

could follow the ridge down into the basin and continue their tour to Dog Lake. On both sides of the northerly-pointing ridge were steep, open slopes. Shaded from the sun the north-east-facing slope to their right looked soft and enticing; however, it was not an option since neither Ogilvie or Sheldon carried any avalanche rescue equipment. As the pair gazed across the tempting slope Ogilvie mentioned that if they were in a larger group and all carried avalanche rescue beacons, he would ski it. But today, lacking rescue equipment and skilled friends, he and Sheldon should follow the ridge down.

The ridge was fairly narrow and neither felt comfortable trying to ski it, so they left their climbing skins on. This allowed them to ski in control straight down the narrow ridge. Travelling one-at-a-time Ogilvie went first and Sheldon followed. As they descended the ridge steepened. On a small and somewhat flat spot on the ridge Ogilvie stopped next to a bushy pine tree. Below him the ridge ended on the steep snow-covered slope. It was the same slope that they did not want to venture onto. Ogilvie figured he was safe next to the tree. Besides being dead center on the ridge, the tree was the only object around that was directly connected to the ground. Ogilvie was troubled, unsure of what to do next and knowing that all too soon Sheldon would be down to his tenuous spot.

Ogilvie was perplexed, but before he could continue pondering their predicament he remembers muttering "Oh sh—!" In the blink of an eye the mountain around him started moving. To his right and left avalanches were running. He glanced up at Sheldon; she was stopped, but snow on both sides of her was moving. She watched the northwest slope slide; he watched the northeast slope. When the snow stopped they were left perched on a narrow peninsula of snow about 12 feet across, but just below Ogilvie the peninsula ended with a 3–4-foot deep fracture line.

Caught off guard by their close call Ogilvie knew he had to do something. He started by apologizing to Sheldon for getting them into this little incident. She was not too bothered by it (Ogilvie attributed that to her inexperience rather than her confidence in his abilities) and took the avalanche in stride. She thought Ogilvie had things under control. It was 1430 and the next decision was an easy one. They chose to retreat.

The pair started side-stepping back up the ridge. Stray cracks and detached blocks littered both sides of the narrow ridge. They faced to the west as they gently climbed; to them this side of the ridge looked to be the most suspect. On this side the fracture line was 3 feet tall, but on the other side it was 4 feet. It was a very tense 15 minutes while they side-stepped up the steepest portion of the ridge, thinking that at any second the snow beneath them might slide. Finally they reached exposed rocks along the ridge and safety. They removed their skis and continued the rest of the climb on foot. Along the way they found a large block of snow with their ski tracks running across the top of it. In another area they found the fracture line had cut through their ski tracks.

Ogilvie wasn't too keen to ski any more slopes, but to get out they had one more suspect slope to cross. In the distance they heard a helicopter, and checking his watch it was starting to get late: 1500 hours. The helicopter was not far away, so Ogilvie decided to try and attract their attention. Waving a ski back and forth it was not long before they were seen. As the helicopter approached, fear returned to Ogilvie about what would they think. He felt the helicopter people might judge Ogilvie and Sheldon to be fools or jerks for triggering an avalanche, or even worse, charge them an exorbitant fee for a short ride back to their car.

The Utah Powderbirds' helicopter hovered over the ridge and dropped off guide Jim Reid about 50 yards away from Ogilvie and Sheldon. When the helicopter flew off the two rushed over to Reid. Instead of a critic Sheldon and Ogilvie were relieved to be met by someone with a warm smile, and soon the helicopter returned to pick up the three.

The ship was low on fuel so instead of going back to their car Ogilvie and Sheldon had to take a side trip to Park West. From there a Powderbird's van drove them and other clients to the main office in Park City. Reid volunteered to drive them back to Sheldon's car after work. It was after dark when they got back to her car.

Sheldon invited Ogilvie back to her parents house for a late dinner and to meet her folks. On the way over Ogilvie got Sheldon to agree to not tell her parents about the day's adventure until later. He wanted to make a good first impression; he did not want to appear "as a jerk who nearly killed their