

and neck pain and numbness in her left leg. Medical care was provided on scene by rescuers and Emily was evacuated out of the field. Emily was wearing a climbing helmet.

### **Analysis**

Belayers should make an effort to position themselves out of the fall line of the climber. (Source: Boulder County Sheriff's Office and Steve Muehlhauser, Park Ranger, Eldorado Canyon State Park)

## **CLIMBER PULLED ROCK OFF, ROCK FALL**

### **Colorado, Eldorado Canyon, Wind Tower**

On June 17 rescuers were called to Eldorado Canyon State Park for a rock-slide with a person trapped. Selma Hafizbegovic (39) was going to climb the Wind Tower rock formation via the Recon Route (5.6). She was with four other climbers, all from New York. Selma was walking near the group when two of her friends began to climb. When the first climber started up, he pulled down a large rock they described as being approximately the size of a person. Selma, who was standing below, was swept down a ravine approximately fifty feet with the rocks. She was not trapped in the rubble. They were all wearing helmets.

She was evacuated by members of the Rocky Mountain Rescue Group and Rocky Mountain Fire and flown to a Denver area hospital. Her injuries resulted in paralysis. (Source: From a Boulder County Sheriff's Department press release and <http://www.eventme.com>)

## **FALL ON ROCK, SIMUL-CLIMBING**

### **Colorado, Eldorado Canyon State Park**

On June 26, Bill Wright (45) and Tom Karpeichik (48) attempted to simul-climb 100 pitches in Eldorado Canyon (Eldo) in a day. At about 7:30 a.m. the climbers were on their 11th route/34th pitch on Redguard Route (5.8) when the higher climber fell about 140 feet and sustained serious injuries. Fortunately the few points of protection between the climbers held. A trail runner in the park heard calls for help and initiated a rescue. Both climbers were wearing helmets. The victim's helmet likely saved his life.

### **Analysis**

In contrast to the traditional stationary belayer and one active climber at-a-time technique, simul-climbing sacrifices safety for speed and has both climbers climbing at the same time with only a few points of protection between them at any given time. This technique alone wasn't the reason this fall was so traumatic. It is highly likely that if he were leading this pitch in a traditional manner, he would have placed more gear, since he would only be climbing for 150 feet or so.

His partner said, "...if we had been climbing in a traditional manner and

using a standard-length rope, I would have been able to escape the belay and rappel to Tom on the unused portion of the rope. What caused Tom to fall on 5.5/5.6 terrain? I don't know. Maybe Tom doesn't either or will not remember, but a slip is the most probably answer. I didn't see any rock fall with him and it is unlikely that a hold broke." (Source: Steve Muehlhauser, Park Ranger, Eldorado Canyon State Park, and Bill Wright, from a post on [www.mountainproject.com](http://www.mountainproject.com))

## **FALL ON ROCK, ROPE SEVERED**

### **Colorado, Eldorado Canyon State Park, Red Garden Wall**

Joe Miller (38) fell to his death on the morning of June 22 while climbing the Yellow Spur route (5.9) on the Redgarden Wall. A later investigation revealed that a micro-Camalot below the dihedral held. It appears that the length of sling on that cam caused the rope to run over a particularly sharp edge, severing the fairly new 60-meter, 9.8-mm rope resulting in a fall of seventy feet to the ground for Miller.

#### **Analysis**

An investigation by the Rocky Mountain Rescue Group found no problem with the rope, but did look into the angles of the rope, etc. See their full analysis at <http://www.rockymountainrescue.org>. Lead climbers are encouraged to inspect the immediate area before placing gear. Check for sharp edges, loose rock, expanding flakes, etc., and react accordingly. (Source: Jed Williamson and Steve Muehlhauser, Park Ranger, Eldorado Canyon State Park)

## **RAPPEL ERROR – NO BACK-UP BELAY AND NO KNOT ON ROPE END**

### **Colorado, Boulder Canyon**

On July 6, a female (31) fell approximately 15 feet when she rappelled off the end of her rope while climbing in Boulder Canyon. She injured her lower leg, and possibly her back, and had to be transported across Boulder Creek and taken to Boulder Community Hospital.

#### **Analysis**

It is common practice to tie a blocking knot on the free end of the rope as a rappel safeguard. (Source: [www.dailycamera.com/news](http://www.dailycamera.com/news))

## **FALL ON ROCK**

### **Colorado, Rocky Mountain National Park, Longs Peak**

On July 17, my partner Eric Baer (23) and I (William Esposito, 27) began climbing the Stettner's Ledges Route (5.7+) on the east face of Longs Peak. On approximately the fourth pitch, I climbed about ten feet past my last gear placement, a green Camalot, and as I attempted a technical climbing maneuver I lost my grip on the rock and fell. I shouted, "Falling," and fell past my cam placement about ten feet. The Camalot held and the rope