



AAC Publications

Shasta Season Summary

California

The 2023 climbing season kicked off in early April, after a robust winter that brought well above average snowfall. With a nearly 200-inch base at 7,000 feet, skiers and climbers were eager to get on the mountain. Strong north wind events throughout the winter had left north-facing climbing routes with a thin snowpack and generally thinner snowpack above treeline.

In late June, the thin snowpack on the upper mountain began to melt and affect south-side climbing routes. Rockfall became the primary hazard for climbers, resulting in multiple accidents. In late July, climbing rangers began advising climbers not to climb Avalanche Gulch due to poor conditions. The remainder of the summer remained busy on east- and north-facing climbing routes. The Clear Creek Route on the mountain's east side remains a popular alternative for mid- to late-season climbing and for novice mountaineers; there is little to no rockfall due to its generally low angle. The route is not to be taken lightly, however, as we've had plenty of slips, trips, and falls on loose rock over the years, resulting in twisted and broken ankles. We've also had numerous exposure-related injuries from climbers becoming lost in poor weather. If you get off route, steep terrain does exist and slips/falls are not as friendly.

In 2023, we had ten SAR incidents on Mt. Shasta. This is about half of the average annual total of 20 incidents since 1992. The 2023 incidents consisted of one search, seven rescues, and two fatalities. (Source: Mt. Shasta Climbing Rangers.)

Images

Article Details

Author	Mt. Shasta Climbing Rangers
Publication	ANAM
Volume	13
Issue	77
Page	32
Copyright Date	2024
Article Type	Accident reports