



## AAC Publications

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### **Slide on Snow — Inadequate Equipment**

Utah, Wasatch Range, Mt. Olympus

**James Roache (54) died after sliding 100 feet on snow before falling into a rocky moat on Mt. Olympus on May 22.** He was preparing to climb the popular West Slabs (5.5). This long, moderate rock climb lies at relatively high elevation and often holds snow at the base in early season. Roache and his climbing partner were near the base of the route when he slipped on steep snow and fell into the moat, the narrow space between the deep snow and a rock wall. The Salt Lake County Sheriff's Search and Rescue team responded and recovered his body the same day.

### **ANALYSIS**

Tragically, we reported a nearly identical incident in ANAC 2020. Fortunately, that person survived. The West Slabs of Olympus see lots of traffic. The climbing is easy, but the peak holds serious hazards for the unprepared, including lingering snow at the base that leads to falls on approaches and sometimes descents. Roache was very experienced, having climbed Aconcagua, Denali, and Kilimanjaro. However, the night before it had rained and frozen on top of the snowy trail leading up to the climbing area, and he wasn't carrying an ice axe. (Sources: [www.thenewstribune.com](http://www.thenewstribune.com) and the Editors.)

**Images**

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