

# **MT STAPYLTON CAMPGROUND**

**40 CLIMBS WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF CAMP!**



**EDITED BY NEIL MONTEITH**

## Warning

Rock climbing is a dangerous sport. None of the information contained in this document has been verified. Treat all fixed gear with suspicion, route grades may be incorrect and the rock may be poor. The editors of this document take no responsibility for any injury arising from the use of this information. If there are mistakes in this guide then let the editor know by emailing [nmonteith@yahoo.com](mailto:nmonteith@yahoo.com)

## Introduction

You gotta love the lazy option! Instead of driving to some far flung part of the Grampians you can explore what is close to your coffee, tent and esky. This guide records the new development that has occurred in the hidden crags within walking distance of the Mt Stapylton Campground in the Northern Grampians of Western Victoria. Most of the better routes are steep bolted sport routes or easy short wall climbs on trad protection. The rock is coarse with a similar feel to the Blue Mountains and has patches of utter choss. If you are climbing on trad then take extra care as many of these routes have had limited repeats. If you want to clip bolts then this area is a great place to start your Grampians experience. Leave your bolt plates at home - almost everything here is ring-bolted.

## Access

To locate these crags from the carpark refer to the map on page 2 of this guide and individual pages for each crag.

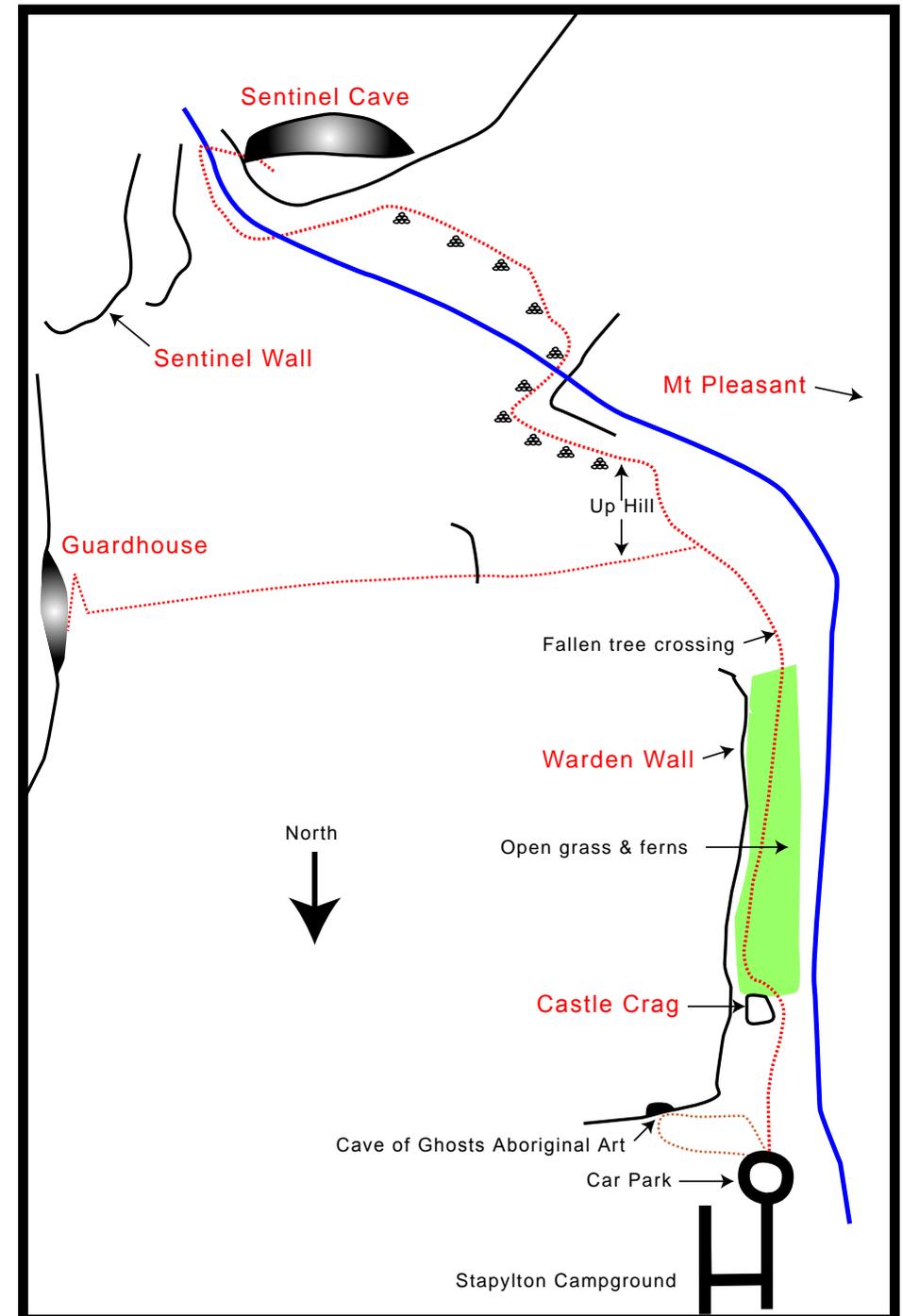
## Code of Conduct

Don't chip, don't litter, don't shit at the crag (use toilets at campground), don't swear near tourists, don't drill within earshot of the campsite and lastly respect the Aboriginal art site by keeping your grubby mitts off nearby rock.

## How To Read This Guide

This is a topo based guide that utilizes photos, symbols and diagrams. The symbols used in this guide are:

-  Route shown on photo topo
-  Route not shown on photo topo
-  Best route in the area. World class.
-  Very good quality and quite popular.
-  Good enough. Worth doing.
-  Warning - trad gear required
-  Downclimb or trad abseil descent
-  Walk off descent
-  Bolted lower-off anchor
-  Fixed hanger
-  Ringbolt



# Miniature Castle Crag

5 minute walk-in  
Afternoon sun  
Trad Protection

Located about 100m south of the Cave of Ghosts carpark. You walk past this obvious pillar on the way to the other crags in this area. This lozenge shaped outcrop would be useful for beginner to intermediate climbing instruction as it is within easy walking distance from the campsite, is about 12 metres high, has several good routes on reasonable rock offering natural protection, can be set up for abseiling, and can be down climbed at about grade 6 (about 2 metres right of the north arête on the west side). This pillar is now totally climbed out – don't even think about contriving a new route!

1



## Automatic Runway 6m 3

Easy corner nearest the carpark. Colin Mibus used this route for ascent/descent eons ago with his .22 to frighten bunnies.

2



## Lamington 10m 15

Climb up left edge of smooth grey wall on the west side (approximately 4m from north arête) through left end of overhangs to finish via right hand of two cracks. *Ben Wright, Nicky Eustace. 13.12.2003*

3



## Vanilla Slice 12m 18

Start in middle of west side and climb up slab and through weakness of main overhang (using hold up right) and finish through projecting shelf at top. *Ben Wright, Nicky Eustace. 13.12.2003*

4



## Ghoulies 12m 15

6m right of Automatic Runway. Through the overhang and up the corner. Marked by high white square. *Ian Welsby & Colin Mibus 17.11.1985*

5



## Rock Cookie 12m 13

Start at Ghoulies on the west side (1.5m left from the south arête) but move to the right through the middle and top bulges. *Jack Lewis, Ben Wright. 13.12.2003*

6



## Mince Pie 12m 19

Climb up just right of south arête to thin crack. *Ben Wright. 25.12.2003*

7



## Casper 12m 11

Six metres right of Ghoulies. Juggy line. *Ian Welsby, Colin Mibus 17.11.1989*

8



## Piece of Cake 7m 10

Crack on wall on east side approximately 4m left of north arête. *Nicky Eustace, Richard Eustace. 13.12.2003*

9



## Turkey Sandwich 25m 14

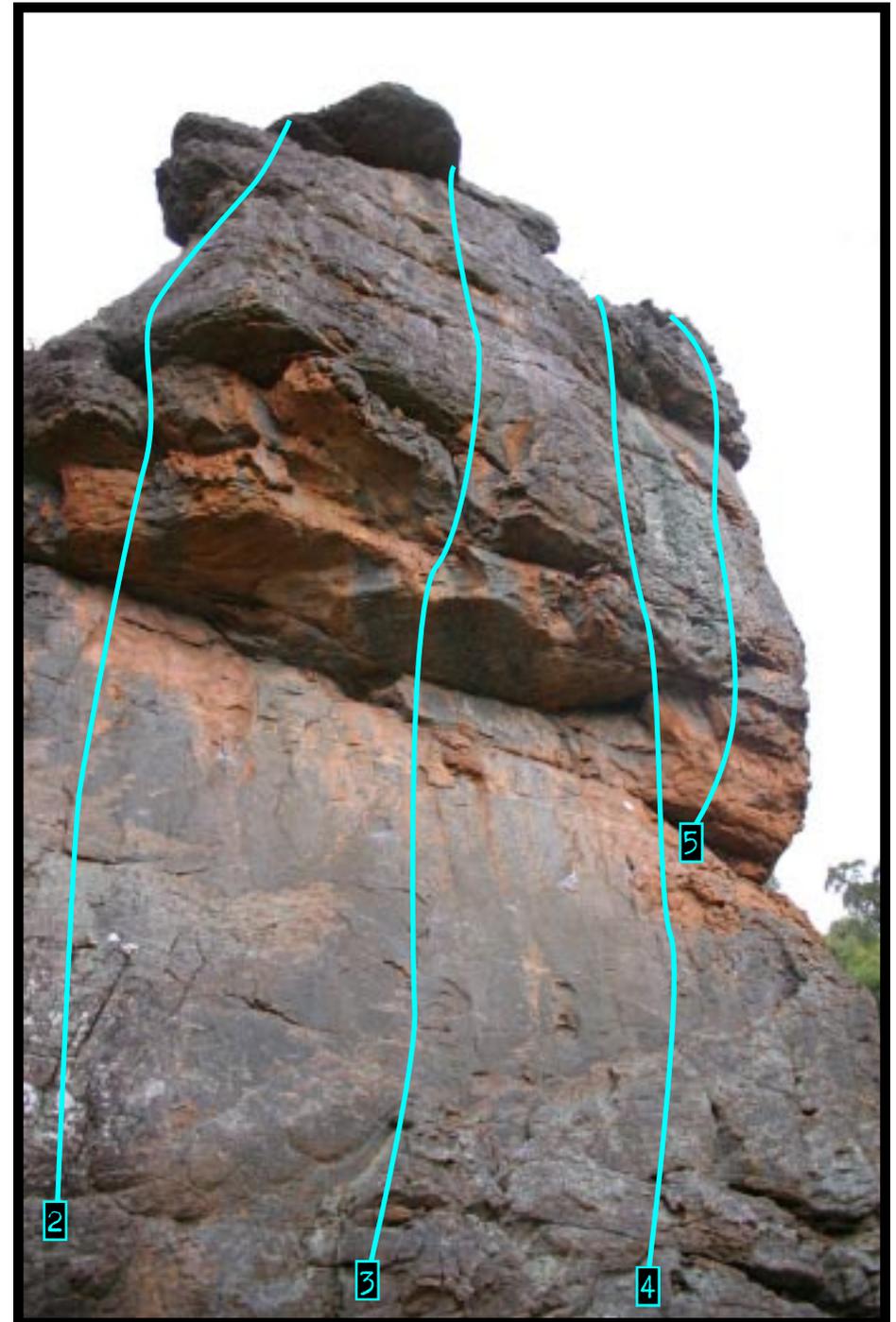
Circumnavigate the outcrop starting up Automatic Runway and following the break at mid-height going anticlockwise to the south arête (belay possible here) and continuing around to the start. Going clockwise looks feasible too and may be better. *Ben Wright. Solo. 25.12.2003*

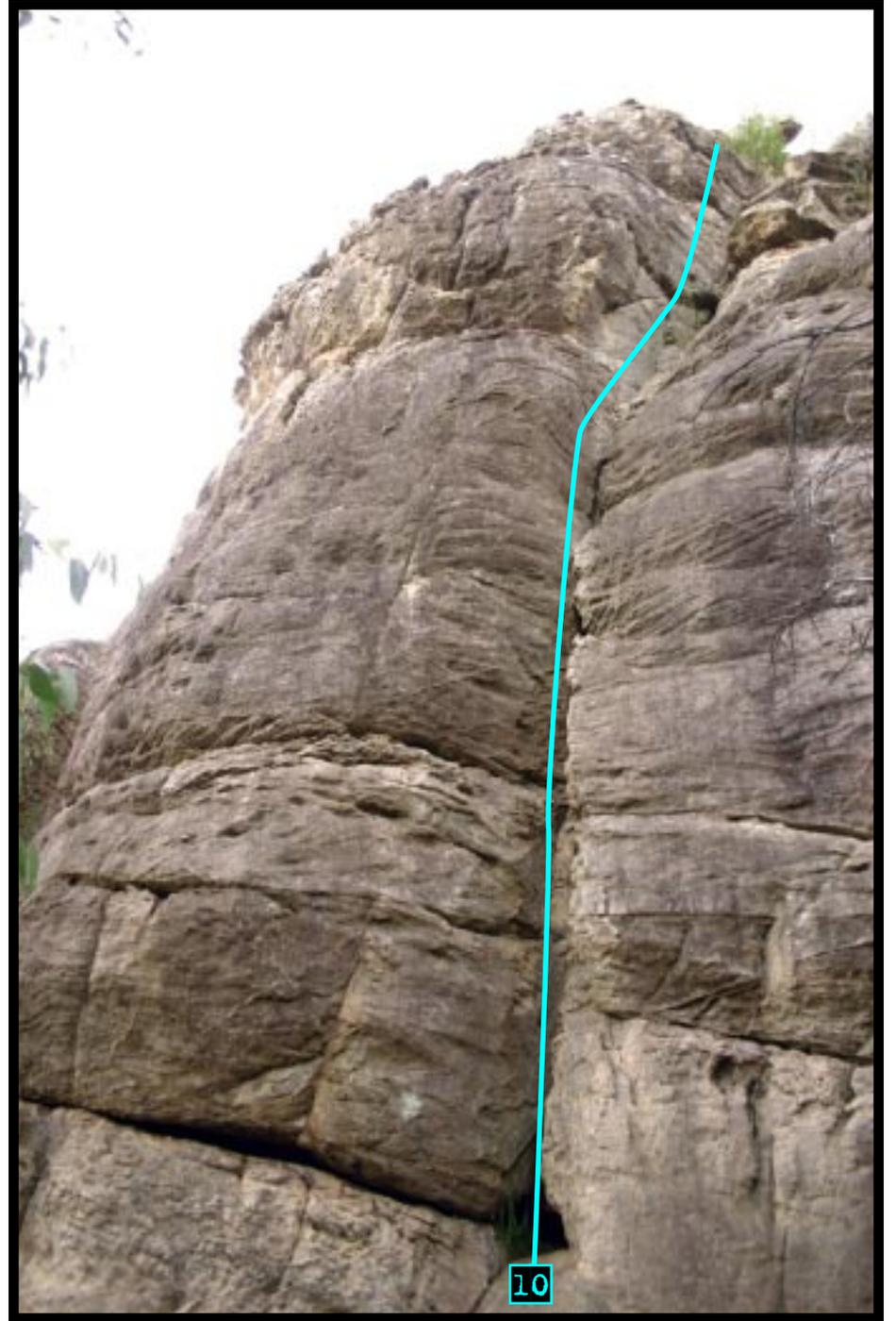
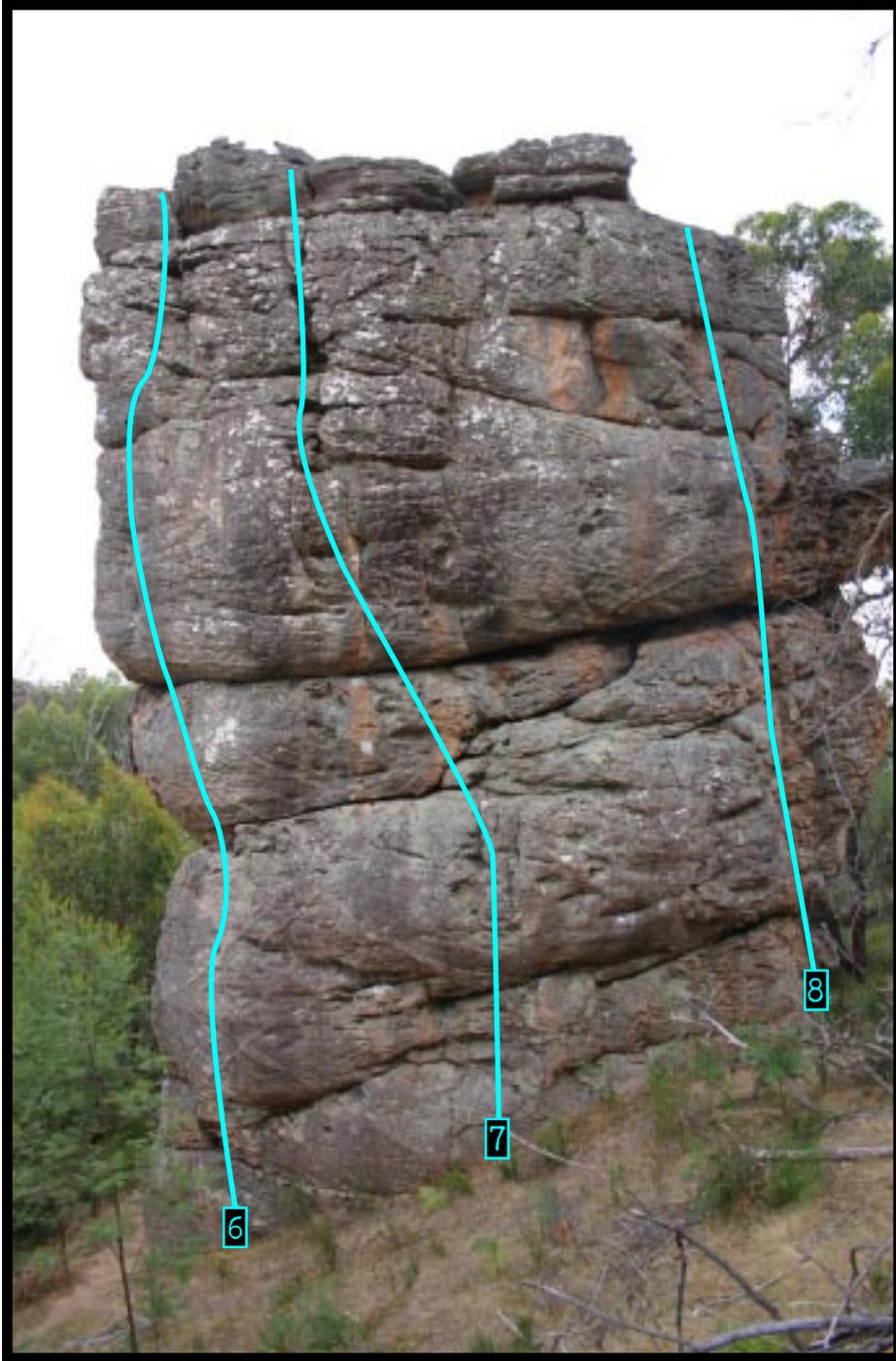
10



## Spirits In The Sky 18m 8

North and approximately 45m directly uphill from the Miniature Castle Crag is this wall. This corner climb is situated about 12m right of the large cave. Marked by white square. *Ian Welsby, Jane Welsby, Colin Mibus 17.11.1985*





## Warden Wall

6 minute walk-in  
Afternoon sun  
Trad Protection

Small featured wall on left side of track about 100m past Castle Crag on the walk in to Sentinel Cave. These are short trad routes on good rock. Walk off the south side and down a small gully to descend.

11



### Crimps of Doom 10m 17

Face round corner and 1m left of Rohans Route, a few balancy crimp moves gets you to the top. *Joe Morgan-Payler. 25.10.03*

12



### Rohans Route 10m 18

A hard and bold mantle at the start reaches jugs (crux) and easy hauling to top. *Rohan Archibald. Solo. 25.10.03*

13



### My Bitch Bubba 10m 17

Same start as for Gormet, only stepping onto thin face after reaching first block, then following the break on left-hand side of face. *Tuan Le. 25.10.03*

14



### Gormet 10m 13

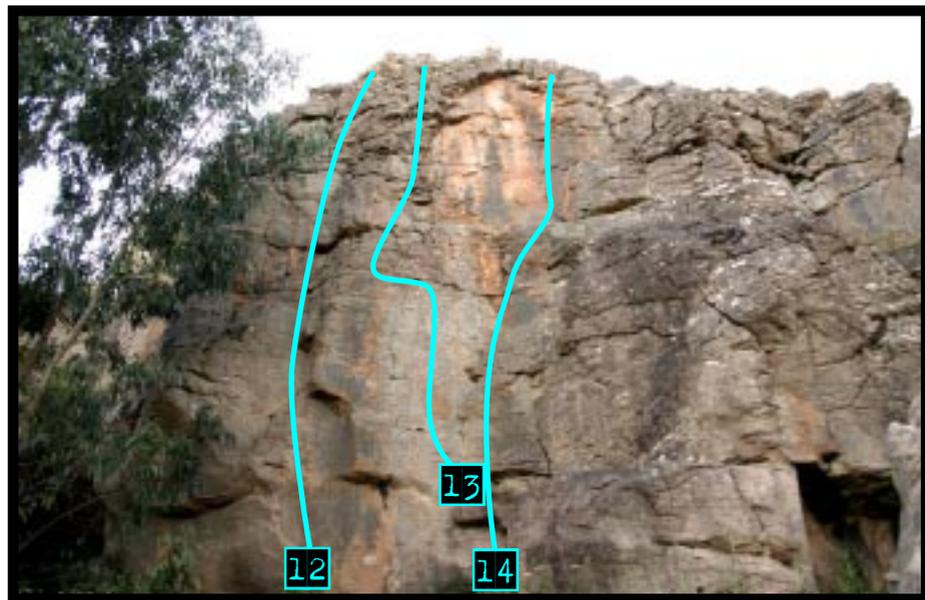
Nice climbing up an attractive line. Follow orange corner to top. *Hanh Le. 25.10.03*

15



### Jump Gimli! 7m 14

Located on wall right of main Warden Wall. Climb straight up from slight scoop in the wall 2m from right-hand end. Short climbers will need to use dynamic technique. *Jack Lewis, Simon Punt, Cameron Barrett. 13.12.03*



## Sentinel Cave

15-20 minute walk-in  
Late afternoon sun  
Rain protected  
Bolt Protection

This is a large cave high up in the valley with an easy flat walk-in. This area features short and very steep sport routes on coarse orange rock. A large viewing area makes this a fun place to hang out with a bunch of mates and watch the sun set whilst cranking some of the sweet routes.

From the Mt Stapylton Campground aboriginal shelter carpark (Cave of Ghosts) walk south east following the east side of a vegetated creek. A few minutes into the walk you will pass an isolated pillar of rock 'Castle Crag' with a few ok trad routes on it. Keep following the creek, walking along nice kangaroo grass and ferns for ten minutes until you can see a red cave above some large walls up and to the left. Try and locate some rock cairns and follow these up a gentle hill. Follow left branch of 'creek' up small rock gully on the left side of the cave until you can traverse directly right across exposed rock to get into the cave. Two RB's are positioned along this traverse to use as an anchor to belay people who may be scared of the traverse. It can also be used to abseil out of the cave when the traverse is wet from rain.

16



### Easier Puzzle 12m 10

Easy trad climbing on big jugs. Start at small corner break 2m left of Half Shark Half Man. Follow break to finish at HSHM anchors. *Phil Neville, Joe Morgan-Payler, Michael Schedlberger 18.4.03*

17



### Half Shark Half Man 14m 17

Nice steep and juggy sport warm-up at the far left end of the cave. Starts halfway across the approach traverse at single u-bolt belay. Up through orange jugs and then grey cracked face. Three RB's and DRB lower off. *Joe Morgan-Payler, Stephen Hawkshaw & Neil Monteith 2.3.2003*

18



### Media Puzzle 16m 23

Starts at left end of cave at small rooflet. Good pump workout on nice orange rock. Out left across crux roof past two RB's then up scoops on jugs (2 RB's) to good rest. Step right (#1 cam optional) and thug through steep territory past RB to jugs and DRB lower-off.

19



*Neil Monteith, Joe Morgan-Payler & Jacqui Middleton 5.11.2002*

### Media Puzzle Special Addition 21m 23

A bonus finish to Media Puzzle. From double ringbolts monkey upside down on jugs out right along the horizontal break for 4m past 2 FH's then up to chains (crux). *Peter Daish & Damian Hall 15.11.2003*

### Roof of Doom 35m 22

A novelty route across a big roof. Originally attempted on trad – but after Neil pulled a huge block off the lip and whipped upside down it was decided to bolt it. Climb to first bolt on Stepping on Snakes, traverse left across Army of Ants to big ledge. Walk left across this to FH and keep going across line (big cams) to roof flake (FH). Out impressive 3m roof and up steep arete past RB to lower off bolts. *Neil Monteith, Jaqui Middleton & Joe Morgan-Payler 2.3.2003*



Jacqui Middleton - Stepping on Snakes (23)

**21**  
 ◎x3  
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**Project**

Line of FH's through roof left of Antics. Keep off until completed please.

**22**  
 ★  
 ◎x4  
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**Antics 15m 26 \***

An impressive five metre roof climb. Follow Army of Ants to first bolt, then traverse left to ledge. Climb left leading roof flakes directly above the ledge past 4 FH's to lip. Back climb to clean. No anchor. *Malcolm Matheson & Jacqui Middleton 24.05.2003*

**23**  
 ◎x3  
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**Makybe Diva 7m 25**

A direct start to Antics. Starts 3m left of Army of Ants at ground level. Steep bulgy wall in true Nowra style. Three FH's. Either lower off first bolt on Antics or continue outwards for the full grade 26 finish. *Neil Monteith 11.12.2004*

**24**  
 ★★  
 ◎x5  
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**Army of Ants 15m 26**

Start just right of small arete in centre of cave. Tough sport route. Don't wear slip-ons unless you're OK with losing a shoe mid-route! Thin reachy face to start precedes big dynamic moves up steep wall and finish via big scoopy roof 1 FH & 4 RB's. Lower off chain. *Rohan Archibald, Neil Monteith & Jacqui Middleton 2.3.2003*

**25**  
 ★★  
 ◎x5  
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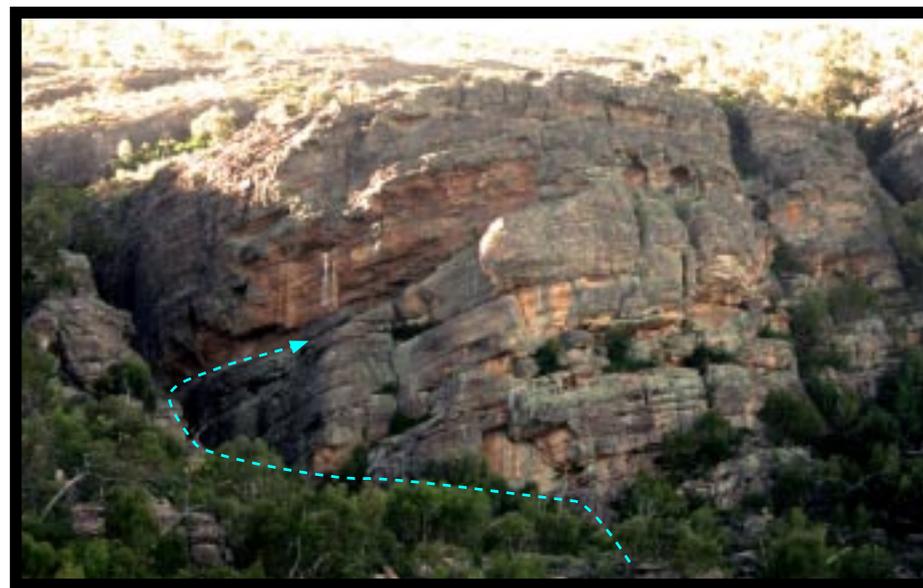
**Stepping on Snakes 14m 23**

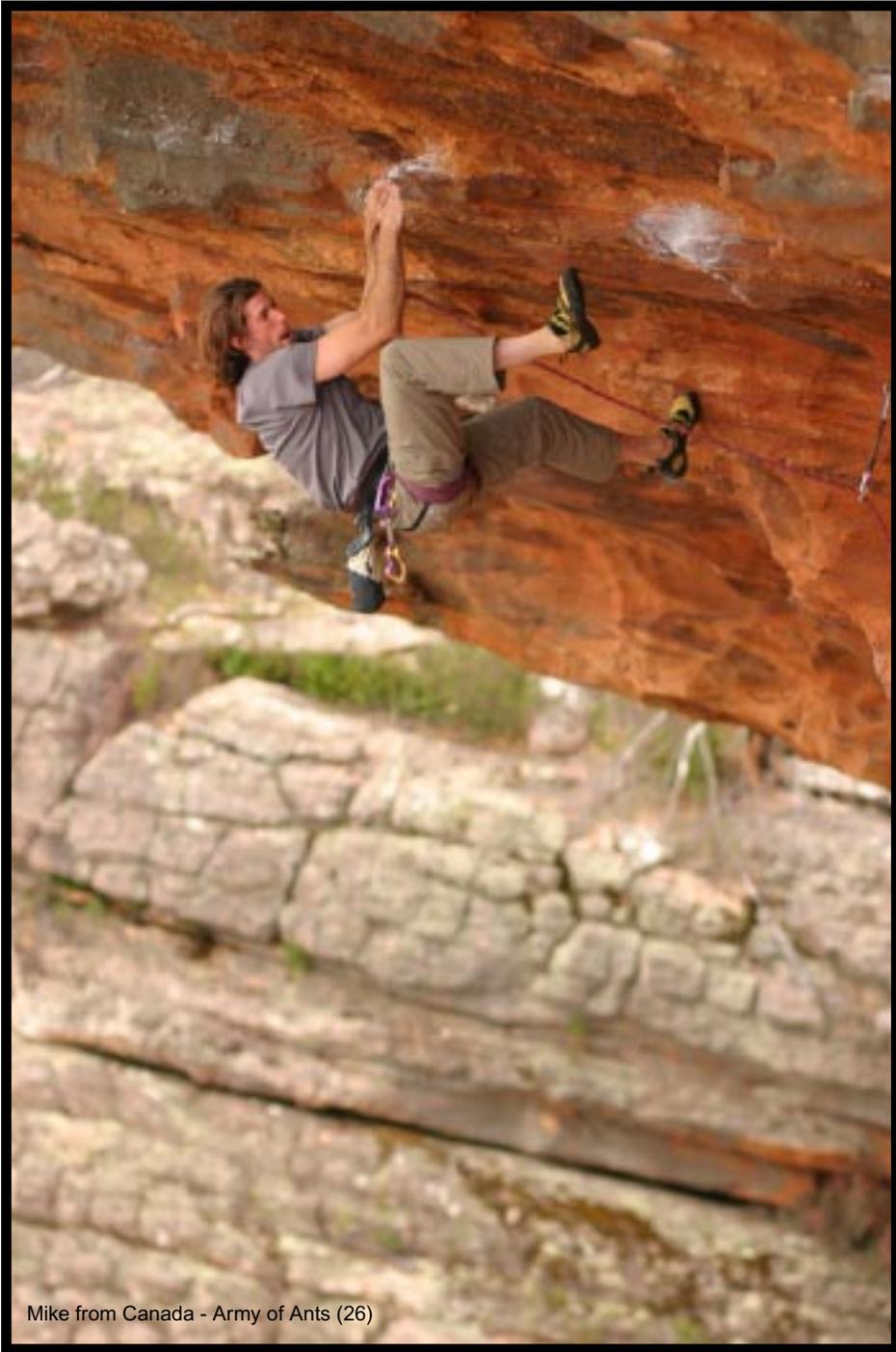
Classic steep thugging. The second route on the right side of the cave. Mantle onto slab then up very steep horizontals to final roof dyno. Five RB's and double RB lower off. *Neil Monteith 16.11.2002*

**26**  
 ◎x2  
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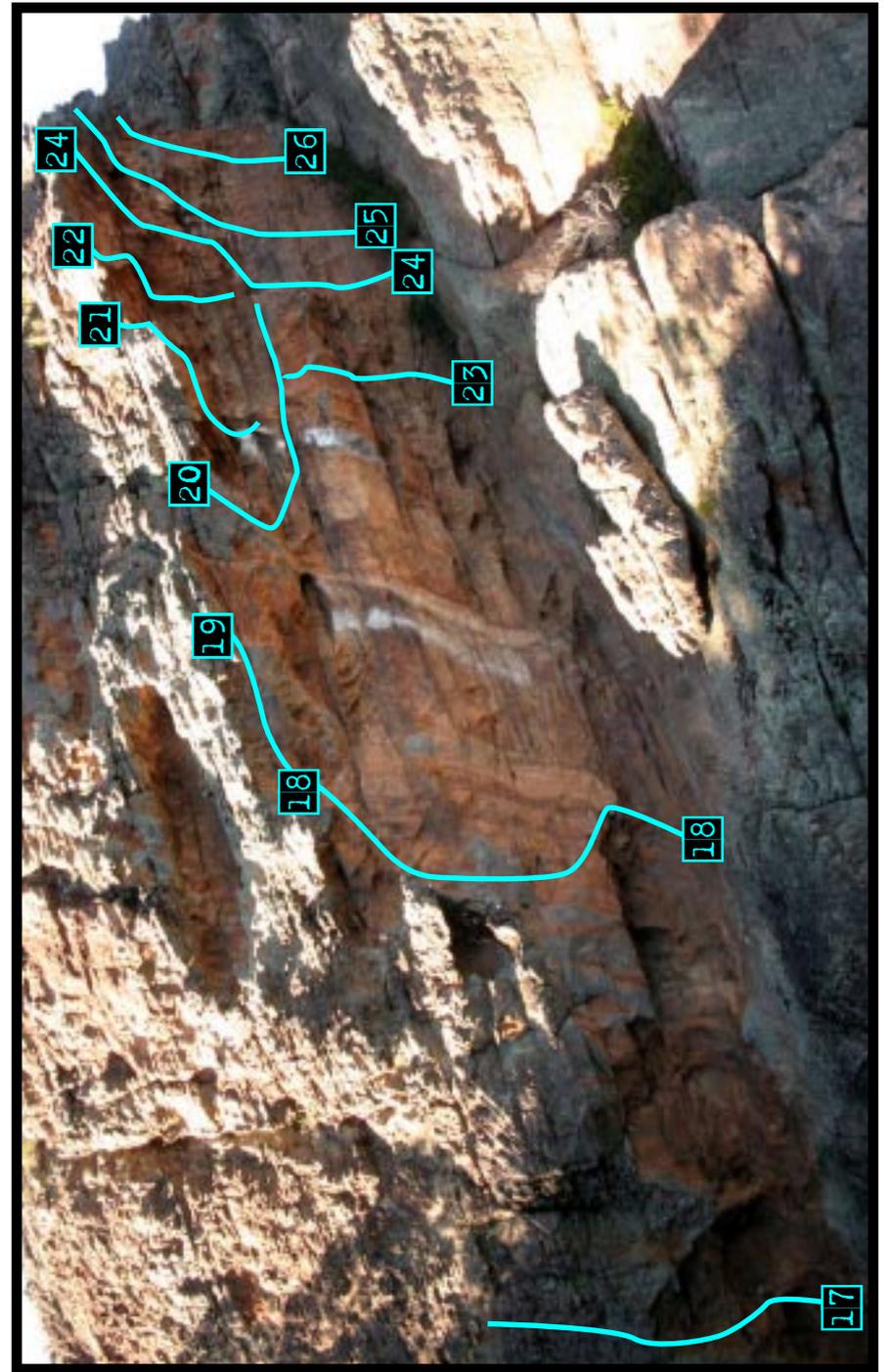
**Dwarf Pumper 8m 20**

Far right side of cave. A Nowra style pumpfest with a tricky crux. Two RB's up steep orange wall. Single RB lower off at top. *Neil Monteith & Joe Morgan-Payler 3.11.2002*

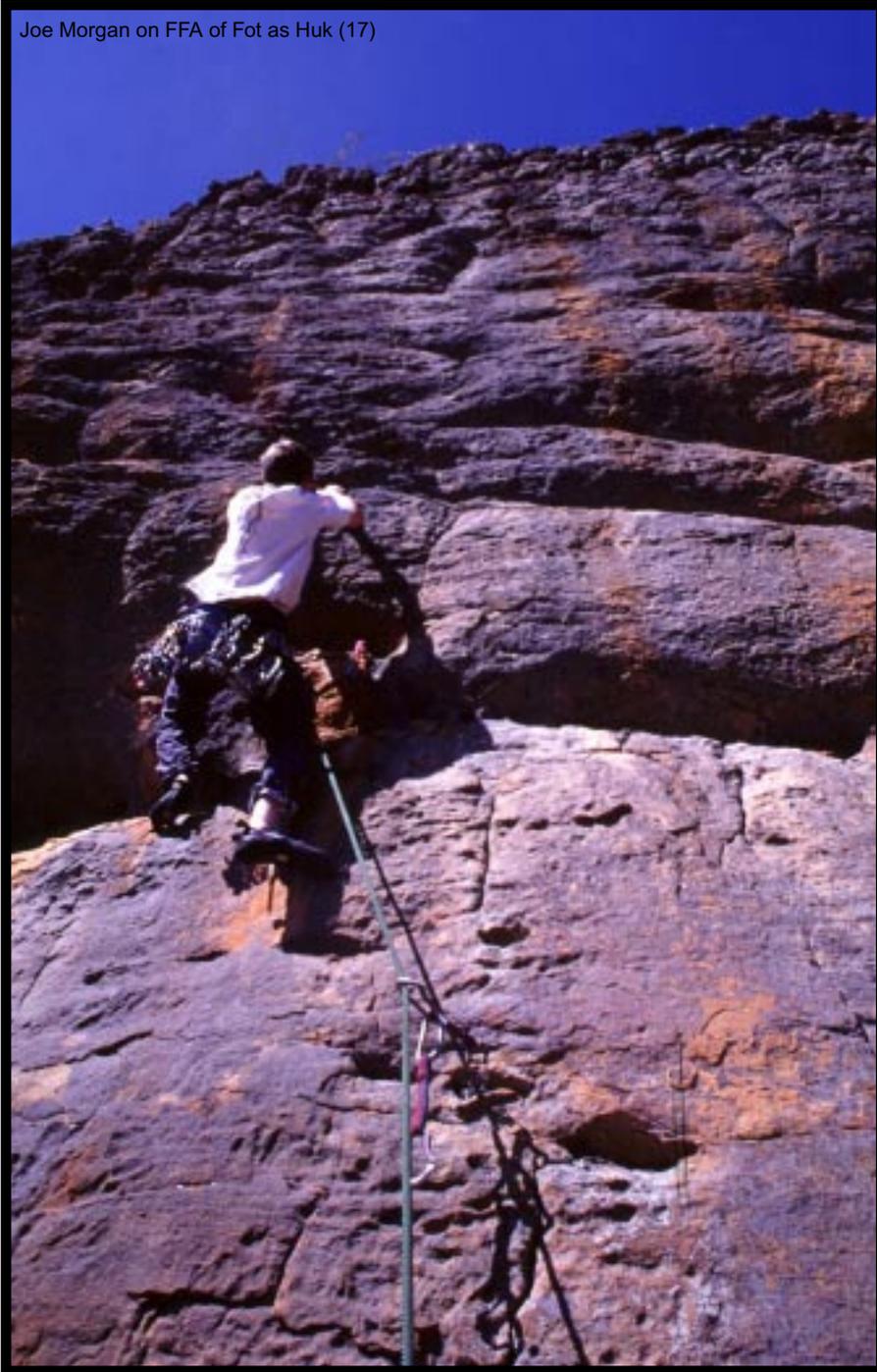




Mike from Canada - Army of Ants (26)



Joe Morgan on FFA of Fot as Huck (17)



## Sentinel Wall

15-20 minute walk-in  
Afternoon sun  
Trad Protection

On the other side of the access gully from Sentinel Cave is a rock buttress. About 100m left and slightly uphill from the cave is this orange wall with large horizontal pockets. Scramble onto large ledge from the left side to belay the first couple of routes. These are mostly average quality trad climbs.

**27**



### Sunsation 15m 18

Start slightly left of Fot as Huck. Up to thread then over bulge to break. Hand traverse left to obvious jugs and up the juggy face above. *Stephen Hawkshaw & Andrew Morrison 19.4.2003*

**28**



### Fot as Huck 20m 17

Starts on the left side of the wall just right of grey roofs. Up slightly overhung wall on big incuts and lots of cam placements to juggy finish. *Joe Morgan-Payler 16.11.2002*

**29**



### Sunraysia 20m 20

Starts about 4m right of Fot as Huck. Long reaches and a scary runout in the first ten metres. At the horizontal jam crack traverse slightly left to finish up Fot as Huck. *Neil Monteith & Joe Morgan-Payler 16.11.2002*

**30**



*Right and slightly downhill from Sunraysia is this wall with some obvious crack lines.*

### Know your signals 14m 15

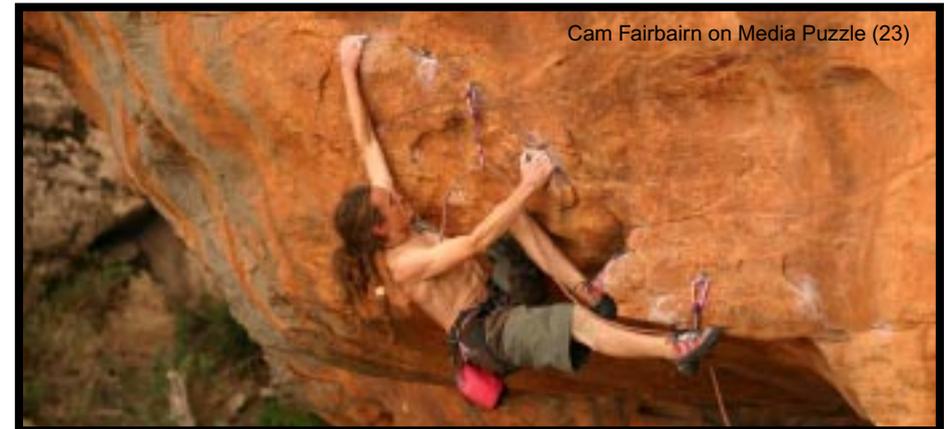
Start 4m right of dirty roof hand crack and left of Tatiana. Follow weakness through thin start to under roof. Watch for loose rock. Traverse left 2m and finish at tree belay. *Phil Neville, Michael Schedlberger, Joe Morgan-Payler 18.4.03*

**31**

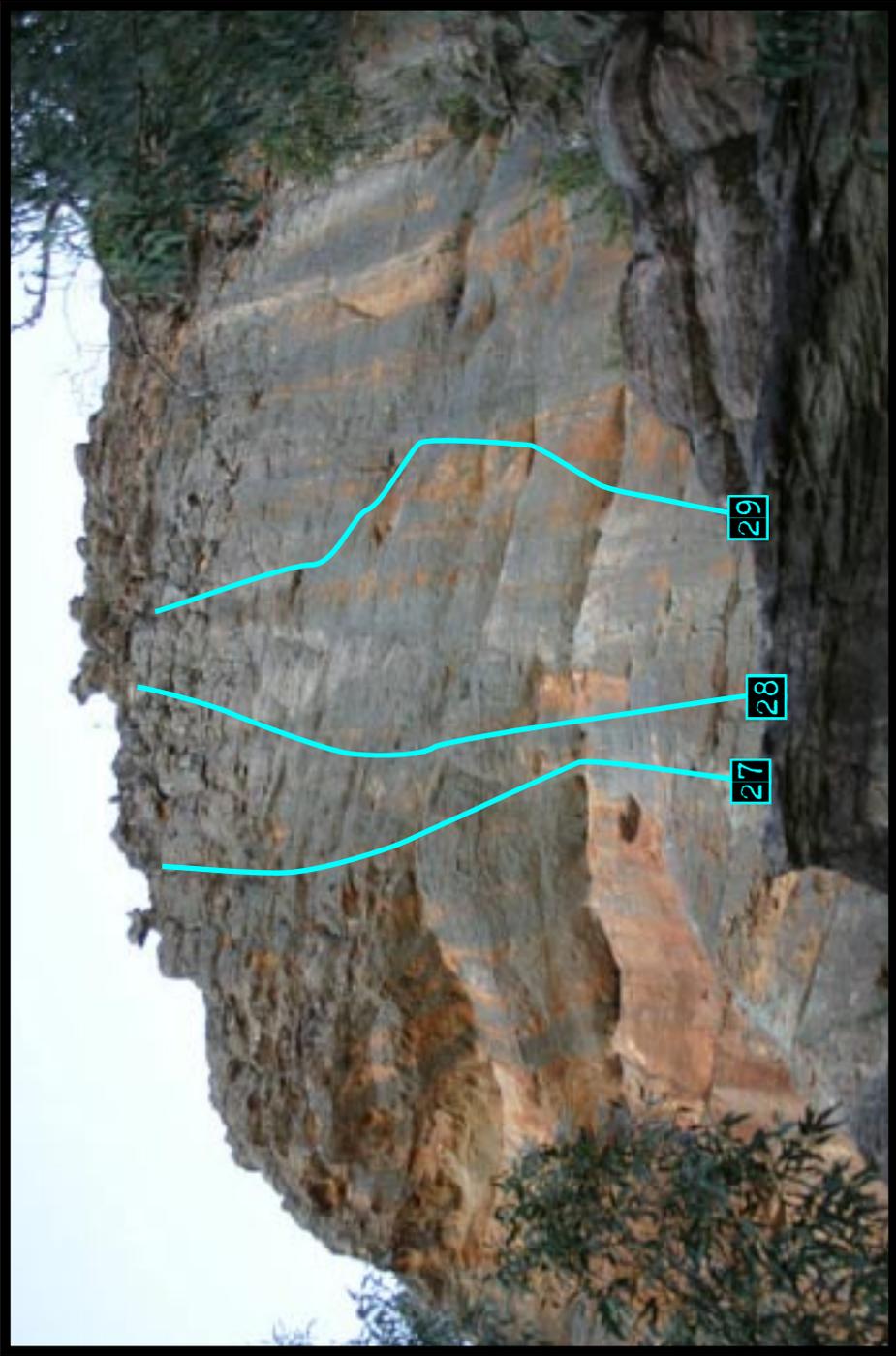


### Tatiana 12m 15

Start 2m right of central crack on buttress slightly downhill and right from Sunraysia. Up through thin start to pockets and past technical finish to tree belay. *Michael Schedlberger, Phil Neville, Joe Morgan-Payler 18.4.03*



Cam Fairbairn on Media Puzzle (23)



## The Guardhouse

20 minute walk-in  
Afternoon sun  
Seeps after rain  
Bolt Protection

A small gently overhung amphitheater of rock with a couple of good Blue Mountains style sport routes and plenty of potential for new climbs. The orange wall is clearly visible on the hillside when driving in from the highway past the olive grove. Walk in as for Sentinel Cave. After hopping over a big dead tree about 8 minutes into the walk turn left (east) and follow small creek bed steeply uphill heading for the obvious orange wall facing west high on the hill. Scramble up ledges and small fixed rope to get to base of wall.

32

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### Little George 12m 23

Named after George the baby gecko, that hitched a ride on a backpack all the way to Brunswick... causing havoc at Jac's place for two weeks before being returned to the Grampians! Follows left-trending line of four ringbolts in centre of crag just right of big scoopy hueco in rooflet. Stroll through delicate start just left of first bolt, locate the secret hold, and march your way to glory over steep juggy terrain. Double RB lower off. *Jacqui Middleton, Neil Monteith 25.04.2003*

33

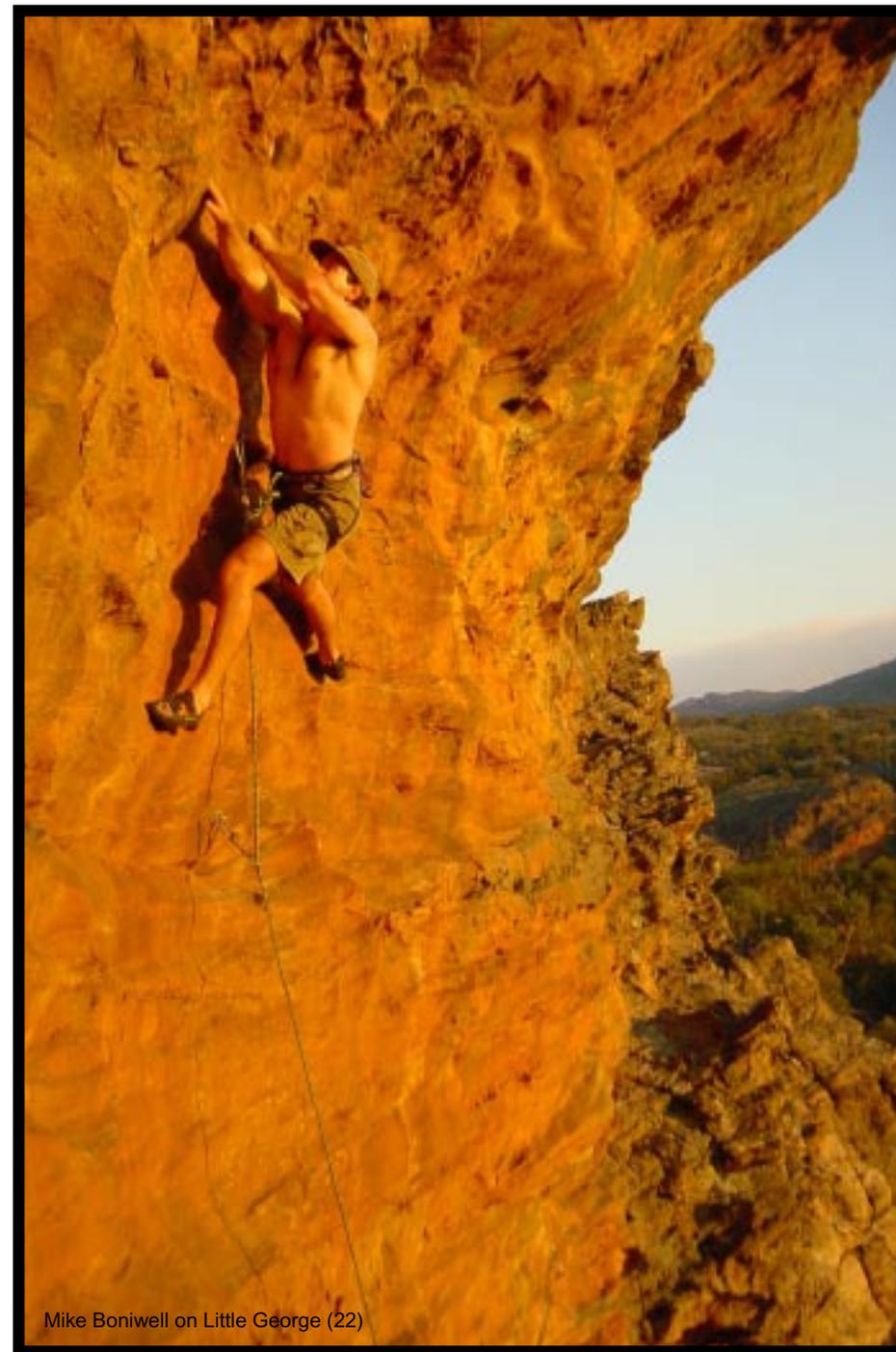
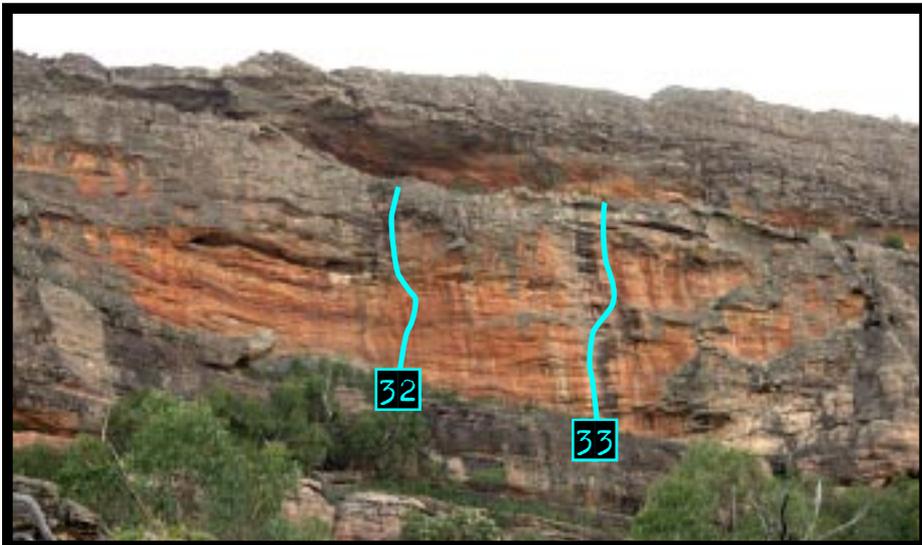
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○x5

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### Ranger Danger 14m 24

Weaves around black streak on far right side of crag. Bouldery start (stick clip ring) up slots to easier ground. At halfway head slightly right to hidden RB and crux dyno. Finish up steep jugs. Five RBs and DRB lower-off. *Neil Monteith Kent Patterson 14.6.2003*



Mike Boniwell on Little George (22)

# Mount Pleasant

10 minute walk-in  
All day sun  
Trad Protection

A small cliff within easy flat walking distance of the Mt Stapylton Campground. The sort of thing you stumble across when killing time on a miserable wet weekend - and quite useful on those sorts of occasions. From the art site car park cross the creek (involves fighting through unpleasant thick new growth but is mercifully short) to the open flats beyond. Turn left and follow these flats for about 10 minutes to a small steep block distinguished by a large red overhang/cave across the front of the main buttress. The cliff has two prominent corner lines on its left side. The right hand one starts above the left end of the main cave and can be accessed from a handy block, this is OP&OH.

34



## Hunter Valley 12m 12

Around left of OP&OH is another obvious corner line with an overhang at the top. The juggy cracks in the wall left of the corner then the line up the arete. *Philip Armstrong, Jeremy Maddox. 10.6.2001*

37



## Philip 10m 5

The easy chimney right of Rosehill. *Jeremy Maddox. 10.6.2001*

38



## Elizabeth 10m 16

The wide crack right of Philip. Take a large cam (Camalot 4+). *Jeremy Maddox, Philip Armstrong. 10.6.2001*

35



## OP&OH 12m 14

The corner starting above the left end of the roof of the cave. From the top of the large block haul into the line and up. *Philip Armstrong, Jeremy Maddox. 10.6.2001*

39



## Semillon 12m 16

Nice climbing up the left leading flake on the wall right of Elizabeth finishing up the short hanging corner. *Philip Armstrong, Jeremy Maddox. 10.6.2001*

36



## Rosehill 10m 17

Around right of the cave is an overhanging corner. Good jamming. *Jeremy Maddox, Philip Armstrong. 10.6.2001*

40



## Lovedale 10m 14

The knobby cracks up the wall just right of the start of Semillon. *Jeremy Maddox, Philip Armstrong. 10.6.2001*



## Credits

Thanks to all the climbers who have helped out with doing these new routes over the last few years. Who can forget the 45°C day we bolted Army of Ants, the thunder storm on New Years Eve 2003 which washed away all summer party plans, the snapped jug on the onsite attempt of Roof of Doom, Malcolm's cam on a stick aid mission to bolt Antics or Em's arse plant on 'Snakes! Special thanks goes out to Joe Morgan-Payler who had the courage to go bush bashing with me early one morning and discover Sentinel Cave. The rest is history!

All text, photos and diagrams are © Neil Monteith March 2005

For updates and more photos visit  
[www.neilhaulbag.com](http://www.neilhaulbag.com)

Mt Pleasant from afar



Upper front cover photo - Tim Storey on Stepping on Snakes (23)  
Lower front cover photo - Neil Monteith on Little George (23)