



## AAC Publications

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### **Fall Onto Ledge – Protection Pulled Out**

Connecticut, Ragged Mountain, Main Cliff

**On November 10, in very cold temperatures, Sam Warren (20) and his partner were rock climbing at Main Cliff on Ragged Mountain. Sam, a 5.10 sport climber and beginner trad climber, was attempting to lead Tower Crack (5.7), an offwidth crack in an inside corner. When first climbed in 1935 by Fritz Wiessner, Tower Crack was among the hardest rock climbs in the country. Sam was confident, having previously followed Tower Crack and having led crack climbs of similar difficulty.**

Sam approached the crack by climbing up Wiessner's Slab for about 70 feet to the large horizontal ledge below the upper offwidth corner. He placed a large cam (size unknown) at the bottom of the corner and a number 0.3 Black Diamond Camalot in a crack in a side wall higher up. While attempting to move up the climb, he fell twice onto the small cam without injury. On his third attempt at the crux, he fell again and pulled out the 0.3, hitting a ledge and spraining his left ankle. He and his partner were able to rappel to the ground and hike out. Fortunately, his injuries were minor and he recovered in a few weeks. (Source: Sam Warren.)

### **ANALYSIS**

The piece protecting the crux and keeping the climber from hitting the ledge had shifted and was no longer well positioned. It may have shifted from the prior falls, the climber bumping the piece as he moved past it in bulky wintertime clothing, or due to the use of a short quickdraw. Anytime you fall onto a piece, reassess its placement and ensure it is still good. Micro-cams, like the 0.3 that pulled out, have particularly small margins for error. Rope stretch may have contributed to hitting the ledge, and stretch could have been minimized by making an intermediate belay on the ledge below the crux crack. (Sources: Sam Warren and the Editors.)

**Images**

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