

Winter Climbing Accident

The Polish Tatras– 12th February 2008

(victim hanging free on rope)

Tatrzańskie Ochotnicze Pogotowie Ratunkowe
Tatra Mountain Rescue Service
Zakopane - Polska



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Topography

Mount
Mięguszowiecki
Szczyt Wielki
(2438 m AMSL)

The climbing route:
Filar MSW
900 - 1200 m long
UIAA V+/VI

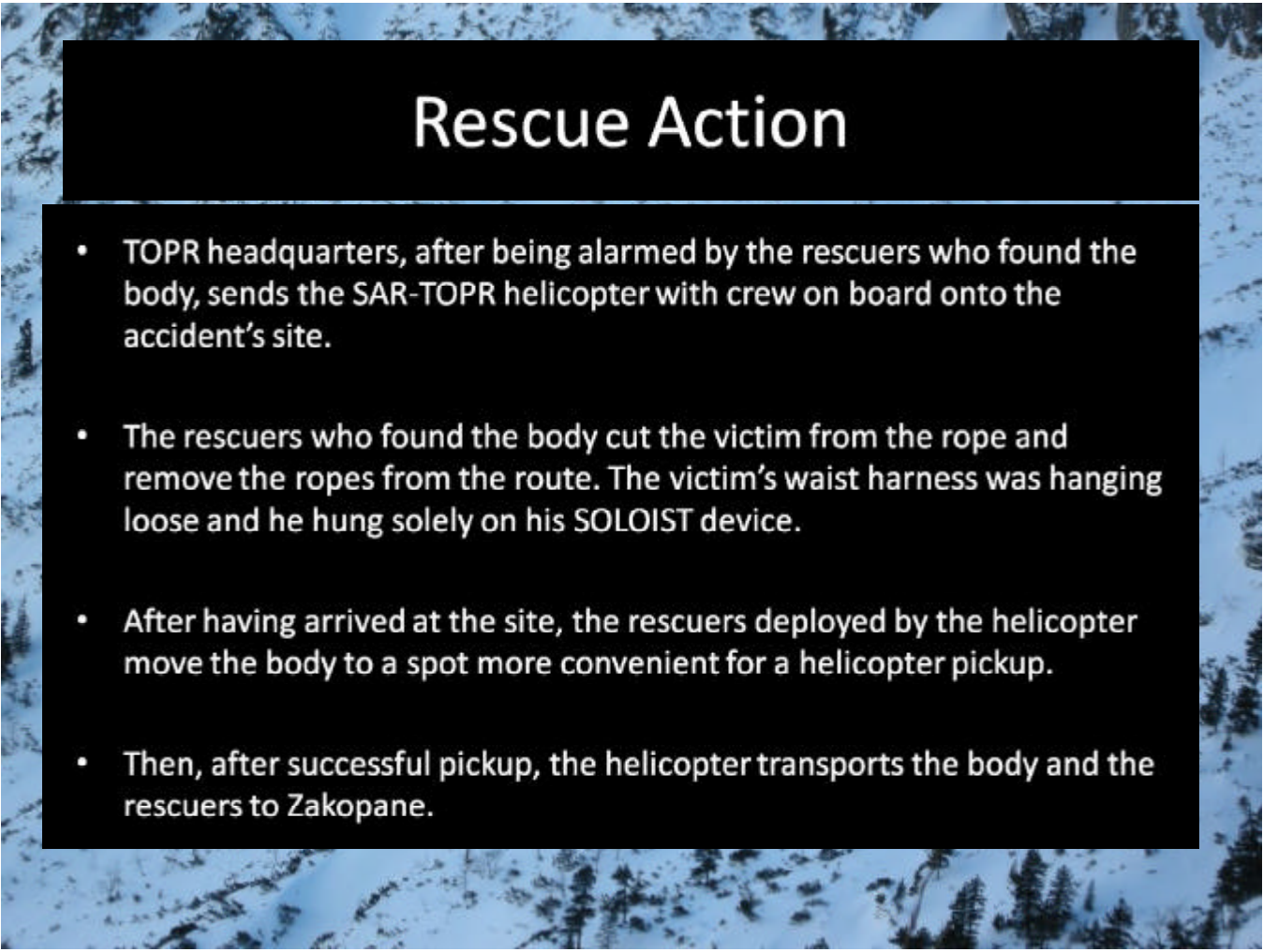
Accident area



www.gory.wyd.pl

The Accident

- During a solo climb in a chimney at the lower parts of Mt Mieguszowiecki pillar, climber experiences a 25 metres long fall which results in a free midair hang.
- The following day, two TOPR rescuers intending to climb the same route encounter the climber with no signs of life still hanging on the rope.
- Death of the climber occurred most likely due to the fact of prolonged free hang on the rope (i.e. without any support for the feet). The probable reason of the accident itself was misuse of self belaying device (SOLOIST). The victim had no external injuries.



Rescue Action

- TOPR headquarters, after being alarmed by the rescuers who found the body, sends the SAR-TOPR helicopter with crew on board onto the accident's site.
- The rescuers who found the body cut the victim from the rope and remove the ropes from the route. The victim's waist harness was hanging loose and he hung solely on his SOLOIST device.
- After having arrived at the site, the rescuers deployed by the helicopter move the body to a spot more convenient for a helicopter pickup.
- Then, after successful pickup, the helicopter transports the body and the rescuers to Zakopane.



Evacuation by HEC technique



The probable fall spot



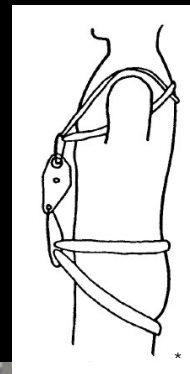
The accident's area



The spot where the body was found

Summary

- Probably a misuse of self belaying device (SOLOIST) caused jamming of the rope during the fall what resulted in an immense fall factor and free hang on rope. The latter, eventually, was the cause of death of the climber.



* - źródło: Soloist Solo Belay System Instruction Manual