



## AAC Publications

---

### **Fall on Rock – Inadequate Protection for Second**

Colorado, Eldorado Canyon, The Bastille

**On September 9 at about 9 a.m., my friend Austin and I set out to climb Werk Supp on the north face of the Bastille.** I led the first pitch (5.8+), placing protection only where I felt that I needed it. The pitch ends by pulling over a slight bulge, protected by a cam, onto a slanted ledge. There is a bolted anchor about 10 feet to the left on this ledge and at a downward angle. I traversed the ledge to belay from this anchor, so I was located slightly lower and far to the left of my last piece of protection.

At the final bulge, Austin removed my last cam and attempted the finishing mantel move for about 10 minutes, then fell off and took a significant pendulum swing onto a rock bulge directly below where I was belaying. We both heard a pop, and Austin yelled that his foot was in intense pain.

I rigged a 3-to-1 assisted haul to bring him up to the belay ledge, so I could inspect his ankle. It had immediately become very swollen, but at the time we only suspected a severe sprain. I lowered Austin directly to the ground and then rappelled to join him. Fortunately, the base of the route is only a short walk from the car. Austin initially chose to rest his ankle for a few days, but eventually decided to get an X-ray, which revealed a shattered right talus and a torn sheath of the peroneus longus and brevis tendons.

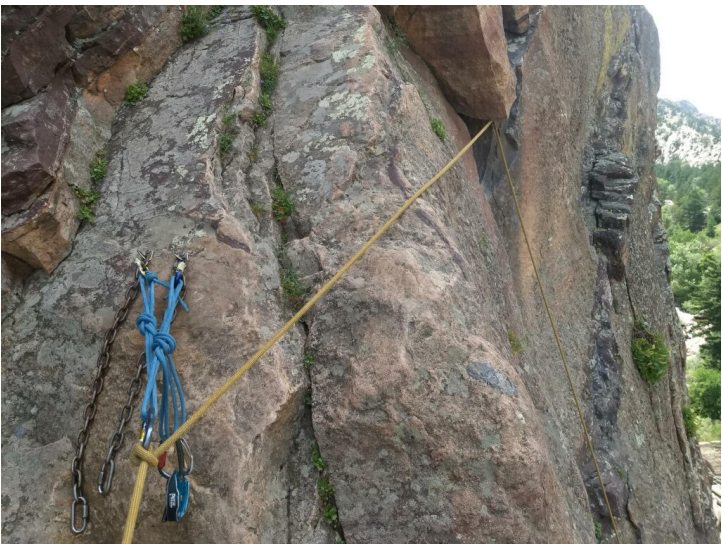
#### **ANALYSIS**

Austin had only climbed outside five times and never on anything this difficult. As I was climbing, I was more focused on protecting the route for me than for the person who would be following. Placing another piece of protection after the final difficult move, before the downward traverse, would have protected the follower from a significant swing. Another option would be to build an anchor directly above the first pitch, rather than using the bolted anchor off to the side. [Editor's Note: Many climbers exit this pitch to the left via a lower traverse, heading more directly to the bolted anchor; this is safer for the second climber.] It's also worth noting that the climber initially only suspected a sprain, but the injury actually involved a fracture that required surgery. Neglecting to seek medical attention for even longer could have led to further complications. (Source: Bill Kinter.)

## Images



Reconstruction of a 3-to-1 haul rigged on the Werk Supp anchor to assist an injured climber to the belay ledge. The Grigri acts as a progress-capture device; a plaquette belay device in guide mode will serve the same purpose.



A rope running over the final section of the first pitch of Werk Supp, with protection placed below the final hard moves of the direct finish. If the second falls after cleaning this piece, he or she will take a hard swinging fall.

## Article Details

Author	Bill Kinter
Publication	ANAM
Volume	12
Issue	73
Page	56
Copyright Date	2020
Article Type	Accident reports