

FALL ON ROCK, HANDHOLD CAME OFF—FAILURE TO TEST HOLDS, UNROPE

Alberta, Waterdog, North D'art Area, Obliteration

On November 13, B.P. and T.M. were approaching the ice climb Obliteration (30 metre WI4) in the North Drywood area between Waterton National Park and Pincher Creek. The approach involves a 45-minute hike from the vehicles, followed by a moderate class 3 scramble in order to reach the base of the climb. The two climbed up through some easy cliff bands to a ledge below the falls and stopped to have a snack and decide which side to climb (Obliteration or The Gasser). They elected on Obliteration, so they put on their helmets and continued scrambling up the cliff bands with T.M. in the lead. Soon after, T.M. let out a holler and B.P. watched as T.M. fell backward past him. T.M. landed on his back, bounced, and then tumbled down the slope and over the cliff bands, falling approximately 100 feet before coming to rest on a steep scree slope above more cliff bands. As it turned out, a handhold that T.M. was using to pull himself up came loose, causing T.M. to fall backwards. While T.M. lay motionless, B.P. carefully down-climbed the cliff bands to reach T.M. As B.P. got closer, T.M. began to move. While still down climbing, B.P. tried to get T.M. to not move, fearing that T.M. might slip again and fall over more cliff bands. B.P. got below T.M. and began to assess his injuries. They determined that nothing was broken, but T.M. had some major bruising and a sprained ankle.

With the help of ski poles, B.P. and C.G., T.M. was able to walk out toward the truck. The 30-minute descent took approximately two hours. To B.P.'s knowledge, T.M. only suffered major bruising and a sprained ankle.

Analysis

The Waterton area is notorious for loose rock. B.P. noted that two things helped save T.M. from very serious injury. One was the 30 pound pack on his back and the other was his helmet. T.M. was lucky to have stopped where he did. If he had continued rolling and bouncing over the rest of the rock ledges it would have been a much more serious rescue. (Source: Dave Stephens)

FALL ON ICE, UNROPE

British Columbia, Haffner Creek Canyon

February 15, I.T. was solo climbing a mixed route in Haffner Creek Canyon to set up a top rope for friends. He was approximately twenty feet up when he slipped and fell to the ground landing at an awkward angle on his left ankle. Two ACMG guides that were working close by and witnessed the accident radioed Kootenay Park wardens to initiate a rescue response. I.T. was transported via heli-sling to the Haffner Creek trailhead. He was then evacuated by helicopter to the hospital in Banff. I.T. had fractured his ankle in three places.