

on his back/butt. His belayer had taken him off belay, assuming he was going to rappel, when he was, in fact, expecting to be lowered.

Analysis

This was a case of miscommunication between poorly trained, novice climbers. The climber never requested to be taken off belay. The belayer took him off and called, "Belay is off!" The climber never heard this and expected to be lowered. Anytime there is a belay change, especially at busy crags where it may also be hard to hear, always yell the person's name in the command. The anchor was inspected and found to have been constructed with the rope passing over a large ledge at the top of the route, thus creating a lot of rope drag. This configuration may have saved the climber from serious injury due to the friction in the system. It actually slowed down at least half of his fall. (Source: Edited from a post by C. Sproul on carolinaclimbers.org)

FALL ON ROCK, INADEQUATE BELAY, ROPE PULLS THROUGH BELAY DEVICE, NO HELMET

North Carolina, Looking Glass Rock

On March 23 around 1:50 p.m., a male climber (26) fell approximately 45 feet on the South Face of Looking Glass Rock. He had led Good Intentions (5.6) and traversed right to a set of rappel bolts over the climb Left Up, where he anchored to the bolts with the intent of being lowered. On his descent he was swinging over to remove gear.

At some point, the belayer stated that the rope end passed through the belay device and the climber fell to the ground. The climber suffered head and other injuries to the chest. EMS services were contacted and the patient was airlifted to Mission Hospital in Asheville, NC.

Analysis

The rope was tied to the climber and there was no apparent failure at the anchor point. There were still four pieces of gear in the rock that the rope was going through. The end of the rope on the belay side was approximately 25 feet in the air. The climber was wearing a helmet. The length of rope was unknown. The belay end of the rope did not have a back up knot. Typically a 60-meter rope will not be long enough to complete this maneuver.

Please remember to close the system while climbing. Either tie a back up knot on the end of the rope or tie in the belayer. This is measure can help prevent incidents. Also, please wear helmets while climbing. (Source: Patrick Weaver – Appalachian Mountain Institute)

FALL ON ROCK, PROTECTION PULLED OUT, CLIMBING ALONE

North Carolina, Looking Glass Rock, Invisible Airways

On the morning of April 12, Parker Kempf (21) was attempting an all-clean aid (solo) ascent of Invisible Airways (A2) on the north side of