

he could get cell reception. Wardens responded to the scene by HFRS (Helicopter Flight Rescue System), splinted the leg and lowered G.H. to a point where he could be packaged on a vacuum mattress, stretcher and Baumann bag and heli-slung out.

### **Analysis**

Top-roping does not necessarily mean that a slip may not cause an injury, as this incident points out. It is important to be sure that one's tool or crampon placement is secure before placing full weight on it. It is not known why D.B. did not lower G.H. further down to a point where he would not have been hanging. (Source: Parks Canada Warden Service, Bradford White)

## **FALL ON ICE, PROTECTION (TOOLS) PULLED**

### **Alberta, Banff National Park, Mount Murchison, Balfour Wall**

On February 9, R.C. (40) was with a large group climbing on the Balfour Wall, an area with a variety of one-pitch top-ropeable ice climbs on the lower slopes of Mount Murchison in Banff National Park. R.C. was about half way up a pitch that he was leading and had stopped to place his first screw. His tools pulled out and he fell down to the base of the pitch and broke both of his ankles. Part of the team descended to the Icefields Parkway where they flagged down a passing Parks vehicle and reported the accident. A warden rescue team heli-slung into the site, splinted both ankles, and R.C. was heli-slung out to a waiting ambulance.

### **Analysis**

Broken lower limbs are the most common injury in ice climbing falls. It is also fairly common to break both legs/ankles. The only real way to prevent such injuries while ice climbing is not to fall. (Source: Parks Canada Warden Service, Bradford White)

## **FALL ON ICE, UNROPED**

### **Alberta, Banff National Park, Johnston Canyon**

On February 13, L.R. (26) and her boyfriend (L.) were doing some ice climbing at the upper falls in Johnston Canyon, a popular area of one pitch top-ropeable ice climbs. L.R. unclipped from the belay station, which was about ten meters up some low-angle ice from the canyon bottom, and climbed down to her pack to get some water. On the climb back up to the stance she slipped and fell back down to the bottom, catching her crampon and breaking her ankle and lower leg in the process. Passers by descended to the phone at the bottom of the trail and called the Warden Service to report the accident. Meanwhile L. fashioned an improvised splint from ice tools and a jacket and began to piggy-back carry L.R. down the trail. A rescue crew of wardens and paramedics met the pair part way, re-splinted the leg, administered morphine for the pain and wheeled the patient down to the ambulance in the wheeled stretcher.

### **Analysis**

It is unlikely that most parties would have belayed on the low angle ice where L.R. fell, but this incident shows the possible consequences of even a simple