



## AAC Publications

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### **Fall On Rock – Unroped Scrambling**

Washington, North Cascades National Park, Forbidden Peak

**On August 14, two climbers were attempting to reach the west ridge of Forbidden Peak via the Cat Scratch Gullies.** The two had just switched over to rock shoes and started to travel up a gully unroped when one climber, a 24-year-old male, fell about 60 feet down rocky terrain and into the moat at the base of the gully, sustaining a left lower leg injury.

The climbing partner and a nearby climbing guide assisted the injured climber until National Park Service rangers arrived on scene. Due to the nature of the injury and patient location, a short-haul extraction was performed.

### **ANALYSIS**

This is not the first time an accident has occurred in this area. Climbers attempting this route should be comfortable with route-finding and climbing on 4th-class terrain with limited protection. There are several ways to help prevent falls. Solid movement skills and proper footwear go a long way. In addition, climbers can consider using a running belay or short-pitching in this terrain. (The technique used depends on the climbers' experience and terrain.) When in doubt, while traveling in exposed terrain, consider adding some form of protection. [Editor's Note: See "Know the Ropes: Safer 4th Class in Accidents 2019.]

## Images



View from the helicopter of the incident location.



Approximate location of the moat location where the climber fell into.

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