

belaying the pitch. We had decent protection in, but it was a low 5th-class pitch and the gear spacing reflected that.

I'm still recovering from my injuries (concussion, four fractured ribs, collapsed lung, scapula, laceration on lower leg requiring surgery, etc.) but am at the point where I am able to write it all down.

We failed to bring a cell phone and did not have any other kind of device.

I hope some climber somewhere can learn from my incident and be just that much more safe.

I'm also a member of a local mountain rescue unit and a rescue tech on a heli-team. Overall, (this rescue) was a fantastically coordinated and successful rescue. (Source: Miles McDonough – 28)

FALL ON ROCK, NO HARD HAT

West Virginia, New River Gorge National River

On June 5th, a male climber (22) was leading Layback and Enjoy It (5.10) located at the Bubba City climbing area. The following is a synopsis of the most likely scenario that occurred causing the fall of approximately 10-12 feet.

As he was approaching the 4th or 5th bolt he yelled, "Falling!" He came off the rock and inverted, striking his head approximately ten to 12 feet below, knocking him unconscious. His belayer lowered him to the ground and 911 was initiated. Health Net Air Medical Services flew him to Charleston Area Medical Center.

Analysis

The climber was not wearing a helmet at the time of the fall. (Source: Frank Sellers—District Ranger and Randy Fisher—Park Ranger New River Gorge National River)

FALL ON ROCK, PROTECTION PULLED OUT

West Virginia, New River Gorge National River

During the evening of June 13, a female (25) was climbing Biohazard (5.10a) a 65' trad route located on the Fern Creek Party Wall. She was almost at the top of the route when she fell about 15 feet and slammed into the wall, knocking herself unconscious. She had just placed a cam for protection and was leaning back to rest when the placement failed and she fell about 15 feet. The next piece of protection held and her belayer was able to hold the fall. Although wearing a helmet, the impact caused her to lose consciousness for about 30 seconds. After regaining consciousness, she was lowered to the base of the cliff and carried out to a waiting ambulance by Fayette County's high-angle rescue team, assisted by local firefighters. She was then flown to Charleston for evaluation.

Although she complained of dizziness, hearing loss and back pain, her injuries were not deemed severe and she was soon released. (Source: Jeff West—Chief Ranger, New River Gorge National River)