



AAC Publications

Rappel Error at Smith Rock

Oregon, Smith Rock, Rope de Dope Block

On November 24, after climbing Immortal Beloved (5.9), a climber fell about 35 feet to the ground upon unclipping from the anchor. The climber sustained lower leg fractures.

ANALYSIS

The exact error involved in this incident is unknown. Based on the scene after the fall, it appears that while cleaning the route the climber failed to thread his rope through the anchor correctly or inserted the rope strands into his rappel device incorrectly. When rappelling, always test that the system is set up properly by transferring your weight onto the rappel device and ropes before unclipping from the anchor. See "Essentials: Clear Weight Transitions." (Source: Deschutes County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue.)

Images

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