



## AAC Publications

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### **Lowering Error — Rope Too Short, No Stopper Knot**

Utah, Moab Area, Lower Dakota Crag

**My climbing partner and I went to the Dakota Crags in the La Sal Mountains on October 21. It was a beautiful day for climbing, and we wanted to begin on some easy routes.** We looked at the guidebook as well as a phone app to determine which routes we were looking at. However, additional climbs had been put up since either information source was updated, so I ended up climbing a different route than expected.

The route, Good Times (5.7), was very pleasing. It is a very long route, about 115 feet (35 meters), and my partner's rope is only 60 meters. After I finished the route, I lowered and cleaned the draws. After I took off the second-to-last draw, I heard him curse and then I began to fall.

I fell about 30 feet to the ground, hit a ledge, which broke both of my heels, and then landed on my bum, which broke my tailbone. I then fell back and hit my head on a sharp boulder, as well as my left arm. Luckily, I was wearing a helmet.

It was 3 p.m. and sundown was close to 7 p.m., so we had about four hours to get out. I tried to stand, but I couldn't, and then tried limping with a sturdy stick. I was unable to weight my feet, so I began to crawl. It took me two hours of crawling to reach the truck. Then we had another 45 minutes of driving on bumpy dirt roads back to Moab. Finally, I headed to the hospital. (Source: Kimberly Kelly.)

#### ANALYSIS

The climbers misidentified the route they were on and did not know the route requires a 70-meter rope, which is common for this area. Tying in the second climber or tying a stopper knot in the end of the rope would have prevented the climber from hitting the ground. (Source: The Editors.)

**Images**

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