



AAC Publications

RAPPEL OFF END OF ROPE

Utah, Wasatch Range, Big Cottonwood Canyon

The Salt Lake County Sheriff's Search and Rescue Team (SLCOSAR) was called out at approximately 7:50 p.m. on May 23 for a fallen climber at the Beachball Crag in Big Cottonwood Canyon. The climber, a male in his 20s, had reportedly been climbing with three others and had fallen more than 20 feet after rappelling off the end of his rope. SLCOSAR and United Fire Authority (UFA) packaged the patient and carried him out, and he was transported by a UFA ambulance to a nearby hospital. All teams were off the mountain by 9:30 p.m. via the standard trail to the Dogwood crags.

ANALYSIS

The routes on Beachball Crag are no more than 70 feet high. From the info available, we can assess that the climber either set up the rappel with very uneven rope ends or was climbing with an unusually short rope. Whatever the circumstances, it's a good reminder that when a climber cannot clearly see both ends of the rope on the ground below, it is always advisable to put stopper knots in the ends of the rope to avoid such an incident. (Source: Salt Lake County Sheriff's Search and Rescue.)

Images

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