



Figure 10. Accident 81-13, Day's Fork, Utah, March 8, 1981.

the snowpack around them. King looked uphill, fully expecting to see cracks widening in the snow above him, but they didn't materialize. Looking over toward the center of the bowl, he watched as an avalanche engulfed the three skiers and dogs standing near the starting zone. King's group was safe for now, separated from the avalanche by terrain features.

When the avalanche struck, the second party consisting of Steve Hanson, Mark Johnson and Rusty Dassing, along with Johnson's huskies, Smoke and Lady, were caught immediately and plunged downhill. Johnson grabbed onto a tree and the snow flowed around him, while Dassing had enough power, and luck, to ski out to the side of the avalanche seconds after it started. Only Hanson and the dogs were carried to the bottom. He fought to stay in a standing position

and was buried to his waist but unharmed when the snow came to rest.

King and partner Mike Swing watched intently as Hanson rode out the slide, and they saw Conant scrambling frantically to get away from the churning snow bearing down on him. He barely made it to the side in time. Beck had been just far enough to the side of the slide that she didn't get caught.

Rescue

When the snow finally stopped, communication between all three parties confirmed that indeed nobody was missing. This was done twice. King, Mark Pollish (also in the third party) and Conant skied to the half-buried Hansen to dig him out. Hansen was out in 5 minutes, but it took almost another 10 minutes to free his skis—which didn't come off in the