



## AAC Publications

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### **Swinging Leader Fall**

North Carolina, Rumbling Bald, Comatose Area

**Early afternoon on November 14, K. Tumek (31) and his wife were climbing the route Comatose (100', 5.8 trad) with K. leading.** Somewhere on the climb he fell approximately 20 feet and swung into the rock face, injuring his hip and elbow. He was lowered to the ground by his wife. He was wearing a helmet.

The climber was unable to stand or walk out, due to his injury. Local rescuers arrived on the scene a short time later. K. was placed on a backboard and Stokes basket, carried a short distance, loaded into a UTV, driven to the trailhead, and finally transported to Rutherford Hospital. (Source: From a report by park superintendent James Leatherwood.)

### **ANALYSIS**

When leading trad routes, climbers should not only focus their attention on route-finding and secure gear placements, but also assess the trajectory and consequences of a potential fall (the “what if” question). If a fall might result in a swing into a corner or other feature, additional protection or other steps may be required. (Source: The Editors.)

**Images**

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