

Version 4		NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SEARCH & RESCUE REPORT – Page 1						DURE0338	
SAR #: 23-30		Park: GTNP		SAR Account #: PX.EGRTES405.00.1		Case #		NP23220338	
Start Date: 07/20/23		Start Time: 1130		End Date: 07/20/23		End Time: 1900		Day of Week: 5-Thursday	
Subject Name		ADDRESS				Phone		DOB	
1	Braydan DuRee	6150 Reining Horse Dr. Kuna, ID 83634				208.615.3802		10/25/1982	
2									
3									
4									
Subject Info:		Age		Sex		Experience Level			
Subject #1		41		M		2. Beginner/Novice/Limited Skills			
Subject #2						2. Beginner/Novice/Limited Skills			
Subject #3						2. Beginner/Novice/Limited Skills			
Subject #4				Click		Click Here (5 choices)			
Date Subject Contacted:		7/20/2023		Time Subject Contacted:		1320			
Location:		Owen Spalding Route, base of Owen Chimney							
Coordinates:		43.741564 -110.803379							
Notification Method:		2 - Cellular Phone							
Incident Type:		3 - Recovery/Salvage				Contributing Factor - 1st:		6 - Fall	
Mutual Aid:		No				Contributing Factor - 2nd:		Click Here (26 choices)	
Subject Organization:		1 - Unaffiliated NPS Visitor				Contributing Factor - 3rd:		Click Here (26 choices)	
Subject Activity:		20 - Mountaineering, Roped				Rescue Method - 1st:		4 - Helicopter Rescue	
Incident Environment:		10 - Mountains, 5,000 - 15,000 feet				Rescue Method - 2nd:		12 - Technical Rescue	
SAR Disposition:		1 - Subject Found/Rescued				Rescue Method - 3rd:		Click Here (14 choices)	
NUMBER ILL or INJURED: 0		NUMBER NOT ILL or NOT INJURED: 2		NUMBER of FATALITIES: 1		NUMBER of SAVES: 0		UNFOUNDED: 0	
The Following Items Are Reported Only When Incidents Involve Searches For Lost Subjects									
Search: TYPE				Click Here (5 choices)					
Search: Linear Distance in Miles from PLS (blank if unknown):				miles					
Search: VERTICAL DIRECTION FROM PLS				Click Here (7 choices)					
Search: DURATION				Click Here (10 choices)					
Search: DISPOSITION				Click Here (5 choices)					
Search: HOW SUBJECT WAS FOUND				Click Here (10 choices)					
Brief Summary:									
GRTE News Release:									
<p>MOOSE, WY— Park rangers responded Thursday, July 20, to a report of a climber who fell 40 to 50 feet from the Owen Chimney pitch on the Owen-Spalding route of the Grand Teton, inside Grand Teton National Park. Rangers responded, however, the climber, Braydan Duree of Kuna, Idaho, succumbed to significant injuries during the fall and was pronounced dead at the scene.</p> <p>Duree's body was short-hauled from the scene and turned over to the Teton County Coroner's Office. His two climbing partners were also flown from the scene to the Jenny Lake Search and Rescue Cache at Lupine Meadows.</p> <p>(See complete narrative below)</p>									

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TIME/COST SUMMARY		Hours:	Costs:
NPS Programmed Hours: Actual, regular hours for permanent and seasonal NPS employees.		52.00	\$1,404.83
NPS Unprogrammed Hours: Actual overtime, hazard pay, emergency hire (AD) and unscheduled part-time, and intermittent employee time & FICA-ER.		63.50	\$3,090.44
Non-NPS Hours: Volunteer, military, and other non-NPS time.		0.00	\$0.00
Totals:		115.50	\$4,495.27

OTHER SERVICES AND MATERIALS		Costs:
Supplies and Equipment: Non-budgeted supplies and NPS equipment replacement, including meals		\$2,040.50
Other Services and Costs: Travel, equipment rental, contracted hourly services, Mountain Weather, etc.		\$0.00
Totals:		\$2,040.50

AIRCRAFT AND VESSEL SUMMARY			
Aircraft Organization:		Aircraft Costs:	
NPS - Air Operations Cost		\$0.00	
Other Air Operations Costs		\$9,229.75	
Totals:		\$9,229.75	
Vessel Organization:		Vessel Costs:	
NPS - Vessels Cost		\$0.00	
Other Vessel Costs		\$0.00	
Totals:		\$0.00	

Non-NPS Total:	\$0.00	NPS Total:	\$4,495.27	Grand Total:	\$15,765.52	Total Charged to SAR Account:	\$14,360.69
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Prepared by: George Montopoli		Approved by: Nicholas Armitage	
Signature/Date: George Montopoli 9/9/2023		Signature/Date:	

For incidents with NPS non-programmed costs in excess of \$500, the following signatures are required:			
Superintendent:		Regional Director:	
		Approved	
		Disapproved	
Signature/Date:		Signature/Date:	

Narrative:

Summary with Timeline of the Incident

Involved Individuals:

- Braydan Paul DuRee, DOB: 10/25/82, Fatality
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

On 7/18/23, at about 1641 hrs., B. DuRee picked up a reserved permit at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station to climb the Grand Teton via the Owen-Spalding (OS) route with [REDACTED]. B. DuRee had a lengthy conversation with Ranger C. Heerdt who issued the permit, and he appeared to be sufficiently informed and capable of ascending the OS route on the Grand Teton. Ranger Heerdt stated that they had a lengthy discussion about the OS route that they were ascending, and that B. DuRee seemed knowledgeable about the route and well-prepared for the ascent. B. DuRee was also advised about, and aware of, backcountry camping regulations and conditions of the OS route (as noted in the permit).

On 7/19/23, the group departed from the Lupine Meadows Parking area and hiked to the Gamet Canyon Caves where they established a base camp and spent the night. On 7/20/23, they began their ascent of the Owen-Spalding route on the Grand Teton by hiking and scrambling to the Upper Saddle, where the OS route technically (using ropes and climbing equipment) begins. They (presumably) completed the Belly-Roll, Crawl and Double Chimney, to the base of the Owen Chimney where they set up.

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Narrative continued:

On 7/20/2023, at about 1140 hrs., Grand Teton Interagency Dispatch Center (GTIDC), transferred a cell phone call from [REDACTED] to the Lupine Meadows Search and Rescue Cache (LMSARC). [REDACTED] informed SAR team rangers (N. Armitage, R. Schuster, G. Montopoli) at the LMSARC that he was climbing with [REDACTED] B. DuRee, and [REDACTED] and at about 1130 hrs., B. DuRee had sustained a 40-50-foot fall while leading the Owen Chimney pitch. While leading the pitch, B. DuRee was wearing a helmet and using a rope. He had placed (or was placing) protection in a crack, and was stepping up when his foot apparently slipped. The protection pulled out, which resulted in the 40-50-foot fall.

After the fall, B. DuRee came to rest near [REDACTED] who was belaying him during his ascent. [REDACTED] called 911 immediately, and was transferred to GTIDC, and then to rangers at the LMSARC. He reported that B. DuRee was unconscious, had sustained a head injury, had dilated eyes, and slowed breathing that stopped at times. He was instructed by rangers to roll him onto his side to open his airway, check for and remove any blood from around his mouth, keep him warm by wrapping him in coats, and monitor his breathing. At 1146 hrs., [REDACTED] informed rangers that he was starting CPR.

At 1146 hrs., contract helicopter N838PA was contacted at the helibase and requested to respond to the LMSARC to assist with the SAR effort. At 1200 hrs., LMSARC was informed that N838PA would be spooling up soon. Rangers C. Martin and D. Weber were put on standby for the 1st insertion load, and Rangers C. Heerdt and Z. Little were put on standby for the 2nd insertion load.

At 1229 hrs., [REDACTED] called the LMSARC and reported that B. DuRee was still unconscious with a heartbeat but was breathing more slowly with severe bleeding in the mouth and had fixed and dilated pupils. At 1230 hrs., helicopter N838PA arrived at the LMSARC, configured for short-haul operations, and briefed for the SAR operation. Ranger N. Armitage supervised Mountain and Helicopter operations, R. Schuster assisted with Medical and Aviation operations, C. Martin oversaw accident site operations, and G. Montopoli acted as SAR Coordinator.

At 1255 hrs., N838PA departed from the LMSARC for the accident site. At about 1300 hrs., G. Montopoli called [REDACTED] to inform him that N838PA was headed to his location, at which time [REDACTED] reported that he had performed CPR for about 20 minutes, but that B. DuRee had died; he had stopped breathing and had no pulse.

N838PA, then landed at the Lower Saddle and short-hauled C. Martin to the accident site, arriving about 1320 hrs. D. Weber was subsequently short-hauled from the Lower Saddle to the accident site, arriving about 1340 hrs. After assisting C. Martin with organizing the accident site, D. Weber was short-hauled with [REDACTED] in a screamer suit to the Lower Saddle, arriving at about 1400 hrs. N838PA then returned to the LMSARC.

At 1500 hrs., C. Heerdt was short-hauled from LMSARC to the accident site, arriving at about 1515 hrs. He then assisted C. Martin with securing B. Duree in a body-bag and net for short-haul to the LMSARC area; meanwhile, N388AP landed at the Lower Saddle. At 1545 hrs., C. Heerdt was short-hauled with [REDACTED] in a screamer suit to the Lower Saddle, landing at 1550hrs. N838AP then returned to the accident site and short-hauled C. Martin to the LMSARC area with the deceased climber in the cargo net suspended below. Deputy Coroner Katrina Clauson (307.733.2331) was notified that B. DuRee had arrived at the LMSARC.

N838PA then shut down and refueled. At 1645hrs., N838PA (internally) shuttled Rangers L. Hunsaker and Z. Little to Garnet Meadows. N838AP continued to the Lower Saddle to transport rangers and party members back to the LMSARC, while L. Hunsaker and Z. Little ascended to the Garnet Caves area to collect the overnight camping possessions of B. Duree's party for return to the LMSARC.

Signature/Date:

Supervisor/Date:

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Narrative continued:

At 1711 hrs., D. Weber and [REDACTED] were flown internally from the Lower Saddle to the LMSARC, arriving about 1713 hrs. N838AP then returned to the Lower Saddle and C. Heerd and [REDACTED] were flown internally to the LMSARC, arriving about 1725 hrs. Finally, N838AP returned to Garnet Meadows and shuttled L. Hunsaker and Z. Little to the LMSARC with the climbing party's possessions.

As soon as the surviving members of the climbing party arrived at the LMSARC, Family Liaison Ranger K. Tozier provided substantial support to them. Meanwhile, their belongings were transported from the mountain to the LMSARC, their car was shuttled from the parking area to the LMSARC, the coroner transported B. DuRee to her office, and other matters were resolved.

Synopsis

The day prior to their departure, Braydan DuRee picked up their reserved permit at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station. The original permit reservation from 1/16/23 included [REDACTED] and himself, and he added [REDACTED] to the trip. B. DuRee had a lengthy conversation with a ranger at the Jenny Lake Ranger Station and he appeared to be sufficiently informed and prepared for their ascent of the Owen-Spalding (OS) route on the Grand Teton. He was also advised about, and aware of, backcountry camping regulations and conditions of the Owen-Spalding route (as noted in their permit).

The trip appeared not to be rushed: the group had reserved the Garnet Caves for two nights starting 7/19/23. It appears likely that they had left their camp sufficiently early and were making reasonable progress from the Garnet Caves to the Upper Saddle. The accident took place at 11:30 am on what most climbers consider the most technical pitch of the route, the Owen Chimney (which is generally the second or third roped pitch from the Upper Saddle, dependent upon decisions by the lead climber).

The conditions on the technical sections of the Owen-Spalding route were reported to be dry; however, areas of hard snow and ice persisted in some sections. Even on clear days, these areas experience freezing (usually at night), thawing (usually in the morning), and verglas (hard to see thin coatings of ice on rock, especially in small pockets or indentations in the rock). On the day of the accident, at the start of the Owen Chimney, where the climbers established their belay, there was substantial hard snow/ice covering the ledge. The chimney above, however, appeared clean and free of snow and ice from below. The snow/ice present on the belay ledge could have affected the ability of a shoe's (rubber-based) sole to adhere to rock – the cold hardens the rubber, and small amounts of snow/ice can adhere to the treads on the bottom of the sole. These conditions certainly could have played a role in the "slip and consequent fall" that occurred when B. DuRee was attempting to ascend the crux of the pitch.

It appears that B. DuRee was clipped into a Figure-of-Eight knot in the middle of the rope while leading. (This configuration would facilitate simul-climbing by [REDACTED], especially on easier ground.) The Figure-of-Eight knot was clipped into a locking carabiner which was clipped into his harness belay loop. While leading the Owen Chimney, B. DuRee had placed one piece of protection about half the distance to the crux. At the crux (about 40-50 ft. up), while placing another piece of protection, he slipped and fell, and the protection pulled out. He took a tumbling fall and came to a stop near his partners before the belay was engaged. Had B. DuRee placed additional pieces of protection, especially just below the crux (and the difficult climbing), he may have prevented the 40-50-foot tumbling fall. B. DuRee was climbing with a helmet, but during his tumbling fall, it was dislodged, resulting in significant head trauma that caused his death.

Investigation (by Case Martin)

Signature/Date:

Supervisor/Date:

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Signature/Date:	Supervisor/Date:
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<div>Continue here if necessary</div>				
Signature/Date:		Supervisor/Date:		

Important:
Print only the pages that
you occupy!

<-- If you need to add
addition subjects, do so at
the START of the *Narrative*
(page 2).
DO NOT INSERT ROWS
ANYWHERE ON THIS
WORKSHEET!

