

2007 Accidents & Recommendations

Club-Wide Safety Committee

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The Mountaineers

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2007 Accident SUMMARY



- **One Major Incident – Fatality on hike**
 - **Definition: SAR* and/or hospitalization**
 - **Down from nine in 2006 (page 23)**

- **13 Significant Incidents**
 - **Definition: Injury & Dr. visit, but no SAR***
 - **Not reported for 2006**

- **37 Minor Incidents**
 - **Definition: Injury but no Dr. visit**
 - **Not reported for 2006**

*SAR = Search and Rescue

Request of Trip Leaders



- **Please use “Incident Reporting” section in Activity Report to document all incidents**
 - **As soon as possible after trip**
 - **Also include no-injury “near-misses”**
- **Any information is better than nothing**
- **This is principal source of information for our reports**
- **We will follow up if we need more**

Major Incident



- **Hike on Mt. Jupiter - July 14, 2007**
- **Fatality**
- **Cause: “Congenital Coronary Artery Hypoplasia”**

Significant Incidents



- **Injury and Dr. visit, but no SAR**
- **13 incidents reported**
 - **8 Slips/Falls on non technical terrain**
 - **4 Falls on technical terrain**
 - **1 Hit by falling rock/ice**
- **First year to report these**



Significant Incidents (Cont.)

Serious injuries

- **Tendon rupture**
- **Broken ankle (2)**
- **Broken thumb, concussion**
- **Broken wrist**
- **Cracked ribs**
- **Fractured shoulder**
- **Torn knee ligament**

Significant Incidents (Cont.)



Four Significant Incidents occurred on Field Trips

- Basic Rock One
- Cragging Class
- Intermediate Ice One (2)

Significant Incidents Detail



1. Chair Peak/NE Buttress (winter)

- Leader fall on ice pitch
- Lip laceration, bruised & sprained ankle

2. Spire Rock - Basic Field Trip Rock 1

- Flipped upside down while on rappel
- Distal bicep tendon rupture, quadriceps strain, hyper-extended knee

3. Ingalls Peak/S Ridge

- Fall in dark parking lot
- Gash on forehead

Significant Incidents Detail (Cont.)



4. Icicle Canyon – Crag Class

- Leader fall on rock
- Broken ankle

5. Concord Tower

- Leader fall on rock, pro pulled out
- Broken thumb, numerous bruises, minor concussion

6. Mt Stuart/N Ridge

- Tripped while navigating boulders
- Broken wrist

Significant Incidents Detail (Cont.)



7. Vesper

- Slipped on a rock
- Gash on leg

8. Mt Rainier/Emmons Glacier

- Fall on scree
- Bruised or cracked ribs, scraped arm/back/leg

9. Mt Maude/Entiat Icefall

- Hit by falling rock
- Bruised shoulder, maybe hairline fracture

Significant Incidents Detail (Cont.)



10. Mount Rainier/Nisqually Glacier - Intermediate Ice 1 Field Trip

- Tripped & fell on low-angle glacier ice
- Torn ligaments in knee

11. Mt. Baker/Coleman Glacier - Intermediate Ice 1 Field Trip

- Caught crampon on sling while downclimbing
- Broken ankle



Significant Incidents Detail (Cont.)

12. Sourdough Mtn

- Tripped while hiking
- Sprained ankle

13. Stevens Pass Backcountry

- Fall while skiing
- Dislocated Shoulder



Minor Incidents

- **Injury but no Dr. visit**
- **37 incidents reported**
 - **16 falls (10 on non-technical terrain)**
 - **17 illness, hypothermia, conditioning**
 - **2 hit by falling rock/ice**
 - **2 warnings for route were reported**
- **Likely under-reported**
- **First time to report these**

Recommendations SUMMARY



These areas need continued focus

- **Group Dynamics**
- **Snow Travel**
- **Slips and Falls**
- **Technical ability**
- **Leader Expectations & Ongoing Training**

Recommendations Discussion



- **Recommendations are based on 2006 and 2007 accidents**
- **Too many to discuss in detail here**
 - **The important ones are given with the **Crucial Ones highlighted****
 - **The Recommendations documents (see page 22) have more details on these plus numerous other Recommendations**

Recommendations – Group Dynamics



- **Party Separation is almost always risky**
 - Keep party together
- **Communicate expectations of leader/participants, esp. conditioning**
- **Leader must deal with unsafe party behavior**
- **Party Self-Evacuation should not risk further injury – patient is sometimes too eager to not be a burden**

Recommendations – Snow Travel



- **Give Self-Belay more emphasis**
 - **Self-Arrest gets almost all instruction time**
 - **It is desperate & unreliable**
- **Emphasize Footwork, Self-Belay & Self-Arrest (in that order!)**
 - **The best way to stop a fall is to have no fall at all!**
- **Students learn techniques in soft-snow, but don't know hard-snow technique**
 - **Add hard-snow instruction**

Recommendations – Slips & Falls



- **Be aware that non-technical terrain produces many accidents**
- **Low-angle hard-snow/ice is treacherous – slippery, can't stop**
 - **Ax or anchor is essential**
- **Loose rock is an ever-present danger**
 - **Falling rock, kicking rock, pulling rock**

Recommendations – Technical Ability



- **Do not allow anyone to walk off a rappel whose anchor is at foot level**
- **Learning to place pro**
 - **Lots of practice & use much pro**
 - **Cannot overemphasize this point**
- **Ice top-ropers should have at least one screw in case belayer is incapacitated**

Recommendations – Leader Expectations & Ongoing Training



- **Provide continued education for leaders**
- **Request leaders document all incidents, even if minor – for Club learning**

More Information



Detailed Accident Reports & Recommendations for 2006 & 2007 are online: [Board of Trustees/Archive/Safety Committee](#) (right-click if in edit mode)

Contacts

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Appendix 1 -- 2006 Major Incidents

Snow Travel



- ❖ Fall on snow w/ice ax - failure to arrest
 1. Cracked pelvis & vertebrae - Crosby Mtn
 2. Lacerated knee, bruised ribs - The Brothers
- ❖ Steep snow travel - w/o ice ax
 3. Broken leg - McClellan Butte
 4. Lacerated head - High Priest
- ❖ Other snow – Uncontrolled Glissade
 5. Lacer. face, abdominal puncture - Red Mtn

Appendix 1-- 2006 Major Incidents



Rock Climbing

❖ Leader Fall

6. Bruising, chipped vertebrae - Chair Peak

❖ Unroped Fall

7. Possibly caused by stroke - broken leg, back, neck, fatality by blood clot 3 weeks later - Yellowjacket Tower

8. Concussion, ankle and wrist injury - Lundin Peak

Appendix 1 -- 2006 Major Incidents



Other

❖ Party separation

9. Solo unplanned bivy (2 nights)

- Hypothermia, dehydration and frostbite
- Muncaster Mountain

Appendix 2

Club Wide Safety Committee



- **Reports to Board of Trustees**
- **Established after Sharkfin Tower Accident**
- **Fully active 2006 and 2007**

Appendix 2 - Committee Purpose



- **Promote a culture of safety among the Mountaineers:**
 - **Collect/report accidents and near-misses**
 - **Educate our leaders and instructors**
- **Ensure The Mountaineers are recognized as industry leaders in safety for outdoor activities.**

Appendix 2 - Committee Charter



- **Distribute safety knowledge**
- **Benchmark other safety programs**
- **Stimulate creation of Safety committees in all Branches**
- **Collect/distribute data on all risk activities**

Appendix 2 - Committee Charter (Cont.)



- **Standardize trip reporting**
- **Professionally investigate Major Incidents**
- **Assist in standards for leader qualification and continuing education**

Appendix 2 - 2007 Committee Actions



- **Systematically documented accidents**
- **Communicated accident facts to club members**
- **Facilitated discussion of accidents/safety**
- **Increased reporting of all incidents**
- **Met 12/1/07 to review incidents and develop recommendations**