



## Krish's Corner

I had only been in Alice Springs for five weeks when Dan asked if I fancied a trip out to Trephina to try a line that he had his eye on. Having been there only the week before, and really liking the area I jumped at the chance. The line Dan was looking at was uncharacteristically long for the centre; a 120m crack that split the right hand pinnacle of the bluff from ground to summit.

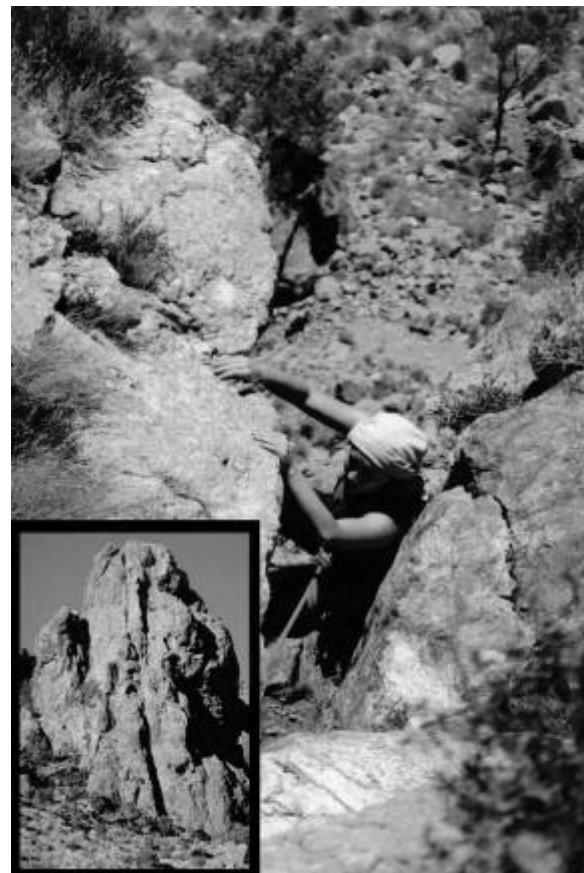
We were not the first to climb this line. Nor is it likely that Neil Melan climbed it first, if at all, when they tried the scary Trephina Buttress Route (15) in 1996, as on both lines pitons have been found. Not having previously been recorded we decided to call it Direct Crack Line (14), a name that now seems bland and not worthy of such a line.

Inevitably, being so long, it comes with some loose rock and run out sections but these are confined to relatively small sections. More surprising, for a line that seems to be easy to follow when looking at it from the ground, is the climbs ability to throw people off line when starting pitch three. Several parties have gone adrift to the right into less than comfortable territory.

What I like about this climb is that it is a great introduction into true multi-pitch climbing, and how it manages to keep a consistent grade for most of the 120m. There is no escape unless you are prepared to abseil back down, so go prepared for the long haul and take food and water. The views from the top are exhilarating and the scramble back down is fun, all making for a big day out.

### It's all in the mind.

I can see the next hold, it looks good. My feet are well placed but to reach that hold I will need to move them to less stable ground. It looks a hard move, a long way to reach. Anticipation wells up inside me. I check the last runner one more time, it's down below my waist but looks OK. I prepare myself to move off.



Crimping down hard on my right hand. My left foot moves to a small edge. It seems good, so I push up. My right foot flags on nothing, and I reach up with my left hand. My mind screams out "just a bit higher please". Then I remember to twist my hips and point that left foot down to maximise my reach. My fingers curl round the hold. I have no choice now, and I pull up. I kid myself the hold I went for is good.

The crimp for my right hand is now useless and my right foot is scratching around to find purchase. I feel like I will barn door, my nerves are on edge. My left forearm starts to ache, maybe the hold wasn't really all that good. I can't reverse the move so I concentrate and manage to settle my right foot on something, it feels small but I don't look down. This left hand hold is really feeling insecure now, I try not to panic. I search with my right hand and the best I find is a what seems like a slight side pull, it is small but the best I can get.

Suddenly it hits me, as my left forearm begins to throbs, my feet are well above the small number 2 wire, my last placement. Was it any good? My memory of it is fading. I have a vague memory of taking my time to find the placement. Selecting the right wire. I think I made sure it was well seated, so it couldn't pop out. But now I can't remember if I turned the gates of both carabiners, to minimise the chance of them opening on a fall? My mind is drifting I need to concentrate.

My left arm is burning now and my fingers are starting to sweat. I think I can't hold on and the right hand hold is hopeless if my left gives out. No chance of chalking up. My mind again adds more uncertainty to my position. Are my feet feel really turning in their boots? Is the belayer watching me carefully? How much slack has been allowed out and how far could I possibly fall?

I look around and spot a runner. It's within reach of my right hand but will my left forearm pump out before I place it? I fumble for gear, my left forearm is really hurting now. Finding the wires, I place the first one I grasp hold of. Damn, how I love first time placements that work. I quickly take an extender off my harness and clip it onto the wire, my left foreman is about to give up, I'm sure of it. I curl my fingers round that left hand hold as hard as I can, it hurts so much. I reach for the rope, I shout for slack as I pull it up and clip the runner.....

Suddenly I have strength, the left hand hold seem bigger and more positive, my feet are on solid placements, even the right handhold seems good, everything is OK again. It's a game of nerves, keeping your head is everything. My mind is riding on the high, wasn't that a wild move, what a great time I am having, damn I'm good. Then I look up at the next move, oh god that looks impossible!



## And they say we are crazy.....

Have you ever gone to Ormiston and just lay down in the river and looked up at the crag? If you watch for long enough, or possibly at the right time of the day, you may be lucky enough to see a head pop up and look down at you. The top of the crag at Ormiston is one of the many homes of the true Central Australian rock legends, the Black Footed Rock wallabies.

On occasion, I have noticed these wallabies watching us get engrossed in our rock antics. I remember Lisa taking on one of her early leads. Maybe because she was quite nervous, a wallaby took particular care to keep an eye on her. As Lisa weaved her way up the line she moved in and out of sight of the wallaby. The wallaby would in turn shuffle this way and that to make sure it could watch the whole charade. I would like to think the wallaby simply wanted to make sure she was safe, and then slipped away to one of its many hiding places.

Other times the roles have swapped, as we have watched these elegant and graceful animals provide a show that is exciting and very unnerving. They jump around and play chase high up above the ground seemingly oblivious of their precarious perches and airy antics, which could so easily end in disaster but never seems to. They make our efforts look clumsy and childish, but who you may ask is more crazy?



