



AAC Publications

Fall From Top of Cliff – Inadequate Protection

Minnesota, Taylors Falls

On July 9, a 23-year-old man with about two months of climbing experience was scouting for new climbs at the top of a popular crag called Taylors Falls, one hour north of Minneapolis–Saint Paul. The climber was not wearing a harness, helmet, or any other climbing gear when he slipped and fell about 50 feet to the rocky landing below. The fall was witnessed by some girls who were canoeing on the river nearby. Their counselor hiked to the injured person's location, face down in a rocky crevice. Chisago County emergency services responded, and the person was transported via boat to an ambulance and then flown via helicopter to Regions Hospital in Saint Paul. The climber sustained fractured vertebrae, ribs, skull, and various other bones in the head and face.

ANALYSIS

Though not strictly a “climbing accident,” such falls from the tops of cliffs occur nearly every year, and unfortunately they often are fatal. Slippery grass, moss, and leaves, wet or loose rock, roots, loose soil, and snow or ice can all be slipping or tripping hazards at the tops of cliffs. Whether preparing for a rappel descent, approaching the edge of a cliff to set up a top-rope, or scouting for routes, as in this case, it's best to err on the side of caution and create a temporary anchor to secure your approach to any cliff edge. (Sources: Andrew Rzepka and the Editors.)

Images



Interstate State Park.

Article Details

Author	Andrew Rzepka and the Editors
Publication	ANAM
Volume	11
Issue	72
Page	60
Copyright Date	2019
Article Type	Accident reports