

Mountaineers 2008 Minor Incidents (Incident or injury, but no Dr. Visit)

Event: Alpine Scrambling Level 1 Avalanche Lectures
Event date: 2007-01-30

See above... bivy sack dissolved!!! in foul weather and the down bag got REAL wet in the mix of rain and snow. That's exactly why we have a couple of tents on hand and the leader takes a big warm synthetic bag along...just in case. This turned out to be the "just in case year". Student who had the experience learned a lot from this and is coming back to teach the next year. Finished the field trip in fine form

Event: Kendall Second Knob/M1 Route
Event date: 2008-01-13

A huge, heavy, hard snow bomb fell from a tree, hit a participant directly on the head and knocked him to the ground. The individual immediately got back on his feet without injury. We knew this was a possibility but there was little opportunity to minimize the risk other than traveling fast and getting out of the trees.

Event: Loop of Cougar Mtn, Long View & Wilderness Peak
Event date: 2008-01-26

Someone fell and hit their bottom when they sat on a stump at the summit of Wilderness Peak -- they didn't see a protrusion and hit it hard upon attempting to sit down. Since there were patches of snow, they iced it, which numbed it. I inquired again at the parking lot and they indicated it was sore. After icing again this evening, I suggested they may want to get medical attention for it if it continues to be a problem.

Event: Snoqualmie Mtn (winter)
Event date: 2008-01-26

Some idiot (ie, me) succeeded in locking himself out of his car. Luckily there were enough cars to get everyone back to Seattle. I would have preferred resting at home to the return visit that night to the pass to retrieve the Forester.

Event: Shuksan Arm
Event date: 2008-02-16

There was no actual incident, but because of the exposure in places and the need for careful route-finding, it's possible the trip should require ice-axes (which would make it a Winter scramble in my opinion). If another leader wants to schedule it, it should be restricted initially to fairly strong, experienced snowshoers with some snow scrambling experience. If the consensus is that it requires ice axes it should be re-classified. Leaders might also want to check to assure that the steep slopes above the gap between Pan Dome and the start of the Arm are avalanche-controlled. I had some information that they do

control it because of the large number of skiers and boarders who traverse underneath the slopes.

Event: Twin Falls Olallie State Park
Event date: 2008-02-18

A miscommunication at the trailhead resulted in one hiker continuing on past a meeting point. I had hiked with him many times before and was comfortable letting him continue with set meeting points. We reached the meeting point and then the turnaround point with no sign of him, so we broke into teams and searched for him further up the trail and back down the trail. We returned to the parking lot and were about to hike the trail again to look for him, when he arrived back at the trailhead unharmed.

Event: Mt Si
Event date: 2008-02-24

Pre-existing knee condition flared up on one hiker, limiting descent speed. Hiker is doing fine and taking mass quantities of Vitamin I.

Event: Olallie Lake
Event date: 2008-02-23

Snowshoes broke for one person and we were delayed a little fixing them.

Event: Twin Falls Olallie State Park
Event date: 2008-03-02

Unfortunately the directions in the Bulletin for the meeting place were too vague. Two people met me at the trail head parking area that I had intended as the starting place. Something like four to six people waited somewhere else, of which I was unaware. They ended up going to Rattlesnake Ledge. I learned all this much later. I discovered when I got home about 4:00 a Seattle Police car in my driveway. Apparently BP, one of the people in the other group, concerned that I had not shown up, had feared the worse, a heart attack or something like that. The officer, amused and perhaps embarrassed as was I, left after encouraging me to call BP and get all this clarified. I then telephoned her, and learned what had happened. I sent an email to the whole group, apologizing and taking responsibility for what had happened. The lesson in all this at least for me is to make sure the directions are explicit.

Event: Indian Henrys Hunting Ground
Event date: 2008-03-09

Navigation errors resulted in our having to find our way out in darkness.

Event: Alpine Scrambling Rock Field Trip - INSTRUCTORS (Mt. Erie)

Event date: 2008-05-11

Two instructors, both Intermediate Climbing grads, slipped and fell in separate incidents on a short, gentle, but wet section of slab at the top of the Protected Downclimb area. Both suffered hand abrasions, were treated with band-aids, and continued with the exercise.

Event: Mt Stuart/Cascadian Couloir

Event date: 2007-06-30

A basic student had a diabetic reaction and required special handling to get back to car

Event: Little Si

Event date: 2008-05-17

One younger and overweight new hiker was barely able to finish the hike. I had to stop with her several times. She was also having some emotional thing, in that she was crying too. She got to the top, and down again. Physically I think she will improve week by week, but today she was definitely not up to the task. I was pretty concerned about her at one point given her weight. She said she attended a hiking seminar, but over estimated her ability. Pace was slow.

Event: Leaders choice

Event date: 2008-05-18

When we arrived back in Anacortes, US Customs was asking everyone in all vehicles whether we were US citizens, and advised us legal nonresident aliens (there was one in our car) need to have their paperwork with or it's > \$100 fine. We ended up not being fined, but it's worth noting we could have been.

Event: Mt Ellinor, 5944

Event date: 2008-05-24

The 1100' glissade on Mt Ellinor has a couple of spots where vision is limited until you crest a rise. On the lower of these, I popped over the rise at high speed to see the person who preceded me, stopped in the glissade track about 15 yards below (because she was catching up to the student in front of her), with people ascending to her left and a boulder to her right.... I yelled an alarm and was able to steer enough to the right to avoid colliding with anyone, but had to fend off the boulder with my right hand and still bounced my (helmeted) head on the side of it. Thanks to the helmet, I suffered no injury.

Things to consider doing differently to minimize future risk:

Me: slow down

All: If you stop in the glissade track, be sure it's not next to a boulder, or just past a rise where those following can't see you (until it's too late).

All: If you are stopped in the glissade track and are being overtaken by another person who may not be able to stop before reaching you, you should roll out of the track.
Leaders: On a glissade of this length, with limited visibility, use radios to communicate readiness/hazards from first person to last person.

Event: Olympic Coast North/La Push to Ozette
Event date: 2008-05-23

A fall resulted in a jammed finger, which resulted in a swollen hand. The swelling was subsiding by the time we reached the end of the trail.

Event: Vesper Peak, 6214
Event date: 2008-09-07

One scrambler is recovering from a nasty cold, and ran out of energy at bottom of rock slabs. She stayed at that location while the rest of us summited.

Event: Unicorn Peak/S Side
Event date: 2008-05-31

One person slipped while crossing a snow bridge over a moat. He landed straddling the bridge and made it safely across. Several of the participants behind him asked, and received, a belay.

Event: Yellowjacket Tower/E Flank
Event date: 2008-06-01

One student poked himself on the eye with a tree branch while rappelling. Upon inspection we discovered that he had a very small cut on his eyelid (and a good shiner). No medical attention was needed on route and upon descending to the cars we offered to bring him to the local hospital for treatment but he declined.

Event: Warrior Peak/SE Summit
Event date: 2008-06-14

Rockfall in the gully on the upper part of the mountain caused a few minor cuts and bruises. A slip on the lower part of the icy gully on the descent caused what we think was a pulled hamstring (minor).

Event: The Fin/SE Ridge
Event date: 2008-06-20

A student stepped down onto a fairly thin covering of snow over down-sloping rock on the descent from Kangaroo Pass, thinking she was stepping on snow. The snow slid off and she started to fall down the snow head first when another party member caught her by the feet. An uncontrolled fall would have been serious. She was wearing a hard hat.

Event: South Early Winter Spire/S Arete
Event date: 2008-06-19

#1. There was a minor puncture wound from a crampon point. It might have been avoided if the climber had had gaiters on.
#2. There was a leader fall on the first pitch. The protection held and there was no run-through at the belay. Fall factor was approximately .2.

Event: Mt Hood/S Side
Event date: 2008-06-22

One member set up a boot-axe belay for another, and in bending over to tend the belay, lost a water bottle out of his pack on the upper Old Chute. Everyone nearby yelled "rock" and no one was in or near the path of the bottle projectile.

Event: Mt Ruth-Icy Peak/Traverse
Event date: 2008-06-28

A basic student was down-climbing a hard snow slope. He was self belaying with his ice axe. He had the axe pick/adze sideways as he was placing the axe down in the snow between his legs. He accidentally cut his upper left leg with the pick of his ice axe. A doctor on the team performed the first aid. The student was able to hike out the rest of the way with no problems.

Event: Mt Rainier/DC Route
Event date: 2008-06-27

One party member, basic student chose to wear non-mountaineering boots. Leader did not do boot check at the trail head.

Event: Kendall Peak
Event date: 2008-07-04

Leader sustained a mild hyper-extension injury to the left knee while trying to self-extricate from bottom of a collapsed snow bridge. No treatment required.

Event: Round Mtn (winter)
Event date: 2008-07-06

Bruised knee, slipped on wet log, walked out extended length of time for trip explained below

Event: Snoqualmie Mtn, 6278
Event date: 2008-07-12

CW lost traction on a step section of trail and fell backwards off of the trail, sustaining superficial scrapes and bruises. No MOFA was required.

Event: Snow Lake

Event date: 2008-07-12

As we explored up on the saddle, one of our hiker's legs sank into a hidden hole in the snow up to her thigh. She was at least two feet away from a protruding rock, but still there was a hole there. She did not report and injuries after we lifted her out of the hole.

Event: Heather Lake (Granite Falls)

Event date: 2008-07-13

2 members of this hike decided to walk around the lake without telling the hike leader. The lake is ringed by snow and travel could be hazardous. No other groups were seen attempting to do the same thing. A third member was not formally on this hike and traveled with this twosome. Technically she was not on the hike but demonstrated the same poor judgment.

Event: Kendall Peak

Event date: 2008-07-12

After successfully reaching the summit and returning to the PCT, Lynn Tissell stepped on a rock on the trail that rolled underneath her. She fell and sprained her right ankle. We were able to tape the ankle and Lynn hiked out slowly without assistance.

Event: Eagle Lake

Event date: 2008-07-13

Someone turned their ankle, then insisted it was fine. The injury wasn't severe and they walked out on it unassisted.

Event: Kaleetan Peak

Event date: 2008-10-16

I summited Kaleetan Peak yesterday. I also had occasion to observe a meltdown of team discipline as a climber refused to obey the group leader during route finding on the descent. Tempers flared and the climber, an older gentleman, never did acknowledge that he committed a real violation by separating himself from the group, even temporarily, and attempting to dictate routes to the group leader.

The group included 12 people. About half were climbers and half scramblers. Some of the scramblers were graduates and some students. One of the climbers was a scramble student and one was fulfilling requirements to lead scrambles. The trip up included a steep snow climb to a section of loose rock leading to a ridge, then the ascent to the summit. The plan was to avoid that area on our descent, traversing snow, scree and

heather, losing some elevation and climbing back up steep snow to locate more of the climber's trail. The group leader was only familiar with the route in deeper snow and some tenuous trails were visible. The group came to a fork, selected the downhill trail which promptly disappeared. The group headed back up to explore the other fork that led directly along the ridge line. Two climbers were sent ahead to explore the route and determine its safety for the group as a whole. One was the climber/scramble student and one a climber participant. They started down a rocky face and began to yell reports back to the climb leader. The climb leader determined that the route was too exposed for all party members and yelled to the climber participant to return to the group. He refused and did not relay the order to the climber/scramble student who was further down the rock face. It was then determined that the climber had the group safety rope in his pack. A scrambler went to his location and obtained the rope, and returned to the main party which proceeded back down along the route where the trail had disappeared.

About ten minutes later the entire party was reunited on a snow covered slope. The climber/future scramble leader had gone ahead to reprimand the pair. His anger over the incident had been and continued to be readily apparent to all as he made it clear he intended to file a report on the incident. The climber/scramble student reported that if had he heard the group leader's order he would have most certainly returned and the future scramble leader calmed down. The other climber expressed no remorse. The group leader didn't dwell on the incident. We still had a long way to descend along the partially snow covered climber's trail. We got to the cars about dark.

Event: Sunrise Campground
Event date: 2008-07-18

One backpacker tripped on the way in, trying to watch the stunning scenery and hike with a full pack at the same time. Skinned knees and a learning point (for everyone!) were the takeaway. Not really an injury but the first time I've run into this kind of misstep on the way in. Accidents on the way out are more likely - when everyone is tired and (too?) eager to get back to the car

Event: Mt Shuksan/Sulphide Glacier
Event date: 2008-07-26

As noted in the report, we spent an extra night. This would not normally qualify as a reportable incident. I'm writing this because I think the description in the Basic Climbs Guide badly needs rewriting. Suggestions: Once the gully is snow-free, party should take full-length (50m or 60m) ropes, some hardware, and sling material. The gully (in my opinion) is decidedly not Class 3 (though the wet rock may have made it seem harder) and Basic students should be taken up with some combination of belaying on some tricky sections and simul-climbing with protection. The party should definitely rappel the gully; I think it would be irresponsible to have them scramble down unroped. [Note: I ran into Pat Timson of AAI Seattle at the Sedro Woolley ranger station, and he thinks the gully should be rappelled. Another note: I did this climb in June of '85 with a party of 12 and summited at 9:30; we climbed the rib to the right of the gully because of traffic in

the snow-filled gully and then descended the gully using ice axes; I didn't know about the rappel anchor.]

Event: Forbidden Peak/W Ridge

Event date: 2008-07-27

After climbers were released from the climb and were departing in cars, three of us were flagged down by a man who had been involved in a mountaineering accident/tragedy. We provided assistance to this man and transported him to emergency services.

As we were driving out of the Cascade River Road, we encountered a man who had just come off of the Inspiration Glacier. He and his wife had been doing a multi-day traverse of the glacier. The fall happened on Saturday evening while they were scrambling in an attempt to locate a col along the traverse in the vicinity of the southeast side of Tricouni. She fell about 35 feet into a moat. She lost consciousness a short time later. The man set up the tent on the glacier and attended to his wife until she passed away from her injuries about 24 hours later. On Monday, he left a note on the tent and went for help. He came to the river before the Cascade River Road in the dark Monday night. While attempting to walk across on logs, he fell into the river. He lost his pack but was able to pull himself out. When we encountered him, he had stripped his wet clothing and was experiencing mild to moderate hypothermia. He was given dry clothes and was warmed up in my truck as I drove him to the Marblemount Ranger Station. The emergency phone was used there to notify authorities. Emergency services had a quick response. The three Mountaineers climbers involved in assisting the climber in need provided written statements to assist with the incident investigation.

I want to recognize Mountaineers intermediate climbers DS and JM for their timely and selfless response to the climber in need. They saved him from enduring another night of hardship and possibly more serious hypothermia injury by responding to his plea for help.

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008085421_climbers01m0.html

I read the very sad and disturbing article this morning on the tragedy on the Klawatti glacier. We were very close to the accident and it is unfortunate that he did not know where to find help or couldn't find it. On Saturday, we attempted Klawatti but aborted due to loose rock and rockfall in the gully. Very sloppy and dangerous and a good decision by the climb leader to get off the mountain. We then traversed over to climb Austeria. From Austeria we could see two climbers far below traversing the Klawatti glacier heading SE. We saw only two climbers that day on the Klawatti/McAllister glacier side and I was wondering where they might be headed, and what route they would take if they were headed back to the Inspiration/Eldorado glacier. We returned to our camp at the foot of Eldorado and then departed early Sunday in poor weather conditions. I can't say if they were the couple, but it seems likely.

What is unfortunate is that our party of nine, a ranger, and a large NOLS group were within two miles of the climbers camp. We would have been in a position to assist. I am glad that you were able to assist this poor, unfortunate man.

Event: Mt Baker/Easton Glacier
Event date: 2008-07-05

JR went back to camp with JS at about 9000' due to fatigue and slowing the team down considerably.

Event: Snow and Nada Lakes
Event date: 2008-07-27

Member in party was carrying extra weight in prep for an upcoming backpacking trip - not long after leaving the TH, said hiker stumbled on rocks in the trail and fell face-first to the ground. Hiker cut her face below the cheekbone and abraised her cheek and chin. Hike Leader treated cut with anti-bacterial ointment and dressing - checking on hiker's condition periodically during the hike (glad to have taken MOFA in Nov. '07). At destination, hiker asked if Hike Leader had Tylenol for the cheek pain - carrying some, the Hike Leader offered tablets to the hiker and she accepted. No further problems or requests occurred.

Event: Defiance, 5584
Event date: 2008-08-02

Very minor injury. GT slipped crossing a log on the old Mason Creek Trail and cut his hand. Very small. Bandaged and then rebandaged with Duck tape. Wouldn't stay on so finally wore a glove over the bandaged area.

Event: Guye Peak/W Face
Event date: 2008-08-02

Off route and ascended the wrong gully to the ramp due to limited visibility. Conditions very slick. Bailed via full length 60 meter rap.

Event: Intermediate Alpine Ice 1 Field Trip (Mt. Baker)
Event date: 2008-08-02

On Saturday, one student fell a few feet and landed badly, twisting left ankle. Was able to stand and walk with some initial pain. No swelling and sufficiently recovered to continue participation in the FT activities. However, limited participation to those activities which did not cause ankle discomfort, avoiding roped travel on ice or flatfooting practices. Was able to walk on to and off of the ice and back to the trailhead with no problem.

Event: Coldwater Ridge from Johnston Ridge
Event date: 2008-08-16

Hiker JK bumped her head pretty good on a fallen tree across the trail. We cleansed and applied a bandage, but she had a lump by supper.

Event: Cutthroat Peak/W Ridge

Event date: 2008-08-17

A basic grad came down with heat exhaustion on the hike out: vomiting, weakness, chills on the drive back (he has a history of heat exhaustion from his earlier years and recognized the symptoms). It was a very hot day and we all had minimal water on the hike out. We should have filled any empty or partially empty water bottles or bags at the last opportunity going in: the small lake just below Kangaroo Pass. The victim was OK as of 8/18.

Event: Kangaroo Temple/NW Face

Event date: 2008-08-10

After completing the route and rapping back down to the start of the basic route on N/face, we made our way back down to where our packs were. To our surprise was the private rope team of two that was behind us on our intermediate route. They had rap back down from the top of the first pitch as the leader took a leader fall on the start of the second pitch and hurt her ankle. By the time we got to her, her ankle was wrapped by her climbing partner and very well wrapped (I am an EMT and have wrapped tons of ankles and splinted lots of broken ankles).

We took her rack, rope, harness, and as much weight off her. There was another mountaineers group (EB was leader) coming down the basic route. We all went as a group back to the notch. From there the basic group went to cars (kept in touch with radios) as my group of AC, PT and SS stayed and walked with the injured climber back to her car. This was not required of all to help, but all volunteered, it shows their concern for the safety of ours.

The injured climber made it back to the cars, but was in lot of pain. Have not heard on what the extent of the injury is.

Event: Mount Pilchuck

Event date: 2008-08-23

GUEST hiker did not stay with the party. I made eye contact with her on the lookout, saw her go down the ladder, and then she was gone. We looked for her for a good half hour and could not find her among the crowds. A note left at the trailhead on a members car said she left with a lady because she was tired of waiting. We were glad to get this note, but obviously this lady does not have a clue as to what a group hike means. I will not allow her on any of my future hikes, if she in fact does apply for membership.

Event: Preacher, 5924'

Event date: 2008-08-24

A two foot diameter rock started to roll when lightly touched. Came close to causing an injury. A bent trekking pole was the only result.

Event: Yellowjacket Tower/E Flank

Event date: 2008-08-24

Minor scrape on hand of one of the basic students when he caught himself coming down trail. He was our MOFA (MD) on climb. Washed out with water and bandaged up.

Event: Summerland & Panhandle Gap

Event date: 2008-08-30

Arrived back at the trailhead and one of the group was missing. She had been doing fine for the whole trip and was last seen within a mile of the trailhead. Sent search party back up the trail to look for her, but she appeared on her own from another direction within about 15 minutes. She had taken the wrong turn at a well marked trail about 0.1 miles from the trailhead and ended up in a different parking area. Several lessons were learned:

1. Avoiding party separation is really important. We let people drift too far apart.
2. A lost or disoriented hiker should stay where they are rather than try to guess which way to go, especially when hiking with a group that has someone assigned to "sweep" at the end.
3. Search parties should carry their 10 essentials and full pack and should plan carefully. Our search party itself got separated and we wasted an hour just getting our group back together.

Event: Mt Ruth-Icy Peak/Traverse

Event date: 2008-08-31

BL led our group up the far left gully (extreme left of cirque in view). According to Fred Becky's description it is 3rd class. At the very top of the gully, many rocks are loose and there is a very short overhanging bulge. At this point the route veers to the right edge of the gully and up and around. BL:climbed directly up the gully, over the overhang, pulling off a low 5th class move un-rope on loose rock. He did not alert our team he was off route (and climbing way beyond 3rd class). SF found the right way (3rd class) up and around the right edge and out of the gully. I did not let BL lead anymore and told him more communication is needed with the leader before ever putting a group at risk.

Event: Mt Stuart/N Ridge

Event date: 2008-08-15

For the first time in my climbing career I suffered from heat exhaustion. I was unable to continue beyond Goat Pass. DP took the two students ahead onto the Stuart Glacier, but they also turned back within an hour of our separation and bivouacked at Goat Pass. I staggered back to Headlight Basin and camped there. It took me three hours to do so, with stops for water and vomiting. A truly shitty turn of events for me, and highly embarrassing. Access to water combined with the high temperatures was another

consideration for turning back. Added to this, a forest fire was burning just a mile away in Jack Creek Valley, and the smoke was cloying at times, especially on day two.

Event: Commencement Bay

Event date: 2008-07-26

One of our paddlers developed cramps in her arms and upper thighs requiring towing. Another paddler developed a "hitch" in her side and also required towing. Our group possessed 4 tow lines, so we created two in-line towing mechanisms and "fresh" paddlers traded off every 15 minutes, or so.

Event: Sahale Arm

Event date: 2008-09-20

Participants MW and HW were recovering from stomach flu two weeks prior and were still not feeling well -- they returned to the cars 3 miles into the hike.

Event: Tubal Cain Mine

Event date: 2008-09-20

On our way out after the hike we were caught up in that murder investigation where the forest ranger died. The forest road we came in was blocked off, so we were forced to take a different road out when we got almost back to Taylor Cutoff road, we were stopped and BC the driver of our car was told to get out of the car at gunpoint, lift up his shirt and walk slowly up to where the policeman were standing. He talk to BC for awhile then BC came back to the car, we then had to pull up to where the cops were located and they took all of our drivers license information, asked a few questions then allowed us to leave.

Event: Goat Lake (Monte Cristo)

Event date: 2008-09-28

I was the last person by about fifteen minutes to reach the cars at about 3:30. I discovered that two people, JF and NA his passenger were waiting for me. Two others, PS and HW had left a note on my car windshield informed me that they had left about 3:00. (I was skeptical of this. I don't think I was that slow.) Two other people AS and DR, who apparently had come together, were unaccounted for. JF said that they had taken the "lower" Elliott Creek trail. They had not discussed this with me. The lower Elliott Creek trail was in good condition. Both were strong hikers. However I was uncomfortable that they were unaccounted for. Both had arrived late for the hike earlier in the day, and had caught up with the rest of the group on the trail. I did not know which of the three cars remaining at the trail head was theirs, or if any were theirs. I told JF that he could leave. I waited around for about a half hour until 4:00. Eventually I wondered if they had gotten to their car shortly after 3:00 themselves, and simply left without informing me. I had their cell phone numbers, and contemplated telephoning one of them, but could not get a connection on my own cell phone. I decided that they were

strong hikers, that the trail was in good condition. I figured under the circumstances I should just go home. I did not want to wait at the parking area until all the cars left. Some people might have been camping. I finally departed and went home. I did not feel comfortable about this, but figured that there was nothing practical I could do short of hiking the entire lower Elliott Creek trail myself.

Event: Tatoosh Range Traverse

Event date: 2008-08-29

As described above, during the ascent up the rocky wash above Bench Lake to the foot of Unicorn, a participant loosed some rocks which slid over him. Some minor scrapes and scratches, which were attended to. He was able to easily complete the trip.

Event: Introduction to Ice Climbing Field Trip

Event date: 2008-10-04

On the hike out KG was struck on the arm by a football sized rock dislodged by PM who was 20 feet above her on a steep trail section. Myself and one other were about 30 minutes behind the rest of the group so were not present when the incident occurred. JR did a MOFA assessment and put the arm in a sling to stabilize. No wound or external bleeding was present. I talked to KG upon arriving to the trailhead. The injury seemed stable and I advised her to visit a doctor the next day and advise me on his findings.