



## AAC Publications

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### **Stranded – Stuck Rappel Rope, No Headlamps**

Utah, Wasatch Range, Big Cottonwood Canyon, Steorts' Ridge

**Salt Lake County Search and Rescue got called out at 9:54 p.m. on May 3 for two climbers (male and female, both 20 years old) near the top of Steorts' Ridge.** The pair had begun climbing the three-pitch 5.6 route around 5:50 p.m. At the top, they traversed down and left to reach the rappel route. (Anchors are in place for three rappels with a single 60-meter rope.) After making the first rappel, the climbers were unable to pull the rope—they had forgotten to untie a stopper knot—and decided to call for help.

A rescue team climbed up an alternative descent route to reach the rappel anchors. The stranded climbers didn't have any light source, and it was difficult to determine exactly where they were on the route in the dark without a visual. However, eventually they were reached and assisted down the route safely. Everyone was off the mountain around 4 a.m. (Source: Salt Lake County Search and Rescue.)

### **ANALYSIS**

The gear packed for any multi-pitch route should include headlamps for each climber, especially when starting a route late in the day. (If you're not carrying a pack, modern lightweight headlamps can easily be clipped to a harness gear loop.) The rappel route for this buttress is notorious for snagging ropes, and there is an alternative descent with just a single rappel that many consider to be easier and safer. A few minutes of online research should be part of the plan before any long climb; the comments sections of online route descriptions often hold useful beta that doesn't appear in guidebooks. (Source: The Editors.)

**Images**

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