



AAC Publications

Leader Fall on Rock — Climbing in Hiking Boots

California, South Lake Tahoe, Pie Shop

My name is Mac (13), and on June 4 I was involved in a rescue at Pie Shop. The people on the spot were Steve (71), Angela, my dad, and Dr. Michael. Steve was going to teach Angela about climbing outside.

We got to our climbing spot, and my dad wanted to teach me more about lead belaying using an Ohm (an Edelrid device) because he's so big and fat compared to me. Well, he's not fat, but he's, like, 190 pounds and I'm 100 pounds so the Ohm makes it safer. While I was lowering my dad, we heard a loud thump over on Crepes Corner (5.7), where Steve and Angela were climbing.

At first, we thought it was just a rope falling or maybe a rock, but Steve had fallen. Dr. Michael scrambled up to help. He rappelled with Steve attached to him as my dad did a fireman's belay from the ground. Steve had bloodstains on his hat and face and hands. He looked okay, but he kept repeating himself, so I guess he had a concussion. Because I am a prepared Boy Scout, I actually brought a first aid kit. I can't believe none of these adults brought one.

Steve definitely had a concussion or something because he didn't seem to know what was going on. We decided against walking to the car, so Dr. Michael decided to call 911. When I interviewed him, Steve said:

"I had left my climbing shoes in the car but chose not to hike back down to retrieve them. I convinced myself—because of the ease of the climb and having done it multiple times—that I could lead it in hiking shoes. About two-thirds up the 5.7 climb, I slipped off. The next thing I remember I was rappelling down to Lunch Rock with Dr. Michael helping me, since I had difficulties standing. After 911 was called, the Lake Valley Fire Department responded, as well as a CHP helicopter. By then, I recovered enough to walk down with the firemen's assistance, and I was taken to the ER. I was diagnosed with a mild compression fracture on my T1 vertebra, a mild concussion, and some lacerations."

ANALYSIS

No matter how experienced you are, you can still trip up and make mistakes. Adults are more confident than they should be sometimes. I learned that rule number one is to wear your climbing shoes when you are climbing. Rule number two is to be prepared. Bring a first-aid kit so that if someone falls on their face, you have Band-Aids. Rule number three is to speak up even if you are the newbie. (Source: Mac Miller.)

Images

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