

have been twice measured on the Longs Peak summit at 220 mph. It should also be mentioned that Dreher was wearing a 70-pound pack when picked up by the wind! Dreher and Williamson showed good judgment in aborting their summit attempt in these conditions. (Source: Jim Detterline and Mark Magnuson, NPS Rangers, RMNP)

FALL ON ROCK, NO HARD HAT, EXCEEDING ABILITIES

Colorado, Boulder Canyon, Happy Hour Crag

On February 26, while lead climbing in Boulder Canyon with two relatively inexperienced members in my group, I lent my helmet to Rob, the least experienced person in our group (who had never climbed outdoors before). Darin, our most experienced climber, was climbing a 5.8-5.9 buttress immediately west of our established position, while being belayed by Dave (who had a great deal of experience in the gym, but likewise had never been outdoors before). Lance belayed me on a route that looked like it might have been 5.6-soft 5.7. Rob was going to top-rope the route. For the first 80 feet of the route, I placed pro approximately every 10 to 15 feet. The route arced from left to right. My final pro placement was a threaded sling through a pothole, from which I had a 30-foot traverse to the natural anchor. Within 10 feet of the anchor, I slipped and fell about 25-30 feet, hitting the top of my head on the rock face. Lance made a sure-handed catch, but I had lacerated my scalp. The copious blood flow impressed upon me the necessity of being examined by a medical professional. Lance accompanied me during the short down-climb/rappel and drove me to the Boulder Community Hospital, where I received seven stitches to close the laceration on my scalp.

Analysis

I clearly should have worn my helmet, especially while on lead. My reason for leaving my helmet with Rob (so he might climb with a greater feeling of security) demonstrates that I began the climb without a clear idea of whether the second was going to follow me up to the natural anchor, from which we would continue up, or if he was merely going to top-rope. I had obviously underestimated the difficulty of the route and/or overestimated my own ability. Further, the arcing route I took made the problem of rope drag a factor, which may or may not have contributed to me falling in the first place.

You can be certain that I will never again climb, let alone lead, without wearing my helmet. (Source: Jon Canon - 28)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE TIE-IN FOR LOWERING, NO HARD HAT

Colorado, Clear Creek Canyon, Cat Slab

On April 24, Heather Lower (25) died in Clear Creek Canyon. She was climbing west of Tunnel 5. (A few areas there include: Cat Slab, Dog House, Primo Wall, and Crystal Tower.) She was with eight others. She fell 100-125 feet. She was not wearing a helmet. She was pronounced dead at the scene.

Analysis

She was at Cat Slab, a new 5.4-5.10 bolted slab where folks often anchor themselves and thread the anchors to lower/rap. She was about to be lowered and