

Ogden Skier Dies In Avalanche

Special to The Tribune

POWDER MOUNTAIN — An Ogden man was killed Friday near Powder Mountain ski resort in an avalanche that buried him for half an hour after he was skiing in a closed area.

Charles L. Beacom, 28, was dead on arrival at an Ogden hospital. He was caught in the avalanche at 2:16 p.m. near the road that connects U.S. Forest Service land to the parking lot of the resort, which is 17 miles north of Ogden.

Steve Smith, ski shop manager at Powder Mountain, said the area where the avalanche occurred was closed but others had been skiing there.

Smith said the avalanche was 30 feet wide and 6 feet deep and covered Utah 162, the main road to Powder Mountain, for 1½ hours, preventing autos from leaving or entering the ski resort.

"Apparently someone witnessed it [the avalanche]. We've never really had a slide problem before," Smith said. He said about 40 skiers, the Powder Mountain Ski Patrol and two dogs trained to search for avalanche victims probed the snow for Beacom who was found unconscious. Weber County emergency vehicles transported him to the Wolf Creek area where they were met by a helicopter which took Beacom to the Ogden hospital.

Avalanche Kills Utah Skier

EDEN, Utah (UPI) — An avalanche swept over a skier in an area posted off-limits due to the slide danger, killing the man and closing the highway to a northern Utah ski resort, the Weber County Sheriff's office said.

"He was skiing outside the designated Powder Mountain Resort area, in a no-trespass area," said Sgt. William Giles.

Giles identified the victim as Charles Beacon, 29, of Ogden, Utah. He said Beacon was unconscious when his body was recovered about 20 minutes after he was buried by the avalanche Friday. Beacon was dead on arrival at an Ogden hospital.

Beacon was skiing with another man about 2 p.m. when he apparently triggered the slide. Giles said

the other skier had already gone down the hill and led rescuers to the site where they found Beacon buried under six feet of snow.

Giles said it is a misdemeanor for skiers to enter posted avalanche areas. He said the resort would have to decide whether to seek trespass charges against the second skier.

One avalanche victim is lucky, another is not

SALT LAKE CITY (UPI) — A Salt Lake City skier swept away by an avalanche said he had given up and was unconscious when Alta Ski Patrol rescuers found him, thanks to a tiny radio signalling device he was wearing.

"In my wildest dreams I would have never thought of the potential of an avalanche that big," said Ron Gregory, 34, who was carried more than a quarter mile down a mountainside Thursday.

Gregory was released from a hospital Friday, the same day another avalanche near Powder Mountain Ski Resort killed a 39-year-old Ogden,

Utah, man.

"I had time to consciously think about it," Gregory said, as he was being carried down Patsy Marley Mountain, near Alta's main ski area. "If I had hit a tree, I was going to be dead for sure.

"After I realized I couldn't get my hand up by my face, panic kind of set in and I wanted to move so badly, kind of like you want to get to the surface when you're drowning.

"Basically I died," said Gregory. "I didn't do much to save myself. They (the ski patrolmen) are the ones who are the real heroes."

He suffered only cuts and bruises. Rescuers

said they were able to find Gregory within 20 minutes because of the special radio transmitter he was wearing. Patrolmen using receivers to pickup the beeping signal were able to pinpoint the spot where Gregory was buried under five feet of snow.

Friday's avalanche, 40 miles north of Salt Lake City, killed a man skiing in an area posted off-limits due to the slide danger. Charles Beacon was the first Utahn killed by an avalanche during the 1984-85 winter season.

"He was skiing outside the designated resort area, in a no-trespass area," said Weber County Sheriff's Sgt. William Giles.

Giles said Beacon was unconscious when his body was uncovered about 30 minutes after he was buried by the avalanche. He was dead on arrival at an Ogden hospital.

Beacon apparently triggered the slide on a steep mountain about two miles from the ski resort. Giles said another skier had already gone down the hill and led rescuers to the site where they found Beacon, under six feet of snow.

Giles said it is a misdemeanor for skiers to enter posted avalanche areas. But he said the resort would have to decide whether to seek trespass charges against Beacon's companion.