



AAC Publications

Fall on Rock, Inadequate Protection at Cliff Top

Maine, Camden Hills State Park, Mt. Megunticook, Maiden Cliff

Maria Millard (28) was climbing with friends Sigrid Coffin and John Cronin. Moments before she was going to rappel from the top of a climb, her partners recalled her saying, "I'm off belay, I'm safe." She then fell an estimated 65 feet. Julie Libby of Camden First Aid, which assisted at the scene, said she believes Millard landed on her shoulder on small rocks and hard-packed soil. "It seemed like the brunt of it was on her shoulder and the side of her face," she said. Partner John Cronin said he thought Millard may have lost consciousness for about 30 seconds, but Libby said the woman was conscious during the half-hour it took to lower her down the mountain, and she was speaking coherently, suggesting she did not sustain a serious head injury. She was wearing a helmet. (Source: Edited from an article in Bangor Daily News , October 12, 2012, by Tom Groening.)

Analysis

Millard is fortunate in terms of the level of injuries she sustained after a long fall. It would seem that her category of cause has to do with switching from being on belay to preparing for a rappel at the top of a climb. This can be a vulnerable time, but one can secure to an anchor with a sling while setting up for a rappel. (Source: Jed Williamson.)

Images

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