

# BUCK ROCK

by Cliff Ellery (March/2018)

## Introduction

Sitting high on the south west ridge of Mt Te Aroha, Buck Rock is an impressive fin of rock 60 – 90m tall and over 500m long. There are a few reports of climbers visiting and climbing at Buck Rock in the 80 and 90's but the first report ascents was made by Grant Pearson and Co up the western buttress and arete. In 2006 Kevin Barrett and Richard Knott visited Buck Rock and put up the 2 pitch line of "Demon of Bosh". Kevin then returned with Stephen Barrett and added 3 more routes. Kevin continued to preach "to anyone that would listen" about how good this crag was and the enormous potential for new routes, but he failed to drum up any interest and when he moved down south development stopped. A little slow on the up take I may be, but in late 2009 I return to the crag and along with other local Hamilton climbers started to develop Buck Rock. As it turns out Kevin was right, the climbing is great, the rock quality is great, the outlook is fantastic and the potential for long single or multi pitch climbs is enormous.

## Access

From Te Aroha, drive south down Te Aroha/Gordon road, about 2 km out of town turn left down Waiorongomai road, 1km on park at the old Waiorongomai settlement and gold mine. From here Buck Rock is a 40min walk up the hill. Take the upper loop track then the Buck rock track, from this junction 20 mins walking get you to within 250m of the base of Buck Rock. From here look for a rough climbers track marked with a cairn and orange and blue tape on your left. A steep climb up the hill past an old mine shaft pops you out at the base of the cliff.

You will need up to 12 Quickdraws. A couple of the routes have Trad gear (Cams and wires) but most are sport.

## Disclaimer

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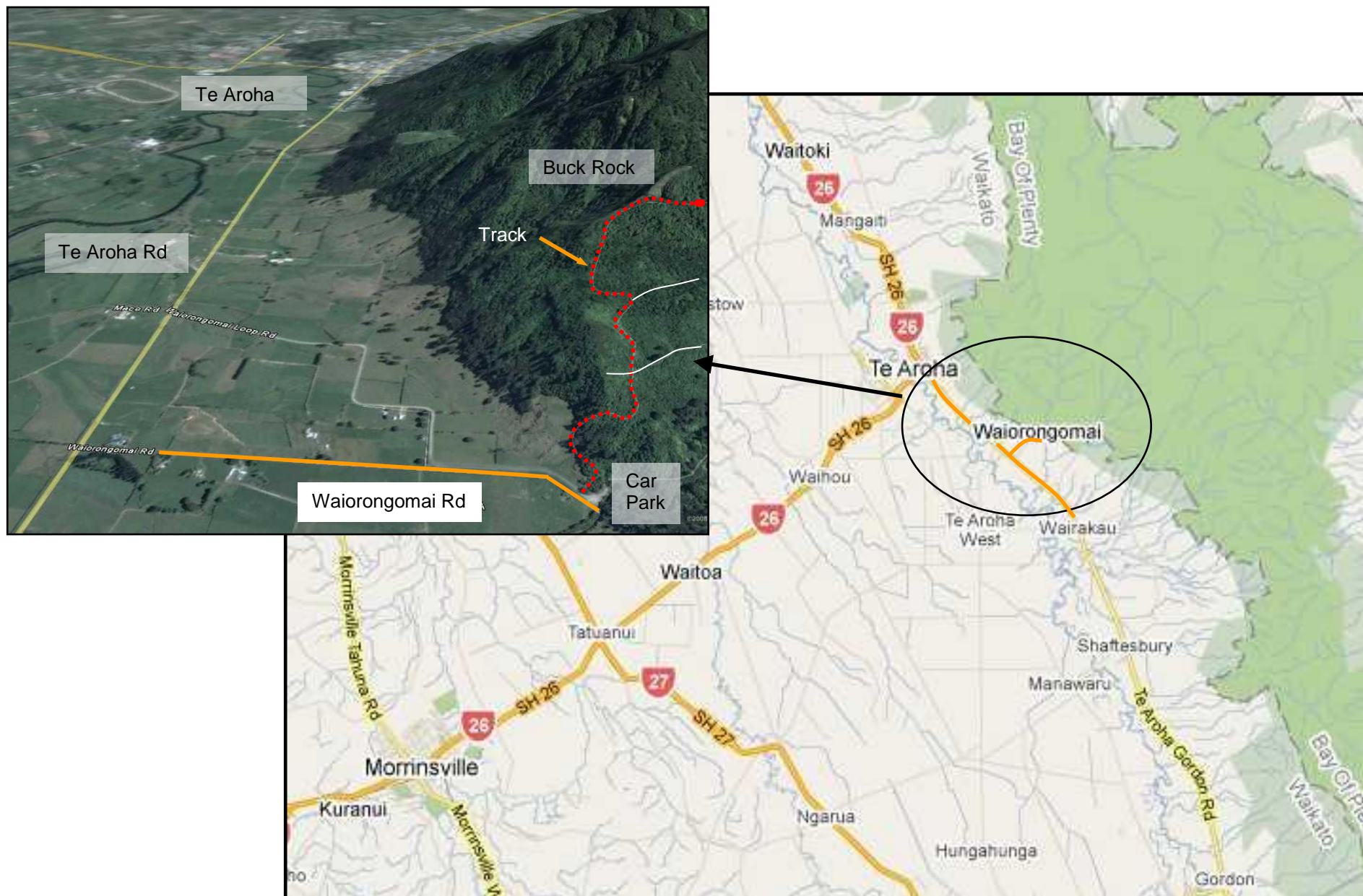
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Figure 1 – Map





## BUCK ROCK Main Cliff

The track meets the cliff at the line of Première and this area has the highest concentration of routes to date. Continue west along the base of the cliff to the far left hand end. From left to right

### **Arete Route (15)**

Exact location unknown but at least one early ascent was made by members of the Auckland Rock Group in the early 1970's. Later ascents were also made by Roger Greene around 1990 while he was teaching in New Zealand.

### **\*Midnight Lichening (17) 60m**

*Pitch 1:* As for Midnight summer dream. DBC 15m.

*Pitch 2:* From Double Bolt belay on top of rib, step left and follow bolts back up and right to reach a large ledge. DBC belay & 13 bolts. Can be done as 1 long pitch with care to avoid excess rope drag or 2 pitches. Abseil down line of "Bolt Clinic" 60m.

*John & Kelsey Montgomery 1/April/17*

### **\*Midnight Summer Dream (17) 80m**

The route starts up an obvious right facing corner then continues up a groove and face. Originally done in 3 pitch's, it was re-bolted in 2016 and the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 pitch's are now normally climbed as one. Most abseil back down from the 2<sup>nd</sup> belay point without doing the 3<sup>rd</sup> trad pitch.

*Pitch 1 (16) 15m:* Start up the corner on the right of the rib, then move left onto the rib. Good holds up to a belay ledge. DBC.

*Pitch 2 (17) 40:* Climb the groove to the right then up face to left. Climb right of overhang at top to DBC belay on edge. Most parties abseil off from this point. 60m down line of "Bolt Clinic".

*Pitch 3 – TRAD.* Continue on easier, but vegetated, ground to the top of the ridge, then traverse right and up a final small wall. 25m.

*Grant Pearson & Jeff Hall 25-Apr-1987*

*Pitch's 1 and 2 Rebolted and climbed in 2016 by*

*Cliff Ellery 16/Oct/16*

### **\*Bolt Clinic (24) 50m**

*Pitch 1 (24) 20m:* Climb the overhang wall just to the left of JAJA. Start as for JAJA but at the 3<sup>rd</sup> bolt move left and climb the overhanging butress. Extend the next 3 bolts. Crux is low down on the overhang but a rest is hard to come by higher up. 8 bolts DBC belay.

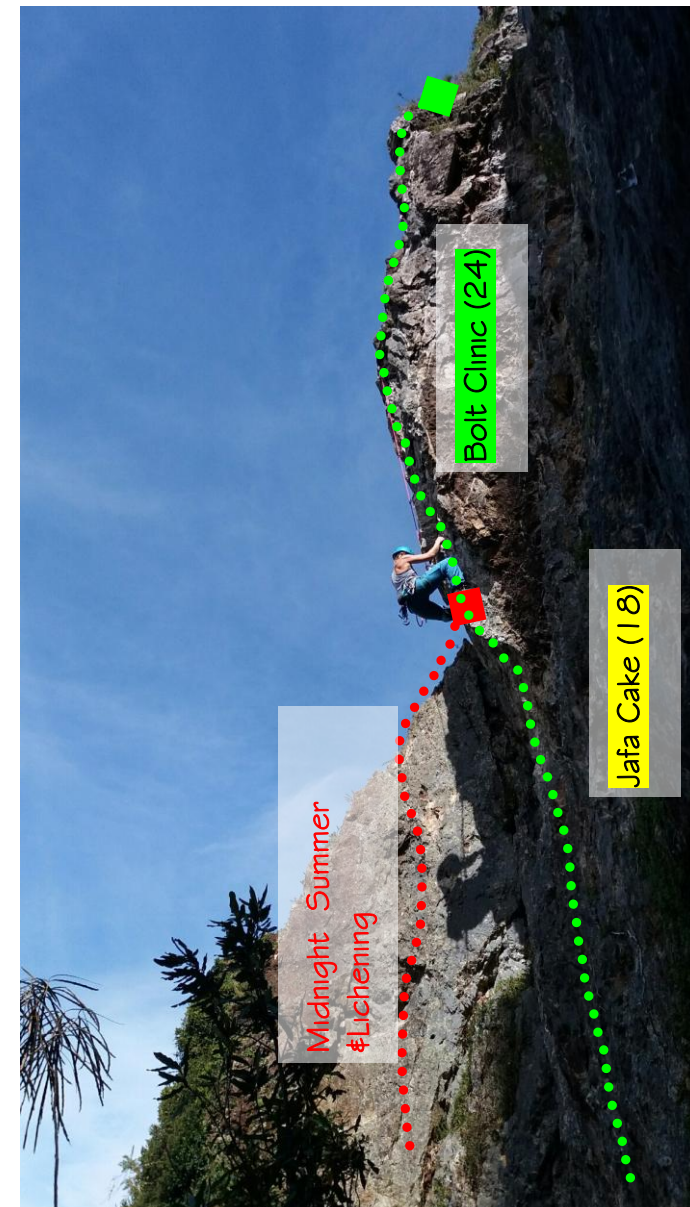
*Pitch 2 (18) 30m:* Although considerably easier than the 1<sup>st</sup> pitch the 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch is well worth an ascent. Pleasant climbing on large crystal lined pockets. 9 Bolts and shares the DBC of Midnight Summer dream.

*Cliff Ellery & Jess Dobson 19-Mar-2017*

Photo Topo-1 : Midnight Summer – Bolt Clinic

Kelsey Montgomery on Bolt Clinic.

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**\*\*Jafa cake (18) 55 m**

*Pitch 1 (18)* 25m Starts up the right facing corner. Then move right and climb the face staying just right of the right overhanging corner. Just below the large ledge move right (crux) onto the face and climb up onto the ledge. Move across to the right end of the ledge and climb the corner past 2 more bolts to a ledge and DB belay (9 Bolts]

*Cliff Ellery Jess Dobson Mar 2015*

*Pitch 2 (17)* 30m Climb the low angle face and left facing corner above the belay. Steady climbing all the way at about grade 17 to a ledge system 10m below the top of the crag and a DBC belay (10 bolts). 55m abseil to the ground

*Cliff Ellery, Anna, Foo. April 2015*

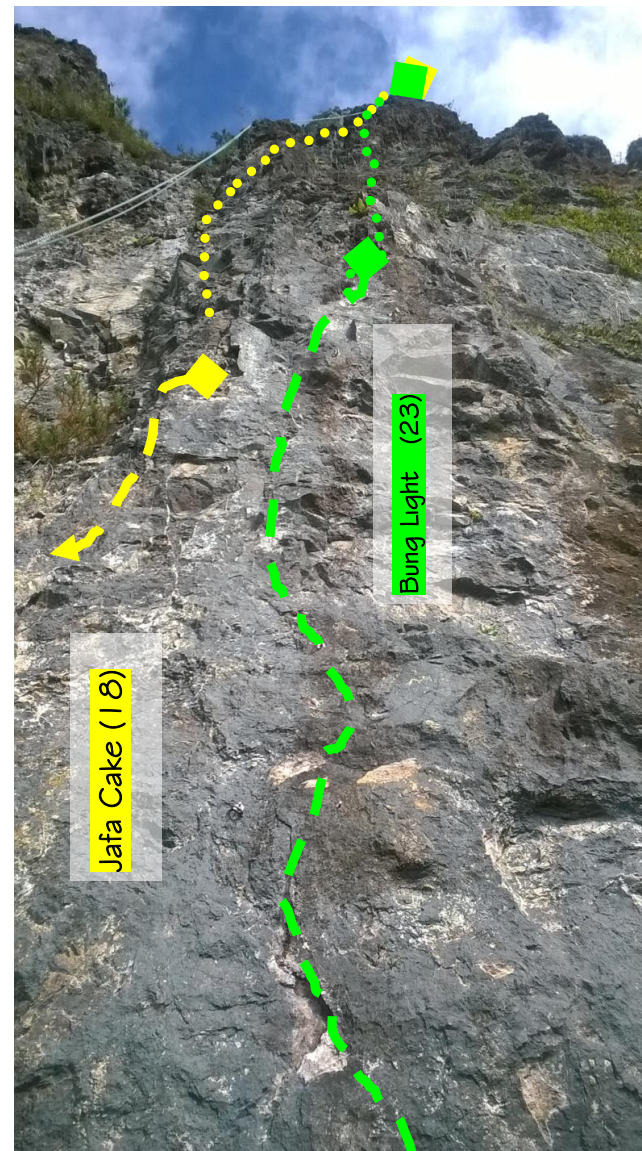
**\*\* Bung Light (23) 55 m**

*Pitch 1 (23)* 25m Climbs the grey flat face at the left hand end of the crag. Climb the face on small crimps and side pulls. Big move to 3<sup>rd</sup> bolt then move left and continue up using small arête. Cross back right at the 5<sup>th</sup> bolt. Continue up steep ground on a series of big ledges to DB belay (10 Bolts]

*Stephan Geissdoerfer, Cliff Ellery Feb 2014*

*Pitch 2 (22)* 30m From the belay, climb the right facing and right tending corner. Steep sustained climbing until a move left can be made at the top of the buttress. From here climb the groove of Jafa Cake past 3 more bolts to the DBC belay of Jafa Cake. Descent is by Abseil 55m.

*Cliff Ellery and Jess Dobson March 2014*

**Photo Topo-2: Jafa Cake & Bung Light**



### **Demons of Bosh (19) 60 m**

*Pitch 1 (19).* Traverse out left on a rata covered ledge to the first bolt, then move up and left to the second bolt. From here the line of bolts heads straight up the face however the climbing does weave its way up the line of weakness. DBC belay just left of the large ledge and belay of Power of Persuasion. (10 Bolts)

*Pitch 2 (15).* Step back left then climb the groove to the roof, traverse left around the roof and then up the groove, easy climbing to top. (Pro 5 bolts)

*Kevin Barrat, Richard Knott 2005.*

### \* **The Power of Persuasion (22) 60m**

*Pitch 1 (22) 30m.* Start just right of *Demo of Bosh*. Climb up the right side of the small cave then move left across the lip of cave onto the wall. Steady climbing with a couple of steep sections (crux's) lands you on the belay ledge of *Climba Sutra*. From here step left clip the bolt and climb the steep arête up to the DBC belay (14 bolts).

*Brian Mercer April 2012 (re bolted 2014)*

*Pitch 2 (22) 30m.* Climb the steep ground straight above the belay (1st Crux) then move left past 2 more bolts till you cross the line of Demons of Bosh. Continue straight up then pull in to the overhanging groove just below the roof. Pull through the roof and then continue up easy ground to the top of the cliff.

*Cliff Ellery and Jess Dobson Feb 2014*

### \*\* **Climba Sutra (20) 25m**

Climbs the white rock underneath the large roof system. Follow the line of bolts out to the left hand end of the roof. From here powerful but delightful moves lead through the small roof. Continue up the steep ground above to the DBC belay. (Pro 8 bolts)

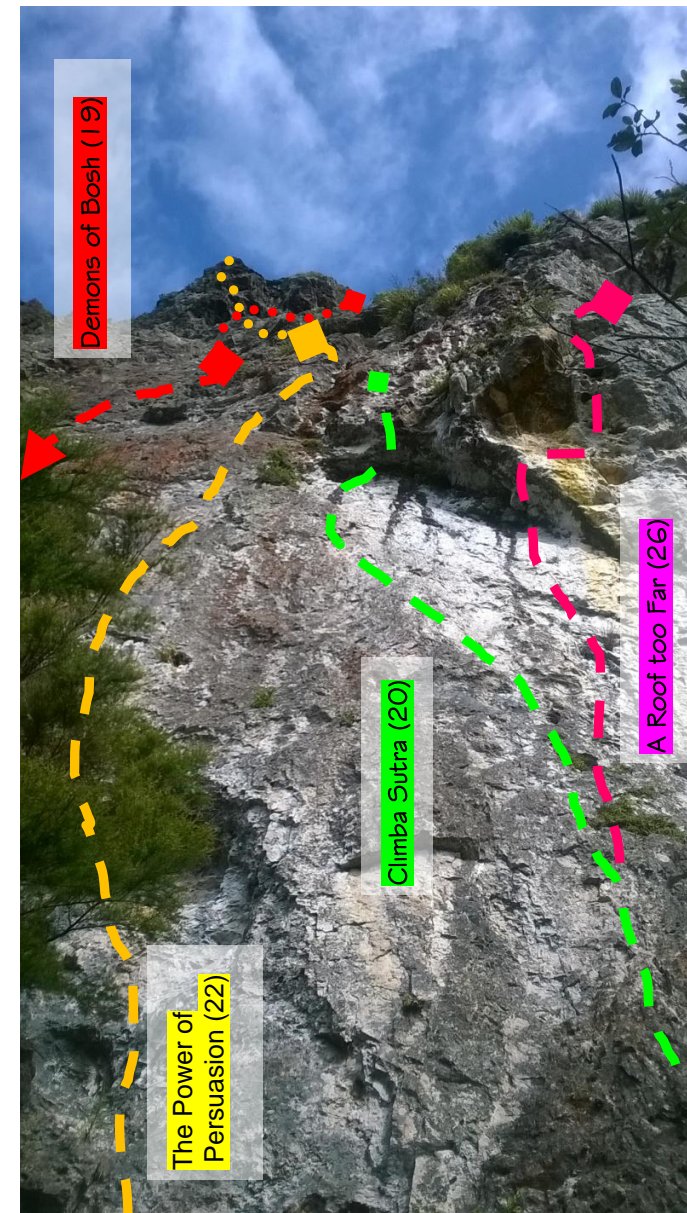
*Brian Mercer and Cliff Ellery, 21 Feb 2010*

### \*\* **A Roof too Far (26) 25m**

Start as for Climba Sutra then after the first bolt climb straight up the wall to the roof system above. Clip the 6th bolt laying away off the left arête then pull on to over hanging face between the 2 roofs, Move right (crux) and climb the steep pocket face right of the roof. Continue up too ledge system at half height. The fixed karabiner at the 8<sup>th</sup> bolts is to help clean your quick draws on the way down. (10 bolts DBC belay)

*Cliff Ellery, 1 May 2016*

**Photo Topo-3: Demo Bosh to A Roof to Far**



**Pioneer Route (15) 12m**

A 2 bolt climb lead "on site" to gain access to the belay ledge of Buckle and Au Reviour. (Pro: 2 bolt, Wires, Cams DBC belay). *Stephen Barratt 2005.*

The next 3 routes start at for Buckle, and the following 4 as for Age Concern

**Buckle (17) 12m**

Climb straight up the buttress directly below the roof to the belay of Pioneer Route. (Pro 7 bolts) . The next 2 route start from the 6<sup>th</sup> bolt of Buckle *Cliff Ellery, Madeleine Van Den Braak and Dylan Ball, 21 Feb 2010*

**Under Pressure (26) 25m**

Having climbed Buckle stay left and blast through the roof. (Pro 4 bolts). *Rich Morgan*

**Third World Issues (23) 25m**

Having climbed Buckle stay left as for Under Pressure but continue to traverse to the left instead of mantling on to the ledge, this means that you clip the bolts of the line when they are at waist height. From there you follow a bunch of big flat edges and crimps up to a throw for an undercling then power over to the juggy slab. Rope drag is pretty bad so you would need to extend some draws (Pro bolts). *Daniel Kripper June 2013*

**Age Concern (16/18) 20m**

Climb the deep groove, at the 6<sup>th</sup> bolt move left to the belay of Buckle for a delightful grade 15 or continue up and right past 2 more bolts to join the finishing groove of Au Revoir. (Pro 9 bolts) *Bryce and Wendy Martin, Cliff and Jamie 16 Jan 2012.*

**Buckle the Trend (16/23/16) 45m**

*Pitch 1 (16)* Climb Buckle to 1<sup>st</sup> Belay. (Pro Bolts)

*Pitch 2 (23).* Climb out left and up crack to left hand end of. Traverse right under roof on good jams and gear until it all runs out at the right hand end. Arrange the best pro you can, then go for it over the lip. You need to have strong willpower not to clip the bolts. (Pro Trad)

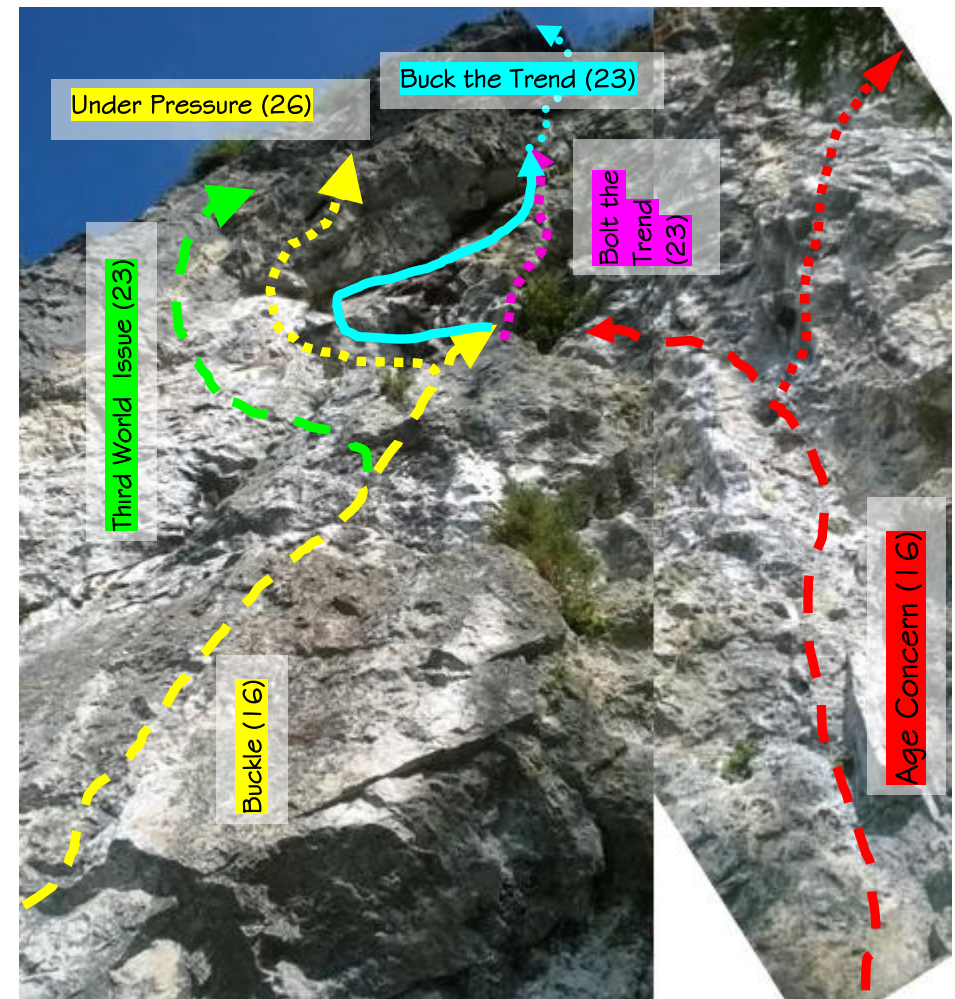
*Pitch 3 (16).* Climb the crack system right of the belay and follow this past the right hand end of the upper roof. Climb crack and groove system exiting out left at the top to a DBC belay. (Pro Trad)

*Cliff Ellery, Jess Dobson 4 March 2018.*

**Bolt the Trend (23) 25m**

Climb age concern then continue then continue up steep ground above to the right hand off roof. Wedge yourself in under the roof, clip the bolt then pull over the lip and up to the ledge and DB belay. (Pro 5 bolts)

*Cliff Ellery, Brian Mercer 4 Feb 2018.*

**Photo Topo-4: Third world to Age Concern**



The next 3 routes all start at the same point.

\* **Au Revoir (19) 25m**

Climb the blunt arete and steep face. Move left near the top and climb the red rock and groove to the DBC Belay. (Pro 6 bolts) *Kevin Barratt 2005*

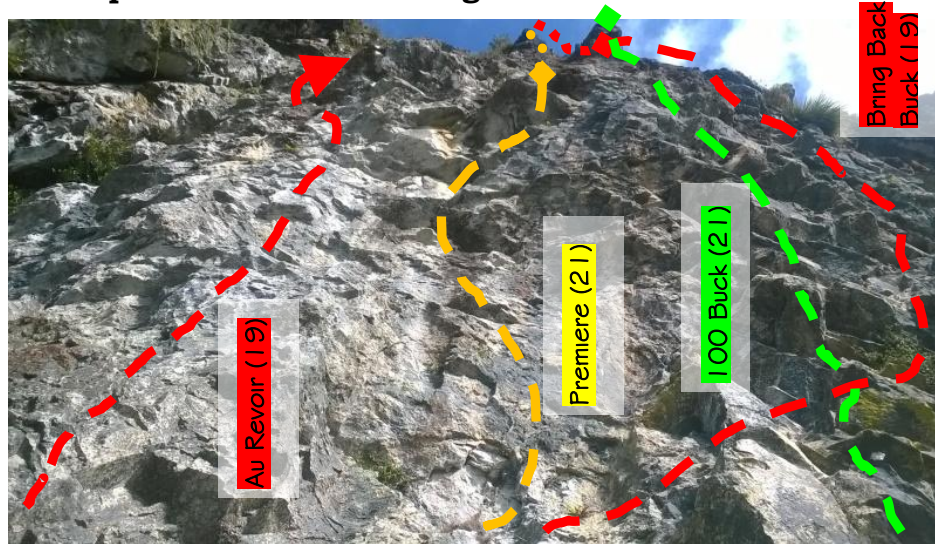
\*\*\* **Première (22) 50m**

*Pitch 1(22) 25m.* Climb up the low angle ramp past one bolt then move left to second bolt and blast up the steep ground above. Getting to and past the 3<sup>rd</sup> bolt is the crux, however the move through the roof takes a bit of commitment. DBC Belay 6 bolts. *Stephen Barratt 2006*

*Pitch 2 (21) 25m.* Move right and climb the corner then move left at second bolts onto the wall. Climb the wall and blunt arête above, do not move right into groove of Bring Back Buck. Continue up steep arête on big holds to the DBC belay of Bring Back Buck. 8 Bolts, 50m abseil to base.

*Cliff Ellery, Jess Dobson Feb 2014*

**Photo Topo-5: Au Revoir to Bring Back Buck**



\* **Bring Back Buck (19) 50m**

*Pitch 1 (19) 30m.* Start as for *Premiere* but stay right after first bolt. Clip second bolt then traverse right above the roof past the 3<sup>rd</sup> bolt to the large ledge (crux). From here climb up the steep groove, move right at the last bolt then up the ramp to DBC belay. (Pro: 8 bolts). *Cliff Ellery, Brian Mercer, Dylan Ball 2009*

*Pitch 2 (19) 20m.* Climb the face then bridge groove. 8 bolts, DBC belay.

*Cliff Ellery & Rachel Mayne. Dec 2009*

\*\* **100 Buck (23) 50m**

*Pitch 1 (21) 30m.* Start 2m right of *Premiere* and cuts across the line of “Bring Back Buck” (at 3<sup>rd</sup> bolt) climbing the steep ground between these 2 routes. Steep climbing on positive holds low down is followed by a slapping and heel hocking excursion up the outside of the pillar. From the top of the pillar descend 1m to the belay of BBB. (Pro: 10 bolts)

*Pitch 2 (23) 20m.* Climb the face

*Cliff Ellery & Jess Dobson 1 Feb 2016*

\*\* **Pass the Buck (20) 80m**

*Pitch 1 (20) 25m.* Start 10m right of BBB. Climb groove right of lower roof. Continue up the face tending right then through blocky ground to the belay ledge and DCB belay. (Pro: 8 bolts) *Cliff Ellery, Dylan. Dec 2009*

*Pitch 2 (20) 25m.* Climb up the ledge to the right of the belay, clip second bolt then move left and power through the over hanging rock to the large sloping ledge. Traverse right and then up through groove (awkward). Follow the groove moving right at the top to the DBC belay. (Pro 7 bolts) *Cliff Ellery & Rachel Mayne 22 Dec 2009*

*Pitch 3 (18) 30m.* An Alpine experience. Climb up the steep rock onto a ledge system, then climb the face and left arête. At the top of the arête move right and scramble up slab to double bolt belay. *Cliff Ellery & Brian Mercer 22 Dec 2010*

10m to the right. Follow a rough track up and right to a ledge system and the line of

\* **Red line “n” it at buck (17, 21) 30m**

*Pitch 1 (17) 25m.* Climb the face and groove to the belay ledge of “Pass the Buck”. (pro 6 bolts) *Richard Knott, Stewart Hope. 21 Feb 2010.*

*Pitch 2 (21) 10m.* Clip the first bolt of Pass Buck then move right on easy ground to 2nd bolt. Lay off the right arête and pull up through steep ground to DBC belay. 4 bolts.

\*\* **Bucking Fumblies (20) 65m**

*Pitch 1 20 25m .* Climb the face to the left of the arete, up through the deep groove. At the 9<sup>th</sup> bolt move right onto the arete and up to the belay. Scramble up ledge to belay. 10 Bolts DB belay. *Cliff Ellery Richard Knot March 2011.*

*Pitch 2 (17/21) 25m .* The left hand line goes at 17 and takes the groove above the belay. The right hand line (21) climbs the steep white face out right. At the 4<sup>th</sup> bolt both lines meet and easy climbing up face above then through steep groove, to large ledge out right and DBC 8 bolts DCB, *Cliff Ellery, Bryan Mercer, Mark Ashurst 31 July 2011.*

*Pitch 3 (19) 15m .* Climb steep groove to large flake in roof. Climb through this breaking right at the top. Move up and right then scramble up to belay and DCB, *Cliff Ellery, Bryan Mercer 2012.*



Photo Topo 6a & b Buck Rock

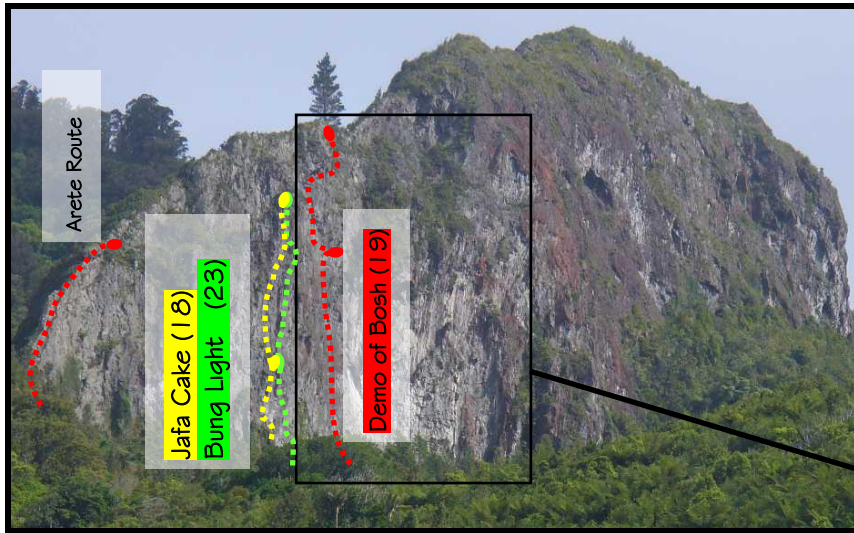
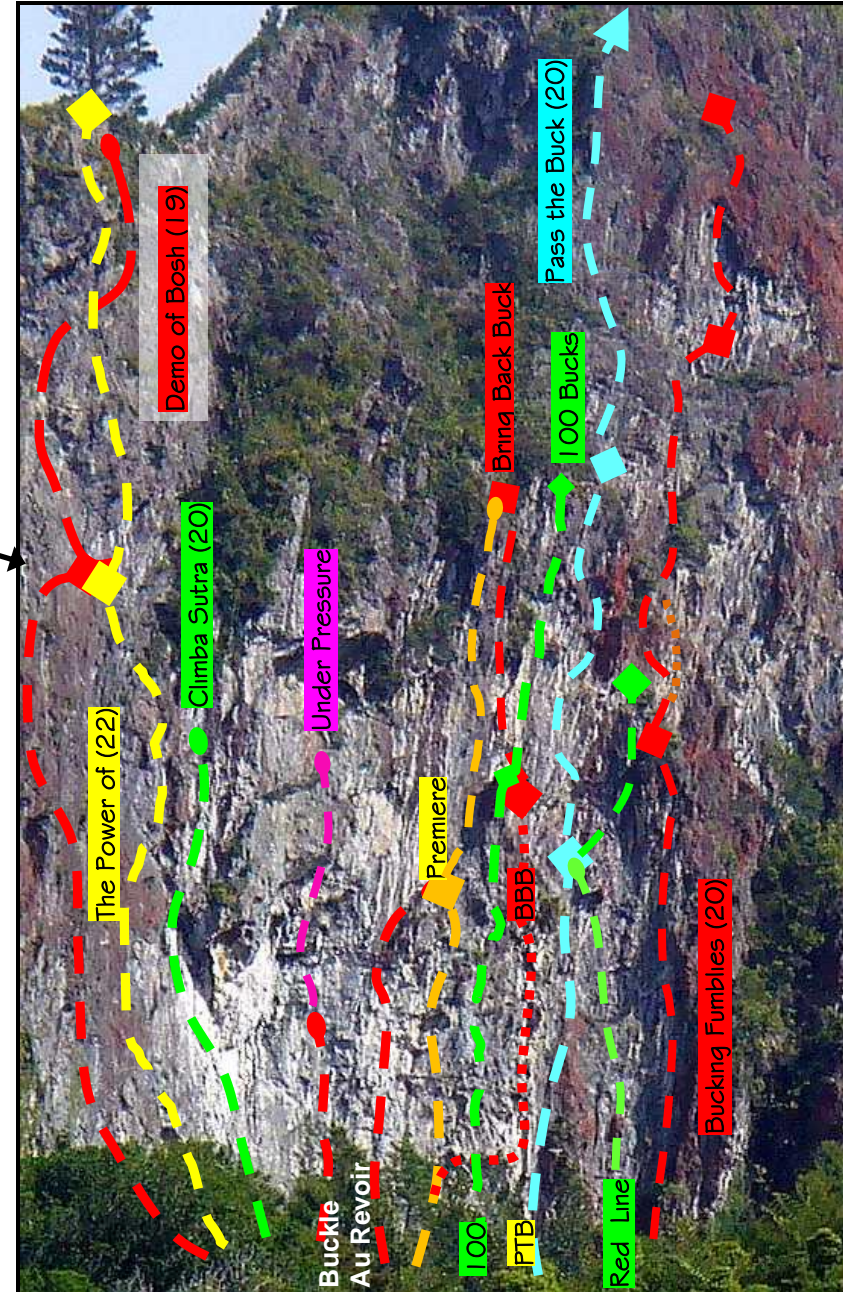
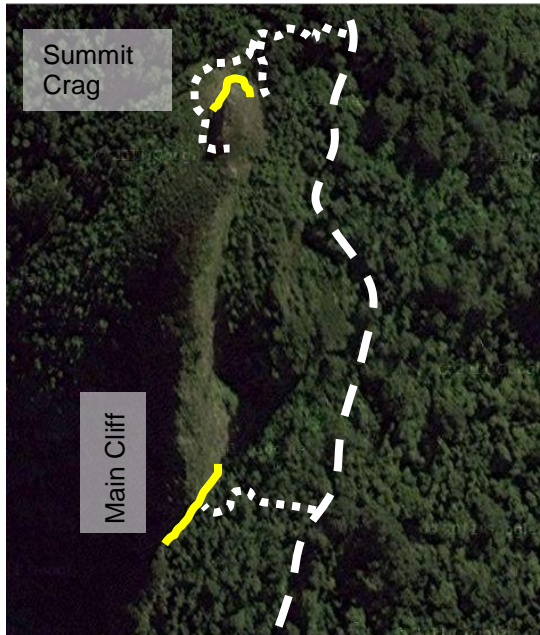


Photo Topo 6 – Buck Aerial view





From the point the access track meet the mine shaft. Scramble up rough a track to the right. Climb a fixed rope to ledge and base of;

\*\*\***Big Stone (20 - 22) 60m**

*Pitch 1 21 30m* . A steep start, move left then right at the lip. Continue up easier ground into the left groove, bridge up the groove then move right onto face. Difficult climbing up the steep head wall to the large ledge and DBC belay, (10 bolts).

Once you have brought your climbing partner up to the belay move left across the ledge scale the small fin of rock and drop into the large alcove and the belay for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pitch.

*Pitch 2 (22) 30m*. Bloody outrageous climbing some of the best at the crag. Climb up through the steep groove clip the bolt under the roof then move out left grab the horn and mantel into the upper groove. At the top of the groove move right onto head wall and then climb straight up past a series of ledges . Note, the top 2 bolts can be obscured from view from below, DBC 10 bolts.

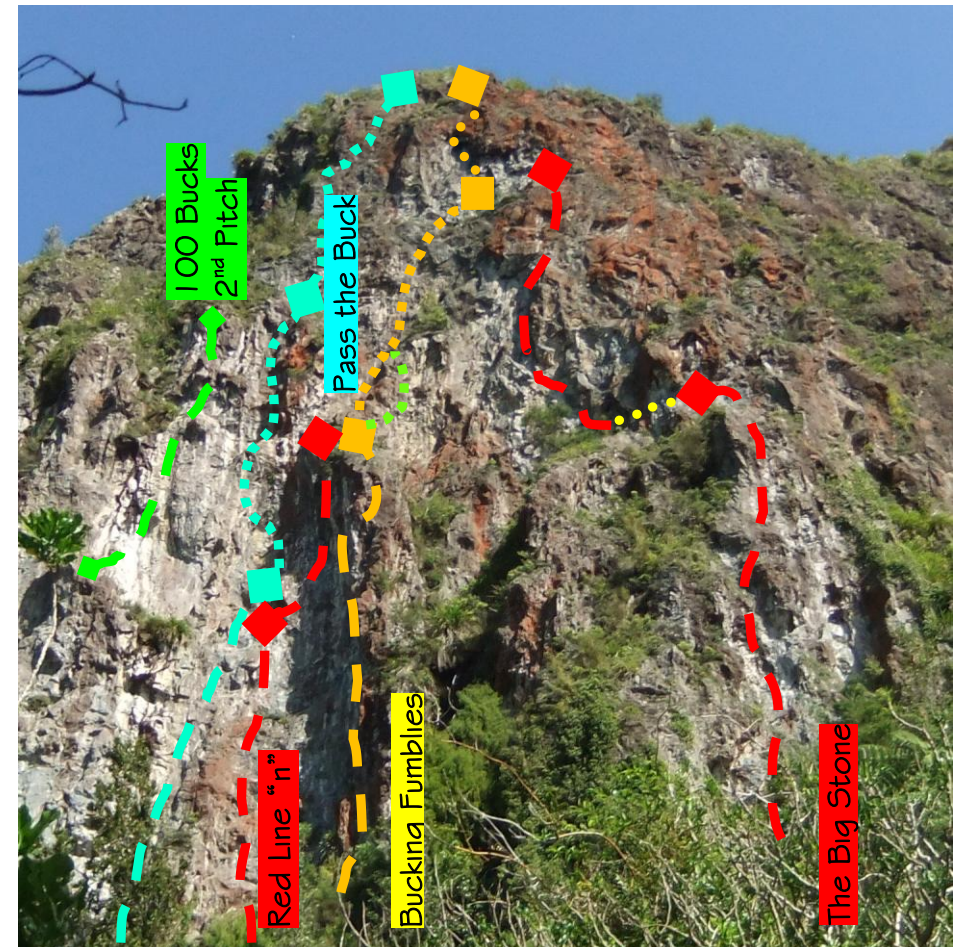
*Cliff Ellery, Jess Dobson & Bryan Mercer Jan 2014.*

Either descend down Big Stone or move left to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Belay pitch of Bucking Fumblies and descend this line.



Cliff Ellery on "Au Revoir"

Photo Topo 7, Buck Rock Right hand end



### Summit Crag

Take the Buck Rock summit track. Near the top you come across a clearing with a north facing buttress. A great little crag, with clean hard rock, that gets soaked in winter sun. From left to right.

#### \*\* Instant gratification (21) 15m

Climb the face to right of the left arte. At the top bolt, move onto the arête and up to the DBC belay on the top of the crag. 6 bolts.

*Cliff Ellery September 2010*

#### \*\* Fight or Flight (24) 15m

Climb the centre face of the face, at the 4<sup>th</sup> bolts move left and climb directly up the steep head wall (crux). DBC belay, 6 bolts.

*Cliff Ellery Jan 2012*

#### \*\* The Earl of Buckingham (19) 15m

The right hand line. Move right near top. 7 bolts BDC belay.

*Cliff Ellery, Mark Ashurst, Brian Mercer, July 31 2011.*

#### Left Crack Route (16) 15m

The left crack line, Trad with belay on the summit ridge

*Craig Miller, Sarah Painter 2000*

#### Right diagonal Crack Route (16) 10m

The right crack line, Trad with belay on the summit ridge

*Craig Miller, Sarah Painter 2000*

#### \* Renee (20) 12m

A small climb with a big view. Climb the buttress at the right hand end of the crag. On closer inspection this easy looking line overhangs 2 m. 5 bolts and a Double bolt Belay

*Cliff Ellery & Jess Dobson March 2014*

### Summit South East Wall

Further down the Buck Rock Summit track, just before the last steep climb to the summit crag, stay low and continue around the edge of the cliff. The main south east face has a bush covered cave at the bass, on the far left hand end is;

#### Wind Swept (22) 40m

Pitch 1 (18) 8m Climb the short face and belay in the mouth of the cave. DBC belay. *Cliff Ellery & Rachael Mayne , July 2012.*

Pitch 2 (22) 27m From the cave move right pull onto the overhanging arete clip the bolt then power your way up (crux 1). The line continues up the face tending right, a difficult move to gain the top bolt (crux 2), then pull over the lip to a BDC belay. 35m abseil to ground! *Cliff Ellery, Brian Mercer, Jan 2012*

Topo 8: Buck Rock summit Crag

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