



AAC Publications

Fall on Rock, Free Solo Climbing, Off Route

Colorado, Montrose, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

On July 10 the body of Andrew M. Barnes (27) was found at the base of the Painted Wall below Serpent Point. Based on evidence found at the scene, and also from talking to his friends and climbing partners, investigators believe he was attempting to free solo the Southern Arête (5.10 R). However, his body was located a few hundred feet up-river from the actual Southern Arête route. Investigators found a handwritten topo of the Southern Arête in his vehicle and have reason to believe he did not have another copy with him. They believe he got off route at some point and fell. No climbing gear other than his climbing shoes and a chalk bag were found.

Analysis

The Black Canyon is notorious for difficult routefinding as well as loose rock. This route faces south, making it quite hot in July. (Source: Matt Abraham, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.)

Images

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