



AAC Publications

Rappel Error – Uneven Ropes, Distraction

Colorado, Garden of the Gods

On June 23, two friends and I (Wesley Hartman, 17) were climbing on the east side of Kindergarten Rock. I climbed what I believe was a 5.10 with a safe belay from my partner Trey. When I got to the top I was planning to clean the route and rappel down. We could see weather coming, so I was trying to be quick but not recklessly fast. On the ground my partners were trying to gather up their gear and were not paying much attention to me. I tethered in and ran the rope through the anchors, but while lowering one end to the ground I was simply unobservant and did not see that it had not reached the ground. I clipped in to my belay device (ATC) and began to rappel down, and when I reached the end that was not on the ground it slipped through the belay device and I fell about 40 feet. I landed on my left side and dug my elbow into the ground, leaving a gash to the bone.

Analysis

Have your partner watch you clean the climb. Tie safety knots in the rope ends. Wear a helmet (although I did not hit my head directly). (Source: Wesley Hartman.)

Images



Video capture of Wesley Hartman rescue at Garden of the Gods, Colorado.

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