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## Alpinist cleared of murder after girlfriend climbing incident



Published on February 20, 2026

Document Date: Fri, Feb 20 2026 03:26:04 pm

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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TYROL, Austria — A court has ruled that mountaineer Thomas P was not guilty of murder after a winter climbing accident involving his girlfriend, though it acknowledged he misjudged the

situation.

Judge Norbert Hofer, an experienced climber involved with mountain and helicopter rescue operations, said Thomas P was an “excellent Alpinist,” but noted his girlfriend lacked sufficient skills for the harsh winter conditions. The judge emphasized that the couple should have turned back earlier to avoid danger.

“The defendant did not act willfully or with malice,” Hofer said. “I do not see you as a murderer or cold-hearted.” He noted that social media discussions regarding the incident had influenced public perception of Thomas P.

During the proceedings, the court also heard from Andrea B, a former partner, who described being left alone on a previous climbing tour on the Grossglockner in 2023. She recounted becoming disoriented and panicked as her headlight failed, and Thomas P moved ahead, leaving her behind temporarily.

The ruling highlights the risks inherent in mountaineering, especially when partners have unequal experience levels. While Thomas P was found to have misjudged the situation, the court concluded there was no criminal intent, and the tragedy should be seen as a miscalculation rather than deliberate neglect.

The decision underscores the importance of experience, caution, and communication in extreme

climbing conditions, particularly in winter alpine environments.