

AVALANCHE CLAIMS LIFE OF SKI

PATROLMAN: Thursday, during a cross-country skiing outing with friends, Brian Roust, 29, died after being buried by an avalanche. Roust was a ski patrol foreman from The Canyons ski resort and was skiing with friends about 32 miles east of Park City and 17 miles east of Kamas. Other skiers were able to dig Roust out of about four feet of snow in just over 15 minutes, but by the time paramedic Marc West was lowered down to the scene Roust did not have a pulse. He died from massive head and neck trauma, not from suffocation, West said.

Avalanche Victim Was Expert Skier, Familiar With Hazards of Mountains

BY ELIZABETH NEFF

THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

A backcountry skier killed in an avalanche in Summit County Thursday has been identified as Brian Roust, a 29-year-old ski patrol foreman from The Canyons ski resort.

Friends and co-workers say Roust enjoyed the outdoors and was an expert skier by all accounts. Roust had served on the ski patrol at The Canyons for the past four years and had spent two more at other Park City resorts.

Roust, a friend, and his two dogs were wearing locator beacons when they were hit by an avalanche just before 2 p.m.

Thursday on the privately owned Thousand Peaks Ranch some 30 miles away from Park City.

Other skiers were able to dig him out of 4-foot deep snow in about 15 minutes, but Roust had succumbed to massive

trauma to his head and neck in the avalanche.

"Brian was an amazing skier and he's always touring in the back country, always taking his dogs out with him," said friend and co-worker Jake Hutchinson, 29. "This is an area Brian was quite familiar with. I think there are always risks when you go into the mountains, and I think Brian knew those risks well and how to minimize them."

His death is a reminder of dangerous ski conditions. Hutchinson described Roust, who is from the East Coast, as a tall, lean and strong skier with great stamina and a great respect for the outdoors.

The two often worked avalanche control together at the resort. Roust also worked as a forest service ranger during the summer months.

"It was always all you could do to keep up with him," he said.

Roust leaves behind a wife. One of the dogs was also killed in the avalanche.

The Utah Avalanche Forecast Center continued its warning of "considerable danger" to skiers in the Salt Lake City and Park City areas Friday.

"You do this long enough, and we all know someone who has been hurt or killed either climbing or skiing in the back country," Hutchinson said. "It's one of those things you have to keep in your mind when you go out there and try to be safe."

Two groups of skiers were in the bowl where the slide occurred. Early in the afternoon, there was an avalanche that did not hit anybody, but a second slide occurred and hit Roust.

Intermountain Health Care's LifeFlight, a helicopter equipped with a hoist that lowers paramedics to the scene of a mountain accident, was used.