

An Accident Involving a Sharp-edged Quick-clip

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Accident involving a sharp edged quick clip

On June 2nd, 2006, a severe accident occurred at a Cologne, Germany, climbing gym. By placement of the rope in the quick clip and the subsequent lower-off, the rope was severed. The resulting investigation showed that the rope was cut by the sharp edge of the quick-clip. Further testing by the German Alpine Club Safety Committee suggests that this incident was not specific to a single instance of an unusually sharp edged quick-clip, but rather that this model of quick-clip is characterized by a similarly sharp edge. In the accident, the rope was not correctly placed in the quick-clips; instead, the rope was inadvertently placed in the notch in the nose of the quick-clip where it was held in place by the wire-gate. The quick-clip geometry and the size of the quick-clip nose caused the weighted rope to run through the quick-clip nose-notch. The sharp edges of the nose-notch finally led to the severing of the rope. (See photo.) We ask all climbing establishments to check quick-clips manufactured by Fixe. Should the quick-clips exhibit sharp edges and the nose permit the constraint of rope in the nose notch, we recommend replacing the quick-clips, or at the very least, rounding the sharp edges. We ask climbers to pay careful attention when clipping to insure that the rope lies correctly in the quick-clip and is not caught between the gate and the nose-notch as shown in the photo. **Chris Semmel, German Alpine Club Safety Committee.**



The opinion of the Austrian Alpine Club: For many years, we have offered this model of steel quick-clip from Fixe as it is especially suited for lowering off of half rope-length pitches. The unfortunate accident described above is to our knowledge unique. In part due to the freak nature of the incident and in part due to the situation, which involved a user error that is easily recognized as incorrect usage even by a novice climber, no recall is recommended. We will continue to offer this quick-clip. It is reasonable for the climber to be responsible for the correct placement the rope in quick-clips before lowering. We recommend that the manufacturer remedy this flaw in future production. **Austrian Alpine Club, Department of Mountain Sports**