

Stephane Brosse - Obituary

Contributed by Sarah Tory

Renowned French ski mountaineer, Stéphane Brosse, 41, died Sunday during an attempt to traverse the Mont Blanc Massif. Brosse fell 600 meters when a cornice collapsed beneath him on the Aiguille d'Argentiere (3900m).
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Born in Savoie, France, Brosse started ski mountaineering in 1990 and went on to become one of the most accomplished ski mountaineering racers of all time. He was appointed to the French National team in 1996 and has won every prestigious ski mountaineering title possible, including the Pierra Menta and the Patrouille des Glaciers.

In 2007 Brosse, along with Pierre Ginoux, set the ski mountaineering record for Mont Blanc in 5:15:47. Since 2003 he and Lionel Bonnel also held the Haute Route speed record when they completed the traverse between Chamonix and Zermatt in 21 hours 11 minutes.

Brosse and friend, Kilian Jornet, began their journey in Les Contamines, France at 1:00am on Saturday, June 16th, and had hoped to arrive in Champex, Switzerland around 9:00pm the same day. The two men were accompanied by Sebastian Montaz and Bastien Fleury who were documenting the event. Bad conditions and high avalanche risk hindered their progress so the pair chose to spend the night at the Couvercle Hut after successfully traversing the Domes de Miage, the Bionnassay and the Mont Blanc.

The accident occurred shortly before 11 am on Sunday morning while Brosse was walking along a ridge to reach the Barbey couloir enroute to the summit of the Aiguille D'Argentiere. A snow cornice gave way beneath him and he fell 600 metres to his death. Emergency rescue personnel arrived within an hour, but Brosse was pronounced dead at the scene.

For Brosse, enjoyment was paramount in all his mountaineering endeavors. He writes on the Millet blog, "It took us about 10 hours 30 minutes for this superb crossing, but our objective was not to break a record but simply share some quality time with friends in the mountains." He documented these and other crossings in his "Just Follow Me" segments on the Millet website.

Brosse will be remembered for his many accomplishments and for his love of the mountains. He leaves behind a wife and two children.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Competitions:

Winner of the Pierra-Menta : 2001, 2005 and 2006

Winner of the Patrouille des Glaciers : 2004 and 2006

Winner at Trofeo Mezzalama : 2005

World champion in individual 2002

World champion in relay 2004

World champion in team 2006
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