



EXPERIENTIAL RESOURCES • PO BOX 542 LAHAINA, HI 96767 • 808.441.5347

SAFETY NOTICE

Failure of TruBlue Speed Auto Belay

Date of Failure: 12 July 2021

Location: Outdoor climbing wall, summer camp, Tennessee, USA

Description of Incident: Camper (9 years old, approximately 60 lbs.) had successfully climbed to the top of the climbing wall (about 52', straight vertical climb, no pitches or obstacles) utilizing a TruBlue Speed Auto Belay device.

Following the climb, the camper weighted the harness in order to descend, and they actively “walked” down the wall as they descended. The camper was about 85% descended and the facilitator had stepped up to the wall in order to receive the climber at the ground. The facilitator heard a loud “pop” from the belay unit and the camper immediately dropped from a height of about 8'. The facilitator was in a spotting position and was able to catch the camper, preventing them from impacting the ground.

The webbing from the TruBlue unit had zero retraction resistance and was in an unspooled state, laying freely on the ground post-climb despite the fact that there was nothing securing it.

Per the facilitator, the climber did not bounce, fall, jerk, or otherwise suddenly weight the system in relation to when the unit failed.

All parties are without physical injury.

Background:

- The unit was newly purchased and installed in 2019
- The unit was recertified by Headrush (including webbing replacement) on 23 December 2020, with the next recertification due 23 December 2021
- The course was inspected by an ACCT Certified Level 2 Professional Inspector on 23 October 2020
- The site performs and documents internal inspections, including a pre-use inspection the day of the incident
- There had been no previous issues with the unit
- The unit had been in regular use Monday-Friday through the summer 2021 camp season which began about 1 June 2021

Additional Notes: The manufacturer of the unit (Head Rush Technologies) was notified 12 July 2021.





RE: Experiential Resources SAFETY NOTICE – Failure of TruBlue Speed Auto Belay (07/12/21)

Head Rush Technologies (HRT) is aware of the above referenced incident regarding the TruBlue Speed Auto Belay device, as well as the resulting Safety Notice issued by Experiential Resources (ERi). We are pleased to hear that all parties are without physical injury.

Because we were not consulted regarding the Safety Notice, we felt it was prudent to provide an update on the current status, including an important clarification specific to the design of all TruBlue Auto Belay devices.

We have been in contact with both the customer and the distributor (ERi), to better understand the circumstances surrounding this incident. We have also requested an opportunity to complete a thorough inspection of the subject device, which is imperative to completing our investigation.

Based upon information obtained thus far, while the device had undergone scheduled annual recertification, it is likely that the device in question experienced a loss of retraction, as result of a fatigued retraction spring. We can only confirm this assumption if provided the opportunity to inspect the subject device.

While our TruBlue Auto Belay devices employ a retraction spring designed for maximum reliability, the longevity of the retraction spring can differ based upon many variables; including, but not limited to mounting height, heavy cyclic use, and uncontrolled release of the webbing.

The TruBlue Auto Belay is designed such that the retraction of the webbing is independent from the self-regulating braking system. With >40,000 devices sold globally; we are unaware of any report of a broken retraction spring resulting in an uncontrolled descent.

Head Rush Technologies takes the health and safety of all participants extremely seriously. We have every intention to complete a thorough investigation into this incident. In the unlikely event that our investigation uncovers any potential device malfunction or abnormality, we will take the appropriate measures to notify all affected HRT customers immediately.

Our #1 priority is to ensure that every experience on an HRT device, is a protected one.

Sincerely,

Rich Reynolds

Vice President of Engineering & Product



COLORADO
Division of Oil and Public Safety
Department of Labor and Employment

Amusement Rides and Devices Program
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Dear Amusement Rides and Devices Operators and Third-Party Inspectors,

Our Program would like to disseminate the notification and attached Safety Notices from Experiential Resources (ERI) and Head Rush Technologies regarding an incident that occurred pertaining to the Head Rush True Blue Speed Auto Belay device. Please download and review the full notices, attached, which contain further information and comprise our Program's current knowledge of the incident and subsequent actions. This notification will also be available on our [website](#).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 303-809-9354.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Amusement Rides and Devices Program

Division of Oil and Public Safety

