

is one of the most important aspects of climbing. Even if all your equipment works, if your belayer doesn't work, you'll have to yell at them from the skies above.

Every climber should have some medical training. Not everyone needs to go out and get an EMT certificate, but some level of medical training should be taken, such as a first responder course or even a first aid course. You never know what is going to happen. It is imperative to be able to not only bandage minor wounds but also realize when the injuries are life threatening. (Source: John Kettinger—25)

FALL ON ROCK, PROTECTION PULLED OUT

New Hampshire, Cannon Cliffs, Vertigo

Daniel Chaffee (20) was climbing on Vertigo. He was on the second pitch when he fell 70 feet when his protection pulled out. Chaffee was caught by his partner Ryan McKeon. He came within 20 feet of hitting the ground.

Luckily there were plenty of climbers in the vicinity to get things started and help with the carry. The Stokes litter was passed all the way down the talus by a continuous chain of climbers, Fish & Game, and Local search & rescue people. It took 40 rescuers nearly four hours to bring Chaffee down from the mountain. The accident took place around 11:00 a.m., and he was in an ambulance by about 4:00 p.m.

Chaffee suffered serious injuries, including multiple fractures of the leg, a broken jaw, broken arm/wrist, and facial injuries. He was airlifted to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center and is expected to recover fully.

STRANDED, INEXPERIENCE

New Hampshire, Cannon Cliff, Whitney Gilman

On October 12, New Hampshire Fish and Game received a report of two individuals with a stuck rope on the Whitney Gilman rock climb. Joe Lentini and another EMS guide took the tram to the top and walked across to the top of the climb with a 300 foot static line. It was snowing and slippery. The other guide rappelled down. The climbers had ascenders but didn't know how to use them, so they were hauled up. Apparently their rope got stuck and they called for help on a portable Motorola. They were carrying a large American flag! (Source: Al Hoppers)

VARIOUS FALLS ON ROCK (22 LEADER FALLS)—MOSTLY INADEQUATE PROTECTION, OFF ROUTE (2), RAPPEL ERROR, INADEQUATE BELAY

New York, Mohonk Preserve, Shawangunks

There were 24 climbing related accidents reported from the Mohonk Preserve this year. The majority of the accidents that resulted in fairly serious injuries were caused by inadequate protection—resulting in long falls; having too much slack in the rope—resulting in falling all the way to the ground and/or a ledge; or just impacting the cliff-face. In two cases, the falls were the result of being off-route on a more difficult route than had been anticipated. The rappelling accident was the result of an inadequate braking system, so the rope ran too