



## AAC Publications

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### **Stranded – Shoulder Dislocation**

Canada, Alberta, Banff National Park, Mt. Temple

**Early on August 24, Dan Erikson (45) and I, Michael MacLeod (56), started climbing the east ridge of Mt. Temple (1,500 meters, 5.7).** We had climbed several times together and are experienced. The weather was cloudy and there was some light precipitation, making the rock slick in places. We initially climbed solo, which is common on this route up to a feature called the Big Step. At that point a rope is used to manage increasing difficulty.

I was climbing up to a ledge several hundred meters below the Big Step. Below, Dan was climbing a short steep section when his foot slipped. The jarring caused by catching himself dislocated his shoulder. The pain was so intense that he couldn't climb. I lowered the rope, set up a haul system, and brought him up to the ledge. I tried to set his shoulder, but the pain was unbearable. It was clear he could not move up or down the mountain.

I gave Dan some painkillers and put an extra jacket on him. We decided the only course of action was to call for a rescue, and we made a cell phone call to Parks Canada. We had an inReach, but using the phone made it easier to coordinate with rescuers.

Steve Holeczi, a Visitor Safety Specialist, and pilot Paul Maloney flew in to scope out the location. They decided on a course of action by factoring in the wind direction, terrain, and other variables. Eventually, they brought Visitor Safety Specialist Morgen Funston on a long-line and set her down on the ledge beside us. Our packs were flown off first, then the helicopter returned, Morgen attached all three of us to the long-line, and we were lifted off the mountain. A few minutes later, we were at an ambulance at the Moraine Lake parking lot.

For an hour, paramedics tried to set Dan's shoulder without success. At the hospital, the physician explained that the dislocation had crushed the humeral head into the outer socket. This caused the intense pain and the inability to reset the shoulder.

### **ANALYSIS**

This accident is a reminder that things can go wrong unexpectedly and very quickly on a climb, and to be prepared. The slip on the rock appeared minor until Dan realized his shoulder was dislocated. Whether there was a previous weakness in his shoulder is unknown. Having cell service facilitated a rapid response. Packing an inReach as well, along with a first-aid kit, was prudent. (Source: Michael MacLeod.)

## Images

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