



## AAC Publications

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### **Fall on Snow, Inadequate Equipment, Exceeding Abilities**

Oregon, Mt. Hood, South Side Route

On June 12, Mark Cartier (56), a highly experienced climber, succumbed after falling approximately 1,000 feet while soloing a South Side route variation. Climbing conditions were considered excellent.

Cartier suffered massive head trauma and was determined deceased on scene. His fall was not witnessed, so it is not known if icefall may have struck him and caused the fall. When an eight-person team from Portland Mountain Rescue recovered his remains, they noted substantial icefall by late morning.

#### **Analysis**

Solo climbing adds considerable risk and should only be conducted by confident and experienced climbers. In this case, climbing solo did not appear to cause or contribute to the accident.

Icefall can be a significant hazard, particularly for late ascents/descents. This accident happened at 5 a.m., well before substantial icefall was expected. By definition, experience level (both negative and positive) increases with the number of climbs, but so does the cumulative effect of risk. Perhaps the exposure of over 100 ascents finally caught up with this experienced climber. (Source: Bob Alexander, Portland Mountain Rescue.)

## Images

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