



AAC Publications

Rockfall – Poor Position

California, Mt. Shasta, Wintun Route

On July 29 a male climber (58) was descending the Wintun Route when he was hit by rockfall at 11,700 feet. The climber fractured his femur and arm. There was also bruising to his hip. Nick Meyers was notified at about 4:30 p.m. A California Highway Patrol helicopter was requested for evacuation, which was accomplished by hoisting the injured climber using a screamer suit. The hoist occurred at about 5:30 p.m. Rangers aided the rescue over the phone only. (Source: Mt. Shasta Wilderness Climbing Ranger Report, prepared by Nick Meyers.)

ANALYSIS

This climber was quite unlucky. The Wintun Route is relatively mellow and has not had many accidents over the years. Since it's not very steep, rockfall is uncommon. The group was led by experienced guides. It's likely that a single, basketball-size rock released from nearly 1,000 feet above and impacted the climber, breaking his leg and arm. The group could have stuck closer to the ridgeline. This would not have made travel much more difficult and likely would have prevented this accident. Being off the ridgeline, they were more exposed to falling objects. But, again, this was a very unlucky incident. (Source: Nick Meyers, Mt. Shasta Climbing Ranger.)

Images

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