

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE PROTECTION

New York, Adirondacks

On July 3, 1983, Lee Fowler (32) and Andrew Metz (22) were killed when they fell about 90 meters from Wallface in the Adirondacks.

Fowler was six to eight meters above Metz, with no protection in, when he fell, pulling both Metz and his protection from the belay position. (Source: Discussion between the Editor and Jim Wagoner, Adirondack climber and rescue team member)

Analysis

Metz used a medium-size Friend to anchor himself to his belay position. When Fowler, who weighed close to 100 kg, fell, the force of pull on the Friend was straight out. The reasons Fowler might not have placed protection are: first, that there probably were no appropriate cracks, and second, that the section of the pitch he was on is not particularly difficult. The major problem was using only one anchor for the belayer, which was compounded by the weight of the climber and the diminished capability a Friend has for taking shock loads. (Sources: David Ames, Adirondack Ranger, and discussion between Editor and Jim Wagoner)

FALL ON ROCK

New York, Shawangunks

A man (22) was leading the climb, Harvard (5.2), when he fell on the first pitch, about five meters up. He hit the ground, cutting his head. (Source: Brad Snyder)

Analysis

On the start of easy climbs, even for beginners, the idea of putting protection in does not usually come to mind. (Source: J. Williamson)

FALL ON ROCK, FAILURE OF PROTECTION

New York, Shawangunks

A man (30) was leading the top pitch of Horseman (5.5) when he fell about 35 meters because all the protection he had placed pulled out. A fixed pin he had clipped into held, and this saved him from a longer fall. (Source: Brad Snyder)

HEAT EXHAUSTION

New York, Shawangunks

A man (29) was leading the first pitch of Coexistence (5.10) on a hot summer day when he threw up and fainted. He was roped, and so was lowered to the ground, sprinkled, and sent to Coxing to soak. (Source: Brad Snyder)

(Editor's Note: It is not known whether the heat of the day or the prospect of the difficult climb caused this climber's problem.)