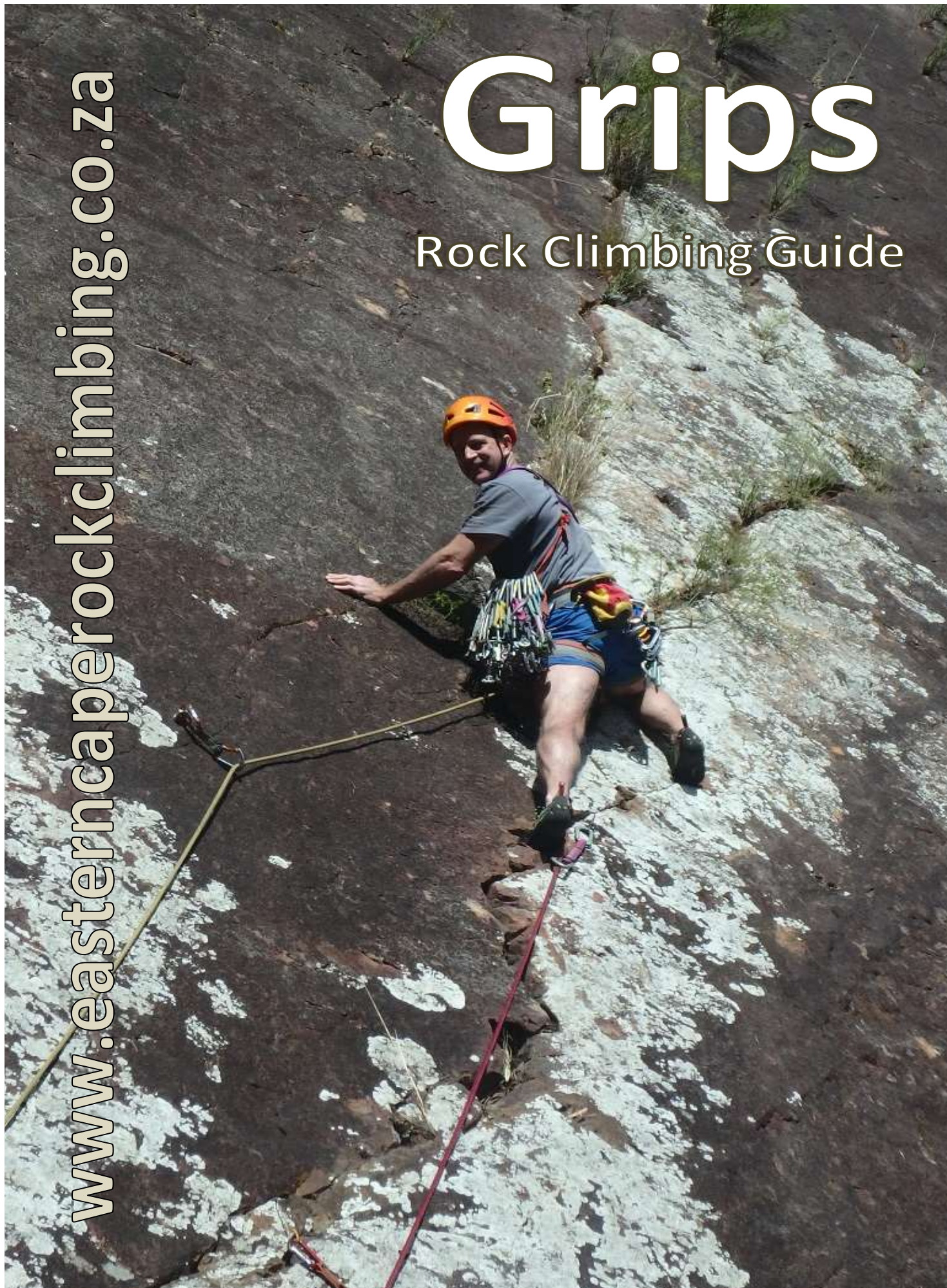


[www.easterncaperockclimbing.co.za](http://www.easterncaperockclimbing.co.za)

# Grips

Rock Climbing Guide





**Legal Note:** All climbing is very dangerous & always at your own risk. Nobody is forcing you to climb. You choose to climb, so choose to go home before the risks become too high. Remember even small injuries can take 6 weeks to heal. No responsibility for inaccurate or incomplete information will be accepted by the scribe or any other body. The landowners accept no liability at all. Climbers take full responsibility for themselves at all times. Fixed protection will become unreliable, loose rock is common, solid rock becomes loose & RD writers make up most of the information, with a beer, at the computer. This RD is only a guide & is no substitute for experience, training, common sense & a touch of caution. So, you are on your own...take care!

**Note from the Scribe:** It took consistent effort, time, work & organization to get this guide ready for your pleasure...for free! Thus, please respect that all the information & photographs are strictly **Copy Righted**. Nobody "has" a lawyer, normally a lawyer has us...by the short & curlies. But I do know this lawyer, he's a bit of a dick, but apparently, he normally wins. Friends let's not get to see how much of a dick he really is. You are more than welcome to print out, e-mail or link to a web page this guide in its unchanged format, with logos & all information intact.

This guide is an attempt to consolidate all the info & make it available to everyone. As this is a web-based guide it can be considered a work in progress. It is easy to change. So please send missing details, corrections, additions & adjustments to [info@easterncaperockclimbing.co.za](mailto:info@easterncaperockclimbing.co.za) . All information will be greatly appreciated.

**Directions:** From the N2 between Cape Town & Port Elizabeth take the R322 towards Hankey & Patensie. Continue on the R322 into the Baviaanskloof Nature Reserve. About 5km after Condomo, the Nature Conservation office, Grips will appear on the L. Find a parking as best you can. There is a sort-of-a path that leads down to the river.

**Walk-in:** 300m easy. River will be tricky or dangerous after heavy rain.

**Access:** Grips is on private farmland! The owner owns Bruintjieskraal, campsites & chalets. So basically, the owner is happy to have climbers at Grips & welcomes sport climbing development, obviously at climbers own risk entirely, but this access is only when using Bruintjieskraal camping or accommodation. See [www.bruintjieskraal.co.za](http://www.bruintjieskraal.co.za) for more info. The camping is great, surely the obvious choice when visiting Grips any way. It's not on Nature Conservation land, so don't ask any questions!

**To-do:** Grips is at the start of the Baviaanskloof Wilderness area. There are amazing views & lots to see. The R322 becomes very much a 4x4 track. Take your old one...it is rough! Clinton Martiningo managed to drive his company Honda Ballad all the way through to Waterkloof, but he also led Mary Poppins 32 on trad gear.

**General:** There are 3 fully bolted modern sport routes, a few old mixed routes with very dodgy old bolts on them & plenty of trad.. The old bolts include old home-made aluminum hangers with drop in anchors were placed way back. Probably 1987! So, beware☠!

**Rock Type:** Fine quartzite slab. Lots of potential.

Star Ratings	
★ ★ ★	Classic route in this province
★ ★	Good route in the area
★	Good route at this crag
No star	Reasonable to bollocks
Abbreviations & Symbols	
	(T) Trad route (natural gear) & grade
	Sport route (bolted) & grade
	Open Project / in-progress & ± grade
	Closed Project & ± grade
	(S) FA was solo & grade
	Potential
	Abseil point
(11B&C)	Number of bolts & top chains
P / RB	Piton / Removable bolt
	Afternoon Shade
	Morning Shade
	Shade all day
	Sun all day
	Dappled shade all day
	Can be climbed in wet weather



**History:** First route recorded was *Reunion* in 1972. Since then there has been on & off spurts of climbing happening with the occasional new route. Unfortunately, not much was recorded during those years. Help us out if you have anything to add. In previous years the river had white sand banks. The story goes that Mike Roberts & company had a large boom box on the beach with *Rock-Me-Amadeus* (remember that?) blaring, during the bolting of the 2nd pitch of *Wasteland*. At least some of the time the boom box was powered by the generator that was hauled onto the ledge above “*the carrot*” face...so the story goes... Keith James says this story is kak & the pitch got bolts in 1990 with Mike Roberts’ brand new Hilti. Is he attempting to cover up the sordid details of misspent youth?

**Acknowledgments:** Big thanks to the following people who provide the information in this RD, much appreciated!

1. Vince Eagan’s rough RD. He got his info from Mike Roberts, who marked in the routes on a photo.
2. Mark Berry’s typed descriptions.
3. Andrew Wesson’s sketches & memory over beers & curry at the Royal Deli.
4. Andrew Forsyth’s personal journal.
5. The oldest 3 routes came from the MCSA journals.
6. The old route book that was kept at Camp & Climb in Cape Road.
7. Keith James filled in all the blanks, which means he contributed most of the information.
8. John Alexander bounced back from the dead (living in Cape Town) & provided all sorts of details.

Thanks to all of you who made an effort to record in writing. Feel free to add & correct.

**Hazards:**

1. **HEAT** in summer....no! Don’t do it! It gets really hot. This is a winter spot. Full sun all day.
2. Good place to find **snakes**.
3. There must be some **horses** in Baviaans. Horses bite, kick, stamp on toes, make silly noises, smell bad, attract horsy chicks, crap all over the place & are generally a huge threat. Be really careful. A good horse repellent or a steel pole may help.
4. **Nature Conservation** try not to make eye contact with any officials. Don’t mention climbing at all. You never know what they will come up with. So don’t ask questions & keep it brief.
5. Loose rock, Grips has plenty of loose rocks. You need a helmet!





Routes are recorded from up-stream to down-stream.

### 1. Reunion – 15

Tim Robertson, Richard Ledger & John Rous 10/10/1972 (T)

P1 – 12 - 23m Up a large slippery chimney until nearly under an overhang. Belay from a small chock-stone deep inside a crack.

P2 – 15 - 33m Traverse horizontally R for 6m to a small bush. Climb directly up following a faint dry water course in the middle of the slab for 27m. Traverse L to belay from sturdy tree & comfy cave in chimney.

P3 – 13 - 33m Up trending R across the slab till 3m from edge. Up over broken maroon-colored rock to a small stance under a gnarled bush.

P4 – 13 - 23m Move 2m L, then up open book for 10m. Up prominent off width, through lichen covered rock, for 13m, to a large stance under an overhang.

P5 – 13 - 32m From a difficult start under the overhang, move L onto the face & up broken rock to a stance close to a tree.

P6 – 10 - 23m Easy, but exposed pitch trending L to the top. Descend using the steep loose gully to the R of *Reunion*. This may require abseiling.

### ● 2. Supernova – 21 ★★

Uwe Haller & Alan Briers 1992 (7B,T&C)

Route through overhang to the R of *Orbiter*. Follows the initial slab of *Orbiter*, but moves out R to the bolt in the overhang. Moves back L to the same chains as *Orbiter*.

### ● 3. Orbiter – 20

Mike Roberts & Alan Briers Dec 1987 (7B,T &C)

### 4. Unknown

No details.

### 5. Reptile Rage – 17

John Alexander & Alan Briers Dec 1987 (T)

P1 – 17 Up slab below distinct 'V' notch in roof. Pitch did not end near any tree, but in an alcove with a pin/nut anchor (worth replacing with a bolt).

P2 - 17 Up trending diagonally R to the RH arête of the headwall above. This pitch was opened by Keith James & Alan Briers.

### 6. Lizard Slither – 18

Alan Briers & John Alexander Dec 1987 (T)

Up slab that is just L of 'V' notch in roof. Pitch ended in same alcove with a pin/nut anchor as *Reptile Rage*.

### ● 7. Municipal Fate – 16

22m Derek Marshall & Tyson Baars 05/06/2016 (10B&C)

### 8. Marginalization - 14

23m Derek Marshall & Werner Illenberger 05/06/2016 (T&C)

### 9. Rehabilitation – 16

John Moss & Karl Dauter 04/04/1974 (T)

P1 – 13 - 27m Climb the break diagonally R to a stance that overlooks a corner.

P2 – 15 - 23m Up the open book behind the stance. Traverse L on sloping holds, around an arête. Up then L to a belay ledge.

P3 – 14 A0 - 20m Move R under overhangs to a corner with a steep, smooth slab on the R. Up the corner using pitons for aid. R across the slab using a flake. Up the grey slab above to a stance.

P4 – 14 - 30m Up the steep corner crack to where it overhangs. Traverse R over a sloping ledge. Move up & L into main chimney. Up chimney to a stance.

P5 – 14 - 20 Up chimney to a tree belay.

P6 – 12 - 23m Close to the huge detached pillar in the chimney, traverse R behind some trees. Across the wall.

Up & L over steep rock to a stance at a huge choke stone.



P7 – 12 - 37m Traverse 5m L, then up easiest path to the top.

#### 10. Waylex – 17

John Alexander & Wayne Clausen 1985 (T&C)

Up slab using arête. Can continue up the remaining pitches of *Jekyll & Hyde*.

#### ● 11. Sunless Sky – 17 ★

30m Derek Marshall & Tyson Baars 05/06/2016 (12B&C)

#### 12. Jekyll & Hyde – 17

Andrew Forsyth & Wayne Clausen 12/12/1982 (T)

Start at the off width, which is to the L of the prominent shield shaped face.

P1 – 15 - 47m up a short easy slab to gain the classic open book layback crack. Up to this to a stance on a sloping ledge.

P2 – 19 - 35m Continue up the crack to a ledge. Up a broken face to a semi break in the overhang. Through the break & up a narrow crack to a large ledge with a tree.

P3 – 12 - 18m Up the LH side of the tree & up over easy rock to the top.

#### 13. Graceland – 18 ★★★

⚠ 55m ⚠ Jason Lang & John Alexander 12/04/1987 (T, P&C)

Up the *Peanut Spread chimney* to the start of the *shield* shaped face. Step R on thin smears then into a prominent R trending crack system. You can clip the first 2 bolts of *Smooth Chalker*. Basically stay a few meters L of the arête, past a piton about 8m from the ledge, then trend L to top anchor below ledge anchor. Top anchor was added later.

#### 14. Wasteland – 20 ★★

Mike Roberts & John Alexander Dec 1987 (T &C)

P1 – 20 ⚠ 55m ⚠ Up the *Peanut Spread chimney* to the start of the shield shaped face. Step R on thin smears then into a prominent crack system up the middle of the “*carrot face*”. You can clip the first 2 bolts of *Smooth Chalker*. Basically stay a few meters L of the arête,

P2 – 19 (3B&T) Mixed line from the ledge above the carrot shaped face. Apparently, a generator was hauled onto the ledge for the bolting. The route was later opened to the sound of *Rock me Amadeus* blaring on a boom box below, powered by the same generator.

#### 15. Passion for Excellence - ??

⚠ 55m ⚠ Mike Roberts & John Alexander Dec 1987 (2B,T)

The 2 bolts on the route were hand-drilled on lead! The first ascent took 3 hours. John Alexander, in blue lycra, belayed heroically, as “The Robe” took 3x 40 foot falls on the 30mm by 8mm drop-in bolt, while working out the crux sequence.

#### ● 16. Smooth Chalker – 26 ★★

⚠ 55m ⚠ Mike Roberts & John Alexander Dec 1987 (20B&C)

Originally this route was protected by 8 homemade aluminum hangers secured with drop-in mild steel bolts. Re-bolted by Derek Marshall.

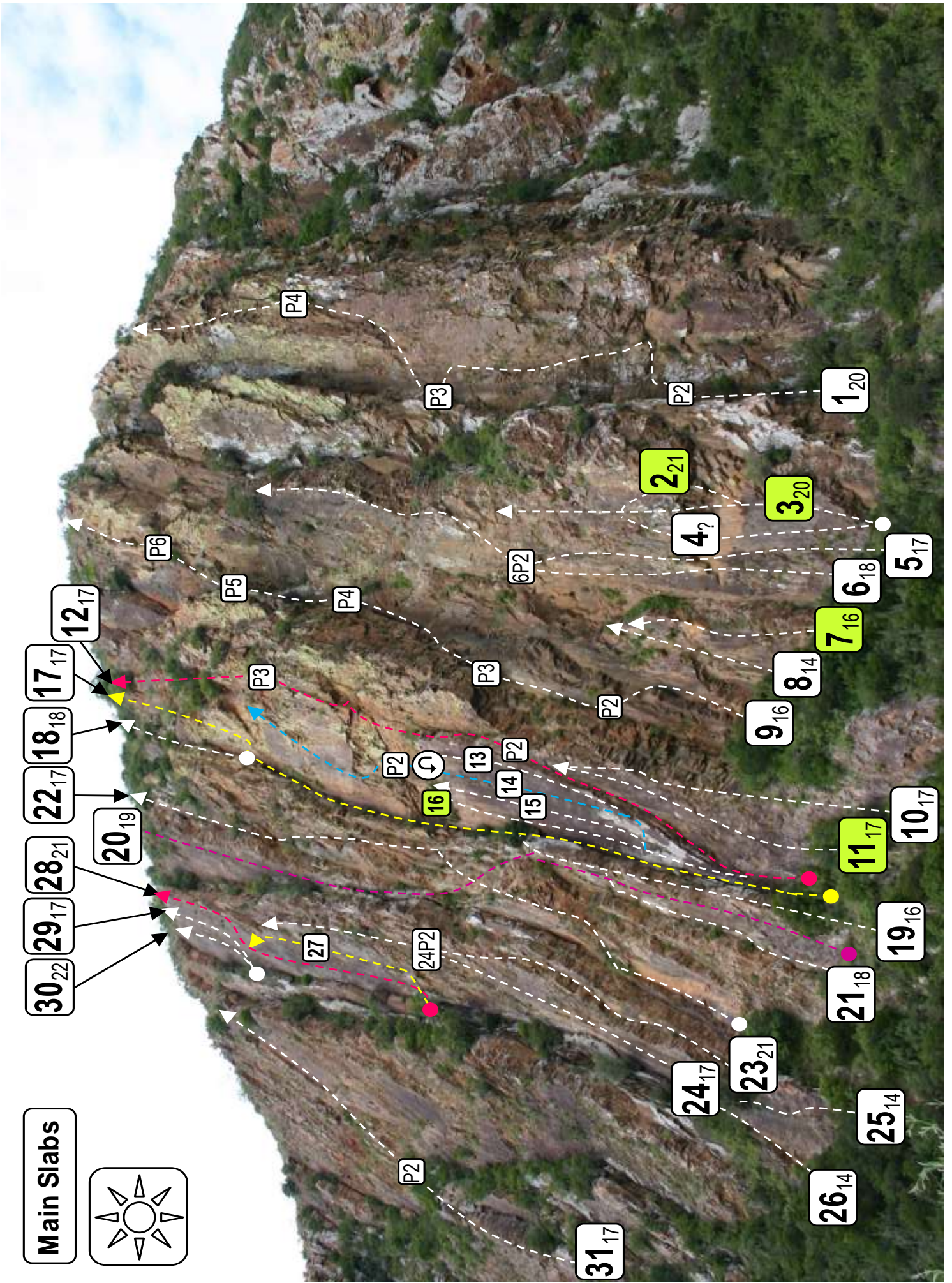
#### 17. Peanut Spread – 17

Andrew Forsyth & John Davies 24 Jan 1983 (T)

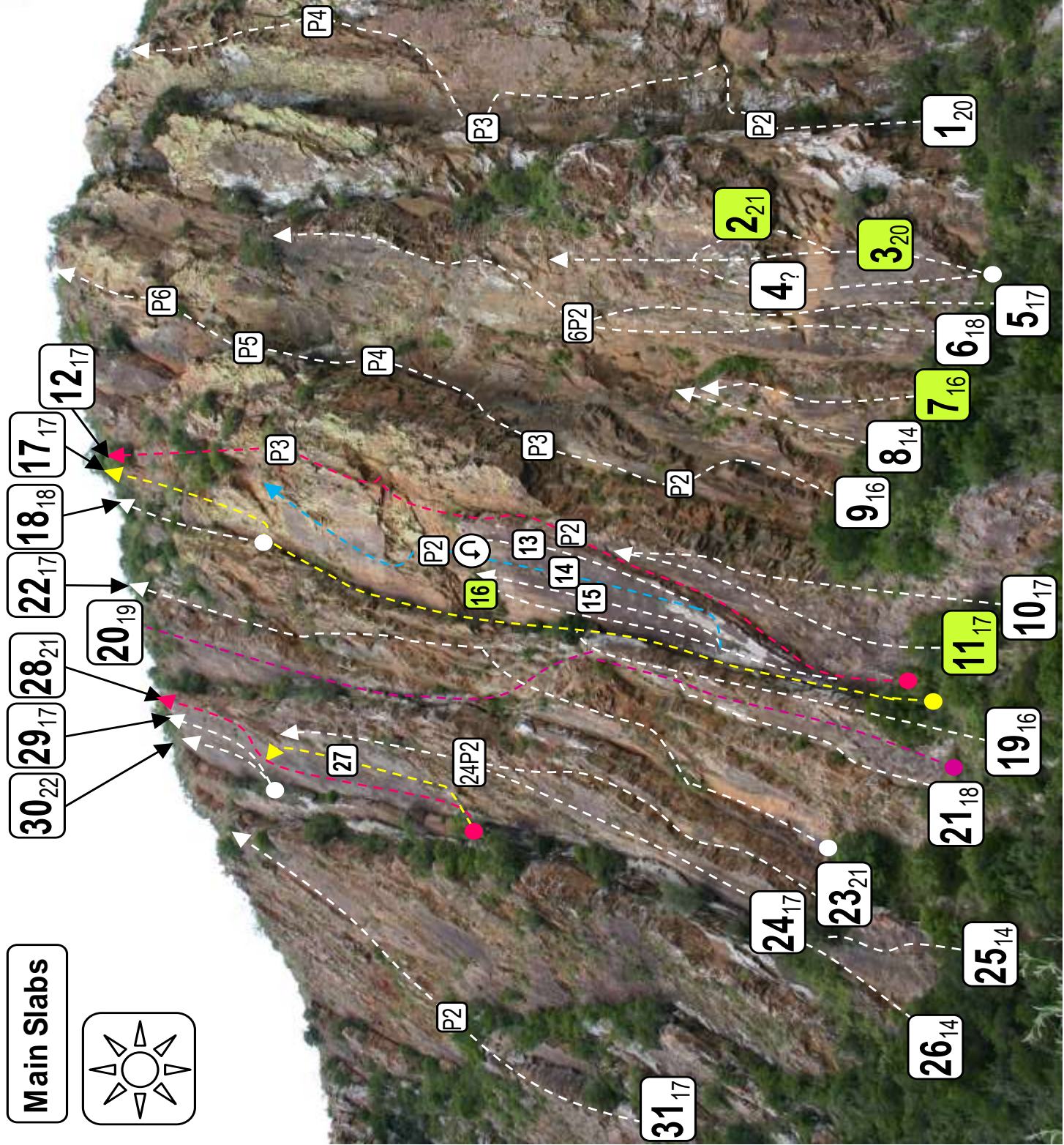
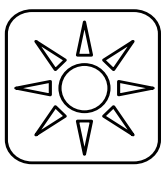
P1 – 17 - 45m Climb the chimney & overhang to the top.

P2 – 17 - 12m Climb the crack behind the stance & move into narrower part of chimney. Up this to a ledge.

P3 – 16 - 35m Up the chimney which is wider. Before the chimney steepens & narrows, move L onto a small ledge.



Main Slabs





tree on the top.

**18. Last Pitch Direct – 18**

Wayne Clausen & Sybrin Kindermans 10/12/1983 (T)

Start & first three pitches the same as *Peanut Spread*. The final pitch stays in the chimney off width.

**19. Lamentation – 16**

46m Derek Marshall & Craig Bester 16/06/2007 (T)

Up the RH side of the slab. Move T onto the arête. Stay on the arête to a tree. 10m above the tree move R into a very veg cubbyhole.

Belay & abseil...for your lives! This was not a fun route.

**20. Un-Holy Grail – 19**

Keith James 1990 (T)

P1 – 17 Up the middle of slab to belay at tree in crack.

P2 – 15 Up short open book, then move left on loose scary ground into veged open book. Up to belay in tree below smooth clean face.

P3 – 17 Up R trending break in the smooth clean face. Top out. Exit R into gully of *Peanut Spread* to descend.

**21. Two Minutes Too Midnight – 18**

46m Terence Trevaskis, Craig Bester & Cathy Anderson 04/06/2016 (T)

Up the R facing open book, over some vegy bits past a huge seemingly loose flake, then move out R to a smaller open book near the arête. Up on the arête to a large tree. Abseil from here.

**22. Monsoon – 17**

E.Nienaber & E.Haber 10/12/1978 (T)

Start up a prominent open book.

P1 – 17 - 35m Up on RH side of crack on slab. Tricky step L into corner halfway up. Continue up passing a bush on LH side. Then traverse 3m R above bush to a stance.

P2 – 16 - 30m Up recess & move R onto the ridge. Climb L to a stance at the start of a crack.

P3 – 14 - 40m Climb diagonally R past a tree to belay from a higher tree.

P4 – 16 - 45m Up the gully to a little chimney. Continue to the top.

**23. Mozart – 21 ★★**

Mike Roberts & John Alexander early 1987 (T)

There are 3 pitches. All 3 pitches were 21+. Mike Roberts carried 3 sets of RPs to protect the route! He always said it was the best route at Grips.

**24. Amadeus – 17 ★**

Chris Vind & Mike Roberts (1B,T)

Up easy-ish slab with little or no pro. Ran for two pitches.

**25. Mr Schnaffler – 14**

12m Terence Trevaskis & Craig Bester 05/06/2016 (T)

Up short L trending diagonal crack.

**26. Ant Man - 14**

12m Terence Trevaskis & Craig Bester 05/06/2016 (T)

R facing open book.

**27. Magical Movements – 21 ★★**

Mike Roberts & John Alexander early 1987 (T)

**28. I Don't Want Your Money Honey – 21**

Mike Roberts & John Alexander early 1987 (T)

**29. Mozart's Minarets – 17 ★**

Andrew Wesson & Richard van der Merwe Aug 1992 (T)



Start at rock fig on final slab of Classical Wall(?). Start up broken section traverse out to bold diagonal crack on RH side. Follow to the top.

### 30. Chopin – 22 ★★

Richard van der Merwe & Andrew Wesson May 1993 (3B&T)

Start at rock fig on final slab of Classical Wall. Follow direct line.

### 31. Flight of Icarus – 17

Derek Marshall & Allen Luck Easter 2008 (T)

P1 – 14 53m Easiest scramble to the base of the prominent R trending open book.

P2 – 17 42m Up unprotected corner then into prominent R trending open book. Stay in this to the top. Pretty scary. Scramble up a few meters to the start of *Scab-Slab-Slags*.

### 32. Scab-Slab-Slags – 14

Derek Marshall & Craig Bester 16/12/2006 (T)

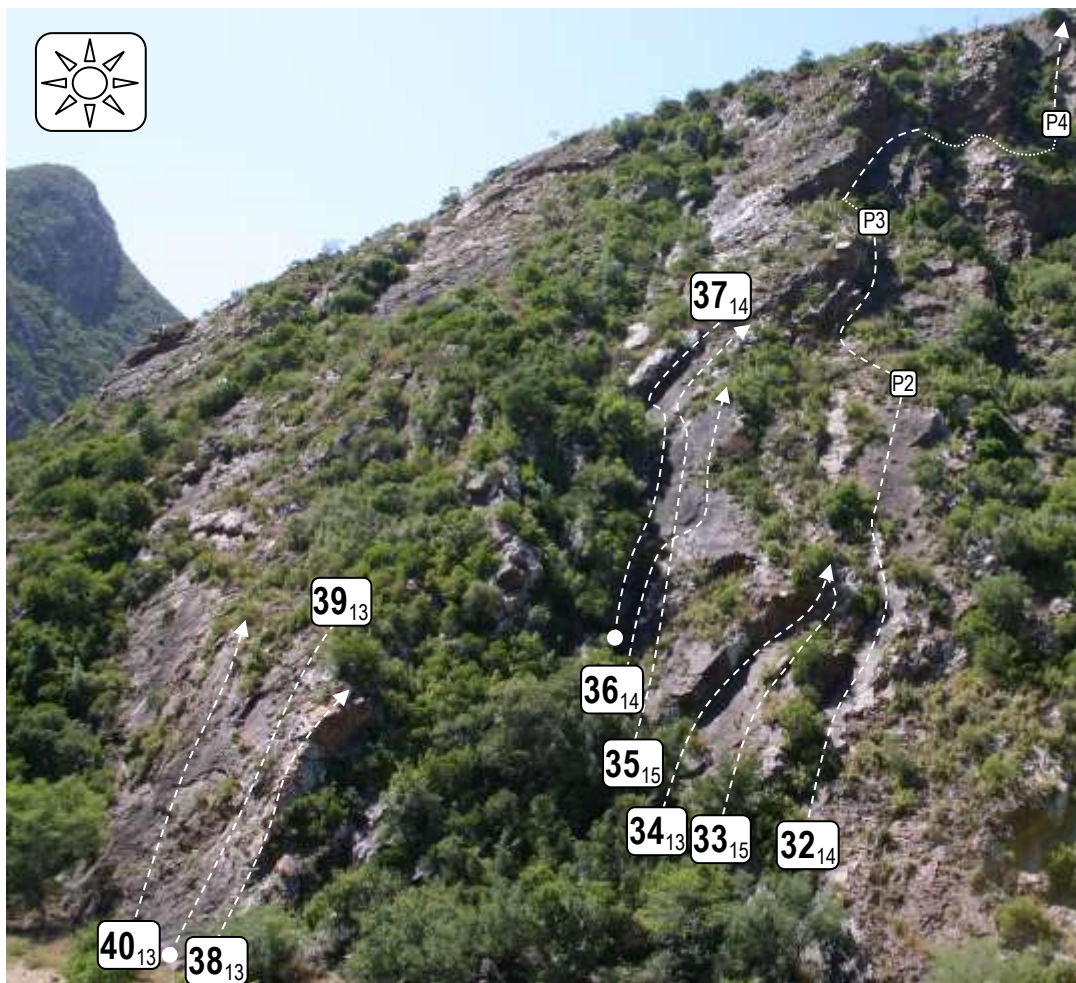
This route is a bit Table Mountain-ish. Pitches linked by vegetated scrambles ☺.

P1 – 13 - 62m Up the clean break between the veg.

P2 – 12 - 24m Scramble R to the start of the next pitch. Up the messy slab.

P3 – 13 - 30m Up smooth clean slab to R of open book.

P4 – 15 - Scramble down & R, around a buttress that looks like a pinnacle, to a short impeccable face with a crack through the middle. Up the crack, to a nice tree. Abseil from the nice tree & then scramble back to the river.



### 33. Slab of Meat – 15

21m Derek Marshall & Craig Bester 16/12/2006 (T)

Up slab 3m R of *Insincerity*. Real easy.





**34. Insincerity – 13**

21m Craig Bester & Derek Marshall 16/12/2006 (T)

Up easy R facing open book.

**35. Sacred Flame – 15**

57m Derek Marshall & Craig Bester 16/12/2006 (T)

Starting on lowest point of slab, follow it up staying 3-4m R of the gully. Move R through break. Continue up staying 5m R of open book.

**36. Reason Are Few – 14**

27m Craig Bester & Derek Marshall 16/12/2006 (T)

Starting in the gully, about 30m up & L of *Sacred Flame*. Move out R then continue up trending R.

**37. No Remorse – 14**

30m Derek Marshall & Craig Bester 16/12/2006 (T)

Starting in the gully, about 30m up & L of *Sacred Flame*. Move out & up staying just R of the gully & the open book above.

**38. Affliction – 13**

24m Derek Marshall & Craig Bester 16/12/2006 (T)

Easy, blunt, but clean arête.

**39. Knorrox – 13**

24m Craig Bester & Derek Marshall 16/12/2006 (T)

Easy break to the L of the blunt arête.

**40. Season of Abstinence – 13**

24m Derek Marshall & Craig Bester 16/12/2006 (T)

Very easy slab line set at river level on a sector downstream of main slab sector.