

Analysis

The belayer should have been properly tied in to the anchor point, and should have been wearing a helmet and shoes. A belay directly off the anchor, or at least redirected through the anchor using the appropriate device, would be preferable to belaying directly off the harness in this case. Better communication between the rappeller and the belayer would also have helped. It is remarkable that the victim did not suffer more severe injuries given he was not wearing a helmet and the length of fall. The rappeller and especially the belayer were inexperienced. (Source: Parks Canada Warden Service, Jim Mamalis)

STRANDED—OFF ROUTE, INADEQUATE RESEARCH, EXCEEDING ABILITIES

Alberta, Waterton Lakes National Park, Crandell Mountain, Tick Ridge

A group of 25, including five teacher/leaders and 20 grade 10-11 students, were attempting the “moderately-difficult” scramble up Tick Ridge on Crandell Mountain. Several group members and leaders had difficulty with footing and exposure on the ascent. Upon reaching the Cockscomb Ridge, the leader decided to proceed directly down an easier-looking gully heading southwest toward the Cameron Lake Road. They continued downward through progressively steeper third and fourth class terrain until blocked by vertical cliff bands. They decided at this time (early evening) to send one stronger leader back up the mountain to gain cell phone coverage and call for help. The group was able to build a fire in a relatively safe spot, and stayed put for the evening. The stranded party was observed by rescuers just before dark, and as the reporting leader had indicated the party was safe and secure for the night, a dawn helicopter rescue response was planned. The entire party was slung off the mountain in the morning.

Analysis

While not strictly a mountaineering accident, this report demonstrates what happens when inexperienced people venture into mountaineering terrain. The route was beyond the abilities of several members and leaders within this large group, some of whom had no previous experience with exposure in the mountains. As well, the group leader had not been on the route before and had chosen to attempt an unknown descent line. (Source: Parks Canada Warden Service, Brent Kozachenko)

STRANDED—SOLO CLIMBING, CLIMBING UNROPED, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT/CLOTHING, WEATHER

Alberta, Peter Lougheed Provincial Park, Mount Brock, Southwest Face

C.F., set out on July 2 around 1400 to do a solo, ropeless climb on Mount Brock, about 50 kilometers south of Canmore in Peter Lougheed Provincial Park. He told his roommate, J.S., he might head to Mount Brock and joked that if he wasn't back in two or three days, “to call someone.” It was hot and sunny. He carried a chocolate bar, two hard candies, two liters of water, a guidebook for the route, a topographical map, helmet, headlamp,