

across an open slope above the other skiers in an attempt to catch up with them. As she did so, a shallow, soft slab (fracture line estimated 6-10 inches thick) broke loose on the open slope 75 to 100 feet above her. She shouted a warning to her companions and then was swept down by the slide. The rest of the party attempted to escape the flowing snow. Two were carried off their feet and swept against trees, where they managed to hang on. The three remaining members of the party were able to reach the edges of the slide and watched D.L. as she was carried past them and over the small cliffs below. The slide moved extremely fast and was accompanied by a dust cloud.

When the slide ceased, D. L. could not be seen. H.M. had suffered cuts around the mouth and had had the wind knocked out of him by the impact against the tree. R.N. received cuts on the face. The others escaped injury. Rescue action was initiated immediately for the lost member of the party. R.N. began climbing back up the slide path in order to ski down Collins Gulch for help. The others marked the line of the victim's fall and began searching down this line. One descended to go for help via Peruvian Gulch. W.S. skied to the bottom to begin the search from below. When he reached the top of the deposition zone he discovered the victim's hand sticking out of the snow in an area where snow had piled up to an estimated three foot depth. He dug her out while the others descended to help administer first aid. Word was shouted to R.N. that the victim had been found and was injured. R.N. then continued out Collins Gulch to seek help while T.S. skied out Peruvian Gulch.

RESCUE

At approximately 5:40 p.m. R.N. reached the Alta Lodge with news of the accident. He notified the Assistant Patrol Leader who immediately called the Avalanche Hazard Forecaster. The latter directed the rescue operation. It was apparent from the patrolman's report that the rescue action required the evacuation of the injured skiers rather than a search for missing victims. The extent of injuries suffered by D.L. and H.M. was undetermined at this point. Three rescue parties were dispatched via different routes to the accident scene, each equipped with a toboggan: One group went by road to the Wasatch Mine, intending to climb up Peruvian Gulch to the accident scene; a second party, led by the Alta Patrol Leader, set out around the end of Peruvian Ridge, intending also to climb to the scene of the accident; the third party consisting of eight patrolmen, the Avalanche Hazard Forecaster, and R.N., went up the Wildcat Lift (where they picked up the light-weight toboggan and a litter) and descended the avalanche path. A fourth group was instructed to follow with radios. While transportation of the toboggan over the difficult terrain was organized, the leader descended to the accident scene, leaving ski patrolmen spaced behind to provide communication with the ridge. There he found D.L. suffering from leg injuries, and H.M. recovered from his minor injuries. Word was relayed up the chain of patrolmen that only one toboggan was required and that sufficient manpower was already at the scene to handle the evacuation.