



AAC Publications

Ground Fall in Smith Rock's Lower Gorge

Oregon, Smith Rock, Lower Gorge

A 37-year-old climber was leading Blood Clot (5.10b) on March 19 when he fell from approximately 15 feet up while attempting to clip his second piece of protection. The climber landed on the ground on his side and fractured his arm.

ANALYSIS

Pulling up rope to clip protection is a hazardous moment in a climb, especially close to the ground, since it adds significant slack to the belay system. If you're feeling insecure on a clipping stance, it's best to seek new holds (sometimes the next handhold up might be better for clipping), reposition your body for better balance, or downclimb to the previous piece or a stance for a rest. This climber was wearing a helmet, which possibly lessened the extent of his injuries. (Source: Deschutes County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue.)

Images

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