

and rappelled off the end of his rope. He landed at the base of Firepoint, luckily missing the large rocks at the base of the cliff. He sustained a broken left humerus, a bruised lung, several cracked lower vertebrae, and several small cuts.

He was packaged in a litter and carried to the Blue Ridge parkway a short distance away. He was transported to medical facilities in Johnson City, TN, via helicopter.

Analysis

It is not known whether the impending thunderstorm may have hastened the descent. Climbers should take precautionary measures when rappelling by utilizing some type of safeguard or “backup.” Always tie a knot at the rope end; use a prusik or other backup (kleimheist knot, autoblock, etc); and be familiar with your surroundings. (Source: Randy Franklin)

FALL ON ROCK, EXCEEDING ABILITIES, FAILURE TO FOLLOW ROUTE, NO HARD HAT

North Carolina, Looking Glass Rock, Bloody Crack

In late November, two people began climbing Bloody Crack (5.8), a popular rock climb on the south side of Looking Glass. The first pitch to Stage Ledge was completed without incident. One of the climbers was leading the second pitch when he moved off route (due to wet rock on the face) onto the arete. He had placed four or five pieces of protection in the main crack. However, he was unable to place gear on the arete. He climbed to a point approximately 20 feet above his last piece when he fell. His fall was partially broken by the tree at the base of the pitch. He landed in a crack on Stage Ledge (on his back), suffering numerous lacerations and a concussion. He was not wearing a helmet. The backpack he was wearing absorbed the majority of the impact, sparing him further head injury.

Brevard Rescue Squad and EMS arrived on the scene, stabilized the patient and executed a litter lower. The patient was carried out, assisted by Job Corps personnel, and transported to Transylvania County Hospital.

Analysis

This climber moved off route because of wet rock. With more experience he may have been able to negotiate the wet rock or the new terrain. Wearing a helmet could have minimized head injury. (Source: Bill Zink)

FALLING ROCK – BLOCK PULLED OFF

New Mexico, Sandia Mountain Wilderness, Hail Peak

After breakfast and coffee, Sinjin Eberle and I set out to have a nice day for a multi pitch 5.8 climb of Hail Peak on May 9, Mother’s Day. The weather was warm and stable with a storm possibly moving in later that evening. The Sandias typically keep many climbers away because of the long approach times and thick raspberry and oak groves. We got an early start and planned to be off the climb by mid-afternoon with only a moderate pace.

As many climbers in the Sandias can attest, the old granite is great to climb, but the amount of loose rock is a major drawback, especially on approaches to many areas. The primitive approach to Hail Peak is no exception, with a two-