

## Analysis

She had climbed Mount Shasta once before but had no other mountaineering experience. She had no helmet, no ice ax, and no crampons—only “yak trax” on lightweight boots. (Source: Eric White, Climbing Ranger/Avalanche Specialist)

*(Editor's Note: This is one of many cases we see each year in which a biker finds him or herself in a climbing situation. We do not count these as climbing accidents.)*

## FALL ON SNOW—FAULTY USE OF CRAMPONS

### California, Mount Shasta, Avalanche Gulch

On July 3, a climber fell near The Heart in Avalanche Gulch at 12,500 feet while descending and stuck his crampons into his calf, receiving multiple deep puncture wounds. A USFS Climbing Ranger at Helen Lake made contact with the climber at 1400. The climber refused assistance and descended on his own.

## Analysis

An ice ax and crampons are great tools for snow and ice and recommended on all routes on Mount Shasta. However, we see puncture wounds every year due to improper use. One should get some training before using these and continue to practice. (Source: Eric White, Climbing Ranger/Avalanche Specialist)

## STRANDED, OFF ROUTE, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT—LEFT ROPES BEHIND

### California, Yosemite Valley National Park, Washington Column

On July 15, two climbers (22 and 20) were attempting to climb the Prow on Washington Column. They decided to retreat from the wall after reaching the top of pitch six. After an attempt to rappel their route, the pair concluded that a retreat down the Prow would be too difficult due to its angled nature. They instead decided to rappel straight down onto what they believed to be the Ten Days After (TDA) route. Neither climber was familiar with the TDA route.

It is believed that the climbers committed to the TDA route at the top of pitch five. The climbers were apparently aware that the TDA route below their position was overhanging. They believed that the descent could be completed by tying their climbing ropes together and rappelling a single strand to a ledge system above the actual base of the wall, since they felt they would not be able to reach intermediary anchors due to the overhanging nature of the wall.

The first climber rappelled with the haul bag. At the very end of the rappel line, he discovered that the ropes were not long enough to reach a stance or an anchor. So he was left hanging at the end of the rope dangling slightly above the desired ledge system, which is still around 100 feet above level ground. He decided to attach his etrier to the bottom of the rope and down-climb to