



AAC Publications

Fall on Rock - Tripped over Fixed Line

California, San Jacinto Wilderness, Idyllwild, Suicide Rock

On July 24, Karen Gose (27) died of injuries sustained while demonstrating climbing and rappelling techniques on the face of Suicide Rock. Gose, a counselor with a Girl Scout troop, fell 30 feet onto a rock ledge during a rappelling demonstration. CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department responded and lowered a medic to the rock ledge. He attended to the woman and prepared her for a helicopter hoist. She complained of difficulty breathing and was thought to have a broken hip and possible rib damage. At 2:50 p.m. she was hoisted into the helicopter. At 3:04 p.m., attending personnel transferred Gose into a Mercy Air helicopter for transport to Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs. She died en route.

Analysis

Along the base of the Weeping Wall, a ledge runs from left to the right and curves upward toward the base of the left-facing dihedral forming the right side of the Weeping Wall. Gose apparently had a fixed line along this ledge. As one moves leftward along this ledge (toward Bye Gully), the drop-off below gradually increases, though never more than about 30 feet. She apparently had rappelled from the Surprise anchors to this ledge, and as she was unclipping from the rope she tripped over the fixed line, going over the drop-off below.

Not a rappel rigging failure, nor an anchor failure. Simply a very tragic accident. (Source: Edited by Beth Shilliday from a report on Supertopo.com.)

Images

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