

ACCIDENT REPORT

LØEFJELL, Setesdal

june 10. 2015



Head of safety commission NKf.

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On June 10. 2015, a 62-year old male German climber lost his life in an accident while sport climbing at Løefjell, Brokke in Setesdal.

The man was climbing the route "Knotts Terror" at Løefjell West – Brokkestøylen while being belayed by a female climber in her 40s. The route is 55m long, grade 5 (UIAA grade system). The guidebook "Setesdal, Klettern in Südnorwegen" awards the route two stars, meaning, "You should do it". It is equipped with 11 bolts and a bolted anchor. It has a severity rating of E2 (not British system). According to the guidebook, E2 means that one can expect longer runouts one grade under the difficulty of the route. The route provides slab climbing without too many protrusions sticking out from the wall.

The climber was using half ropes while climbing, obviously due to be able to rappel down after climbing the route, given its length of 55 meters. The climber was alternating between the two ropes when clipping the bolts.

Near the top of the route (presumably after clipping the last bolt), the climber experiences a fall. After the fall, the climber becomes unresponsive. The belayer reports the accident, and a rescue operation starts. A rescue team from a Sea King helicopter rescues the climber from the wall, and takes him to the hospital. He dies due to injuries to the head.

We will never know for sure what made the climber fall, or what took place during the fall that could cause such critical injuries to the head. After the fall, the climber was hanging from one rope 6-7 meters below the last bolt he clipped, and from the other rope 2-3 meters below the second last bolt. He was not entangled in the ropes in any way. Given the generous spacing between the bolts on this route and this scenario, it is likely to assume that he has fallen a total distance of 10-12 meters, and the damage to his head has been imposed during this long fall. The climber was wearing a helmet (type half helmet made of plastic) while climbing. Sadly, the helmet was in this case not sufficient protection to prevent injuries to the head.



Løefjell.

The accident happened at Løefjell West, far to the left on the photo.

Photo from Birkeland/Eriksen archive