

and continued the rappel another 100 feet bouncing around upside down/sideways and landing on the ground flat on my back!

"I could feel the pain in my lower back (two previous back surgeries in the late 90s). I was happy to be on the ground and because of my back injury, couldn't move for about ten minutes. I called up to my son to wait a few minutes. Eventually I forced myself to roll over, got up and unclipped the rope so my son could rappel. He joined me on the ground at approximately 8:30 p.m.

"Despite the pain, I was able to get up and walk around a little on flat terrain. In order to continue our descent, we had to hike up a 30-foot low angle wall. Normally this wouldn't be a huge problem, but with my injury I tried twice from two different sides and made it halfway. We rested for a while and called my wife in Lafayette and my oldest son in Montana, a professional mountain guide, to seek advice. We wanted to self-rescue and hike out but decided instead to call 911 a little after 10:00 p.m."

A total of thirty-five rescuers worked for more than eight hours to get the pair out. Mines was transported to Boulder Community Hospital with non-life threatening injuries. His son was uninjured.

Analysis

"In hindsight, there were some things that we should have done differently: Attempted a shorter climb, started earlier since we knew we were slow, pushed harder, practiced rappelling in advance, and familiarized ourselves with rappel safeguards (e.g. prusik, etc.)." (Source: Edited from a post by Kevin Mines on mountainproject.com)

(Editors' Note: We did not post all the "fall on rock" narratives available, as the half-dozen others we were sent or we found on line included similar causes.)

FALL ON ROCK, PROTECTION PULLED

Georgia, Tallulah Gorge State Park

Joshua Robertson (20), an avid rock climber, died of injuries from a fall on April 20. He was climbing with three others. Sources said the fall happened on P2 of Mescaline Daydream (5.8) and that one or more gear placements failed. Joshua was not wearing a helmet. Park officials said this is the first climbing-related fatality since the park was established in 1993. (Source: www.ajc.com/news/uga)

INADEQUATE BELAY, FALL ON ROCK

Idaho, City of Rocks National Reserve, Parking Lot Rock

On August 19, Jeff Everett (49) was lowered off the end of his seventy-meter rope on "Delay of the Game."

He fell at least 20-30 meters, impacting ledges and a Mahogany tree on the way and landed on the ground. He sustained multiple injuries including a broken neck. Bystanders, City of Rocks staff, and local EMS were all in-

volved in his care and transport to Twin Falls Idaho, where he was treated and released after five days.

Analysis

Jeff Everett is a very experienced climber. As to why his belayer dropped him is not stated. Tying in to both ends of the rope would have prevented this accident. (Source: From a report by Brad Schilling, Climbing Ranger)

INADEQUATE BELAY, FALL ON ROCK, NO HARD HAT

Idaho, City of Rocks National Reserve, Twist and Crawl

Twist and Crawl is about a 35–39-meter route. The leader (53) of the route, clipped draws to the anchor chains and was to be lowered off. The belayer's (mid-50s) end of the rope wasn't tied to her and she let the 60-meter rope end slide through the device, resulting in the leader falling to the ground. He sustained lacerations, abrasions, a fracture, and a concussion.

Analysis

Tying in to both ends of the rope would have prevented this accident. The use of a helmet might have lessened the severity of the worst injury.

(Editor's Note: There were two other incidents from City, but they were minor in nature. There was one other report from Idaho this year. Two young men were off-route on Sturs Chimney on Mount Heyburn in the Sawtooth Wilderness area when one of them fell about 50 feet, resulting in a sprain and fracture. The good news is that they negotiated the terrain, including many miles of hobbling. They made it out in time to prevent the SAR effort that had been initiated.)

NO EXPERIENCE — SOLO CLIMBING, INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT FALL ON ROCK

Kentucky, Red River Gorge, Beachcomber

On February 13, Shaun Wilhoite (28) was camping in the area with a large group of friends. The group hiked to Pebble Beach around 2:00 p.m. Upon arriving, Shaun began to free-solo Beachcomber (5.4) in leather hiking boots. His friends said he had no rock climbing experience. When he started climbing, the rest tried to stop him but he did not listen. After topping out, he moved over onto the Arrowhead Pinnacle, from which he fell about 54 feet, headfirst, onto the rock-strewn base. His three best friends tried to revive him, but he had apparently died instantly.

RRGMRT responded and performed the recovery. Resuscitation attempts at the scene were unsuccessful. (Source: From a post on redriverclimbing.com)

FALL ON ROCK

Kentucky, Red River Gorge

On April 17 M. Tucker was climbing above bolt three when he fell approximately 30–40 feet while climbing Elephant Man (5.13b). He suffered fatal head injuries. (Source: Edited from: www.redriverclimbing.com)