

(Right) All the hardware needed for climbing and roping had to be carried with the soldier; it was issued as required, and then returned to stores. Shown here are: Two ice hammers (*Eishammer*), one marked 'GJR137' on the handle; note the varying shapes of the heads, although their purpose is the same. Several Italian-issue and many civilian items found their way into German use. Pitons, for horizontal (left) and vertical cracks (right), the former on an original *karabiner*. Ice pins (centre) had long screw heads for anchoring ropes to ice.



(Left) Three original examples of the several types of ropes issued; from top to bottom, red rope for avalanche rescues, the general issue rope with green flecking, and plain rope. A list of the equipment required by a two-man rope team for a difficult climb was listed in one manual as follows: 1 mountaineering rope (10mm × 40m), 1 climbing

[piton] hammer, 3 pitons for horizontal cracks, 1 piton for vertical cracks 1 ring piton, 1 wafer piton, 4 karabiners, 2 pairs of climbing shoes, 2 long cord slings (5mm × 2.5m), 1 short cord sling (5mm × 1.5m), 2 first-aid packets, 1 small backpack, 1 prismatic compass, map and guide, 1 electric flashlight, 1 altimeter.

(Right) Crampons were strap-on spikes for ice climbing. The larger ones, as used by the Hoch-Gebirgsjäger, came in 10- and 12-spike size for the entire foot; the smaller four-spike version was for the front sole only. They were

retained by a single canvas strap laced through metal rings on the sides, and a metal toe strap. A canvas bag with a metal protective plate in the base was provided for carrying the larger crampons.



Climbing equipment

An essential piece of equipment for climbing was the ice pick (*Eispickel*), used for breaking ice, removing loose rock and providing leverage when climbing steep inclines. They consisted of a steel head on a wooden shaft, with a square-section steel spike protruding from a ferrule. Around the handle, retained by a metal stud low on the tapering shaft, was a movable ring with a tough webbing wrist strap, generally in olive-drab or natural off-white with a pair of fine red stripes. The most famous manufacturer was the company Stubai, who also made items such as pitons and crampons. Apart from their maker's mark picks were usually stamped by the Waffenamt on the head and/or the handle.

(Right & below) Two types of pick bearing the diamond-shaped Stubai maker's mark, the longer one with a mattock-type blade and the shorter with a hammer head for driving pitons. Both types came with a leather protective cover (bottom). The longer pick illustrated is stamped on the shaft to 'GJR 137' (bottom

right); quantities of climbing gear were abandoned by this regiment when 2. Gebirgs Division left Norway in late 1944 after retreating from Finland, and have subsequently appeared on the collectors' market after being disposed of by the Norwegian Home Guard.

