

Provo Canyon avalanche kills Colo. climber

By **ALEXANDER STOCKS**

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Bridal Veil Falls turned deadly Saturday.

A free-lance photographer was killed when an avalanche swept him and a climbing companion from the summit of "The Fang" near the falls in Provo Canyon.

Doug Hall, 27, who recently moved from Salt Lake City to Silverton, Colo., was ice-climbing with close friend, Scott Lee, when the rushing snow took them on an approximate 250-foot fall at 12:15 p.m., said Lt. Ron Fernstedt, public information officer with the Utah County Sheriff's Department.

Lee, a 25-year-old Salt Lake City resident, was tied to Hall, who was above him on the mountain. Below, another party of three climbers was not touched by the avalanche as it passed overhead.

Fernstedt said authorities were notified via cellular phone by one of the witnesses. The three also assisted in the rescue, attempting unsuccessfully to administer CPR on Hall.

The three witnesses also dug partially-buried Lee out of the snow, Fernstedt said. Hall — who

died — was not buried.

Rescuer Jon Allred, 37, of West Valley City, said by telephone Saturday evening that his party would have been ahead of Hall and Lee at the top of the mountain if they hadn't taken a wrong turn. After it was over, he said, his group heard cries for help below.

"Really, it should have been us," he said. "It's incredible that Scott Lee lived."

Allred said the avalanche was accompanied by howling winds and "was like being next to a jet airplane." In the future, he said, "I'm going to pay a little more attention to the weather."

Lee was reported to be in fair condition at Utah Valley Regional Medical Center Saturday evening with mostly internal injuries.

"He's pretty lucky ... he's fine," said girlfriend AnnDee Bennett from UVRMC.

Bennett, 24, of Salt Lake City, said Lee's face and body were badly bruised and that he suffered from a broken nose and bruised lungs.

She said her boyfriend — who

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broke his neck last year in a skiing accident — had been awake for awhile and talked to her about the accident. "He said he looked up and all of a sudden it was black."

Lee's "best-friend" Hall was in town for a ski-trade show at Solitude, Bennett said. The two, who met through climbing acquaintances about three years ago, were out on a pleasure climb.

Hall, a semi-pro climber, was sponsored by outdoor companies Black Diamond Equipment in Salt Lake City and North Face. He also did photography for climbing magazines, she said.

Along with Allred, the two others who assisted in the rescue were Brent Butterfield, 37, and Richard Cox, 39, both of Sandy.

Provo Canyon was closed as crews removed snow from the road

and reopened around 6:30 p.m. Saturday.

A 4 p.m. avalanche in American Fork Canyon Saturday closed state road 92 indefinitely. A Utah Highway Patrol dispatcher said no injuries had been reported.

Another avalanche near the Butler Fork area of Big Cottonwood Canyon, about 20 miles southeast of Salt Lake City, also injured a Sandy woman.

Salt Lake County sheriff's Sgt. Lane Larkin said Camille Coyle, 22, and her cousin, Leslie Post, 20, Sandy, were snowshoeing about 12:30 p.m. when an avalanche carried Coyle about 20 feet down a hill and into a ravine.

She was buried under about eight feet of snow, Larkin said, but was left with an air pocket. The avalanche missed her cousin, who ran into several cross-country skiers while trying to dig Coyle out from the ravine.

Eventually, the skiers found her,

and a motorist telephoned for help. Coyle was flown by medical helicopter to Alta View Hospital where she was listed in stable condition, a nursing supervisor said.

Larkin said Coyle sustained only minor injuries. "She's got a lot of moxie," he said.

A third avalanche near Ogden, about 35 miles north of Salt Lake City, forced the closure of two ski resorts. No injuries were reported.

That avalanche swept across the North Ogden Divide Road at about 5 p.m. Weber County Road Administrator Kelly Hipwell said the slide was about a half mile long and 18 feet wide in some places.

With winds gusting up to 50 mph and blowing snow, visibility at Snowbasin and Powder Mountain ski resorts had been reduced to zero, forcing the closure of both recreation areas. The Ogden road also was closed.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.