

Analysis

Proper assessment of the fall line within a couloir can reduce the risk of injury to a climber. Kraus may have been able to avoid injury from ice fall had he and his partner chosen a belay stance out of the fall line of climbers above.

(Editor's Note: All the reports from Denali National Park were edited by Daryl Miller, South District Chief Ranger. The reports he worked from were written by Rangers Roger Robinson, Kevin Moore, and others.)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE PROTECTION, NO HARD HAT

Arkansas, Sam's Throne

On March 10, a climber (36) was looking at a climb from the top of a route, but he was not tied in. He fell 50 to 60 feet and suffered major head injuries, fractures, and other trauma. He was assisted by other climbers, who transported him via backboard to a helicopter called to the scene. (Source: Anonymous)

Analysis

Each year there are at least a few reports of this kind of accident—both on rock and ice cliffs. The first order of business one should attend to for these top rope situations is setting up an anchor. Hard hats are a good idea for people at the bottom of the cliff or while climbing—to do the job they are made for, which is to protect one's head from falling rocks or objects. In this particular case, a hard hat would not have done much good. (Source: Jed Williamson)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE PROTECTION, CLIMBING UNROPE, NO HARD HAT

Arizona, Oak Creek Overlook, Griffio

On September 28, a rock-climbing teacher died after falling more than 60 feet from a route called Griffio (5.6) at the Oak Creek Overlook on Highway 89A South of Flagstaff.

According to the Highlands Fire Department, Glennon Wessellman (34), of Cottonwood, sustained massive injuries in the fall, which happened just before 11:00 a.m. Rescue crews hiked to him, and it took about 20 minutes to get Wessellman moved to an awaiting Department of Public Safety helicopter because of the terrain. He was then flown to Flagstaff Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead.

Sgt. Randy Service of the Coconino County Sheriff's Office said Wessellman was a teacher at a Cottonwood charter school. At the time of his fall, he was instructing five students, ages 15 to 19, on how to rock climb.

He was setting an anchor into the rock wall when he lost his balance and fell, Service said. He was not wearing a helmet or a safety rope at the time of the fall. (Source: *Arizona Daily Sun*, September 29, 2001)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE BELAY ANCHOR

Arizona, Superior, Queen Creek

I was climbing in Atlantis, Queen Creek, on a 5.10, which really has no belay spot directly below the climb, so my belayer set up on the other side of the creek bed, about seven meters away from the wall I was to climb on. All was