

Avalanche Incident near Mt Baker Ski Area

Tuesday, November 08, 2005

Preliminary Report

Location of incident—Near Chair #6 Mt Baker, OB within area

Number in party—2; 1 caught and totally buried. Found by beacon within ~15 minutes

Type of activity—snowboard

Elevation—approx 5000 ft

Aspect—NA

Slope angle—NA

Preliminary Avalanche classification—SS-AR-R2-D2

Other avalanche information: Soft slab running into terrain trap.

Rescuer narrative:

well today was a wild day!! Me and some buddies skipped out of class to make it for opening day. Me (brad) and my buddy phil had an interesting experience our first run. here is what phil wrote up about it from the tgr forums <http://tetongravity.com/forums/showthread.php?t=38862>

here is the story

avi # 2 baker

My buddy Brad and I were about to ski this one run a little ob of chair #6 i think it was when we see this one guy screaming and yelling frantically. Brad goes down to check it out and yells back at me that we have a burial. The guy was digging around frantically with his snowboard which gave us the indication that neither of them had transceivers. fortunatley they did, however either this guy was in a daze or he didnt know how to use his equipment. brad took charge as group leader and after wading in 8 foot snow we were able to locate him with a probe after about 10 minutes. he was 8 feet buried according to the probe. as we dug at about 6 feeet we sawa a hand and as soon as that was uncovered it the hand started frantically waving. thank god for we knew the guy was alive. however we tried yelling at him with no avail to stop as to conserve his engery. we got his face uncovered at about 15minutes and he was alirght. crazy sequence. brad and i have done a lot of training but never been involved in an avi. the guy at first was so stoked to be out, then started crying for about 5 minutes then got stoked again and hugged us both real hard and then started crying again for another 5 minutes. he said while he was under he was making amends, wanted to tell his parents that he loved them and he said that when my probe hit his teeth it was the happiest moment of his life.

needless to say after all that we were in an avi runout and it was another 25 minutes of hell of getting out of there safely.

brad and i are happy that we are 1-0 for pulling out victims alive but never in hell want to go through it again.

after we were shook up and just went and relfected in the lodge for about an hour before deciding to make some turns again.

even though we pulled the guy out alive we made a lot of stupid mistakes most likey because it was so early in the season. we learned a lot about the power of the mountains and are truley humbled. we are going to practice a hell of a lot more before we go out again.

landings are overrated