

ledge at the bottom). I believe my left foot slipped—though I only remember hitting the ground. The Friend pulled out. I landed on my back and hit my head. I was littered off the edge. My husband is a paramedic and directed the rescue as well as administered first aid. I went to Speare Hospital in Plymouth and was transferred to Lakes Region General Hospital. My injuries included cracked ribs (back), cracked left humerus, sprained ankle, severely broken right hand which was operated on and put back together with three screws. I had lots of typical Rumney abrasions all over my body and minor bleeds in my brain (detected on the CAT scan).

Analysis

I would have been dead if I didn't have my helmet on. It's hard to know exactly what happened. I was not climbing above my ability and I was not ill equipped. I may have been over-confident and so did not pay enough attention to the Friend placement. Having a cellular phone in the car made everything happen very fast. It was not a luxury but a serious part of rescue equipment. (Source: Susan Kennedy, 27)

STRANDED, EXCEEDING ABILITIES

New Hampshire, Cannon Cliff, Lakeview

On July 13, Eric Lougee, with two years of climbing experience, took his cousin, Donald Lougee (33), to Cannon Cliff for what Donald thought was to be an introductory climbing lesson. After a short lesson, the two men started up Lakeview. When Donald realized that they were headed for the top he objected, but his cousin insisted on continuing. Eric Lougee reached the top of the Old Man's head in the late afternoon. Donald was unable to climb the final crux flake, 50 feet below the top.

Eric left Donald on the slab below the crux and went down the climbers' trail to call for a rescue. Two rescuers reached the stranded climber at 2200. As one rescuer rappelled down to him, he saw climbing gear (protection and quick draws) in place in the exit corner, but no rope. The rope was in a pile at the beginner's feet where he was sitting on the slab. The leader must have dropped the rope, either intentionally or by accident.

Analysis

It is unfortunately fairly common for leaders to talk less experienced companions into climbing a route which is too difficult. In this case the beginner was not a willing companion. His first words to the rescuer were, "I told him I didn't want to do this. I told him!"

A more experienced leader could have helped his partner to the top in one of several ways. He could have hauled him using a Z pulley. He could have used his own weight as a counterbalance to help the second up the crux. He could have tied foot loops in his (the leader's) end of the rope, lowered those loops and anchored that end of the rope so that the second could climb the loops. He could have rappelled with the beginner to the brushy ledge below the Old Man's head and then bushwhacked north to meet the climber's trail. He could have taught his partner how to prussik before taking him onto a big cliff like Cannon. (Source: George Hurley)

STRANDED, OFF ROUTE, LATE START

New Hampshire, Cannon Cliff

On July 24, John (26) and Lisa Tedesco reached a spot close under the Old Man's chin on Cannon Cliff. They could not find the normal exit corner, the Wiessner finish, which