



## AAC Publications

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### Fall onto a Tree Branch

Colorado, Staunton State Park, Tan Corridor

In September, while working on the moves of Ddong Chim! (5.11b), a woman fell partway up this overhanging sport climb. The route begins directly behind a tall conifer, and the woman crashed into a stubby dead branch that points toward the cliff like a dagger. The branch cut a gash in her left buttock that required urgent-care treatment including stitches.

### ANALYSIS

Situational awareness is essential, even on well-protected sport climbs. Though it must have seemed unlikely she would hit this branch, awareness of the hazard might have prompted more caution while working the route and taking falls. [The editor of this publication is intimately familiar with this branch, having swung into it while cleaning the same route; he fended it off with his hand, fortunately suffering only a minor puncture.] Although conscientious route developers attempt to minimize their impact on cliff-side vegetation, this dead branch should be sawn off in cooperation with the staff of this climber-friendly park. (Source: Personal accounts.)

**Images**

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