

Climber Michael Reardon, 42, believed dead

by UPI

KNIGHTSTOWN, Ireland -- World renowned free solo rock climber Michael Reardon is believed dead after he was swept out to sea by a rogue wave off the coast of Ireland. Reardon, 42, a native of Oak Park, Calif., disappeared into the sea on Ireland's southwest coast after completing two climbs on the small island of Valentia, The Los Angeles Times reported Thursday. "It was just another day of climbing on Atlantic sea cliffs in Ireland with Mike," photographer Damon Corso said. "Mike took me around the bottom of Wireless Point to an inlet merely 15 feet above the roaring Atlantic." Corso told the Times Reardon he "was waiting on an algae-covered platform for the big swells to pass by so that he could walk back over to me on the opposite side of the inlet. A rogue wave came into the inlet and curved rightwards as it crashed into Mike. "He tried to stabilize himself on the platform but the water was too powerful and sucked him in." "A lot of what he did just seemed unfathomable," Tom Bristow, a close friend and climber, told The Times. "He had an incredible athleticism. But probably more outstanding than the physical capability was the inconceivable mental focus. "He loved life and he expressed it through climbing."

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