



AAC Publications

Long Leader Fall on Kemosabe Ice Climb – Inadequate Protection

Canada, Alberta, Kananaskis Country, Waiparous Creek

On November 29, while leading the second pitch of Kemosabe (100 meters, WI4), a 35-year-old climber took a 40-meter fall from near the end of the pitch, pulling out two ice screws before his fall was arrested. The climber sustained life-threatening injuries, including a skull fracture and broken pelvis. His two climbing partners, one of whom was a doctor, stabilized him as best they could on a sloping ice ledge while awaiting a rescue. Kananaskis Country Public Safety technicians heli-slung the climber from the ledge and transported him to an air ambulance.

ANALYSIS

The injured climber was an experienced and skilled ice climber. This climb is notorious for being somewhat sandbagged and often has extensive wet or chandeliered ice on the second pitch. The climber had placed seven screws before his fall. Certain routes and certain conditions carry inherent risk that cannot be mitigated. As the climber acknowledged, they should not have attempted this route on that day. (Sources: Kananaskis Country Public Safety, media reports, and the Editors.)

Images

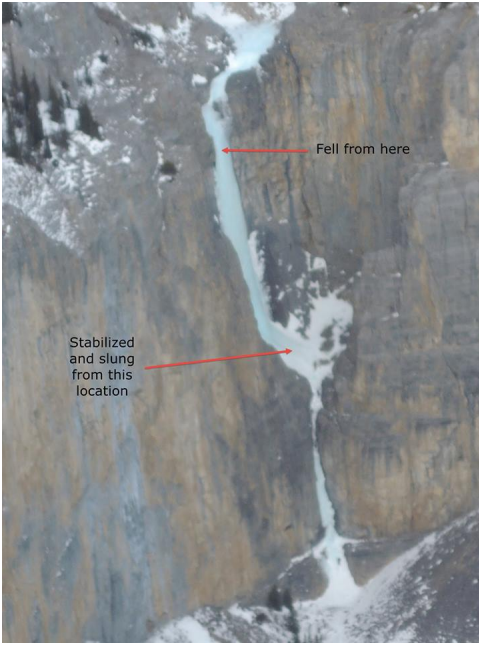


Diagram of accident scene on Kemosabe ice climb, Waiparous Creek.

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