



AAC Publications

Lead Fall on Rock

Alberta, Banff National Park, Mt. Temple, East Ridge

On August 11 two climbers were making an attempt on the East Ridge of Mt. Temple. As the lead climber was nearing the top of the Big Step, he fell approximately three to five meters and broke his right ankle. His partner took over the lead, and the two climbers made it to a relatively flat area on top of the Big Step and called for rescue.

Two Visitor Safety Specialists were dispatched from Banff. They flew over the accident location so the pilot could do a power check with the helicopter and determine the wind level. The specialists then staged out of the field next to Moraine Lake Lodge. The rescue leader was slung to the site to prepare the injured subject. The second rescuer then slung up to the accident site and hooked onto the injured climber, who had been prepared by the rescue leader. The second rescuer and the injured climber were flown down to staging. The helicopter made a return trip for the uninjured climber and the rescue leader. Once all people were at the staging area, the uninjured climber was driven back to his vehicle by a park warden, and the injured climber was loaded into the helicopter and flown directly to Mineral Springs Hospital in Banff.

Analysis

Occasionally, well-prepared climbers fall off. These two climbers were experienced, and the East Ridge of Temple was an appropriate undertaking for them. They chose a day with good weather and conditions, which also showed that they displayed good judgment. The Rockies are inherently loose, and occasionally things happen and people can fall. Despite their bad luck, they were well prepared, which facilitated a smooth rescue.

Images

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