

# GOWER

By Michael Camilleri

Stand on top of *Pinnacle at Smiths* and you'll see a cliff-line marching off into the distance. Rich pickings indeed for any buccaneer willing to storm the ramparts with quickdraws at the ready and a bolt drill between the teeth.

Access to Gower is from the East side of the river, just before Sheridan Hills when driving from Wharepapa South. Park before the bridge and walk along a fishermans' track for about 15 minutes until you can see the cliff on your left. Walk directly up to the farm road at the bottom of the cliff - you can literally step off the road onto the rock. The first outcrop has 5 routes, the rest are scattered about the length of the cliff, some near the road and others up into the bush.

Gower has some exceptionally good climbs. *Lex Talionis* is a superb arete climb, and *The Forks* is a sport-climbers paradise with a string of overhanging routes on beautiful hard rock.

## Location and Access

Access: Ask at Bryce's for latest access information.  
 Parking: Park by bridge on Seafund Rd

Note, as with any property please insure all gates are left as you find them. One open gate could cause thousands of dollars worth of damage if stock get into the crop paddocks, so be extra vigilant.

## Disclaimer

The author, publisher, and landowners take no responsibility for damages, injury, disability, or death resulting from the use of this guide. This guide does not guarantee any of the fixed gear, including bolts, peg, or belays mention in this guide. All fixed gear is to be used at the climbers own risk. Ownership of the guide does not grant you entry onto the property or crag. No responsibility is accepted for the accuracy of the information in this guide. Climb at your own risk. This property is a commercial farm and as such has hazards associated with such a property. Access is at own risk.



*For the best rock climbing experience in New Zealand*

- \* **New Zealand's Best Gear Shop**
- \* **Cafe** , **Accommodation**
- \* **Instruction** **Gear Clinics**
- \* **Workshops** **Guiding Service**
- \* **Hire Gear (Ropes)** **Crag Information**
- \* **Run by Climbers for Climbers**

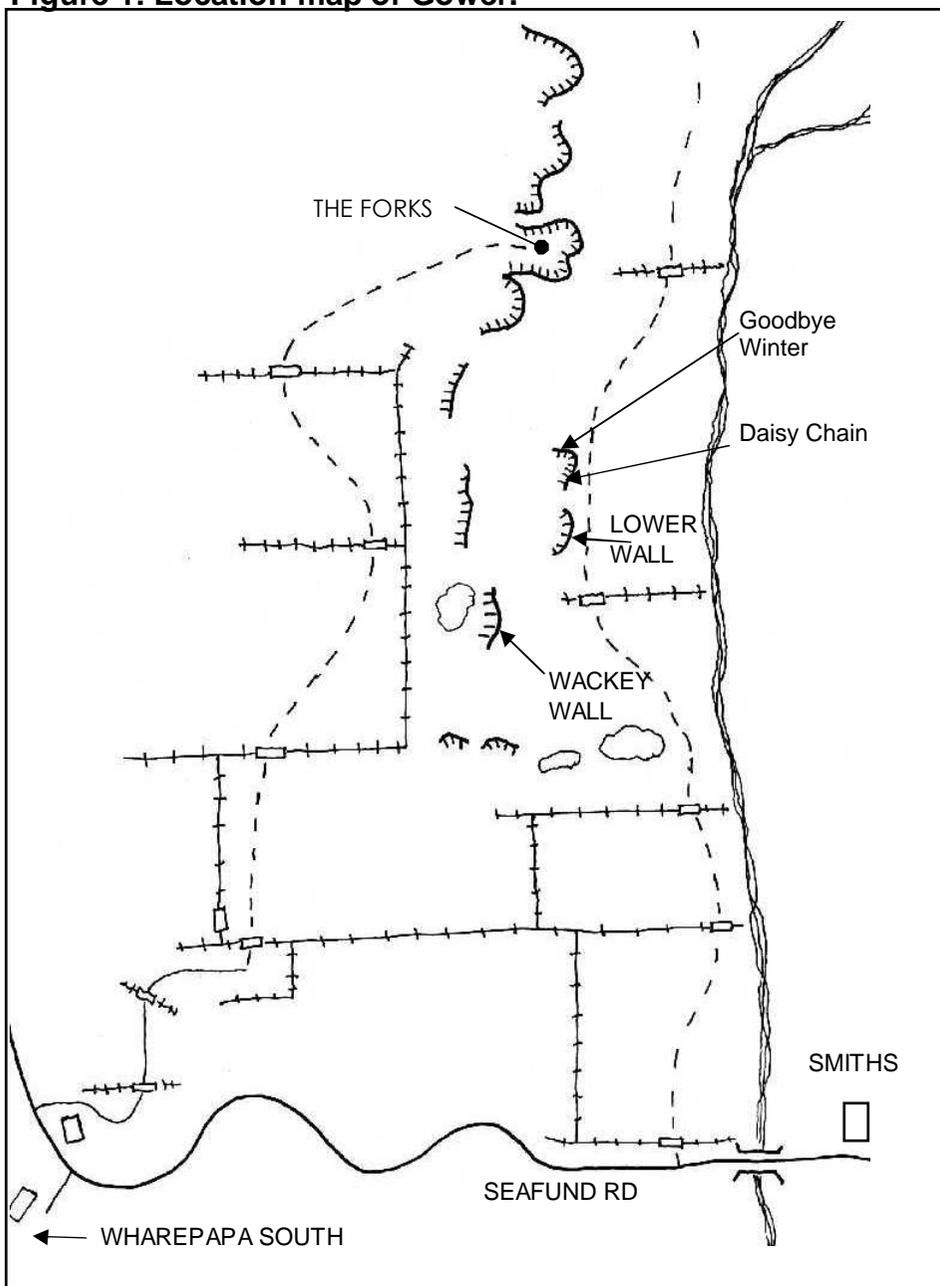
for more information visit [www.rockclimb.co.nz](http://www.rockclimb.co.nz) . Email [bryce@rockclimb.co.nz](mailto:bryce@rockclimb.co.nz)  
 Telephone / Fax (07) 872 2533  
 1424 Owairaka Valley Road

Wharepapa South  
 RD 7 Te Awamutu  
 New Zealand

freeclimb.co.nz

[www.freeclimb.co.nz](http://www.freeclimb.co.nz)  
 Number One, for up to date  
 Rock Climbing Information

Figure 1: Location map of Gower.



## The Pinnacles

Only a couple of routes here so far, but potential for some more and some bouldering. The pinnacle split by a prominent crack has two crack climbs. The one on the RH side is:

### **Boco (17) 10m**

Climb the slightly overhanging hand crack. The top lip is a little friable, like *Turtle Power* used to be before they all broke off. Named after Bryce's fat cat (the one that pissed in his gumboots that morning – anyone want a cat?). All natural gear and DBC belay.

*Dave Garrity, Bryce Martin, David Hood 5-10-98*

### **Bimbo (16) 10m**

Climb the crack on the LH side of the pinnacle. Starts tight at the bottom and goes to wide fists at the top. Named after Bryce's other cat. All natural gear and DBC belay.

*Dave Garrity, Bryce Martin, David Hood 5-10-98*

## The Lower Wall

### **User Friendly (17) 15m**

Climb the laid-back face to the left of the buttress: big pockets, hard rock. What more could you want? 7 bolts, DBC belay.

*Bryce Martin 31-8-97*

### **Sly Bandits (19) 17m**

Climb the buttress at the LH end of the wall. Technical moves supported by 4 naked bolts and #3, #3.5 and #4 friend in the big horizontal crack. DBC belay.

*Pete Swanson, Bryce Martin 29-1-94*

4m to the right is a face and buttress:

### **Across the River (18) 17m**

Climb the face up to a hanging buttress, finishing right at the top to a TBC belay.

*Bryce Martin, Pete Swanson 29-1-94*

### **Double Trouble (22) 19m**

The face and corner crack. The climbing is easy up to the large ledge, then it gets steep real fast! Move left at the top before pulling over to the TBC belay. 5 naked bolts.

*Pete Swanson, Bryce Martin 29-1-94*

### **Hop, Skip, and Jump (16) 15m**

Climb the corner all on natural gear, mainly large wires but a friend or two might work. Must have been the end of a long day, as no belay was placed. Climb up to a likely looking tree for a belay, or place your own.

*Pete Swanson, Bryce Martin 29-1-94*

**\*\* Lex Talionus (23) 17m**

A stunning arete. The crux is in two parts: 1) clipping the 5th bolt. 2) climbing past it. 5 bolts. DBC belay. (see Front cover)

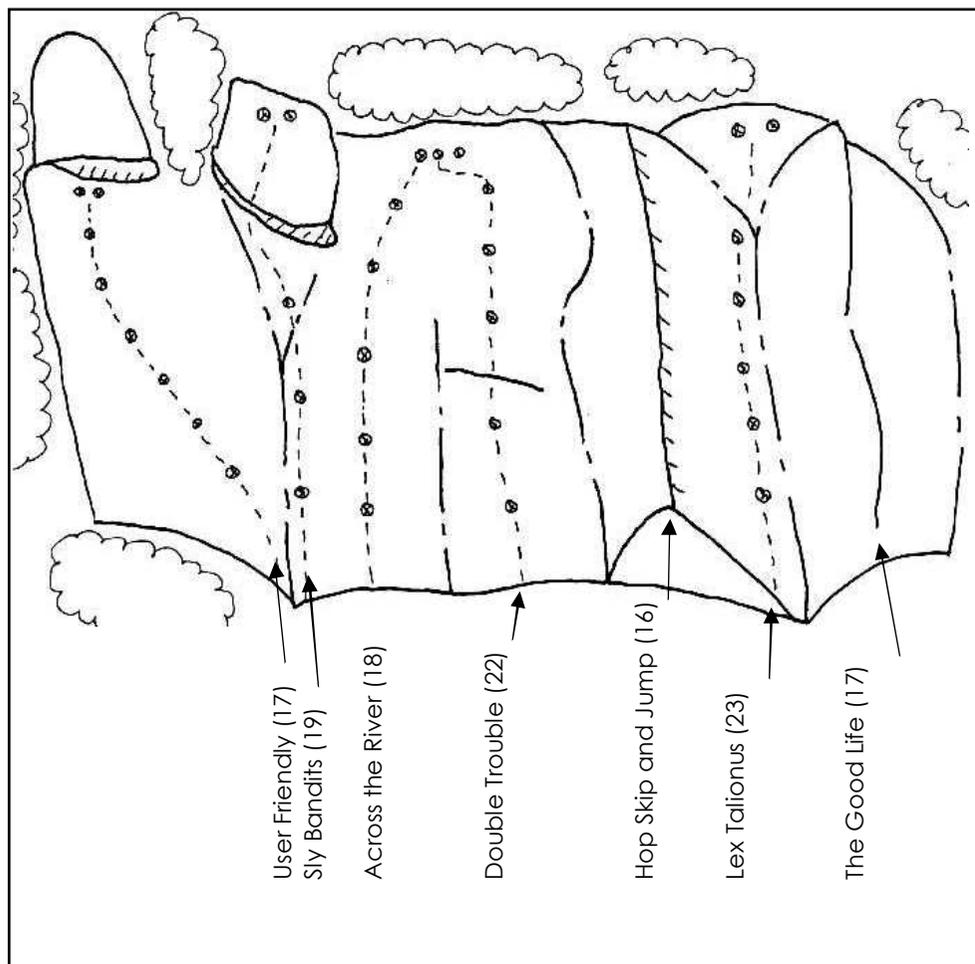
*Lydia Bradley -92*

A couple of meters right is:

**The Good Life (17) 17m**

A thin left-tending crackline, climbed using natural gear. Move left at the top, protected by a sling runner, to a DBC belay

*Dave Garrity, Bryce Martin 27-2-94*

**Figure 2: Gower Main Wall.**

Fifty meters right is another smaller outcrop. The major feature is an overhanging corner:

**Daisychain (19) 12m**

Climb the corner using mainly mid to large wires and a few small friends. The rock is hard so the placements are usually good. Exit left to a DBC belay.

*Bryce Martin, Pete Swanson 29-1-94*

The thin crack to the right is:

**Goodbye Winter (18) 8m**

Climb the thin crack line. 3 bolts with habers, DBC belay on the left at the top.

*Bryce Martin, Kevin Barratt, Cliff Ellery 31-8-97*

## Wacky Wall

The track comes out 15m left of the chimney *Dirty Dave Does It Again*. From left to right:

**\* Lost Gumboot Groove (17) 15m**

The thin snaking crack about 15 m left of the chimney. Bridge past the groove at the bottom, up to the headwall (crux). 4 bolts and a DBC belay.

*David Hood, Dave Garrity, Bryce Martin 5-10-98*

**Dirty Dave Does It Again (14) 10m**

A classic chimney reminiscent of the bottom pitch of *Tibia*. Gain the chimney by bridging up the corner, placing a mid sized wire as your only piece of protection. The chimney is a tight fit, so knee and arm bars are the way to go. DBC belay.

*Dave Garrity, Michael Camilleri 3-10-98*

**Handle With Care (18) 12m**

Bridge the shallow groove, using the arete for hand-holds. Bridge into the corner at the top. 5 bolts and a DBC belay.

*Bryce Martin, Cliff Ellery 13-9-98*

**Summit Lust (18) 15m**

Climb the black streak. Easiest to start low down from the right. The crux is between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> bolt. 6 bolts and a DBC belay.

*Bryce Martin, Cliff Ellery 13-9-98*

**\* Jacinta Gilbert (16) 15m**

Start on the RH side of the arete up the steep wall, and move left on to the arete. The crux is near the top. Six bolts and a DBC belay.

*David Hood, Cliff Ellery, Kevin Barratt 5-9-98*

**Mates Rates (19) 15m**

Climb the steep face, using the arete. The crux is crossing over to the RH arete near the top. Six bolts and a DBC belay.

*Bryce Martin, Michael Camilleri 2-4-98*

Walk 20m to the right to an imposing overhanging wall. The chimney at the left of the wall is:

### **Back 'N Foot (16) 20m**

Climb the honeycombed curving corner. Some of the honeycombed rock is a bit brittle. Six bolts and a tree belay. Nice climbing.

*Bryce Martin, Cliff Ellery 30-9-98*

### **\*\* Three Day Arete (26) 15m**

Climb the arete and thin crack, then dynamic moves and high steps get you up the steep arete and headwall. 5 bolts and a DBC belay.

*Cliff Ellery 4-10-98*

### **2 Hard, 3 Bolts (24) 8m**

Kindly donated by Bryce Martin. Three bolts and a DBC belay.

*Cliff Ellery 4-10-98*

Down at the other end of the cliff about 20 m to the left of the access track. From right to left are:

### **\* Sunset Slab (17) 20m**

Start up the arete to the right of *Declination*, then delicate face moves up a steep slab. Try to stay on line for the highest point on the rock. 6 bolts and a belay from gorse bushes.

*Dave Garrity, Bryce Martin 5-10-98*

### **Declination (16) 20m**

Start in the deep corner/cave, climb up through the chimney (crux) then clip the bolt at the edge. You may be able to place some wires in the crack below the first bolt. Exit the chimney onto a slab and another bolt, then easy moves up the slab (can be protected with mid-size wires) past the final bolt to a DBC belay.

*Kevin Barratt, Cliff Ellery 5-9-98*

### **\* Inclination (18) 20m**

Climb the steep headwall left of the *Declination*, pulling up on big holds to the slab. 5 bolts and a DBC belay.

*Kevin Barratt 13-9-98*

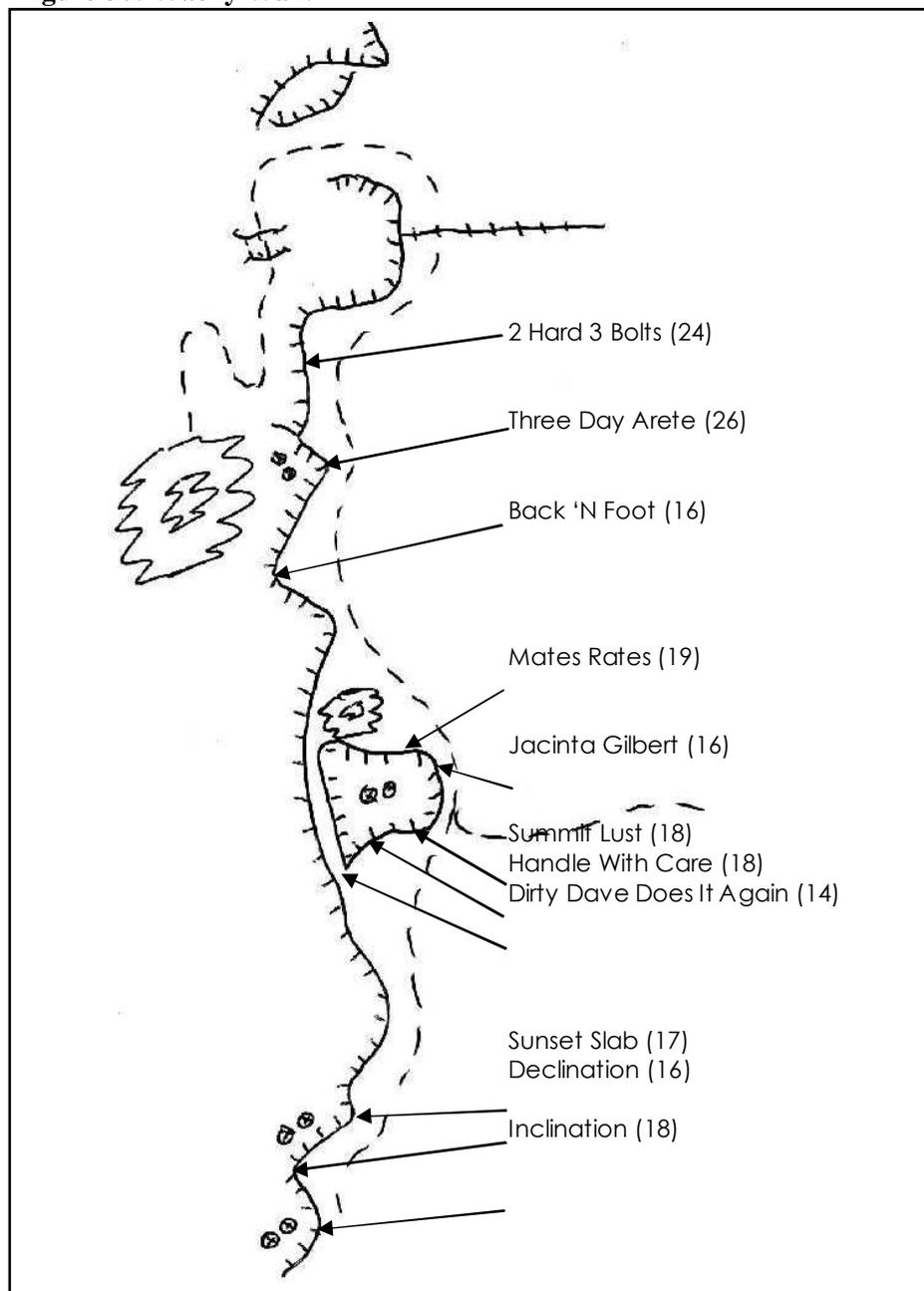
From the right hand end of Wacky Wall scramble round the base of the cliff.

### **Electric Magpie (15) 15m**

Stand on a small trunk and climb the face arete and ledge. DBC Belay & 3 bolts.

*David Kopp, Peter Butcher 13-07-00*

**Figure 30: Wacky Wall.**



## The Forks

This cliff is at the right-hand end of the crag, directly opposite the fork in the river, access is from the top. The only easy way to the top is at the far left-hand end of the crag, from here make your way back along the top to the end paddock. A rough track, which starts by a couple of Manuka trees, leads out onto the top of the buttress. Either abseil in (DBC belay) or make your way down the access gully past *Supa Mira Fiori* and *Slacker*, and around to the front of the buttress. The climbs are described from the far left hand end.

On the buttress out to your left

### Group Dynamics (20) 20m

Bridge across the deep crack, then up through a series of mantle moves to finish up the arete. 5 bolts and a DBC belay.

*Cliff Ellery, Bryce Martin, David Hood 4-10-98*

### Way Out (14) 15m

On an early visit to the area (before the track was cut), and after an hour of struggling through the gorse, box-thorn, and blackberry, soloing a grade 14 chimney was a very attractive means of escape. A nice chimney, but unprotected except for the first couple of bolts of *As Good As It Gets*.

*Cliff Ellery [solo] Aug 97*

### \*\*\* As Good As It Gets (22) 20m

Simply brilliant! Steep, steep, steep. Climb the black, overhanging wall. 9 bolts and a DBC belay.

*Bryce Martin, David Hood, Cliff Ellery 3-10-98*

### \*\* Crossing the Line (22) 20m

The overhanging corner in the middle of the Black wall. Climb easy ground to the bottom of the corner. Bridging the corner get progressively more difficult and strenuous, until you are forced to cut loose and climb the right face. Pull up and over the lip to exit up an easy head wall. Nine bolts and a DBC belay.

*Bryce Martin, Cliff Ellery 2-8-98*

### \*\* Vying for Space (22) 20m

Climb the overhanging face. Six bolts and a DBC belay. The crux is clipping the fifth bolt.

*Cliff Ellery, Bryce Martin, David and Kevin Barratt 2-8-98*

### \*\* A Bolt to No Where (22) 22m

Climb the steep face between the two aretes. Start up the right arete, then cross the face onto the left arete. Pull up onto the head wall (crux), finish up the wall and arete. Eight bolts and a DBC belay.

*Cliff Ellery, Bryce Martin 26-7-98*

### Abandoned Project (28+)

Through the cave in the rock is an abandoned project. It is partially bolted.

Around 25 metres to the right and up a gully are two other routes on the LH wall.

### Supa Mira Fiori (26) 15m

Climb the face.

*Ton Snelder Mar-92*

### Slacker (25) 15m

Go for a heinous dyno to start - if the ground erodes you can add a grade or two!

*Luke Newnham Mar-92*

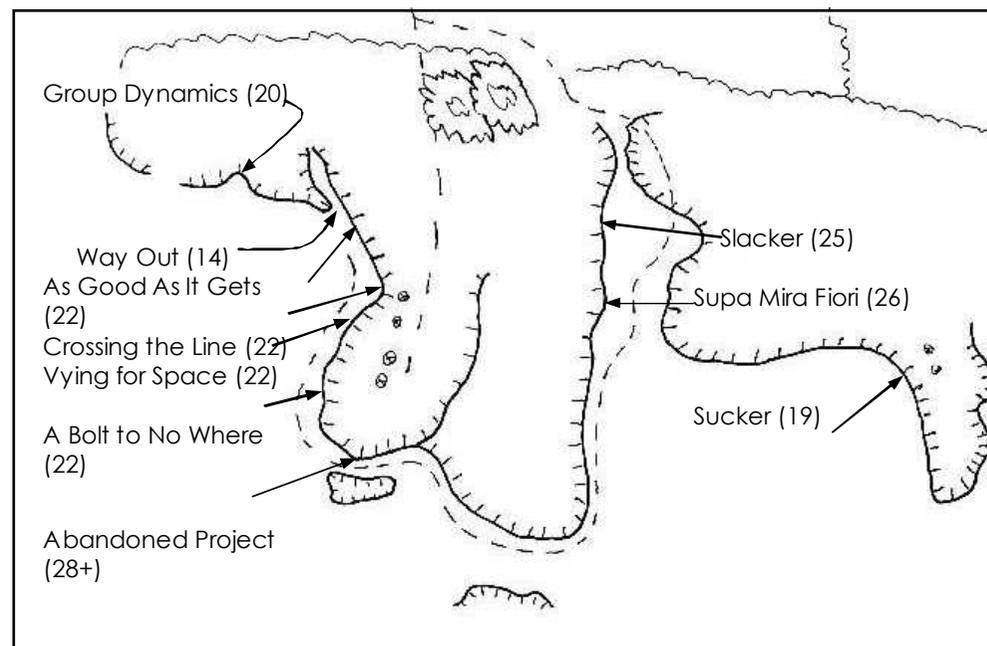
A prominent corner and slab 50m to the right of the gully is:

### Sucker (19) 20m

So called when a supposed easy slab turned into something harder. Bolts??

*Luke Newnham Jan-93*

### Figure 3: The Forks.



# Gower Index of Climbs by Grade

Star	Name	Page
GRADE 14		
	Dirty Dave Does It Again	3
	Way Out	5
GRADE 15		
	Electric Paggie	4
GRADE 16		
	Bimbo	2
	Hop Skip and Jump	2
*	Jacinta Gilbert	3
	Back 'N Foot	4
	Declination	4
GRADE 17		
	Boco	2
	User Friendly	2
	The Good Life	3
*	Lost Gumboot Groove	3
*	Sunset Slab	4
GRADE 18		
	Across the River	2
	Goodbye Winter	3
	Handle With Care	3
	Summit Lust	3
*	Inclination	4
GRADE 19		
	Sly Bandits	2
	Daisychain	3
	Mates Rates	3
	Sucker	5
GRADE 20		
	Group Dynamics	5
GRADE 22		
	Double Trouble	2

***	As Good As It Gets	5
**	Crossing the Line	5
**	Vying for Space	5
**	A Bolt to No Where	5

GRADE 23		
**	Lex Talionus	3
GRADE 24		
	2 Hard-3 Bolts	4
GRADE 25		
	Slacker	5
GRADE 26		
**	Three Day Arete	4
	Supa Mira Fiori	5

This free guide book was made possible by the team at;

