

check for any activity on the slopes. The air search was cut short on April 23 due to strong winds but resumed early on April 24. C.N. was familiar with the area, and was in Canmore/Kananaskis to make various climbs. (Source: Burke Duncan)

Analysis

C. N.'s death is the fourth solo climbing fatality in the park in two years.

FALLING ROCK

Alberta, Kananaskis Country, Mount John Laurie (Mount Yamnuska)

At the same time as they were searching for C.N. on Mount Brock on April 23, the conservation officers were called to a rescue on Mount Yamnuska about 1300. A climber was fixing a project, (climbing route) he was working on and a block fell and hit him. The rock knocked him off his stance. He hit the belay ledge eight feet below him and broke both his lower limbs in the ankle area. The hurt climber was able to call 911 on his cell phone. He then lowered himself down from the scree slope. He was slung out by helicopter. (Source: Burke Duncan)

Analysis

Spontaneous rockfall and hold failure is common in this area because of the nature of the rock in combination with the winter melt and freeze conditions. This is evident in the large scree slopes below the crag. For that reason it is imperative that climbers be alert for rockfall and holds be tested before fully weighting them.

RAPPEL ERROR, NO BACKUP, NO HARD HAT

Alberta, Kananaskis Country, Barrier Mountain, Barrier Bluffs

On April 30, a climber fell 15 to 20 metres to the ground while rappelling off a 5.8 sport climb, at Barrier Bluffs, "One Way to Wangland." The 30-year-old climber had finished leading the pitch and had rigged the rope to rappel and clean the route. The figure-8 device he used to rappel with was loaded incorrectly and he failed to test it before committing his weight to the rope. He subsequently fell directly to the ground, hit shoulder first and rolled five metres downslope, coming to rest on a rock. He was not wearing a helmet. Five other climbers immediately lowered off their respective climbs and ran to give assistance. One climber took a cell phone and headed to the road where he flagged down a car for help. Luckily, two registered nurses from the emergency department at the Calgary Foothills Hospital were in the car. They quickly made their way to the accident scene to assist. They performed a detailed assessment and determined that the victim's femur was shattered and that he had ruptured a vein or artery in the upper leg. He had also sustained a compound fracture to the elbow and radius, internal injuries and a number of deep lacerations on his head and body. When they

arrived, the victim was bleeding heavily. The nurses repositioned the man so that his blood was going to his head and heart. This action likely saved his life. A paramedic and conservation officer also arrived on the scene within minutes and began preparations to evacuate via helicopter. Alpine Helicopters from Canmore dropped a public safety officer to the scene and went to the road to wait. STARS air ambulance was called and met the helicopter at the highway. A short line and jenny bag were employed to transfer the victim to the highway in serious condition. Two minutes later, a STARS helicopter picked him up and took him to Foothills Hospital. (Source: Burke Duncan)

Analysis

The climber who fell was experienced. He said he had done this hundreds of times and this time he must not have been concentrating. It has become common practice to attach a sling from one's harness with a prusik knot in the rope below the lowering device as a backup.

FALL ON ICE, INADEQUATE PROTECTION

Alberta, Jasper National Park, Mount Andromeda, Practice Gullies

On June 4, two climbers left the climber's parking lot at 0500 enroute to the Practice Gullies (III) on Mount Andromeda. These inappropriately named gullies are similar in difficulty (45 to 55 degrees) and are located on the extreme left hand part of the Northeast Face. They are often capped by large cornices. The climbers arrived at the base and began climbing around 0800 on good snow in the shade of the mountain. They moved quickly up four pitches and then anchored to the rock wall. The snow was thinning out and they were moving out through an interface onto ice. The leader set out, and about four metres into the ice climb, his tool placements failed and he fell. No protection was in place yet and the full force of the fall came upon the belay device that was attached directly to the anchor. It is uncertain what broke or pulled, but the anchor failed and both climbers fell to the base of the climb. A.T. sustained a dislocated shoulder and fractured femur, while his partner C.G. suffered only minor bruising.

A guided climbing party on the Athabasca AA Col route witnessed the fall and sent two climbers down to assist the victim. The guide contacted the Jasper Warden Service via radio and a heli-sling rescue operation was initiated. A total of three wardens were slung into the location where the patient's injuries had already been immobilized. Due to a large overhanging cornice above the route, the rescue emphasis concentrated on a fast heli-sling evacuation of all people.

Analysis

The leader was moving through a difficult snow/ice interface where his tools were not secured in the ice below the snow. When the climber fell,