

Reporoa Gorge

Christmas Crag- Torepatutahi Reserve

by Matt Natti

Introduction

This crag, though it did show a few signs of possible climbing activity in the past, was brought back into the lime light by a few Taupo locals including Steven King and Kane Fleur. The crag offers both bouldering and roped climbing on top notch Rhyolite. Due to a temporal focus on bouldering, the crew focused their energy at the other end of the gorge and managed to put up a number of excellent boulder problems. The main cliff section, however, remained mostly ignored until Matt Natti and Fionn Claydon, two Palmerston North locals, decided to focus their energy on developing the area over their 3 week Christmas break in the summer of 2006. After the initial tracks were cleared and a few of the "classic" lines had been clean and bolted, the crag quickly took on a life of its own as more and more people jumped on the "development band wagon."

As many of the climbs are on short bits of rock with good landings they lend themselves more to bouldering. The guide is split into 2 sections, climbing at the front with boulder problems near the back. Most climbs listed have double chain belays on top.

Access

From Taupo

From state highway 1 in downtown Taupo, head up Spa Rd and bear right (just before the spa park turn off) onto Tauhara Rd heading towards Rotorua and Reporoa. Stay on this road the 1km past Broadlands turn right down East rd (No road sign).

From North

Drive to Rotorua then take state highway 5 south to Taupo. Stay on state highway 5 till you pass the Reporoa Dairy Factory then turn left to Reporoa. At the round about turn right down Broadlands road. 5 km down the road turn left on to East rd on you left.

From East Rd

4.8 km down the road past the golf course, veer right then take the turn off, immediately after crossing a small one lane bridge, where there is a small DOC sign (again, on the left side of the road) for the Torepatutahi Reserve. The cliffs are located at the end of this dirt road. The hike in is about..... 10 seconds!



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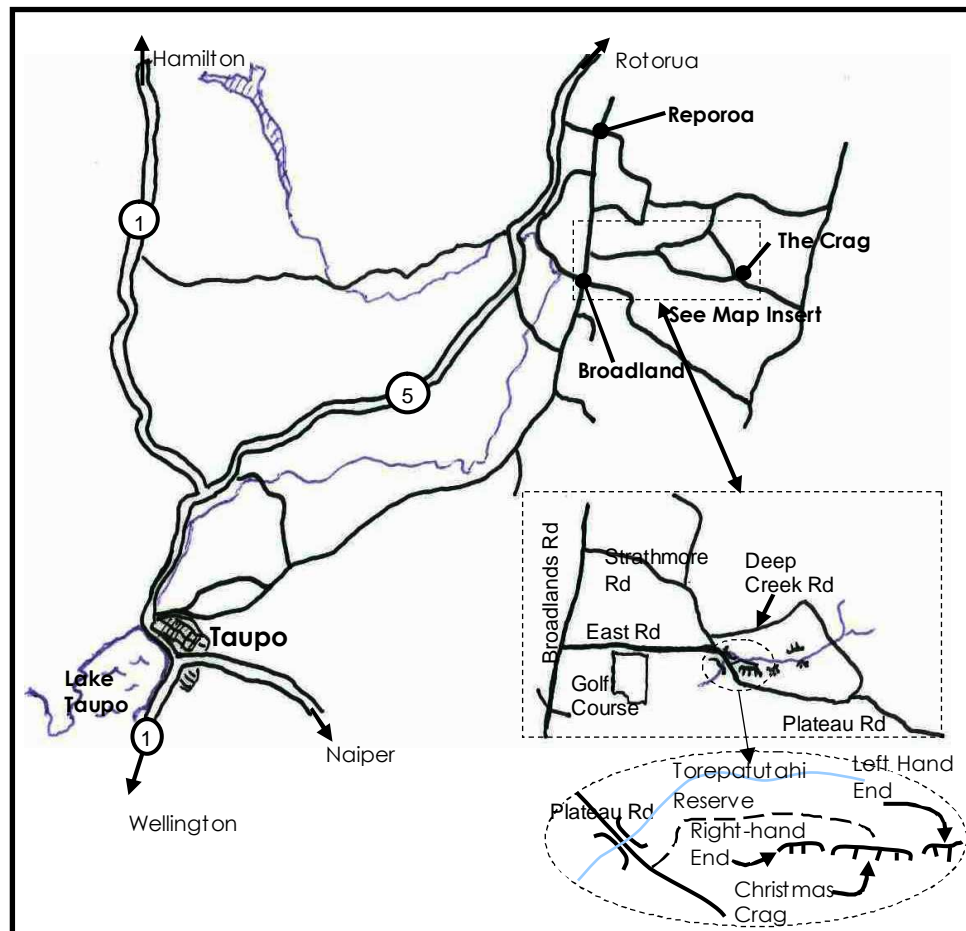
GEAR

The crag has a mix of Trad and sport routes. A standard trad rack and 10 quick draws will get you up most routes

A recommended rack is given for each line. Trad gears is given as

SCD = Small Cams. Smaller than 1 Friend.
 CD = Set of Camming devices, size 1 to 4 Friend or equal (+½ sizes)
 W = A full set of wires.

Figure 1: Location Map



Left End

Down the left passed 'Punga Power'. Climb the access cave and follow the track to the first pine tree, go down to the fixed line and follow it to the belay chain. The stellar crack line just left is

The last flight of the eternal sunbird (22)

Start on tips and progress up the crack to top. Belay off roots and crack at top, walk off. Small cams and wires in bottom & #4 camalot at top.

Tom Johns, 25/8/07

Christmas Crag

The main cliff at Reporoa. Down the far left hand end is a small wall with numerous boulder problems, The 1st climb starts just right of here. Climbs are described from Left to right

Punga Power (18)

A great finger crack in the far left corner of the main section which starts with easy bridging and then goes into interesting lay back and jamming. [Pro. CD,W]
Matt Natti - 3/1/07

* Loose Cannonballs (16)

Trad. The first line done on the cliff. Claydon figured he was scoring the 1st ascent of this beautiful line but upon reaching the top, an OLD red and green sling was found wrapped around the pine tree, ah well! Since then, the route has been cleaned and RE cleaned by Claydon and Matt and is definitely a fun line to practice you trad on. It can be done as 1 or 2 pitches. Climb up the broken crack/ slab just under and left of a large pine tree. Double Rings Belay just up and left of pine on top. [Pro. CD, W]

Rob Moore, Liam Dickson Sometime in 2005

* Death to the Sigg (20)

Trad. Again, this line was lead by Cliff Ellery with the idea that he was bagging a first ascent, but it seems a line this good gets snatched up quick! A real stunning route, though starting it can be a bit daunting as that the crux is just getting off the ground! Start on the gradually widening, slightly overhung, hand crack, pull up onto the big scoop/ ledge, then up through the short off width (the pine tree is NOT eliminated from this climb, hence the name Cliff Ellery gave it- "Tree Hugger"). DBC belay courtesy of Matt Natti.

[Pro CD, W]

Rob Moore, Liam Dickson Sometime in 2005

Hammer and Sickle (19)

Trad. Starts up on the ledge, in the corner just right of "Death to the Sigg." A few cool bouldery moves gets you up the sickle shaped crack and then you just hammer out the top! There is a set of double chains directly on top of this climb, as well as a set farther back on the "cave" wall. [Pro. SCD, CD W]

Fionn Claydon and Matt Natti - 1/1/07

Middle Age Mix (23)

Bolts & Trad. Difficult boulder move to start then mantel ledge. Clip 2nd bolt then move right into scope. Climb scope then pull into crack (crux) and climb through small roof. Easy climbing up fist crack to top. DBC belay.

[Pro. 3 Bolts SCD, CD, W]

Cliff Ellery - 22/09/07

*** Four Mantels and a Polish Maid (18)**

Mixed- 1st pitch (15) 3 bolts with optional cam down low (DBC), 2nd pitch (18) Trad to chains. The first ascent of both pitches on this climb go to Tom Johns, but as Tom did the 2nd pitch "o' natural," some credit must be given to Tomasz Swinarski for giving it a thorough cleaning during the 2nd ascent. Start by heading up the cool scoops, left of "Three Boulders," head up to a shallow cave (double chain belay) and then finish the line by heading up through the roof crack to a set of bolts on top.

Tom Johns 15/4/07

**** Three Boulders (18)**

This line is a must do for boulders. Although it is short (for a roped climb), it offers some really... "interesting" moves, complete with a horribly bouldery (but well protected) top out. This climb was bolted on lead, but as that the bolt placement was less than ideal, 1 or 2 were shuffled around after the top anchors were put in. [Pro 4 bolts]

Matt Natti and Fionn Claydon 30/12/06

Project

Open Project.

***** Flying Frenchman (20)**

A very balancy, technical route up the blank scoop just left of Cyclopean Nightmare. [Pro. 3 Bolts]

Matt Natti 14/4/07

**** Cyclopean Nightmare (25)**

This was the line that inspired the revival of the cliff. It starts with a cool mantle to a low ledge, up through a fun "warm up section" and then into a bouldery crux which traverses left, below the Cycopes eye (cave), to a flaring seam. [Pro. 8 Bolts]

Steven King 20/5/07

Photo 1: Christmas Crag Left Hand Side

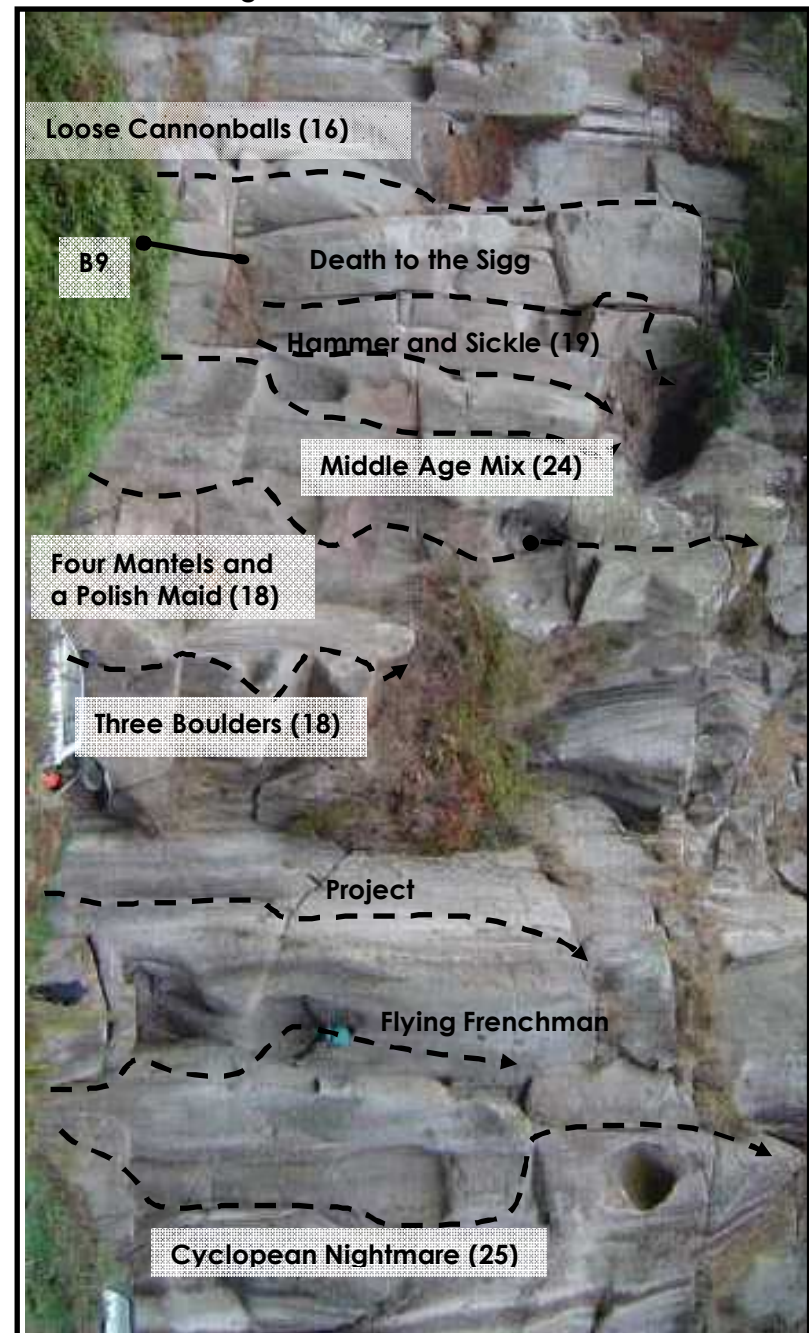
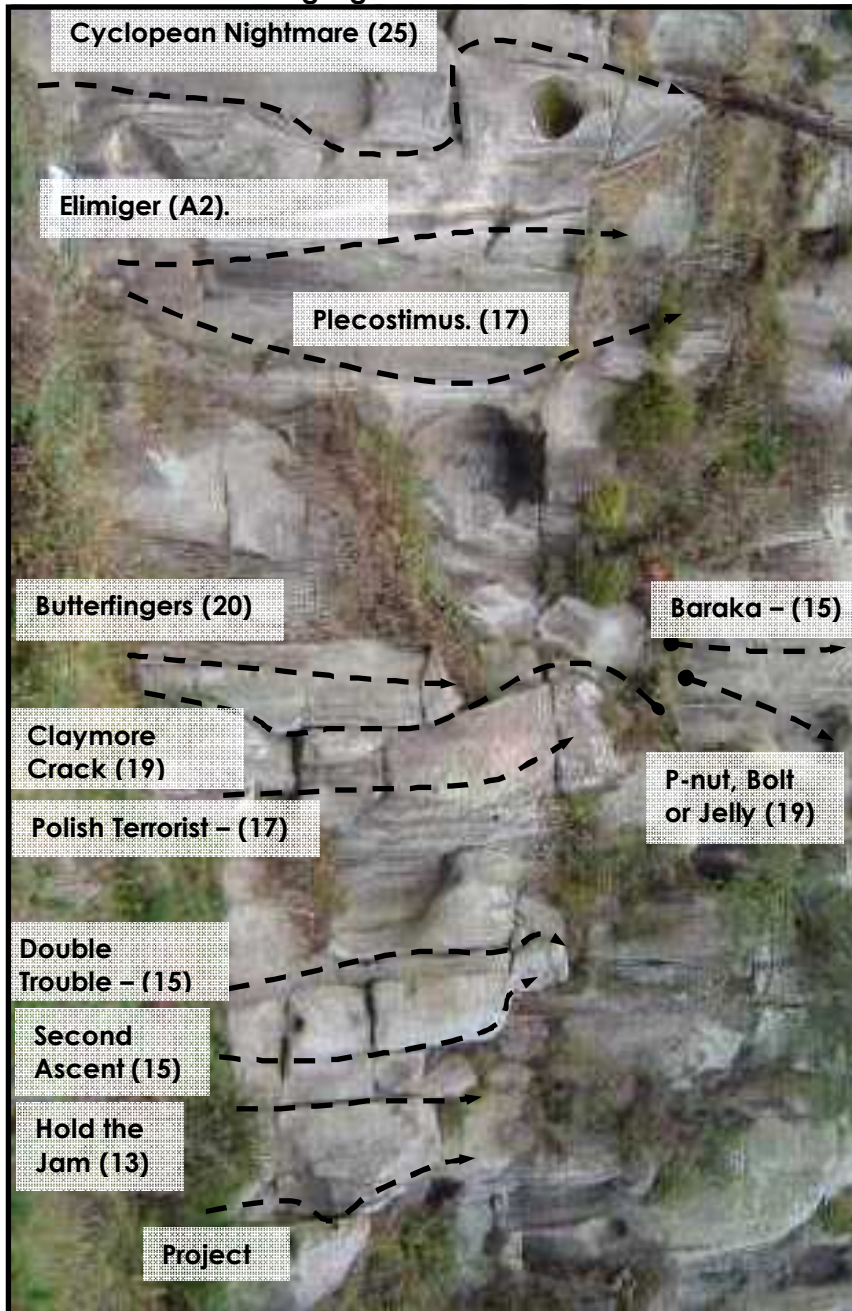


Photo 2: Christmas Crag Right-Hand



Elimiger (A2).

Aid the thin seam around the arete from Cyclopean Nightmare.
Brendon & Benny 14/5/07

Plecostimus (17)

Climb up the scoopy, ramp/ face just right of the aid crack and left of the big roof. [Pro 5 bolts]
Brendon 20/5/07

Butterfingers (21)

A thought provoking line up the slabby arete just left of a series of good cracks. The crux is probably pulling the mantle onto the angled, blank top, but after wimping out on the first few attempts, Matt added an extra "feel good" bolt to protect the final move! Currently finishes on a single ring bolt. [Pro 4 Bolts]
Matt Natti 20/05/07

Claymore Crack (19)

Trad. This line was cleaned by Claydon, but after killing himself on repeat attempts on "Cyclopean Nightmare," he offered the line to Cliff after repeatedly being spat from the lower section of the crack. A variation direct line up the slab can be done using the top belay of "Butterfingers". [Pro CD,W]
Cliff Ellery and Fionn Claydon 2/1/07

Polish Terrorist (17)

Trad. Jam the obvious hand/ fist crack on the left side of the raise ledge.
Matt Natti, Tomasz Swinarski 20/5/07

Double Trouble (15)

Trad. A fun line which offers off width technique with out the off width gear! Bridge, lay back, chimney and jam the two big cracks in the right-hand corner. Exit through the blocks up left. [Pro. Large CD, CD]
Matt Natti and Cliff Ellery 2/1/06

Second Ascent (15)

Mixed- 2 bolts/trad. Start with right hand on "Hold the Jam" and cut immediately left to a good sidepull. Head straight up through the crack on the left and then mantle the top. Shares the anchors with "Double Trouble" by the pine tree. The direct start (a bouldery move, straight up to the sidepull) adds at LEAST a grade.
Tomasz Swinarski 20/5/07.

Hold the Jam (13)

Trad. A short, fun climb which looks like a crack, but acts like a nice lay back flake due to the lip inside. Cams may be a bit fussy on the first part of this route due to the open back, but break out the old cow bells and you'll be right as rain!

Craig Millar, sometime in the spring of 2006

Project

3 bolts up the seemingly holdless arete. Essentially this is a bolted boulder problem. This route needs hangers AND a first ascent, so if you are keen, have at!

Baraka – (15)

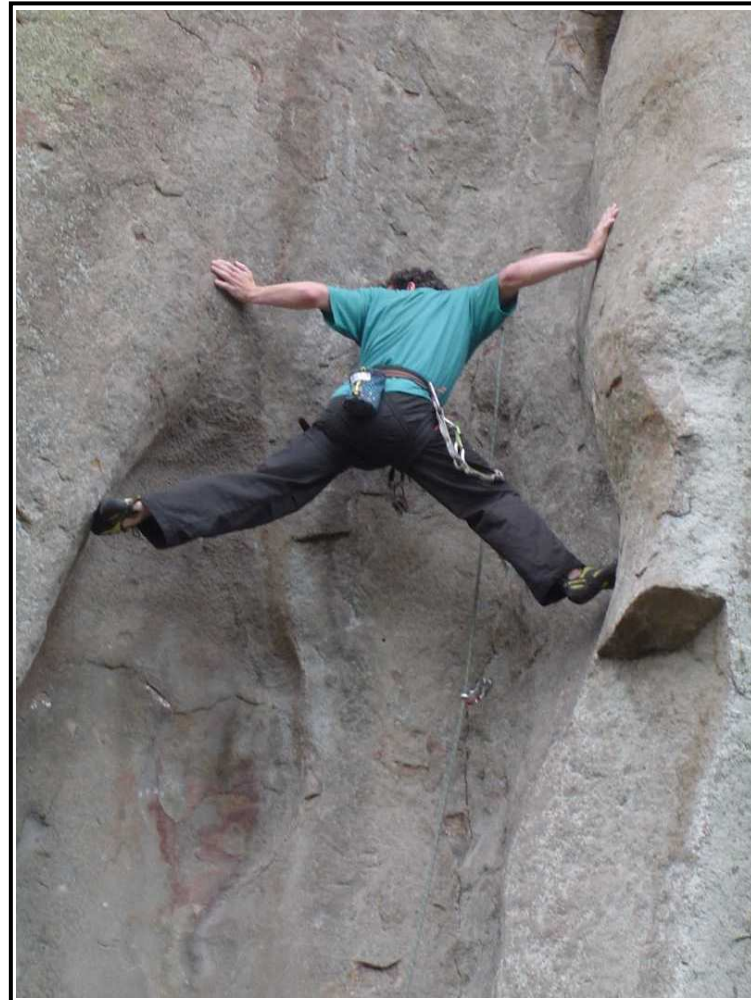
3 bolts. This fun little line runs up through the right side of the scoop of the second tier of rock, above "Claymore Crack" and "Polish Terrorist." It starts on the "look ma.... an actual jug!" and heads up and right to a good ledge

Jeremy Rowe (his 1st, 1st ascent.... and he lead the climb onsite!) 15/4/07

P-nut, Bolt or Jelly (19)

6 bolts up the left side of the scoop (left of Baraka) and onto the cool arete above. This COULD have been a mixed route but it was decided that because the crux was at the only trad (nut) placement on the route, it was safest for the masses to just make it a full sport route. If you are a purist... bring a few small nuts!

Matt Natti 19/05/07

Photo 1: Eric Duggan – Flying Frenchmen

RIGHT HAND END

Follow the track up and right turn right down the new path, the first two climbs are before the bridge:

Bloody Knuckles (17)

This is the last line on the Main Wall proper, just before the track heads up to the upper tier and the right hand wall. It was Joe's first bolted line. Upon tightening up the final bolt.... he discovered that if your hand slips mid-torque, your knuckles can get shredded!

Joe Morrow, Matt Natti

Donning the Ramset Rack (14)

This mixed line, which had all the bolts placed on lead, cruises up the fun gully/ slab just above "Second Ascent." The gear is SMALL nuts after the first bolt, followed by a good mid size cam placement after the second bolt (though if 14 is well below your limit, just using the bolts should be sweet). (Single Ring Bolt on top)

Matt Natti, Matt Donn 16/12/07

Chimney Fire (16) 6

Just left of the start of "SoL" is a cool, blocky, off-width chimney-thing. This climb LOVES big gear (1st acs used #s 4,5 and 6 BD cams!). It can, however, be done with a few creative placements from a standard rack and a long sling. Cams up to #6BD (DCB)

Matt Natti, Kane Fleury 26/6/08

* Captain Hook (18)

"Arrrrgh!" This short little finger crack is just left of the top of "CF" and can be accessed by topping "CF" or "DtRR." Standard rack (DBB)

Matt Natti, Kane Fleury 26/6/08

Open proj. (21-23?)

This is the line of bolts just above "Chimney Fire" and right of "Captain Hook." It can be accessed by either doing "CF" or "DtRR" and lowering down to the belay of "CF." 4 bolts (DBB) -This line requires a hammer and a spanner to set and tighten the bolts still. Also, it appears that the nut on the bottom bolt fell off as well, so a 10mm SS nut is required to tighten down the hanger.

** Spice of Life (19)

A great line with a bit of height and a bit of exposure. Starts just up and right of the chains for "Hold the Jam" and cruises up easy shelves to a BIG ledge (ring belay). It then cruises up the left side of the scoop on cool holds, reaches around an exposed arete (secret left-hand jug) and up the face to the top. This line has a great variety of moves and holds including chicken heads, mantles,

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crimps, slab and Reperoa's "most user friendly jug!" Can be done as 2 pitches, though much nicer done as one. 1p- 4 bolts (14)(DRB), 2p- 5 bolts (19) (DRB)

Matt Natti, Fionn Claydon 10/11/07

var. Not so Spicy*- (18) Matt Natti

Since the addition of the project on the second tier, up and left of "SoL," an "Sol" variation can be done. By exiting left at the scoopy ledge before the final bolt, you can use the final bolt and rings of the new proj instead.

Moving Day (17)

This fun little line cruises up the arete just left of "Picking on the Skinny Kid" and also shares its anchors.

Matt Natti 11/11/07

Project

This is the stunning finger crack, right of "SoL." It has a single bolt to protect the start. Closed Protect until the tape is removed, then, pretty staunch undertaking.

** Picking on the skinny kid (17)

Starts below the large cave and make nice dynamic moves on great holds up and into the top cave, from here clip and move left out to the broom bush to clip the anchors. 3 Bolts, DBA.

Tom Johns, 23/9/07

Lady Patience (19)

Just right of 'Picking on the skinny kid', Climb into the shallow hueco and clip then move up and right around the bulgy arête to top ledges.

2 Bolts, DBA. Tom Johns, 23/9/07

After the bridge:

* All the tired Cliques (18)

Climb the really smooth slab with the dimples to sloper and clip, then up the dark groove trending left to avoid the jungle. Shares anchors with Lady patience. Watch out for the first clip as a fall can land you in the pit. 2 Bolts, DBA.

Tom Johns solo 22/9/07

* Split Ends (16)

Start around the corner (to the right) from "All the Tired Cliques." This line has a bouldery start, protected by a single bolt, before it enters a crack on the left. Climb up to a ledge at about the halfway point and then continue up to a left-hand exit. Standard rack, 1 bolt (DCB)

Sarah Painter, Andrew Williams 2/08

After this keep heading past numerous more possible lines until a right facing corner with obvious flake

* **Resistance is Futile (18)**

Climb crack including flake, which now offers good gear. Crux is at the bottom. Done un-cleaned ground up with rope but no good gear to the sounds of Matt Natti's "something anytime now would be good tom" CD's to size three and wires. Chain anchor.

Tom Johns, 22/9/07

Continue down the track to a large cave thing:

Death from above (14)

Another un-cleaned, ground up ascent. This time by Brad. Start in the cave and climb the curving crack to the slab where the crack thins. Cams to size 4, DBA shared with arête.

Brad Heuson, 23/9/07

Arete (19)

A classic arête. Start down the hill from the cave and climb both sides of the arête following the bolts. 4 Bolts, DBA.

Brad Heuson, 23/9/07

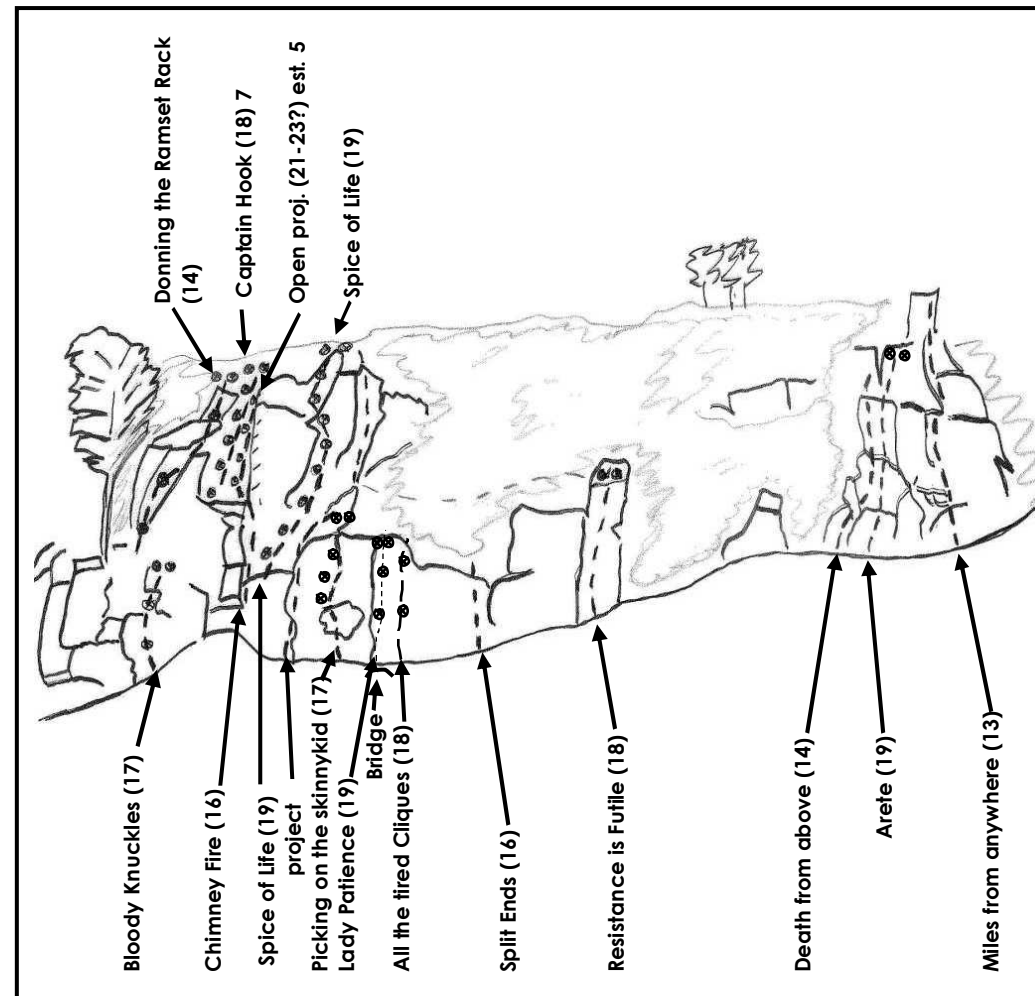
From the arête continue up and around until you see a chimney thing (this is as far as the track goes so you cant really get lost).

** **Miles from anywhere (13)**

Start in the chimney and follow the crack up and right around of the roof then up to the top. Watch out for gear behind the wobbly blocks in the chimney. Takes all gear, chain anchor to right.

Tom Johns, 23/9/07

Figure 2 Right-Hand End



Boulder Problems:

B1 Hound's Dung (V0)

A fun layback/ off width crack on the left end of the cliffs, right of "Punga Power."

Fionn Claydon, Jan/07

B2 Airwalk (VM)

A short, thin crack right of Hound's Dung. Originally sent in Airwalk shoes.

Fionn Claydon, Jan/07

B3 (V1)

Climb the face left of the thin seam starting from a sit on a slopey rail.

Jan/07

B4 (V1)

Sit start as for B3, but head right and climb along the thin seam and sloping face holds, then straight up to the top.

Jan/07

B5 (V1)

Easy crack. Uses more bridging and face techniques then jams.... What am I saying?!? You can practically jump to the top!

Jan/07

B6 Slappy Slab (VM)

Though this climb had been previously cleaned and used as an approach to the top of the boulders a number of times, Wayne was the first to put a pad underneath it and name it.... so I guess he gets "bragging rights" on it.

Wayne Upton, Jan/07

B7 (V1)

Another short slab line.

Jan/07

B8 Hand Jamming 101 (V0)

A fun crack in the corner, great to practice jamming, bridging and mantling on. The line is a bit harder if you can't jam and a bit easier if you just run and jump to the top.

Matt Natti

B9 Kane's Climb (V5)

A nice slabby line just underneath the start of "Death to the Sigg."

Kane Fleur

B10 Cyclopean Starter (V2)

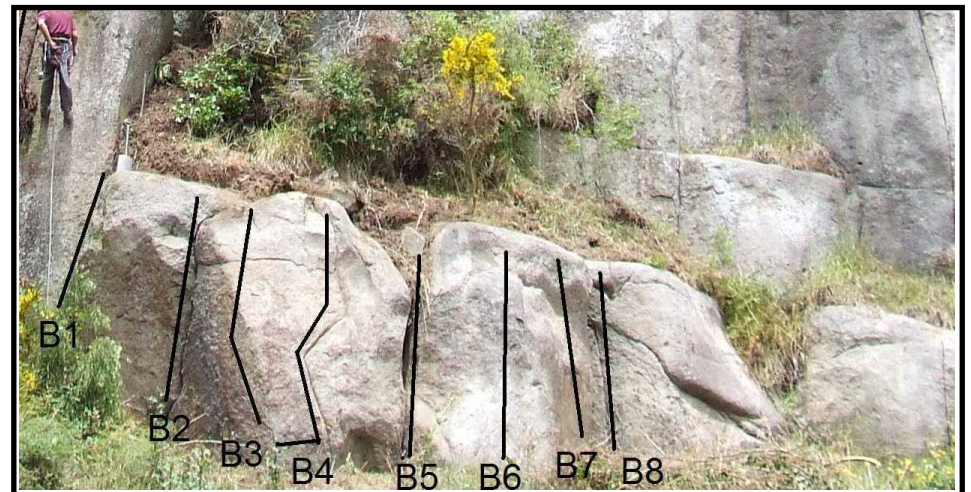
Jump up and grab the lip of the ledge below "Cyclopean Nightmare" and then mantle the lip.

B11 Wee Two (VM)

This is THE 6 year old "test piece" boulder problem for the area. The line was put up by the energetic son of Stephen King... in an attempt to flirt with a few of the visiting female climbers! Though it is easy enough for us, just imagine doing it as a "wee" fella!!!

Rowan King

Photo 3. Bouldering (left hand end)



Disclaimer

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