



## AAC Publications

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### **Rappel Error/Failure**

Canada, Alberta, Grassl Lakes, Fiberglass Undies

The climber had prepared to rappel from the top of a sport route. As the rappeller descended she removed the upper three quickdraws. Shortly after that, the climber fell to the ground and landed on her back. It was noted that the rope ends were uneven. One rope end was on the ground, and the other was six to eight meters up. There was no knot in either strand. As the upper end of the rope passed through the rappel device, gravity took over and the rappeller fell.

Other climbers in the area had medical training and immediately began first aid. They also contacted EMS, which was able to attend the scene on foot. Meanwhile, a heli-sling operation was initiated for evacuation of the victim. The climber was slung to EMS, and the patient then carried to the hospital. It was reported that the victim sustained a fracture.

### **Analysis**

It is assumed that the rappeller did not utilize a safety or backup knot (autoblock, prusik, etc.), nor were stopper knots tied into the ends of the rappel lines. As well, no helmet was worn. Had the climber communicated with the people on the ground, the misalignment of the rope would have been brought to her attention.

**Images**

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