



AAC Publications

Fall on Rock, Belay Device Compromised

Colorado, Eldorado Canyon State Park, Redgarden Wall

On March 31 a male climber had led the fourth pitch of Rewritten (5.7) and was belaying his male partner up the pitch. The second was only about 10 feet from the top of the pitch when he slipped and fell. The lead climber lost control of his belay device (Trango Cinch), and his partner fell as far as 90 feet before the lead climber was able to stop the second's fall. The lead climber suffered rope burns to both hands. The second sustained a sprained ankle and contusions from hitting the rock. Two nearby climbers helped the two injured climbers get to the ground. They walked out and drove themselves to an urgent-care facility, where they were treated and released.

Analysis

It is likely that either the Cinch was loaded incorrectly or the configuration of the leader's belay setup (possibly in combination with being pulled into the rock) prevented the Cinch from moving into a locked position. (Source: Steve Muehlhauser, Park Ranger, Eldorado Canyon State Park.)

Images

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