

that were worse than expected. I don't know what you can do to change anything, since the document is already in print, but I could not, in good conscience, let these thoughts go unsaid."

As I pointed out to Mr. Lee, we are only as good as the information we receive, so sending in first-hand accounts is the best way to go.)

FALL OR SLIP ON ROCK, PROTECTION PULLED OUT

Tennessee, Tennessee Wall, Blood-on-the-Rocks

Fellow climbers and rescue crews evacuated an injured climber on January 25 at the Tennessee Wall after she took a serious leader fall.

Jesse (22) was leading Blood on the Rocks (5.10b/c) in the north section of T-Wall. Witnesses said three or four pieces of gear pulled when she fell, causing her to fall to the ground—about 30-35 feet. The route is an 85-foot, single-pitch.

She had previously fallen on a BD C3 #1 and it held fine. She attempted the move again and fell, this time with devastating results when the cams pulled out of the crack. However, there was enough tension on each piece to slow her down. Landing on her back resulted in a broken pelvis, wrist, and C2 vertebrae.

Analysis

Always check your gear placements after a fall. Falls move gear and can weaken their position. (Source: From a post on Mountain Project and Aram Attarian)

FALL ON ROCK, LOWERING ERROR – ROPE (TOO SHORT) SLIPPED THROUGH BELAY DEVICE (GRIGRI)

Utah, Pine Creek Canyon

On May 9th, rescuers responded to a climbing accident near the Zion-Mount Carmel Tunnel. A 27-year-old man was on a route known as "Feast of Snakes," which is located on the Pine Creek Canyon wall directly below the Zion-Mount Carmel Tunnel, when the fall occurred.

He had placed an anchor at the top of the route and was cleaning gear while being lowered by his partner, who was using a Grigri, at the bottom of the climb. The rope was too short for the slingshot belay technique and the end of the rope went through the Grigri, dropping the climber 20 feet onto his neck and back on a ledge below the route.

Due to the steep terrain and loose footing, along with the mechanism of injury, rescuers called for a helicopter to perform a winch extrication. The rescuers had to do a technical lowering first to move the climber from the ledge. An additional low-angle technical raising, followed by a low-angle lowering, were performed before carrying the patient to an open area away from the canyon walls. A Blackhawk from Nellis Air Force Base extricated

the man and flew him to a waiting ambulance at the Coal Pits heli-spot. He was then taken to Dixie Regional Medical Center, where he was diagnosed with C-1, T-1, and T-5 fractures along with a lacerated spleen. About 25 park personnel were involved in the rescue. (Source: From a report by Therese Picard on the NPS Morning Report, May 14, 2009)

Analysis

This is one of several incidents like this during 2009—and for the last several years. It is hard to understand why so many climbers do not have the proper length rope for these situations.

There are those who believe that the Grigri is designed in such a way that it will lock off under these conditions. But obviously that is not so. It is likely that rather than using friction by a good angle with the brake hand, the belayer was using the “clutch” to regulate the speed. This is a common error with the Grigri. (Source: Jed Williamson)

FALL ON ROCK, PROTECTION PULLED OUT

Utah, Big Cottonwood Canyon, Mr. Sandman

A rock climber suffered serious injuries when he fell in Big Cottonwood Canyon on August 4. The 29-year-old man was backing off a route called Mr. Sandman in the Stairs Gulch area, located off Big Cottonwood Canyon Road, when an anchor came out. He fell about 30 feet and landed feet-first on a rock outcropping, apparently breaking both ankles.

Search and rescue crews navigated the very steep, rocky terrain to reach the man, and brought him to an ambulance about two hours after arriving. He was taken to Intermountain Medical Center in Murray. (Source: *The Salt Lake Tribune*, August 5, 2009, and a posting on Mountain Project)

FALLING ICE – GAVE WAY, FALL ON ICE, CLIMBING UNROPED

Utah, Little Cottonwood Canyon, Great White Icicle

On December 31, Gene Rawson (37), a solo ice climber, was near the top of the final pitch of the Great White Icicle. Rawson was waiting for another climber to complete the pitch. Rawson felt he had a firm hold in the ice with his ax. As he was waiting, one of his legs broke through the ice. He shifted weight onto his other foot to pull his leg out when the entire ice section gave way and he fell approximately 300 feet. He reported positive loss of consciousness for unknown length of time and severe left hip pain.

Other climbers in the area witnessed the fall and assisted with the rescue. The Salt Lake County Fire Department paramedics responded with medics from the Little Cottonwood Canyon Fire Station. A backboard was hauled up using a rope system through an anchor set up by the climbers responding to the accident.

Life Flight team assessment: Salt Lake County Sheriff Department