



AAC Publications

Stranded – Unsure of Descent Route

Colorado, Eldorado Canyon State Park, Redgarden Wall

About 8:20 p.m. on December 4, the Boulder County Sheriff's Office received a phone call from two climbers who were stuck near the top of Redgarden Wall, the highest cliff in Eldorado Canyon. The climbers, who were from Manitou Springs and Fort Collins, had started climbing at 10 a.m. and neared the top at dusk. They were unsure of the route back down from Redgarden, which, depending on the climb, is either by complex scrambling or a series of rappels.

Rocky Mountain Rescue Group arrived on the scene and were able to reach the climbers at 9:40 p.m., after climbing up the East Slabs descent route. Both climbers were assisted down the East Slabs.

Exactly two weeks later, on December 18, the Boulder County Communications Center received a 911 call from two climbers near the top of Redgarden. The pair were stranded, close to hypothermic, and in need of rescue. The climbers, a 28-year-old male and a 30-year-old male, both from Denver, began climbing around 11:30 a.m. As with the prior incident, they did not reach the top until around dusk and were uncertain of the descent route.

Rescuers from the Rocky Mountain Rescue Group climbed the East Slabs and reached the climbers at approximately 9:40 p.m. The two climbers were assisted off the southwest face of Tower One and then down to the road. The climbers were uninjured. The rescue took approximately six hours.

ANALYSIS

Many climbers have been stranded on top of this large, complex formation. For this reason, it's very helpful to climb your first Redgarden route with a partner who knows the descent routes. If that's not possible, thorough research of the descent options is essential, as is an early start and conservative climbing schedule, especially during the short days of winter. See "Know The Ropes" in this edition for more discussion of complex descents. (Sources: Boulder County Sheriff's Office, Boulder Daily Camera.)

Images

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