



AAC Publications

Fatal Fall On Snow – Failure to Control Glissade

Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park, Teewinot Mountain

At approximately 7:45 a.m. on June 25, an individual was reported overdue from a solo climb up the east face of Teewinot Mountain. The overdue climber, a 27-year-old male, had posted a video onto social media from the summit around 4:30 the previous afternoon. His vehicle was still at the Lupine Meadows Trailhead. Rangers started up toward the east face of Teewinot, and at approximately 11 a.m. they observed a blue object at the base of the face through a spotting scope. About 15 minutes later, the two rangers reached the location and confirmed that it was the missing climber and that he was deceased. The body was recovered by helicopter long-line.

ANALYSIS

An aerial reconnaissance of the upper east face conducted the day the body was discovered revealed that the climber had most likely tried to glissade the upper snowfield at 12,000 feet, lost control, and fell approximately 2,400 feet. Generally, climbers on a slope of this angle and exposure would choose to plunge step or downclimb in order to descend safely. The climber was dressed for a day climb with a light pack, helmet, and boots. He carried an ice axe. He was not wearing crampons, but had a pair in his pack, which would be consistent with glissading versus downclimbing. (Source: National Park Service Search and Rescue Report.)

Images



The east face of Teewinot (shown here) is a snow climb in early season. A fatal fall in late June ended in the area marked.

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