



AAC Publications

Fall On Rock - No Protection

New York, Shawangunks, The Trapps, Yellow Wall

Heidi Duarte Wahl, 28, died November 15 after falling to the ground from about 20 feet up Yellow Wall (5.11) at the Trapps. The climber had not placed any protection, which is the norm for the relatively easy but poorly protected start of this route. She appears to have broken her neck in the groundfall and died at the scene or soon afterward. She was wearing a helmet.

ANALYSIS

A Chilean climber living in the United States, Duarte Wahl was highly experienced and skilled. She appears to have slipped on relatively easy ground (approximately 5.7 on a 5.11 climb) before she reached good protection. This tragic accident points up the potentially catastrophic consequences of a short fall onto the ground or a ledge, and thus the need for great care even on terrain that is very easy for the climber. (Source: The Editors.)

Images

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