



AAC Publications

BOULDERING FALL — Missed Pad

Michigan, Keweenaw Peninsula, Cliff Drive

On October 28, Patrick Marx (18) fell while climbing Big Ass Flake (V2) on the secluded basalt outcroppings along Cliff Drive. He wrote *ANAC*, "I was 15 to 18 feet off the ground and I dropped and missed my crash pad. I had a spotter who prevented my head from hitting a rock. But when I landed, I struck my left heel on a tree root next to the wall. I fractured my heel in multiple places.

ANALYSIS

While bouldering falls are usually inconsequential, they are frequent and some lead to injury. Because they usually result in lower-leg injuries and self-rescue is the norm, most bouldering accidents go unreported. Marx's accident is a reminder that the physical cost can be high and it is worth taking thorough precautions. He wrote, "A proper assessment of the landing before climbing would've made the injury avoidable. At the time of the accident, I had only one pad and there was one other person climbing (spotting) with me. If I had to do it over, I would have brought more pads or decided not to climb the route. I base this on the sketchiness of the landing due to the exposed tree root, which would be difficult to cover with a pad. I have essentially made a full recovery now, and I am back to climbing two-footed." (Source: Patrick Marx.)

Images

Article Details

Author	Patrick Marx
Publication	ANAM
Volume	13
Issue	76
Page	54
Copyright Date	2023
Article Type	Accident reports