at the base of the route, observing.

The climber ahead of Andy gave up on the 5.7 crack and moved to the easier chimney. At this point, Andy had been waiting 15 to 30 minutes at a resting point. He then started up the crack. He had difficulty at the crux of the crack, and spent longer than he felt he should getting through the move. As a result, he grew tired and felt that he should either down-climb to the resting point or hang from the rope to rest. Andy decided to use his remaining strength to add a piece of protection and then hang his weight on the rope to rest and shake out his tired arms prior to continuing the climb.

After adding the piece of protection, Andy felt that his strength was almost gone, so he called, "Falling," three times, waiting approximately five seconds between each call. He did not call out his belayer's name in conjunction with yelling, "Falling." Vera, who could see Andy, heard a call of "Falling" and directed Sam to "take up the slack." Sam immediately began to take in some rope. At that time, Andy "released from the rock" for a short rest. The remaining slack in the system, together with normal rope stretch was sufficient to allow Andy to fall approximately ten to twelve feet onto a shelf before the rope grew taut enough to stop his fall. All of his protection held securely. Sam was not pulled tight against his anchor, and no rope slipped through his belay device.

Sam lowered Andy to a safe place. Andy had swelling in his right ankle, which was subsequently bandaged by Vera. Andy decided he could walk to the trailhead with assistance. He then drove to Seattle on his own where he was diagnosed with a fractured fifth metatarsal in several places, a hairline fracture of the ankle and a small chip to the outside ankle.

Analysis

Several factors may have contributed to his accident, but predominately, it was one of poor communication between climber and belayer. Calling the belayer's name along with, "Falling," might have helped reestablish communication. Also, Andy might have avoided the fall if he tested the system before committing his weight to it, or clipped directly into his protection. (Source: From a report written by a panel of five members of the Seattle Mountaineers and written statements from party members)

FALL ON ROCK, LOOSE ROCK

Washington, Tumwater Buttress

On Sunday, April 26, Linda Olson was participating in a rock climbing field trip as a student in the Seattle Mountaineers Intermediate Climbing Course. She was leading the second pitch of Tumwater Buttress. Linda climbed to the top of a short pillar and reached the crux of the climb, which was a bulge formed by several large flakes of rock. She placed a wired stopper while standing on top of the pillar then proceeded to work her way up the flakes. She suddenly yelled and was falling, with a large rock falling with her. She fell past her belayer. After she landed, the large flake struck her leg and then her arm. The fall was estimated to be around 25 feet. Her belayer (John Wick) and another rope team provided first aid. Linda sustained a broken arm and broken leg.

Analysis

The wired stopper pulled out during the fall, but it is unclear whether this made a difference in the outcome. Linda was wearing a helmet, without which her injuries would have been much more serious. (Source: From a report written by a panel of five members of the Seattle Mountaineers and written statements from party members)