



AAC Publications

Free Solo Fall

New York, Shawangunks, The Trapps

On September 6, Stephen M. Buda III (56) was killed when he fell from 150 feet up Easy Street, a two-pitch 5.6. He was free soloing when he fell.

According to the Ulster County Sheriff's Office investigation, which included eyewitness accounts, Buda was climbing alone and had "ascended about 150 to 175 feet of the approximately 200-foot section of the climb when he fell." He was pronounced dead at the scene at about 5:30 p.m., deputies said.

ANALYSIS

Buda was a fireman and a very experienced climber. Park rangers and eyewitnesses said Buda slipped at the awkward crux of the route 150 feet up. According to Mountain Project, pitch two (the approximate point at which Buda might have fallen) starts with a "weird/ awkward move" and then traverses on terrain described at times to be "wet and slippery— one of those 'big hands, no feet' traverses." (Sources: Connecticut Post, Mountain Project.)

Images

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