



Wellington Dam Quarry Climbing Guide

Krish Seewraj

Warning about Rock Climbing

This climbing guide has been developed to help climbers find out what climbs have been recorded and that is all. The information given is true and accurate to the best of the author's knowledge.

Remember climbing is an adventure sport and as such you may be seriously injured or killed. The grades and descriptions may be subject to debate. Therefore, be warned that you must exercise your own judgment with regard to the route location, description, difficulty and your ability to safely protect yourself from the risks of rock climbing.

You should not depend on any information gleaned from this mini-guide for your personal safety. Your safety depends on your own experience, equipment and climbing skill. If you have any doubt as to your ability to safely attempt any route described in this mini-guide, do not attempt it. When you use this mini-guide, you accept and acknowledge the risk that it may contain errors. The responsibility for your safety is solely yours.



Steve Sterling focusing hard, as you often have to do at this place, at the finale of Savage Sausage Sniffer (20)

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Front cover image: Mikie Howe taking to the air on the aptly named Flight Simulator (21)

Rear cover image: Tomski Yuval learning about the deceptive holds at the quarry on A Walk in Central Park (19)

Introduction

The first routes established here were in the late 90s by Amanda Watts, Adam Coffee, Glen Henderson, Jeremy Scott, Boyd McNamara, Matt Tiller and Ross Weiter. It was not until 2012 that it gained attention again, with a selection of very fine routes being provided by Dan Meester, Kym Hartley, Jonas Hollingworth, Chris Wiggins, and Ryan Doe. Ten years later more worthy lines were added by Krish Seewraj.

Wellington Dam Quarry has in the past been given an unjustified bad rap, which may put some people off from sampling the fine climbs available here. Previous comment has been made to suggest the bolt placements at the Quarry were given little thought resulting in the potential for some nasty falls. In the opinion of the author, and based on comment from local and visiting climbers the bolts have in most cases been well placed. While there are some tenuous clips to be made they are usually in keeping with the grade and often have a reasonable landing. In the few circumstances this is not the case this is indicated in the route description and the use of the following symbol .

It is probably more truthful to say that most people are not used to the different rock and/or style of climbing and subsequently find it intimidating. Once you pick a line the bolts are easy enough to locate but route finding can be tricky. Simply looking up gives little away. So when you first sample the joys to be had here it is advisable to climb a few grades lower than your comfort zone, at least until you get used to the place.

Location and Access

The Quarry is a 200km drive from Perth and is a day use area for visitors to Wellington Dam. The place is equipped with benches, shelters, BBQs and toilets, the latter being located in the main car park above the Quarry. A café exists a few minutes walk from the crag and is open seven days a week during school holidays & Thursday to Monday non school holidays. With a car park in the Quarry itself you can literally stumble out of your car and onto the crag. During summer the faces are shaded till mid/late morning and in winter they are shaded most of the day. While in winter some areas seep a fair bit on a dry day there is usually a good selection of routes to choose from.



To get there turn right off the Collie Highway onto Wellington Dam Road (approx 17km before Collie). Follow Wellington Dam Road for 12km and after passing the café descend a steep incline before turning right into the Quarry car park.

The Quarry is situated in the Wellington National Park and managed by DBCA. A permit and costs of \$6/person/day is required for groups and individuals who use the facilities for abseiling. For more information contact the Collie district DBCA office (9735 1988). At the time of publishing this guide recreational climbers could use the area without needing to get a permit or informing DBCA of their intentions. This may change should the crag start to become overcrowded and it is best to check the latest information with the Collie district DBCA office or the CAWA website or by emailing cawa@climberswa.asn.au.

Future Development

If anyone would like to share their past or future experiences in this area, details of new or listed routes as well as any reference issues, typos or mistakes in this mini-guide email them to kermit@iinet.net.au.

Rock, Protection & Grading

The Quarry offers sheer walls and slabs up to 20m high comprising a compact, and for the most part solid granite. Being a place set up for the general public most of the loose rock was removed when the quarrying activities ceased but care is still required, especially when climbing near the obvious blast holes.

In addition to the fine selection of routes there is a long low level traverse from the extreme ends of Left Wall through to Right Wall. Going left to right there are a number of sections going at about 23, going right to left is slightly trickier.

The routes here tend to be deceptively steep and tricky and become a lot harder even after only a short shower. All lines are fully equipped with either ring bolts or fixed hangers, except for three routes which require traditional gear. Most routes are also equipped with lower-offs but there are some for which you need to top out. These usually have anchors available which are set back from the face. So eight quick draws and a fifty meter rope will get you up nearly all the lines.

Naturally, each individual will have their own idea of the accuracy of the grade, which will be influenced by personal preference and skill. The climbing here is a little different to other places in Western Australia and as such may seem under-graded to some visitors. Despite there being a line of bolts to follow route finding is not straight forward and the steep terrain and fingery holds can quickly sap your strength. On your first visit here it is recommended to climb several grades below your comfort zone at least until you get used to the place. As with any crag it is best to read the description carefully, look at the climb and make your own judgment.

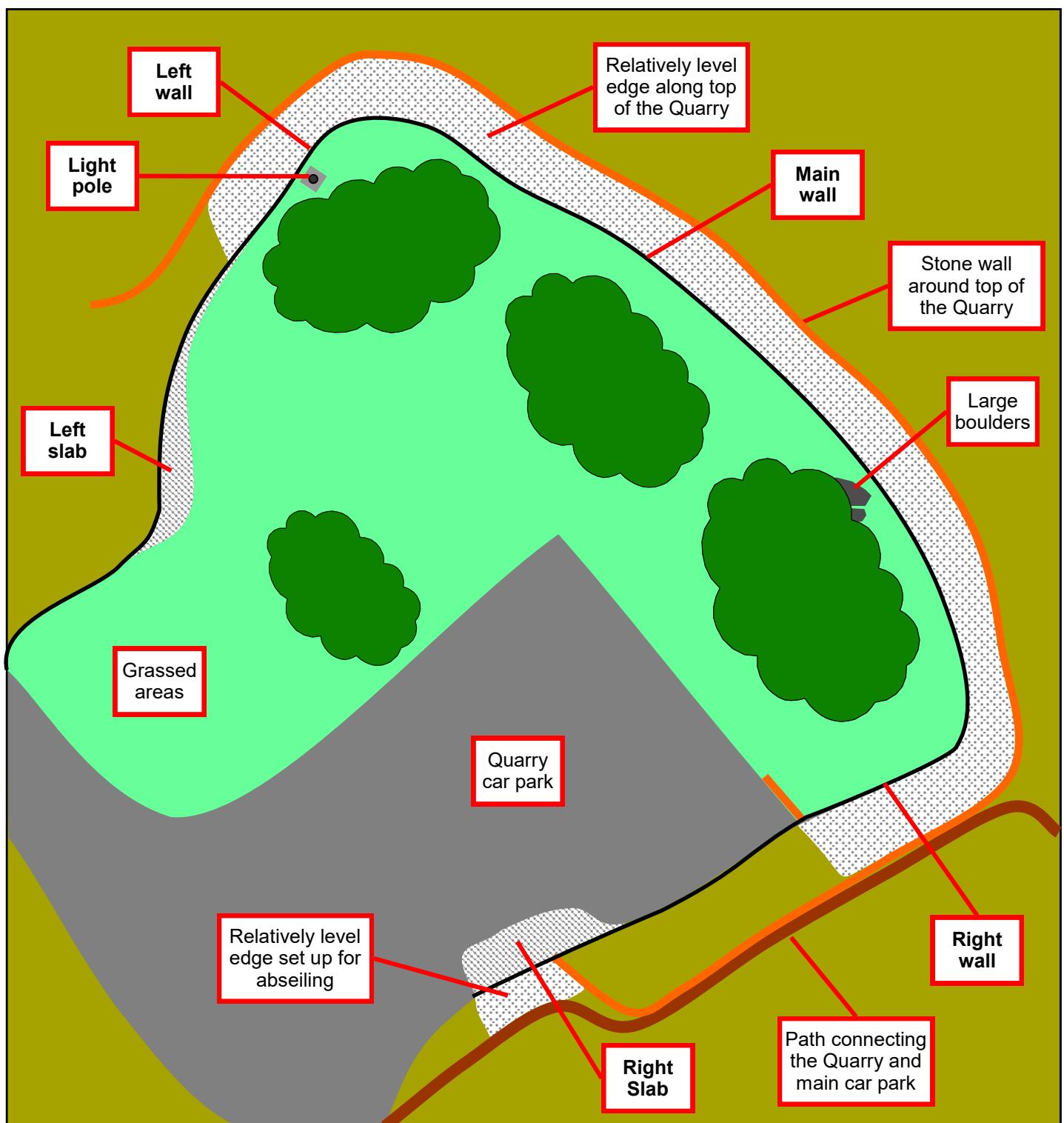
Stars have been given to those climbs considered the best value. However, this was a tough call as all the lines in the Quarry have their own charm. When you warm to this place you are unlikely to find a climb that doesn't provide you with a rewarding and satisfying feeling.

The following abbreviations have been used BR (bolt runner), SBB (single bolt belay), DBB (double bolt belay) &  (potential for a nasty fall so be carefull).

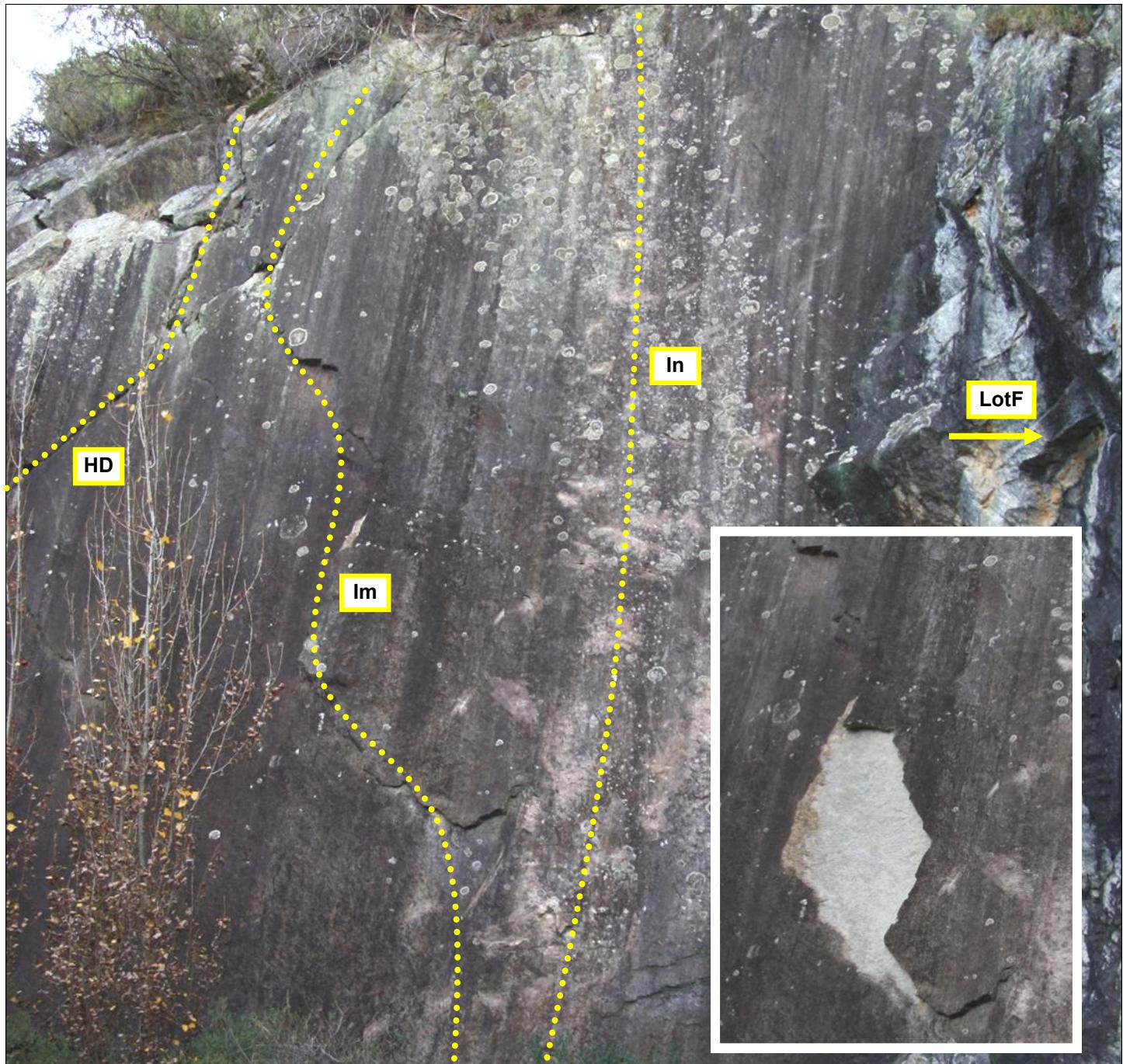


Crag Topo

Routes have been presented in this mini guide from left to right looking at the crag, i.e. a clockwise direction starting from the left slab. To make things a little easier the crag has been split into five sections. While images of each section have been taken it is difficult to capture all of the main wall clearly due to the larger trees. Some of the route locations are therefore a little obscure on the topo, but locating the routes from the ground should not pose any difficulties.



Left Slab



Heavenly Delight (12m, 17)

Follow the lowest right trending crack to the left of the slab with a tricky traverse at 8m. After the crack ends go straight up to a tree belay after which a bush bash descent awaits you. Ross Weiter & Gemma Waldendorp 1997

Impossible (12m, 27)

This line was described as shockingly slick and with an unforgettable crux move, trending leftwards up the hollow flake. However, a large portion of this flake detached itself in late 2012 (as the insert image shows). The line has not been attempted since and the grade is likely to have gone up. The potential for the flake to shed more sections is high so it is best to pass this climb by. (3BR & SBB). Boyd McNamara 1998

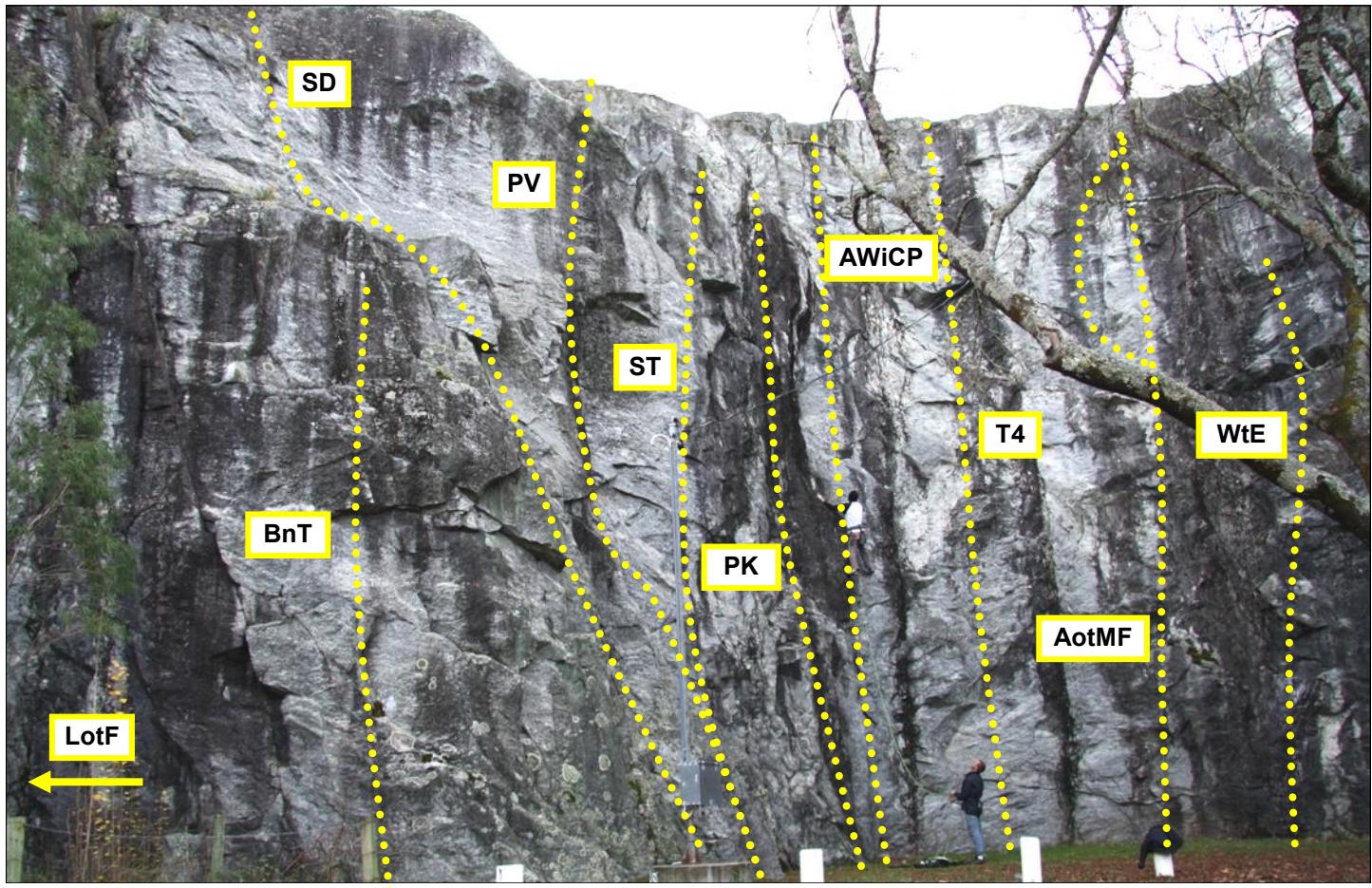
Infeasible (12m, 24)

The right hand line of the slick slab taking a direct path passing thin edges and slippery smears (3BR & SBB). Boyd McNamara 1998

Lord of the Flies (12m, 21)

Up the pleasant slab a few meters left of the fence to the steep headwall where the holds get smaller and pace quickens providing a memorable crux sequence in a great position (4BR & DBB). Jonas Hollingworth 2014

Left Wall & left end of Main Wall



Block 'n' Tackle (8m, 15)

A short climb that starts left of the light pole providing a good introduction to the deceptiveness of the Quarry with a crux move that makes you think twice before committing (2BR & DBB). 1997

Scraggly Daggly (20m, 11)

From the light pole follow the left tending crack system. While there is plenty of gear it does have a couple of moves that will make you wonder. Steve Sterling & Leanne Dunlop 2014

Pole Voltz (18m, 22)*

Starts to the right of the light pole heading up a right facing ramp and corner. Once established above the corner balance up the steepening wall on extremely thin holds before surmounting the lip (5BR & DBB - out of sight until you are over the lip). Dan Meester 2012

Shock Therapy (18m, 20)

This line shares the first BR of PV and heads directly up the steep face providing good but strenuous climbing, which doesn't let up till the end (3BR & DBB). Dan Meester 2012

Pocket Knife (18m, 19)

Not as straight forward as it may look. Follow the black wall to an alcove, from here tricky moves lead to good holds and the belay (4BR & DBB). Chris Wiggins & Ryan Doe 2014

A Walk in Central Park (20m, 19)

The left wall of the corner provides good climbing that gets progressively harder. For best value tackle the crux by heading straight up and avoid the loose rock around the blast hole. Top out and use the anchors set back from the face (4BR & DBB). Dan Meester & Duncan 2012

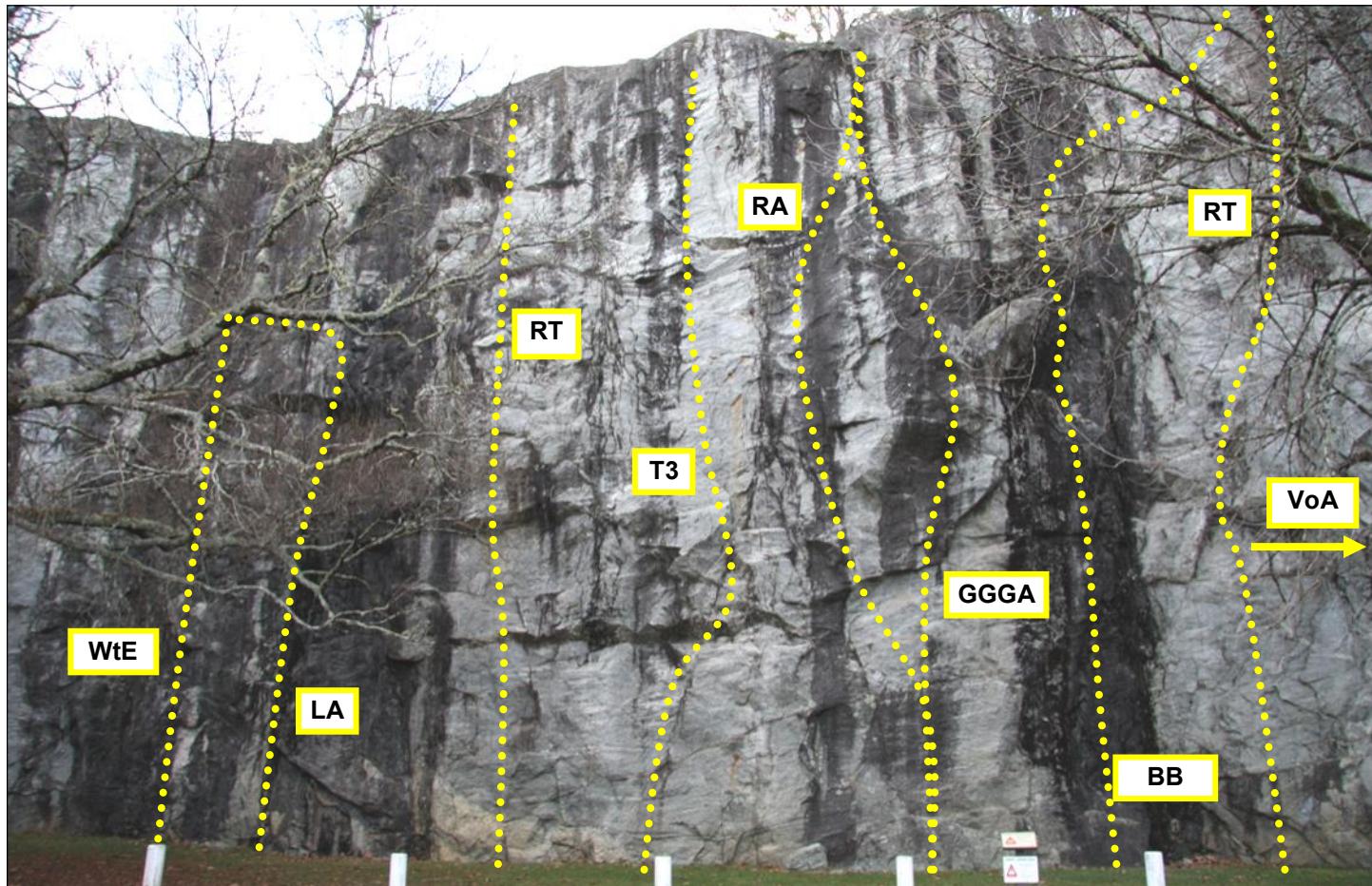
T4 (20m, 24)**

A brilliant route up the wall immediately right of the corner. It takes time to find the best holds to use and there are no real rests so make sure you are up for the challenge. Top out and use the anchors set back from the face (5BR & DBB). 1997

Attack of the March Flies (18m, 22)**

An excellent sustained line that has several differing and exciting crux moves. The final section past the last two BR offers a right and slightly easier left variant (5BR & DBB). Dan Meester 2012

Main Wall



Welcome to Edges (14m, 18)

Prior to recent development this was the standard line for warming up on. Being shorter than most of the harder lines, having holds that are uncharacteristically large and friendly for the place and probably a little easy at the grade it never fully prepares you for your next chosen climb (4BR & DBB). 1997

Loose Association (20m, 20)

A nice line but easy at the grade. As there are no lower-offs and no anchors at the top of the crag a D-shackle has been placed on the last BR or alternatively it is possible to traverse left to use the lower-offs on WTE (4BR). 1997

Rock Therapy (20m, 21)

Tricky moves between good rests makes for a fun line, and then just when you think you've got it in the bag it bites back (5BR & DBB). Dan Meester 2013

T3 (18m, 23)**

A very worthy line that is sure to provide a fully body work out. After a tricky section through the overhang rest up on the ledge before starting up the next section which doesn't let up till the very end (6BR & DBB). 1997 (extended by one BR to reach the top of the crag by Dan Meester in 2013)

Red Alert (18m, 22)

This line has some long reaches and loose rock. It plays more with your head than your strength and the final section has been made less scary and dangerous by the addition of an extra BR that was added by Kym Hartley in 2013 (6BR & DBB). 1997

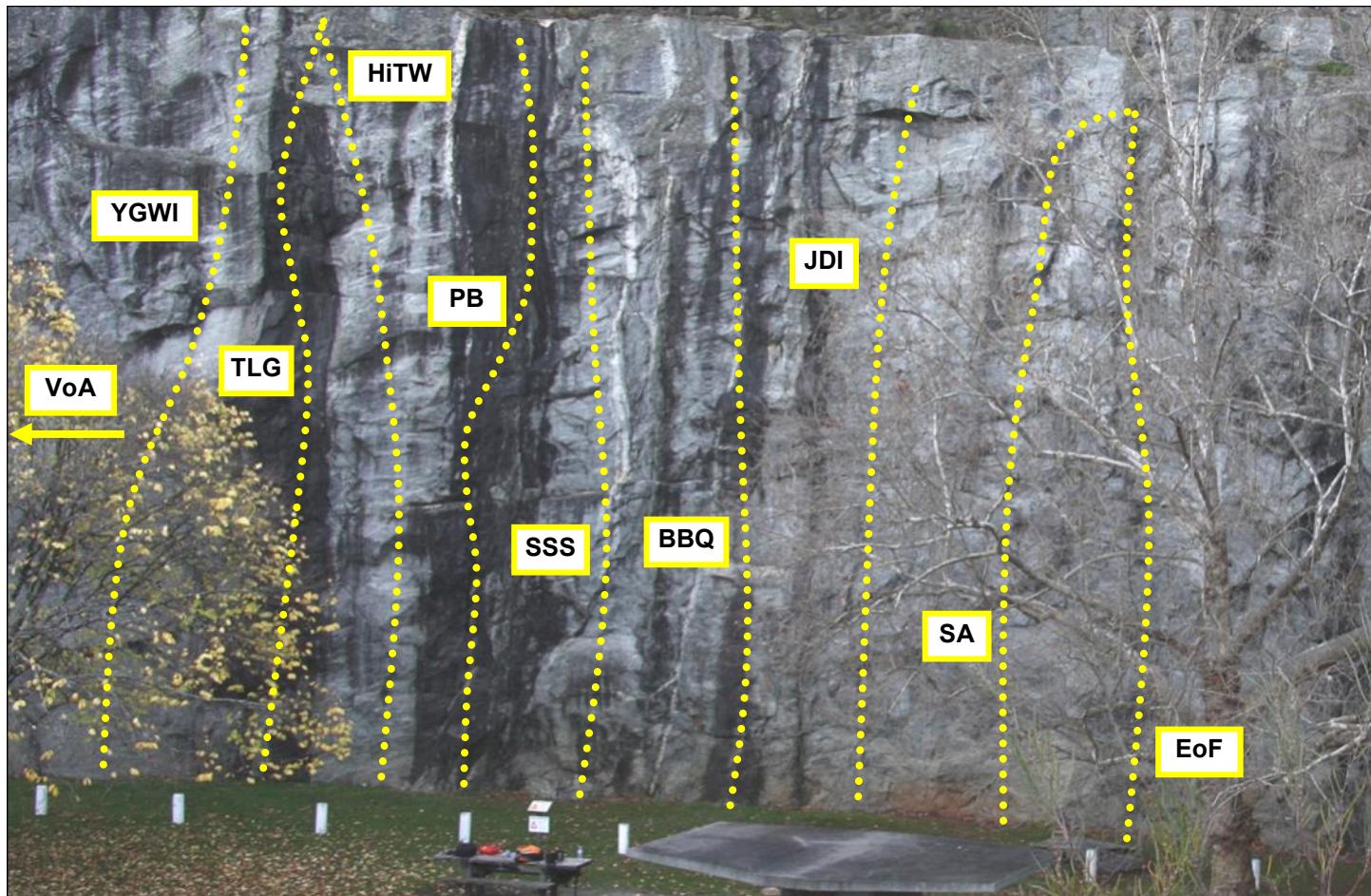
Go, Go Gadget Arms! (18m, 23)*

Shares the first and fifth BR of RA. There are some memorable positions on juggy holds up the start to this climb but after the roof it gets thin, balance and run out. If you got what it takes this climb worth the effort (6BR & DBB). 1997

Building Bridges (20m, 20)

This route sports the most number of bolts! The left wall of the black gully offers a steep line with some unusually features and moves for the dam, finishing with a rising rightward traverse to the anchors of RT. (7BRs & DBB). Krish Seewraj, Chris Howe 03/02/23

Main Wall



Raging Torrent (18m, 18)*

A hotly debated climb on The Crag due to the height of the first bolt and with many suggesting it is a grade 20, but if follow the original path and can find the holds it is an 18. Start immediately right of the central gully of the main wall, the climb takes a right trending line till half height from where it goes direct. A more traditional style is needed on this climb to make use of the features in the most efficient way (5BR & DBB). Kym Hartley & Krish Seewraj 2012

Victim Of Authority (18m, 19)

This climb makes you work to find the holds which then allow good but committing moves, after the third bolt trend right (5BR & DBB). Jonas Hollingworth 2014

You've Gotta Want It (18m, 23)

The name says it all! This outrageous climb comes complete with a very delicate technical sequence low down followed by two dead point moves that require full commitment (6BR & DBB). Dan Meester 2012

The Long Goodbye (18m, 22)*

A nicely sustained climb starting with delicate moves that lead to the bulging wall in the upper section of the black streak, from here the climbing gets strenuous (5BR & DBB). Ryan Doe & Chris Wiggins 2014

Hole in the Wall (18m, 22)

Fun climbing separated by a couple of big rest ledges. The crux is getting past the bulge on small holds once you find them (5BR & DBB). 1997

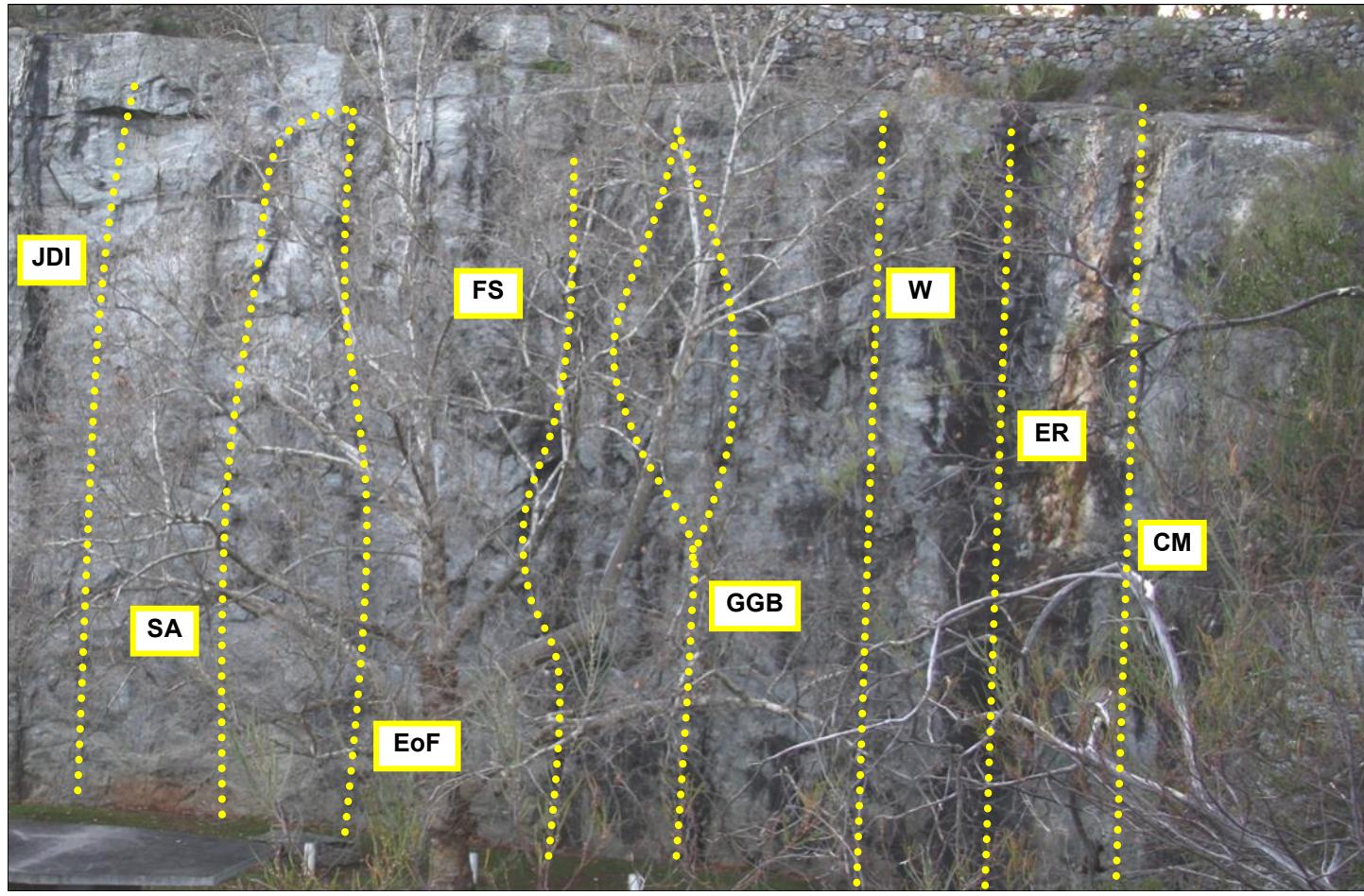
Peanut Brittle (18m, 21)

Weave your way up the black streak to make use of the best rock, which at times still feels brittle, to finish with an exciting finale (6BRs & DBB). Krish Seewraj, Chris Howe 03/02/23

Savage Sausage Sniffer (18m, 20)*

Hard at the grade even for the Quarry standards. The layback arête in the mid section is as good as it looks. Once you leave the ledge and head up the arête the pace keeps going until the very end (4BR & DBB). 1997

Main Wall



Barbie Q (18m, 19)

A very direct line up the wall but the question for almost every BR is do you go left or right, get it wrong and you may not have enough energy to finish the climb in the style it deserves (5BR & DBB). 1997

Just Do It (18m, 21)**

A deceptive start and finish joined by fine, and less steep climbing than any other route on the main wall. When you get towards the end just do it (5BR & DBB). 1997

Slay Away (16m, 22)*

Sustained and technical climbing with a hard crux and after you pass this you'll be asking yourself if your arms will hold out till the end. At the top traverse right to share the same DBB of EOF (6BR & DBB). 1997

Ear of Fear (16m, 22)***

Starting directly in front of the two large boulders this is the classic of the crag that is superb from start to finish. An airy technical and delicate move is required at the crux, which is then followed by extremely satisfying bridging up the right facing corner (5BR & DBB). 1997

Flight Simulator (16m, 21)

The first half of this climb is full on after which the pace eases considerably. Weave your way up towards the third BR, for which you'll need all your energy to hold on and clip to avoid considerable air time (4BR & DBB). 1997

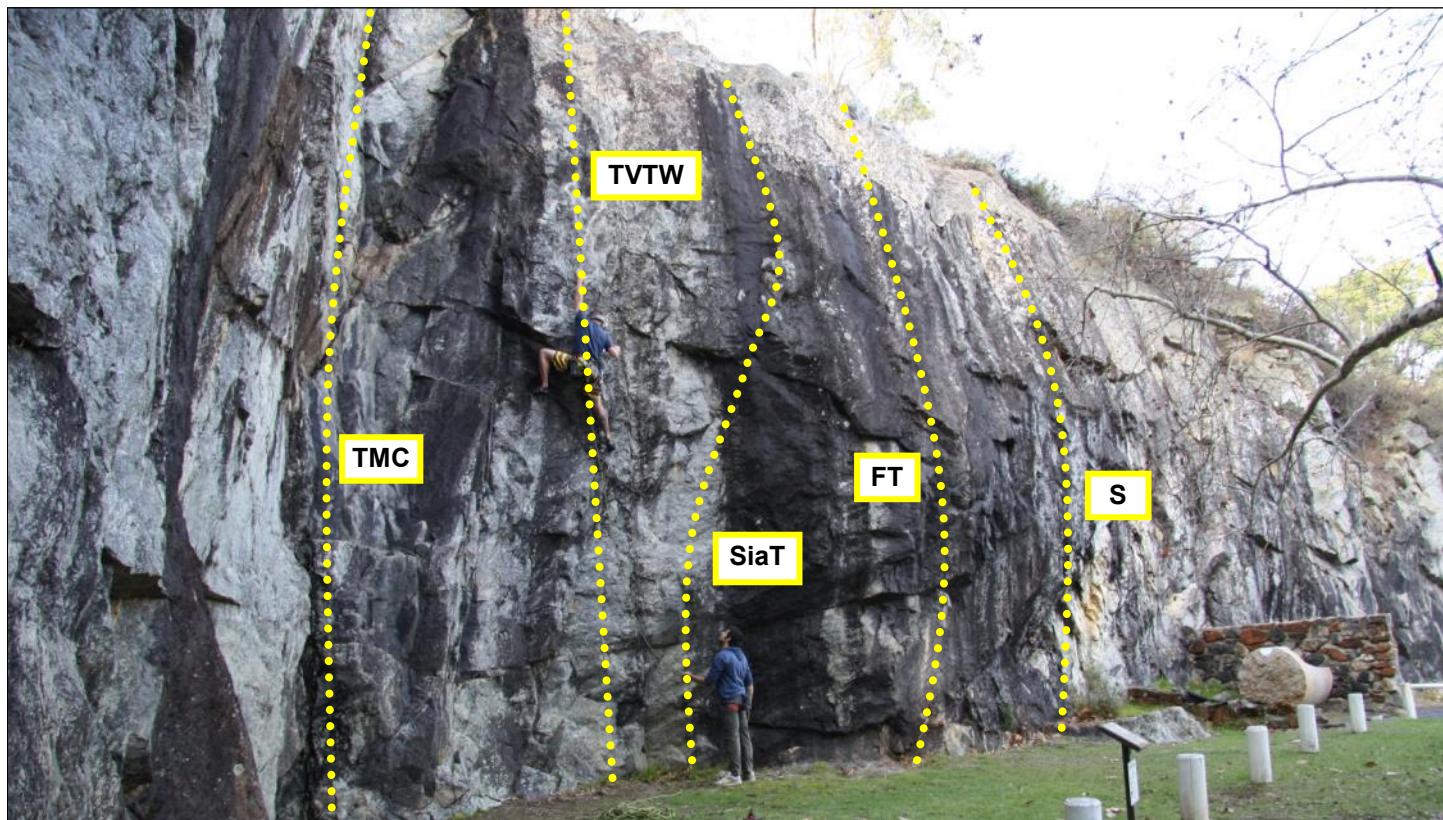
Gumby Goes Bolting (16m, 20/22)

This line has seen most discussion about bolt placements as the fourth and fifth BRs are almost level. However, this was probably purposely done to provide two lines. After the third BR step left and up the steep wall (20) or go straight over the bulge (22). Be warned, the fourth clip on both lines are somewhat off. (4BR & DBB). 1997

Wingspan (16m, 22)

As the name suggests reachy but with adequate rests between the harder sections, this climb goes right to the top and depending on your stature this climb may have more than one crux. Top out and use the anchors set back from the face (4BR & DBB). 1997

Right Wall



The next two lines are on the right end of **Main Wall**:

Ebonie Road (16m, 20)

A fierce line that tests if you are up for the challenge from the start. After the initial steep wall there is a good rest, take advantage of this before you tackle the second half where you need to keep searching for the right holds to use (4BR & DBB). Dan Meester 2012

Chasing Mason (16m, 23)

A strong line with a harder than it looks overhung lower section that provides the first of two fine technical crux sequences. Make sure you save some strength for the thin and fingery second crux (5BR & DBB). Dan Meester 2012

Climbs on **Right Wall**:

This Murky Corner (14m, 17)

Start up the easy corner but the climb earns its grade with a tricky mid section. While there is a DBB the climb can be extended by topping out with fine moves. There are no belay anchors set back from the face but the gate post is often used (3BR & DBB). 1997

Taj Vs The World (14m, 21)

The first line of BRs right of TMC looks innocent enough but with almost every move you wonder should I use this hold or find something better. The question is do they ever get any better and will it ever ease up. While the angle does eventually ease there is a long run out before you get to the lower-offs (3BR & DBB). Dan Meester 2012

Storm in a Teacup (14m, 18)

Nothing too serious, but try not to make a meal of the thought provoking move midway up (3BRs & DBB). Krish Seewraj, Chris Howe 03/02/23

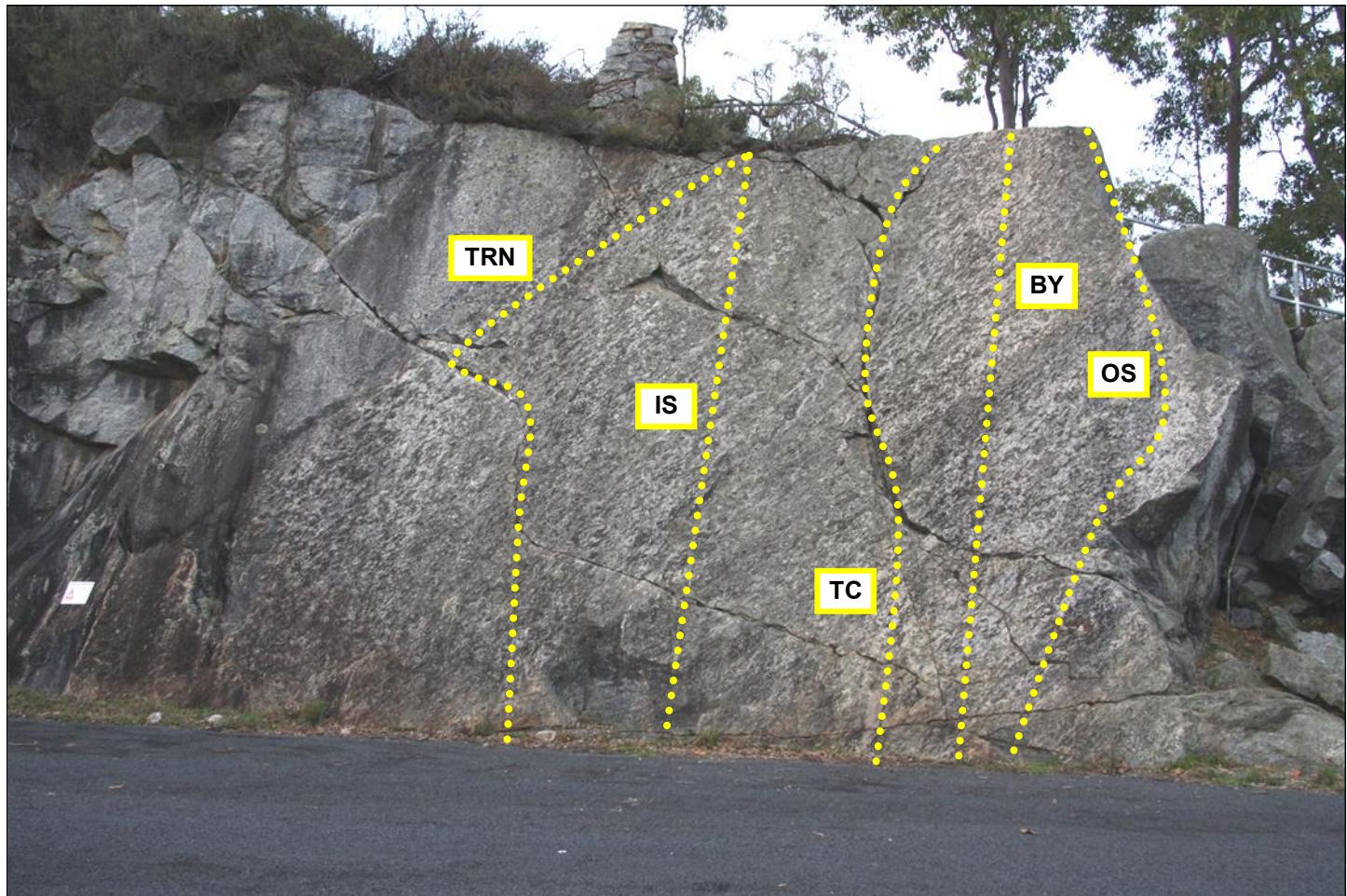
Full Tiller (14m, 22)*

The start of this climb is steep with great moves and sequences until the slab above is reached. The slab is never too hard but there is a very long run out to the top of the crag where anchors are set back from the face (3BR & DBB). Matt Tiller 1997

Silverback (10m, 21)

This climb starts with reasonable holds but is steep and sustained and has an extremely thin and fingery crux section (3BR & DBB). Kym Hartley 2012

Right Slab



The Roman's Nose (12m, 17)

Some small wires are recommended for this fine outing. Reach up to, and ascend the vertical crack. Step left to place your gear at the tip of the nostril before balancing your way up and right along the bridge of the nose to exit through the vegetation. A bold alternative start can be made from directly below the tip of the nostril, straight up the unprotected slab. Steve Sterling & Krish Seewraj 2013

Irish Stew (10m, 14)

Fun slab climbing past a BR above which there is gear in the horizontal break before exiting through the vegetation (1BR). Craig Ferguson & Dan Meester 2012

The Crack (10m, 12)

The central crack line offers small but adequate protection. Top out and use the anchors set back from the face (DBB). 1997

B Young (10m, 16)*

Keep the BRs on your right for some fine slab climbing that leads you into a false sense of security and then attempts to pull your legs away from you when you think you've made it. Top out and use the anchors set back from the face (2BR & DBB). Kym Hartley & Krish Seewraj 2012

Old School (10m, 14)

Shares the same BRs as BY but this time keeping them to your left. Head out right to the arête and ascend this with increasing difficulty. Top out and use the anchors set back from the face (2BR & DBB). Kym Hartley & Krish Seewraj 2012



Krish Seewraj enjoying some old school trad techniques to the bemusement of others on The Crack (12)



Pontus Sjöblom learning what it means to commit as he eyes the distant looking second bolt on Storm in a Teacup (18)



Mario De Decker showing that you can climb here even after a wet spell, just avoid the black stuff, on Slay Away (22)



Chris Howe reaching for not much on a route we regard as an old friend, until we start climbing it, Taj Vs The World (21)



And when it all gets too hard it's the perfect place to kick back with a brew, to allow the arms to recover



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