



## AAC Publications

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### **Fall on Rock – Inadequate Belay**

South Dakota, Victoria Canyon, Foot Fist Way

**Jimmy Burckhard, 31, was climbing the bolted route Foot Fist Way (5.13a) in a limestone canyon southwest of Rapid City on September 26.** He had previously worked on the route a couple of weeks earlier. On this day he climbed partway up the route, yelled “take,” and his belayer held him for a rest. He continued up the climb and then, at about 70 feet, near the top of the route, he let go again. He expected to take a short fall, then lower and rest to attempt the redpoint. Instead he plunged toward the ground, impacting on his heels. Burckhard broke both feet, his wrist and thumb, and three vertebrae in his back.

A local climber hiked out of the canyon to a point where he could get cell reception and dialed 911. Responders carried Burckhard out of the canyon to an ambulance.

### **ANALYSIS**

Burckhard was climbing with one of his regular partners, and both men are very experienced climbers. The belayer was using an assisted-braking device, and when Burckhard asked him after the accident what had happened, he responded, “The device failed.” No further information was available. (Source: The Editors.)

## Images

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