

Port Hills Climbing

A photograph of a person climbing a dark, craggy rock face. The climber is wearing a white helmet, a white t-shirt, and dark shorts. They are secured by a rope that runs vertically down the rock. The background shows a bright, overcast sky and a distant, hazy mountain range.

The Black Wall

Tony Burnell, 2016

THE BLACK WALL

General

The Black Wall has a mix of both good & not so good Port Hills rock, it has some good & some not so good climbs & it also has some well & some, not so well, protected routes, but that said it's a great little venue. The crag was discovered almost simultaneously by Bill McLeod, Pete Sykes, Athol Whimp, Simon Middlemass & Gavin Tweedie, not 100% sure of the teams.

A hand full of routes were produced, of the bolted lines Athol's 'Steel Rain', and Pete's 'Tarn' were the stand outs. Most of the trad lines from the early and mid 90's were climbed on sight, in the case of climbs like "Die Yuppie Die" and "Principal" this is pretty impressive. In these post quake times I'm not tempted to repeat them without a bit of cleaning, it's also likely that these climbs are still awaiting their second ascents.

The crag was then left until 1997/1998 when Simon returned along with John McCullam, they in turn brought along Pat Deavoll to sort out the harder routes & most of the better lines were climbed during this period. Independently the crag was also discovered by Craig Smith & Tony Burnell. Shortly after Tony & Jonathon Wilkinson climbed some lines the self appointed regulators of Canterbury climbing debolted two routes, 'Joker Hysterical Face' & 'Pressure Test' their reasons being, they were not pleased that chain links had been used as hangers. The pictures below are of two pieces of gear on separate routes and are less than 3.0mts apart.

All of the routes on the main face & Joker Hysterical face now have new anchors. Existing routes are in the process of being re-equipped



Location

The crag is located on the South side of the Summit Road overlooking Lyttelton Harbour it is well sheltered from the Northerly & fairly sheltered from the Easterly winds. The main wall is short at the LHS but gets up to around 17mts, the rock is quite solid, compact & the climbing varied, parts are slabby, parts are sharp coral like & there is some vertical fingery face climbing.

Approach

620 m ts

15 minutes

-43.595748, 172.778109 GPS Coordinates

Park at Breezes Col parking area, cross the road then over the stile & head along the Crater Rim Track towards Lyttelton. Keep going to the third orange topped waratah route marker go left off the track onto some rocks drop down the side of the rocks & sidle diagonally down & across the flank of the hill following a vague track, with cairns, that contours around onto the spur, at this point go downhill to an old wire fence line; cross this and go down the left easy angled gully that leads to the foot of Pinnacles.



Seismic Damage



There has been some earthquake damage to the crag, however it is not that significant as to make climbing there untenable. There were some issues with some of the rock layering at the top of the crag pancaking, where this has happened we have attempted to remove the worst of the rock & in some cases lower the anchor points out of this area. One of the descent routes is down the rib to the right & opposite "Twisting by the Pool" care should be taken around this rib which is very fractured post earthquake.

Overview



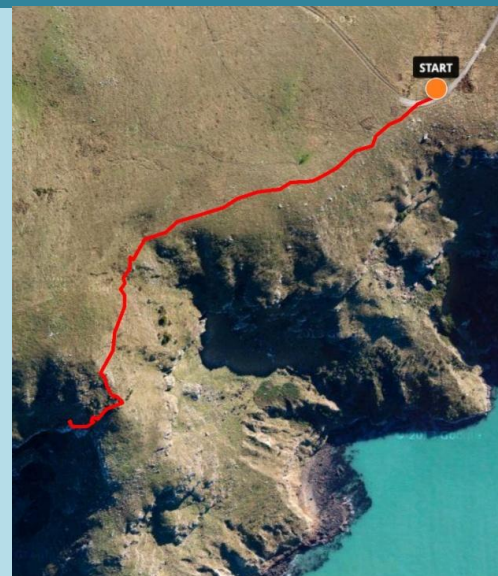
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Street View



Climbing Notes

There are now over 50 routes at the crag, they are predominantly sport routes and all of those on the main wall have new anchor stations, the existing routes are slowly being reequipped as required.

Routes shown in **Red** are sport routes, but may not have anchors & may not have been re-gearred. Routes shown in **Green** are either trad routes or mixed pro routes. Routes shown in **Blue** are potential lines.

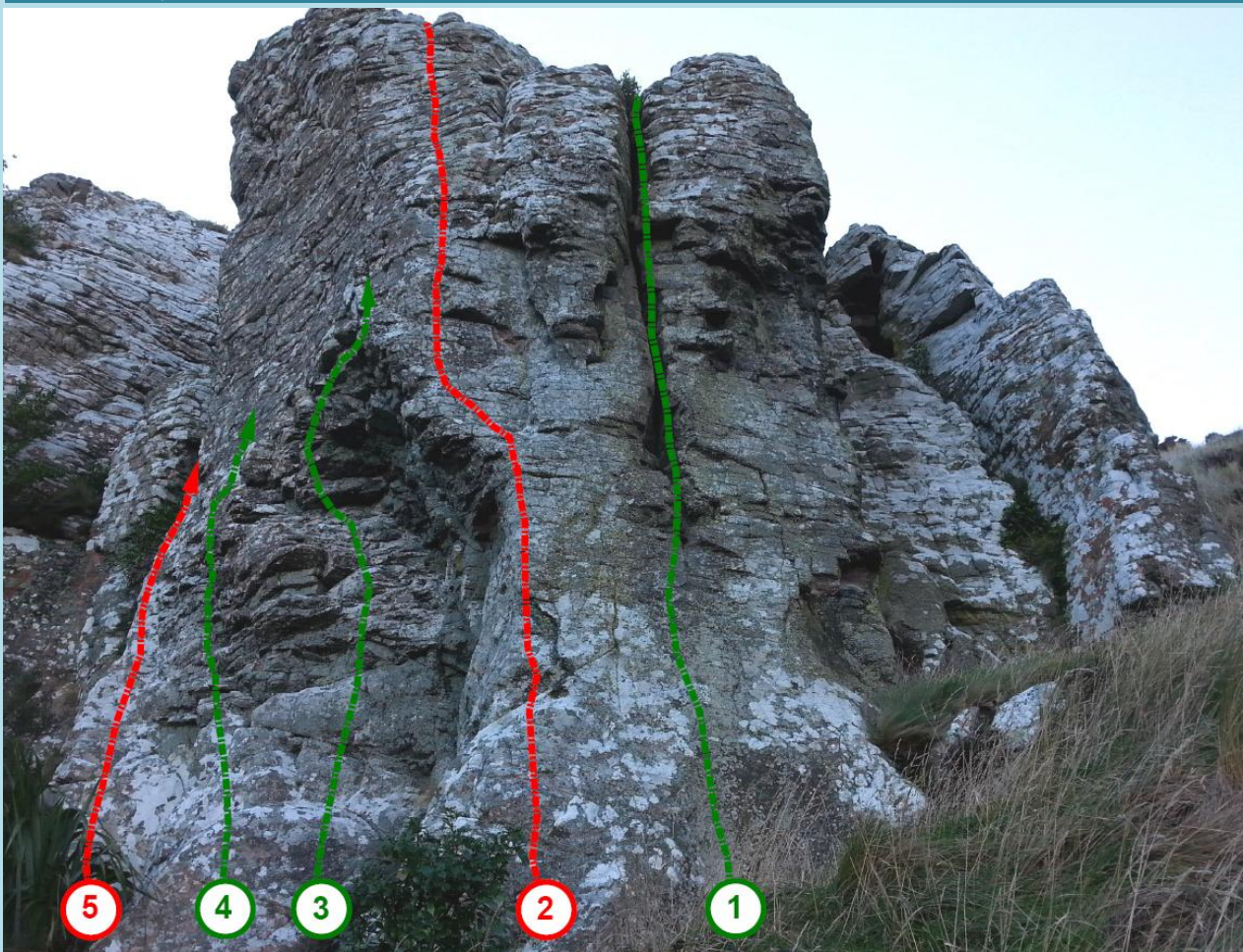
Routes are described from R to L. At the top of climbs please use quick draws to set up top ropes or lower offs. If you only abseil off the fixed gear you'll help prolong its lifespan. Inclusion of climbs in this guide does not mean there is any right of access to the area. No climbs are longer than 20 mts.

THE STRIP

This area of the crag has sustained significant earthquake damage & in its current state is not worth climbing on, any routes done here would be in the lower grades.

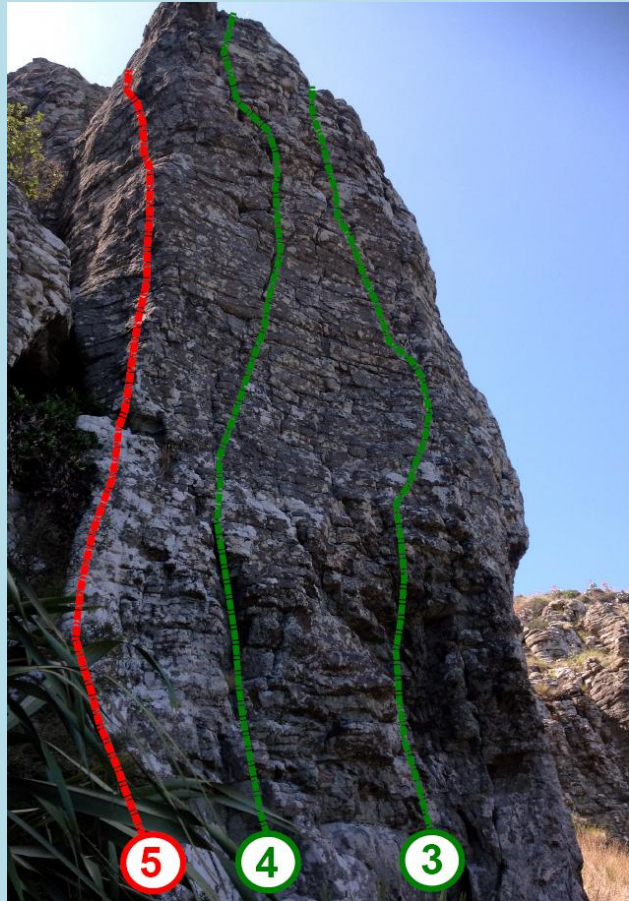
THE PINNACLES

Principle Face

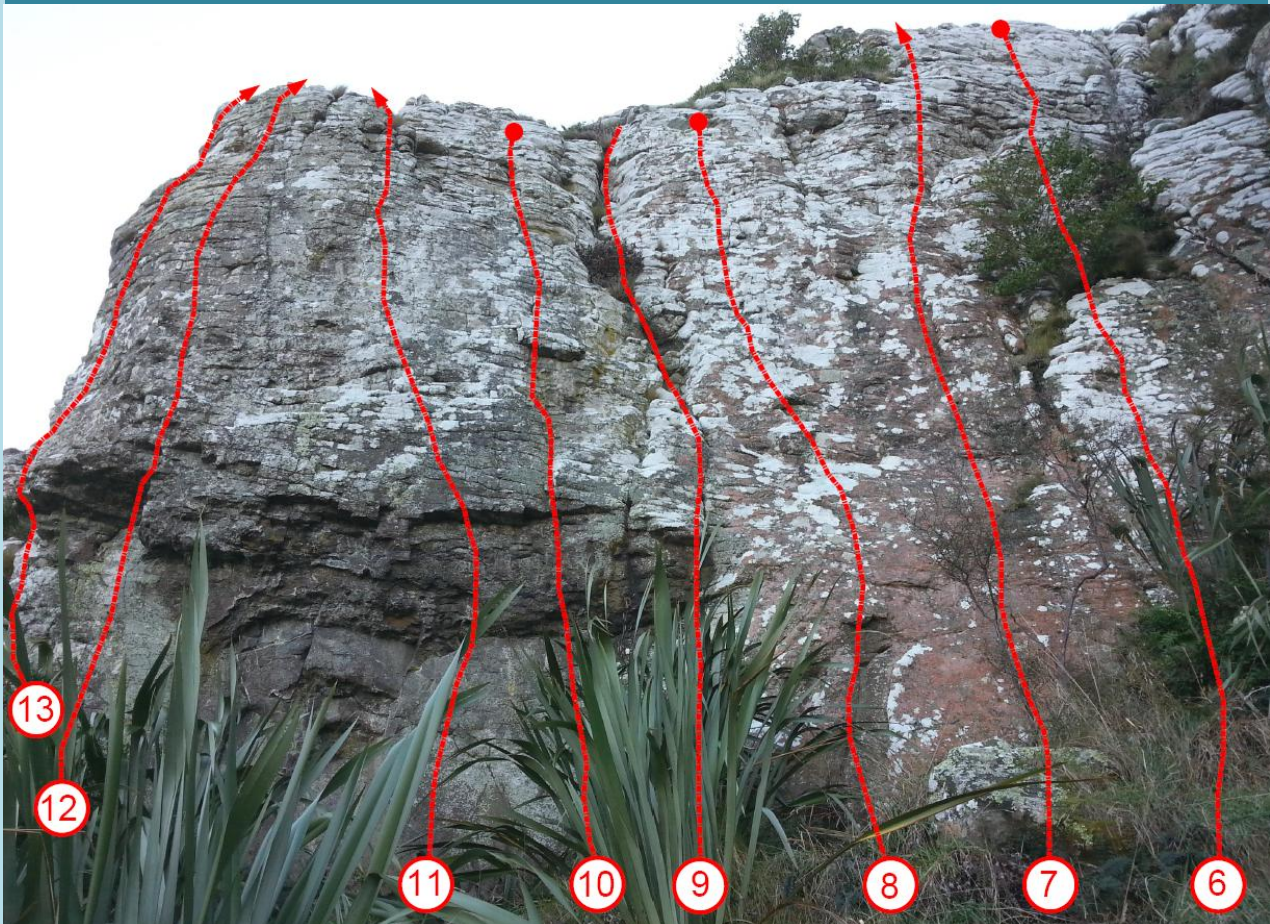


1. *Avoiding The Crowds* - 17 (T), Climbs the slab to the R of the arete, then the wide crack that splits the face. Tony Billing, 1997
2. *Prospective line*

3. **Die Yuppie Die - 20 (Tr)**, On the deceptively steep face to the left. A direct line up the left of the steep face that probably finishes up Principal with lots of small cracks minimal pro (wires). Athol Whimp, 1991
4. **Principal - 20 (Tr)**, On the deceptively steep face to the left. Original line starting on the R at the overhang diagonals L to gain a definite crack line on left of the face then straight up. Placed pro (minimal) .Lead and cleaned on-sight. Bill McLeod, 1991
5. **Camelot Corner - 15 (4BR)** Start at the base of the left arête, climb the white wall to gain the cleft, bridge up this then climb the wall above. Cameron Pawson, June 2016



Joker Face



Staple Diet - 17 (5 Staples) The right most route on the slabby, pink, south face. Up the wall to the ledge then continue up the whiter head wall to an anchor station.. Grant Piper, June 2016

6. **Miro - 18 (5 Staples)** On the slabby, pink, south face. Re-equipped at the FA request, start just L of a choked crack straight up the wall past some left facing overlaps. Pete Sykes, 1991
7. **Pink Palette Pulling - 20 (4BR)** Straight up the slabby wall, tricky start getting easier as you get higher Tony Burnell, June 2016
8. **Chain Reaction - 19 (4 Staples)** Climbs the central groove on the pink wall. Tricky moves up into the groove with an easier finish to the anchors.. Grant Piper, June 2016
9. **Prospective line**

The next three routes share a common anchor:

10. **Pressure Test - 24 (5BR)**, Starting on the undercut slab, cross a small roof trending L then back R to finish up lichenous white wall. Tony Burnell, 1998

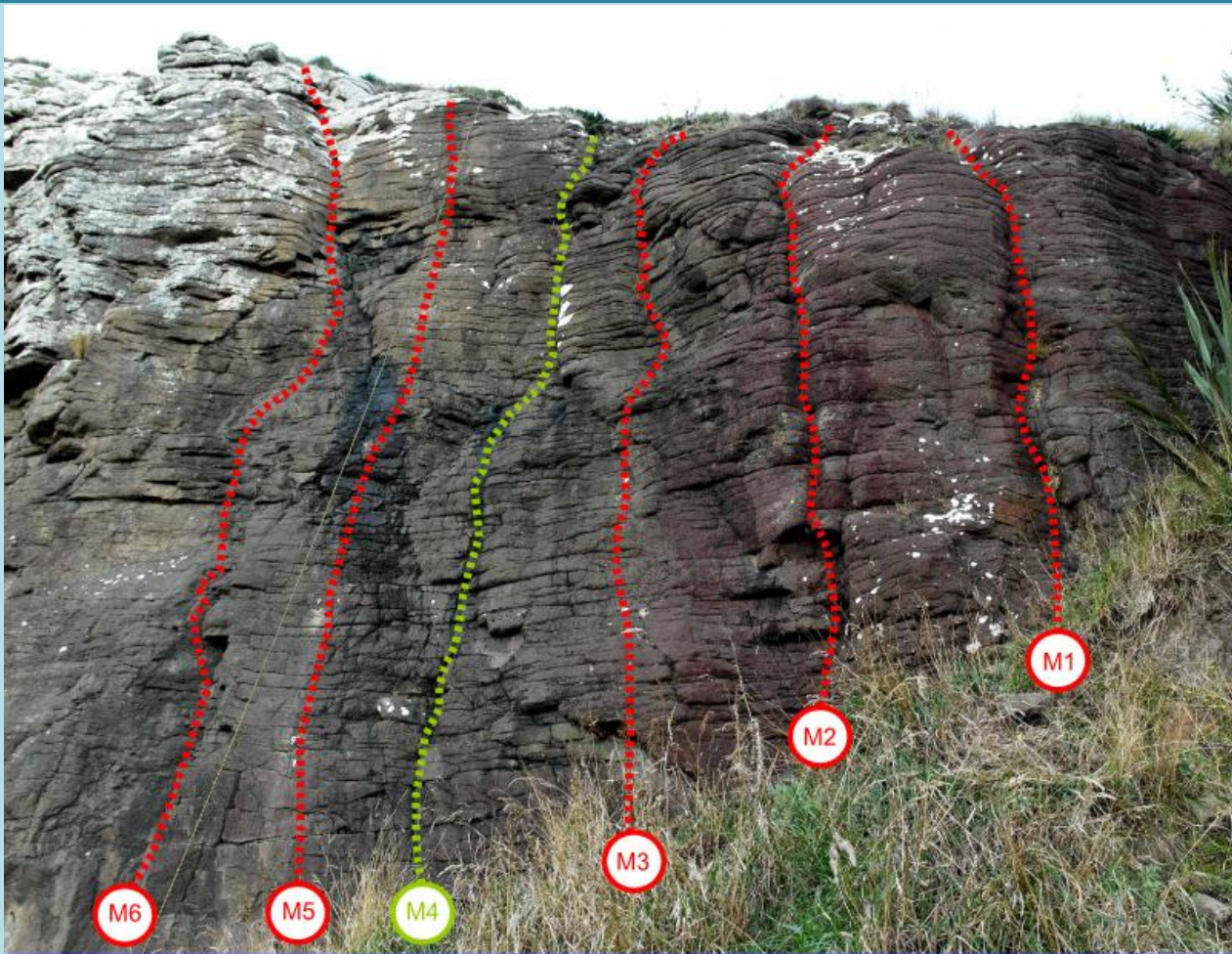


11. **Joker Hysterical Face - 23 (5BR)**, Start almost on the arête move up & R through roof then go up the thin slab. J Wilkinson , 1998
12. **Project - (5BR)** Start in the groove in the arête, just L of the roof. Climb the groove, turn the roof on the R then up the slightly more user friendly face.
13. **Grubbies Bolted Groove - 15 (5 Staples)** Start just left of the arête, straight up bridging the vertical groove to an anchor station on the right. Grant Piper, July 2016

THE MAIN WALL

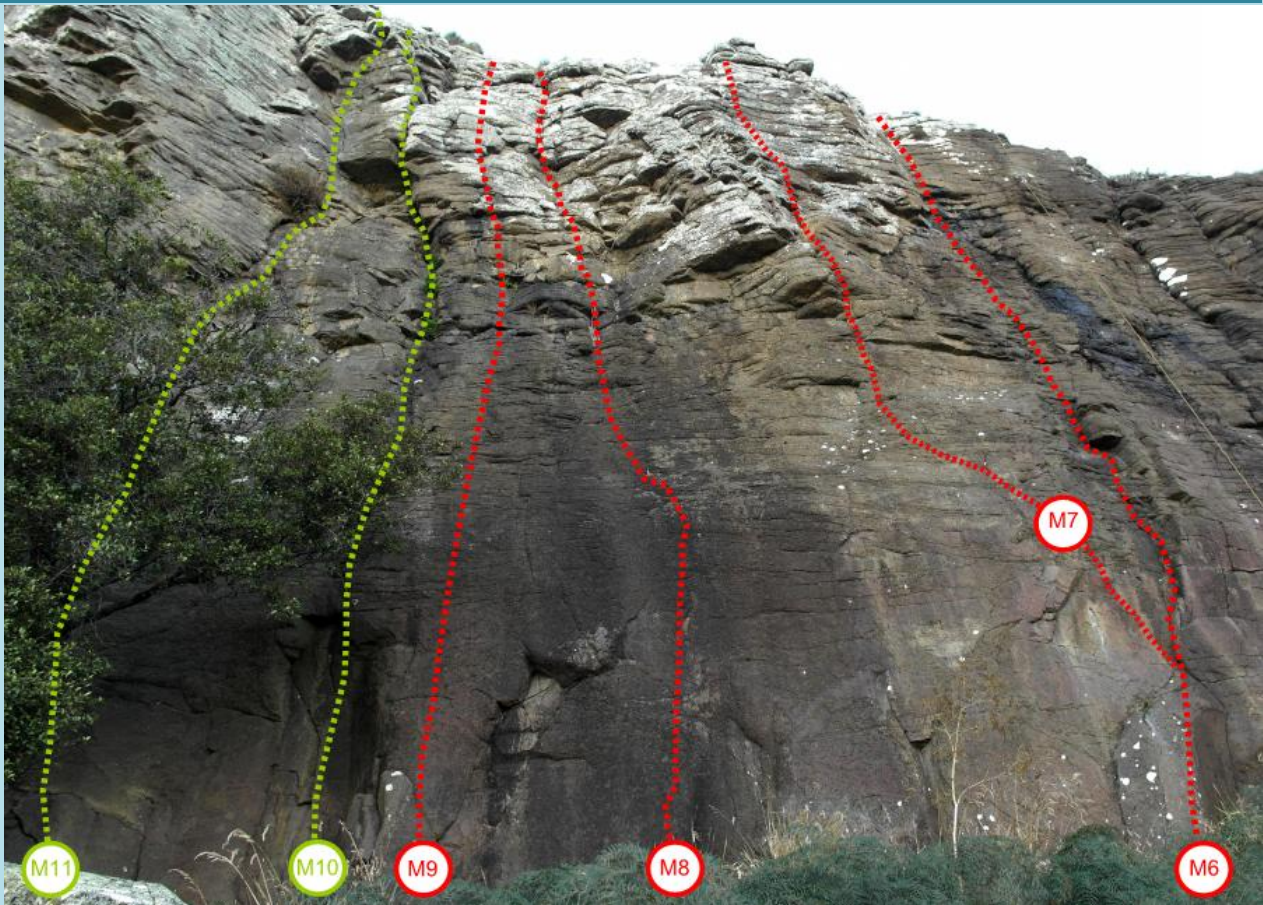
The main wall starts to the left across the flax filled gully, at its right hand side it is quite short but there's so much texture on the rock it will give you some pain. Just left of centre on the Main Wall is a large Matipo tree growing from the base of the crag.

Main Wall (1)



- M1. *Twisting By The Pool* - 16**, A short (4m) bulging boulder problem up the first vague seam/corner near the bottom of the flax filled gully. Single bolt at the top can be used to get down. Simon Middlemass (solo) March 1998
- M2. *Winky The One Eyed Snake* - 19 (4BR)** Climbs the hanging groove, over a bulge and onto slabbier rock at the top. Simon Courtois, April 2016
- M3. *Blinky The Three Eyed Fish* - 16 (4BR)**, Originally a top roped line by Chris Owen in January 1997. Now a sport line. FFA Pam Yee, April 2016
- M4. *The Uprooter* - 15**, Starts near the bottom of the access gully at a shallow R trending groove & 2m R of HMHB, 3 white lichen spots high up help locate the route. Take the line of least resistance past the lichen spots. John McCallum January 1997
- M5. *Dreaming of Dry Rocks* - 21 (5BR)**, Start L of "TU" and climb the wall as directly as possible, up the line of bolts, the crux is the last move to the anchor. Tony Burnell, April 2016
- M6. *Half Man Half Biscuit* - 19 (2BR)**, Where the level ground starts, climb the broken corner past 2 glue in bolts. Straight up with an excursion out left before the final groove, Gavin Tweedie 1991

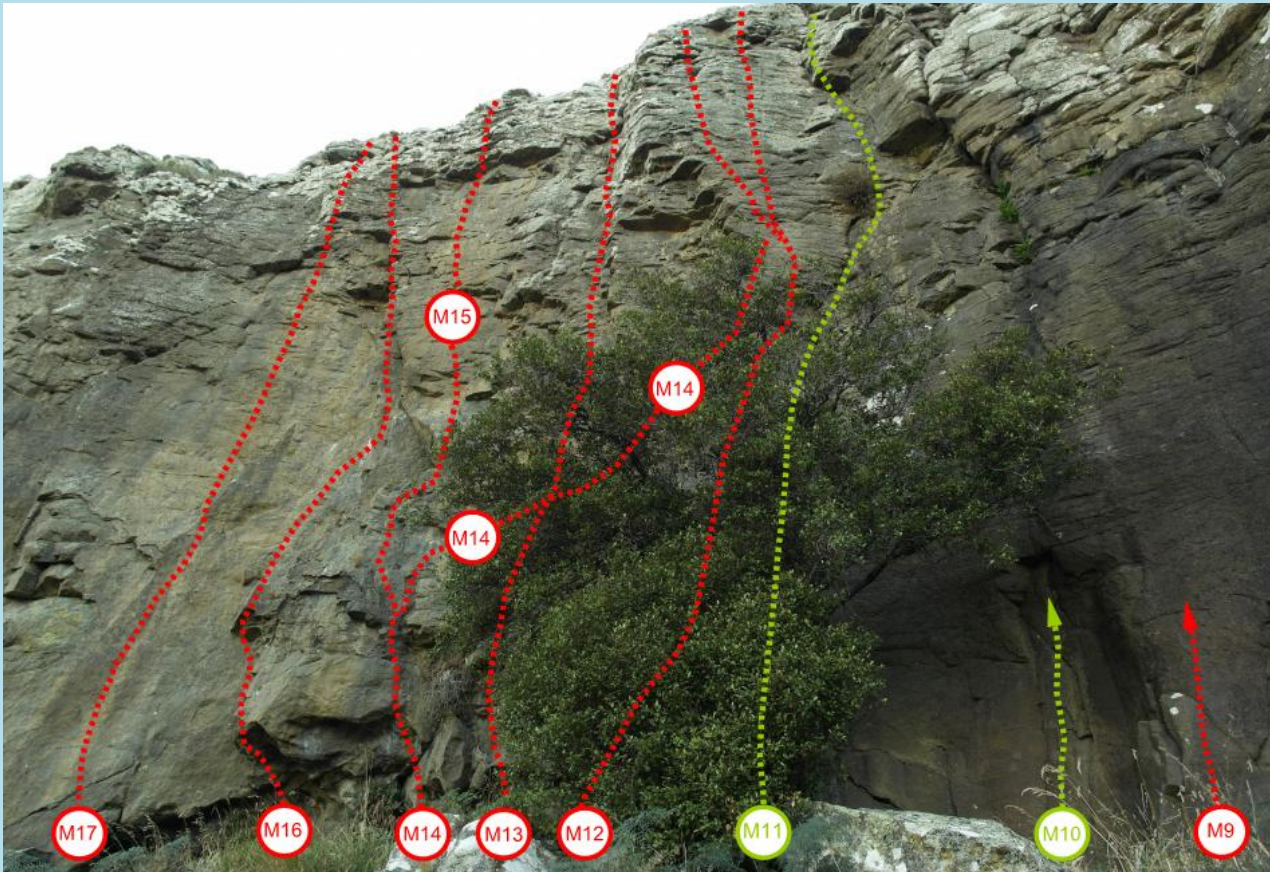
Main Wall (2)



- M7.** *If Jenny Craig Could See Me Now - 20 (5BR)*, Start as for "HMHB", at the first good hold go diagonally left across wall past a bolt then up over bulge & head wall finishing L of the last BR. Simon Middlemass, January 1997
- M8.** *The Power of Piss - 21 (MP)*, 4m R of tree. There are a few thin moves before you can clip the 1st BR, easier climbing on good holds before finishing up the bulge L of IJCCSMN use the same anchor. John McCallum, February 1998
- M9.** *Pin Cushion - 22 (7BR)*, A direct line up the face between "TPOP" & "SS", takes a line directly up the line of bolts, start on the slabby tongue of rock a metre or so left of the hanging groove "SS", tricky moves lead to good holds, then finish up the white, bulging, lichenous rock. Tony Burnell, April 2016
- M10.** *Smokescreen - 21 (MP)*, Behind the obvious large tree is a crack. start 2m R of the tree in a small alcove there is an obvious groove / seam that heads directly up the wall. Bouldery start protected by 1 bolt leads to easier climbing through middle ground and then committing moves through crack and overhang at top. Craig Smith, February 1998
- M11.** *The Full Monty - 16 (MP)*, Start off the large boulder just right of the tree. Takes a line up the L side of the face to the bulging crack. Finish on ledge. Simon Middlemass February 1998

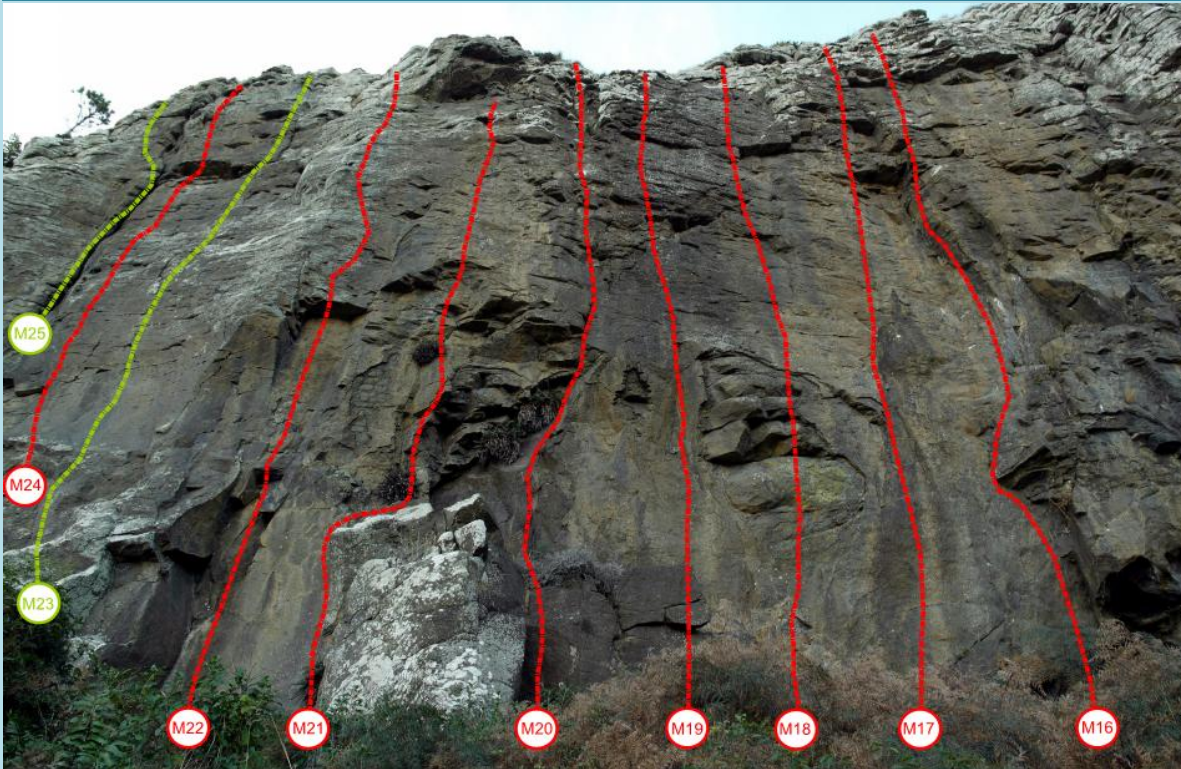
Main Wall (3)

The next routes start at the base of the groove approximately 3.0 mts right of the large Matipo Tree.



- M12. Galvanised Action - 22 (5BR)**, Starts 2m L of tree at undercut bulge with good slot up into corner (good pro) move L to lets off road at roof then move R at 2nd roof directly up face to move L again to the last BR of 'LOR'. Tony Burnell, 98
- M13. Project Tony Burnell**
- M14. Lets off Road! - 24(5BR)**, Starts in the middle of the undercut wall left of the tree, diagonally R through roofs to finish up the Buttress L of GA. Pat Deavoll, January 1998
- M15. Spice up your life - 23 (6BR)**, Starts in the middle of the undercut wall left of the tree. The left hand line almost straight up the wall and lactic your way through the final bulges. Pat Deavoll, January 1998
- M16. Rodeo Corner - 25 (5BR)**, On the left of the undercut wall a V-groove starts. Hard moves to a big block then continue up the left facing corner next to 'SR'. Pat Deavoll, February 1998
- M17. Steel Rain - 23 (MP)**, An ode to the Gulf War. On the largest section of flat wall, left of L facing corner. Start on broken blocks / pedestal on left that allows the 1st bolt to be clipped. Diagonals R then move back left after the 3rd bolt to place wires under block to protect the final moves. Athol Whimp, 1991

Main Wall (4)



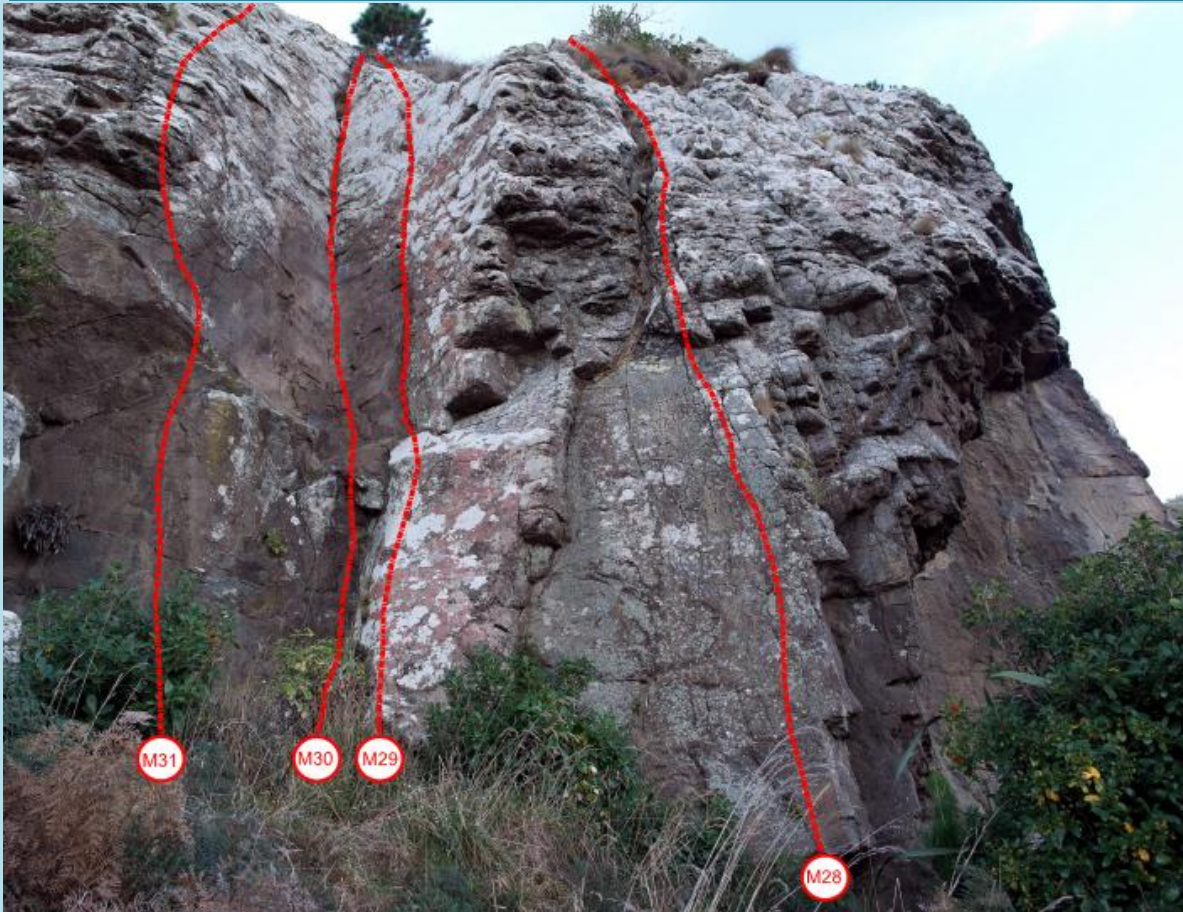
- M18. Navel Gazing - 23 (6BR)**, A direct line up the wall between 'SR' & 'BWTD', using a cardboard flake move up through the centre of the oval eye onto the face proper to BR3, after clipping BR4 tricky moves on the R leads to good holds, steep but easier climbing to the top. Tony Burnell, May 2016
- M19. Hugs and Drugs - 22 (4BR)**, Just left of 'SR' is a peapod groove head straight up wall from this 4B. Finishes at the belay of SR. John McCallum January 1998
- M20. Bolting With The Dolphins - 21 (4BR)**, Clip first bolt on 'H&D' to stop a ground fall, climb the bulges 1m left. Uses the last bolt on 'H&D' which can be clipped leaning across. John McCallum January 1998 - A lazily bolted line
- M21. Stepping Out - 23 (6BR)**, A strenuous, fingery, line up the wall to the right of Tarn. Start up the crack on the L side of the white snout (there is a cluster of blocks on top of the snout). Climb up the broken rib to good holds on the L before moving back out R with difficulty onto a good rail.. Thin moves up the wall till the climbing eases & you get to an anchor below the final roof. Tony Burnell, May 2016
- M22. Tarn - 22 (6BR)**, Start direct up a shallow groove to a new bolt & get into the coffin shaped pod below a small roof. Go over roof using a thin crack on the L & an undercut on the R, move R to good holds then back L slightly & up to the last bolt before topping out B. Pete Sykes, 1991 (Re Bolted in 2016)
- M23. A slice of life - 20 (MP)**, Left of 'T' is a slightly concave wall that leads to a head wall split by broken cracks. Climb delicately from either the R or the L using small wires to protect the first moves to the bolt. Then straight up using broken cracks. Simon Middlemass February 1998

Main Wall (5)



- M24. *Between The Lines - 18 (6BR)***, - Start left of the corner taken by *Dangerous Liaisons*, climb the blunt arête past 5 BR until you come to the small roof at the top of the crag, clip BR 6 then move over the roof using the top of the crack. Tony Burnell April 2016
- M25. *Liaisons Dangereux - 15 (Tr)***, Start just R of a steep white slab, up a small groove with a creeper to get to the base of the corner/flake crack, at the final bulge go L and up to the anchor station. The top is a bit unstable. Simon Middlemass, 1991.
- M26. *Richard Kimberley - 21 (6BR)*** Start low down, just R of the arete. Up the thin groove at the edge of the slab, then out to the arete before stepping back into the middle of the wall then straight up to the to share the anchor of 'LD'. Richard Kimberley, May 2016.
- To the L of 'LD' is an arête that goes direct to the top of the crag, move down and L to a lower level below a capped corner, the next route starts in a short subsidiary groove.
- M27. *Left Simon Courtois 20 (7BR)***, Climb the groove & wall above (tricky) past 4BR, move up to a splitter crack though the arête above, pull round the bulge & step R, go up the wall to an anchor point above & R. Simon Courtois, April 2016

Main Wall (6)



M28. Desert Storm – 22 (6BR) – Climb the left side of the remarkably un slabby wall to gain the hanging groove, up this to the anchors. Tony Burnell April 2016

M29. Dangelina Jolie - 19 (5BR) Climb the crack that splits the pinky white wall just on the R of the prominent corner. Simon Courtois, April 2016

Originally a climb called Pine Tree Leads (climbed by Craig Smith in 1997) went up the corner, a trad climb, of which the majority collapsed in the 2010 earthquakes.

M30. Don Whillans Drilling - 16 (5BR) Damaged by quakes this is now a clean open book corner. Climb the corner. Simon Courtois, June 2016

M31. New Tricks 23 (5BR) - A strenuous route. Start on the left of "PTL", climb the short rib then hard moves up & past the second BR to gain the arête on the L, up this before stepping back R & straight up to the anchors. Tony Burnell April 2016

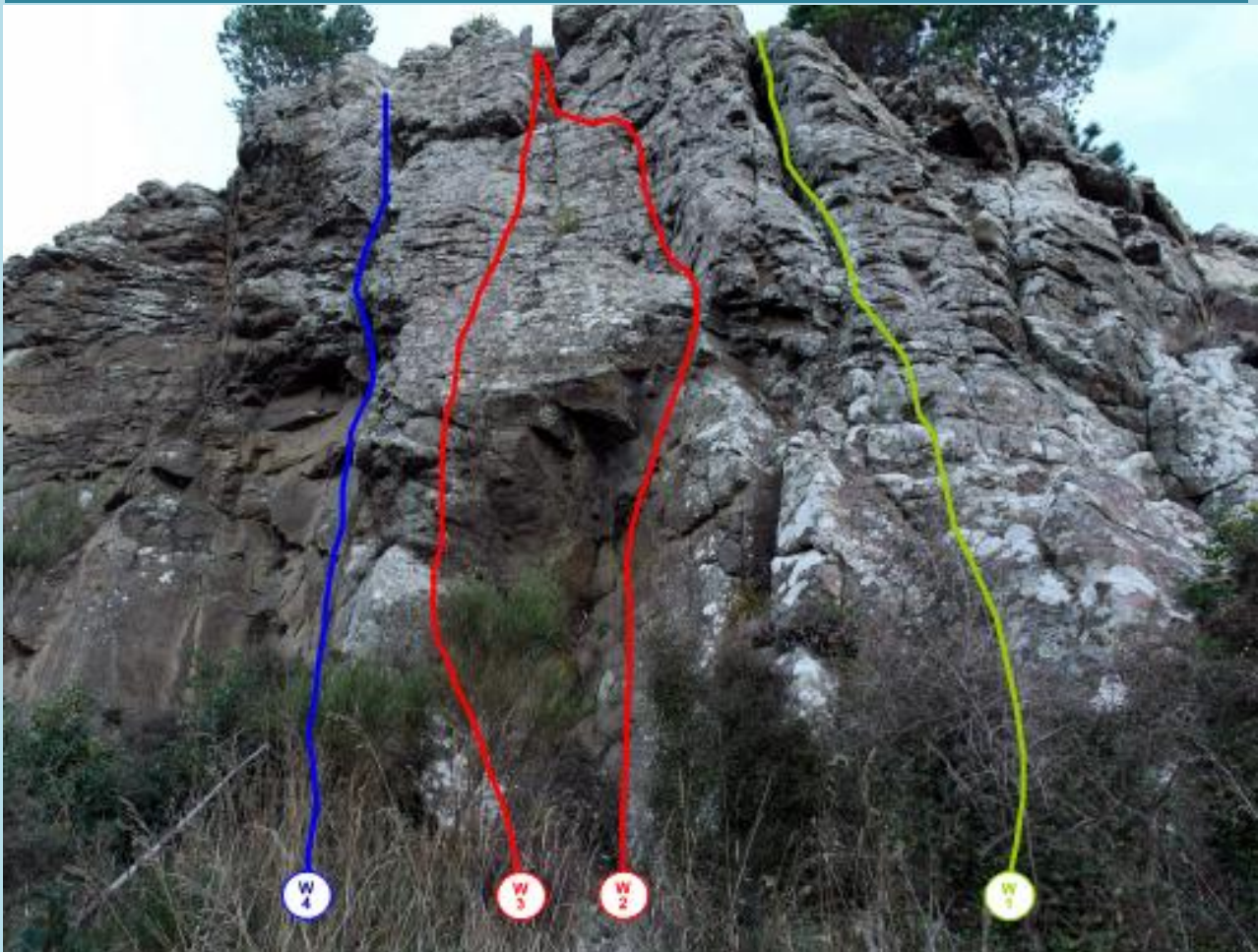
bivouac / outdoor

COMMITTED TO ADVENTURE

WEST WALL

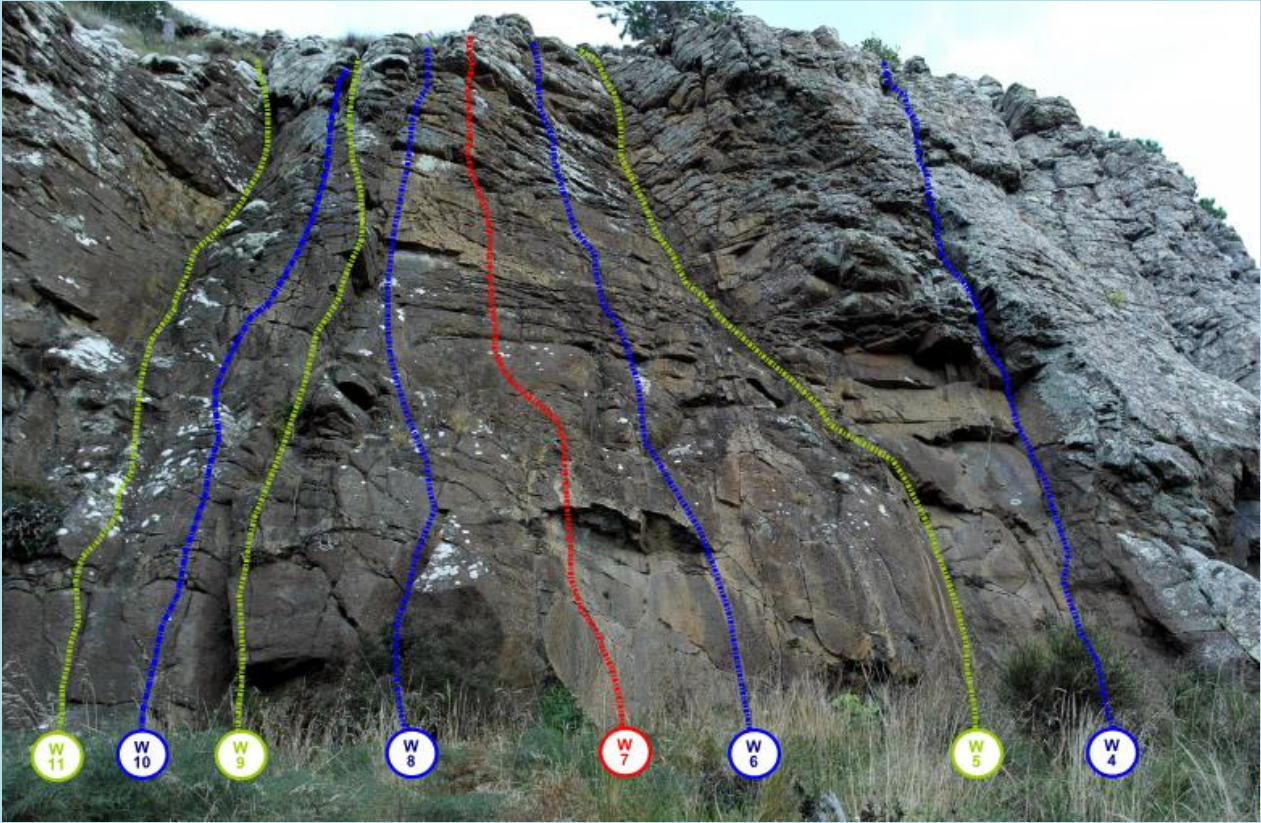
From "PTL" walk around the base of the crag & across an overgrown debris slope before moving back up hill to the West Wall

West Wall (1)

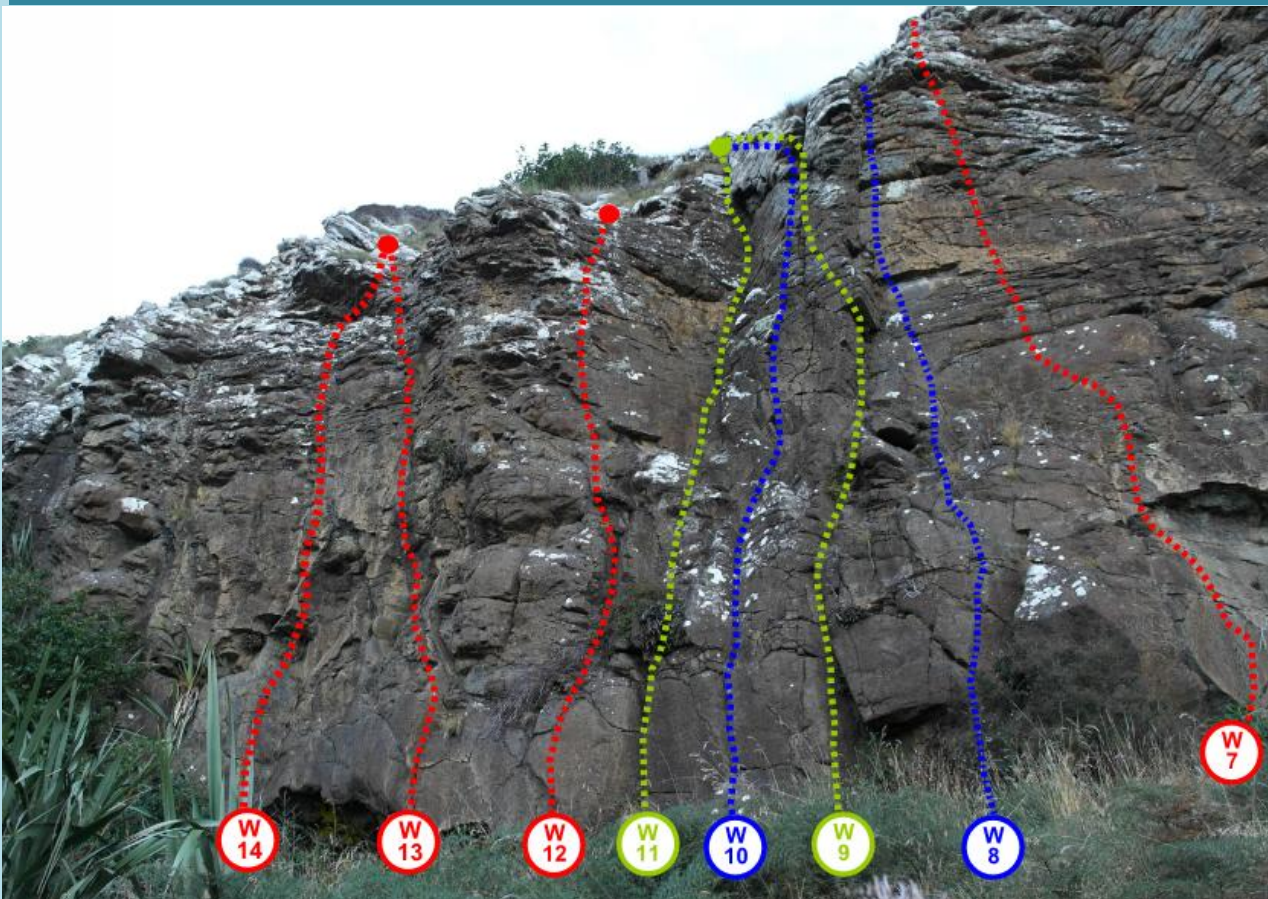


- W1. Right Brain - 17**, The first feature is an off width crag at the L end of some easy angled rock, climb the more solid bits to get to the crack finish up this. Tony Billing 2/98
- W2. Exceeding The Quota – 19 (5STPL)**, Originally top roped by Craig Smith in 1998 then forgotten about. Climb the corner moving slightly left to the junction of the roof & the arête. Go up & R into the shallow corner follow this till it runs; out then step L and go up the chimney.
- W3. Glimmer - 19 (MP)**, Start in an alcove below a hanging pinky white wall, exit via the small chimney at top. Craig Smith 2/98
- W4. Prospective line**
- W5. Rush Hour - 18 (Tr)**, Start in the R facing corner below a horizontal roof, up the corner and move L to a good stance, follow the open book corner, near the top the corner gets steeper. Tony Billing 1/98
- W6. Prospective line**
- W7. Naval - 20 (5BR)**, Start in the smooth vertical scoop capped by a small roof, using a pocket move up L & over the roof, follow the line of bolts. Tony Billing 2/98
- W8. Prospective Line**

West Wall (2)



West Wall (3)



W9. *Miss Kitty - 17 (Tr)*, Start 3m left of "N" almost directly below the sharp hanging arête, lay back

up to ledge then climb right side of sharp arête, at half height move around L then up to the top.
Tony Billing

W10. Prospective line

W11. Crispy Corner 16 (Tr) *Around L of "MK" is a corner starting at mid height, the start of the climb is marked by two dotted lines of white lichen. Craig Smith 1/98*

W12. All On Edge – 19 (4STPL), *Start just L of "CC", start up the short groove then the wall just L of the arête. Tony Burnell, 2016*








W13. Closed Project – 21 (5STPL), *Start at the R side of the big undercut with bright yellow lichen under, tricky start, then move L and up a vague groove finishing through weakness in the wall above. (still wet)*

W14. Domino Effect – 20 (5STPL), *Start at the L side of the big undercut with bright yellow lichen under, up the rib into the recess then straight up using the vertical intrusion, go R through weakness in the wall above. Tony Burnell, 2016*

THE BLACK WALL TICK LIST

No.	Name	Grade	Style	Comments
01	Avoiding the Crowds (TR)	17	✋	
02	Cams Line (S)			
03	Die Yuppie Die (TR)	20	☠	
04	Principle (TR)	20	☠	
05	Camelot Calling (S)	16		
06	Staple Diet (S)	17	✋	
07	Miro (S)	18	✋	
08	Pink Pallet Pulling (S)	22	😊✋👉	
09	Grubbies Line (S)	19		
10	Prospective Line (S)			
11	Pressure Test (S)	24	✂	
12	Joker Hysterical Face (S)	23		
13	Project			
14	Grubbies Line			
M1	Twisting by the Pool		✂☠	
M2	Winky the One Eyed Snake	19	😊✂	
M3	Blinky the Three Eyed Fish	16	😊✂	
M4	The Uprooter (TR)	15	✂	
M5	Dreaming of Dry Rocks	22	😊✂	
M6	Half Man Half Biscuit (MP)	19	😊✂	
M7	If Jenny Craig Could See Me Now (S)	20	✂	
M8	The Power of Piss (MP)	21	✂	
M9	Pin Cushion (S)	22	😊✂	
M10	Smokescreen (MP)	22	😊✂	
M11	The Full Monty (MP)	16	✂	
M12	Galvanised Action (S)	22	✂	
M13	Project (S)		😊☠	
M14	Lets Off Road (S)	24	☠	
M15	Spice up your Life (S)	23	☠	
M16	Rodeo Corner (S)	25	😊☠	
M17	Steel Rain (S)	23	😊👉	
M18	Star Gazer (S)	23	😊👉	
M19	Hugs & Drugs (S)	22	😊	
M20	Bolting with the Dolphins (MP)	21	😞	
M21	Stepping Out (S)	23	😊👉	
M22	Tarn (S)	22	😊👉	
M23	A Slice of Life (MP)	20	😊👉	
M24	Between the Lines (S)	18	😊👉	
M25	Liaisons Dangereux (TR)	15	😞	
M26	Richards Line (S)	21	😊👉	
M27	Simons Line (S)	21	😊	
M28	Desert Storm (S)	22	😊👉	
M29	Simons Line (S)	16	😊	
M30	Simons Line (S)	19	😊	
M31	New Tricks (S)	23	😊	
W1				
W2				
W3				
W4				

W5				
W6				
W7				
W8				
W9				
W10				
W11				
W12				
W13				
W14				
W15				

 - Well worth doing
  - An OK route
  - Having done it I wouldn't bother
 ✂ Sharp
 - Slabby
 - Fingery
 - Powerfull
 - Oh yes
(S) Sport Climb Bolt Protected
(MP) Mixed Protection Bolts & Trad Gear
(TR) Trad Gear