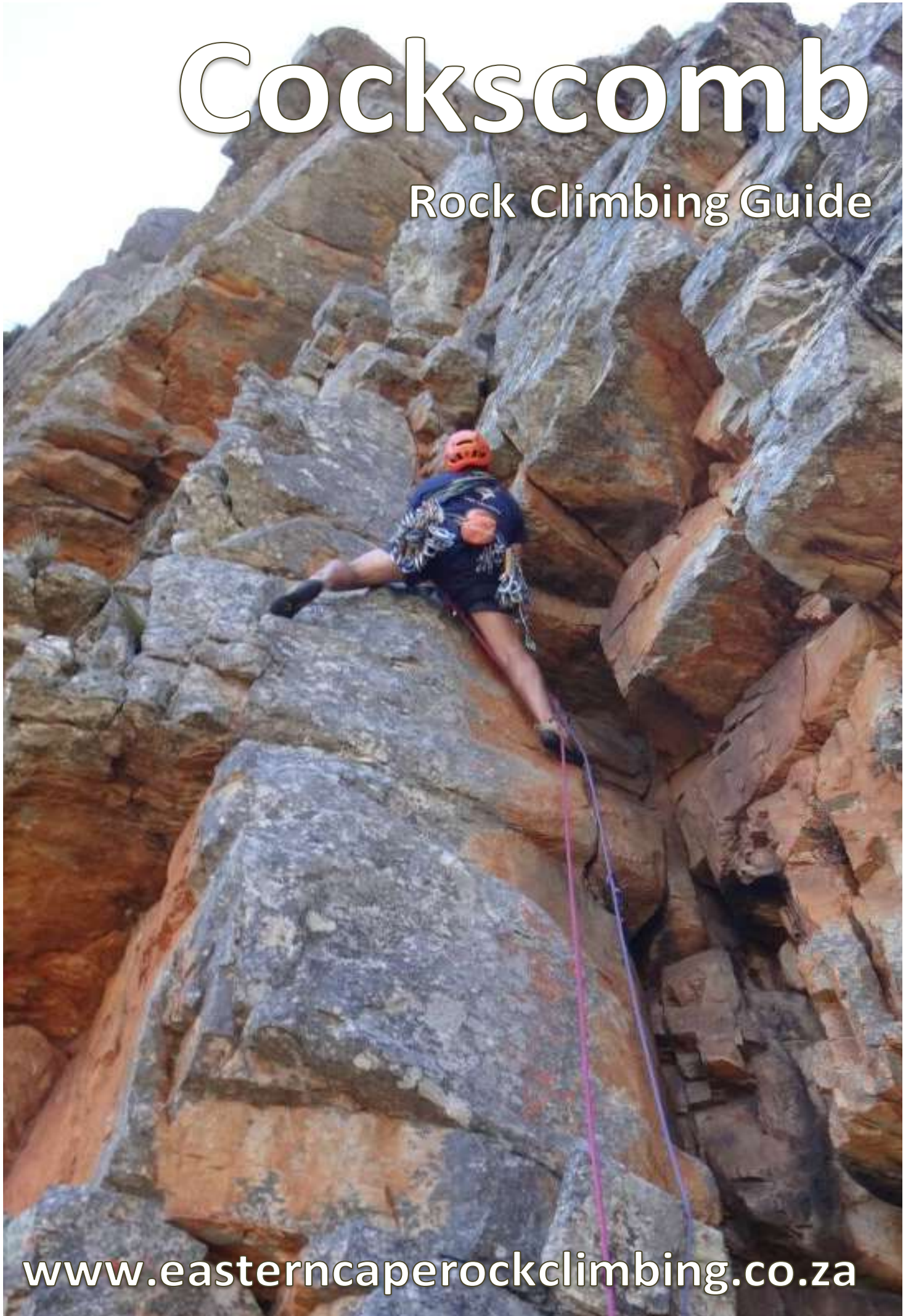


Cockscomb

Rock Climbing Guide



www.easterncaperockclimbing.co.za



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!

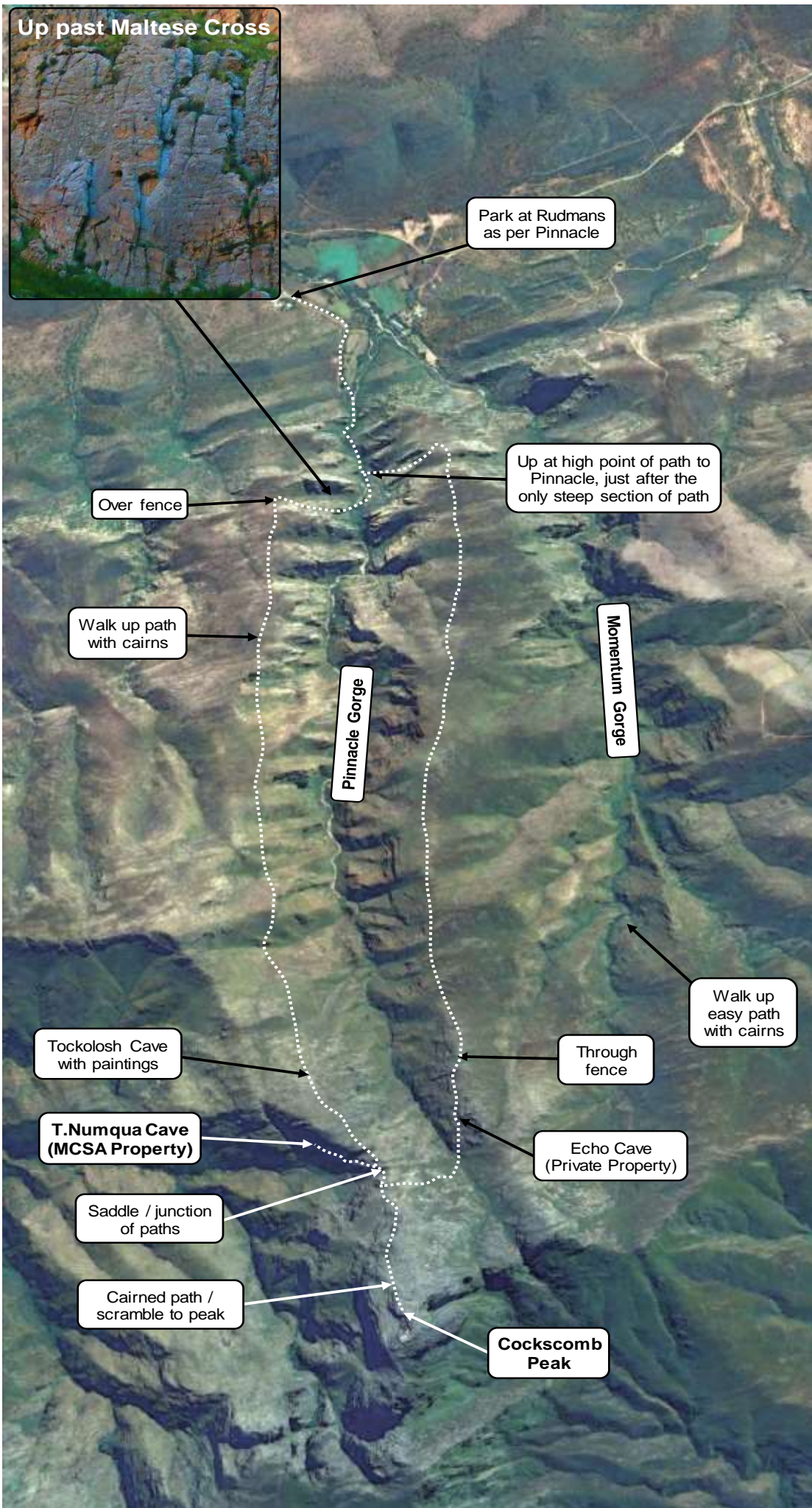
Eastern Cape Climbing Venues

Port Elizabeth	30 Coombs Gorge	37 EL urban crags & boulders	Toorberg	Swartberg
1 Lady's Slipper	Amatolas	38 Yellowsands & Inkwenkwezi	44 Graff-Reinet	49 Toverkop
2 Van Stadens	31 Fort Fordyce	39 Lalapanzi	45 Compassberg	50 Oudtshoorn
3 PE urban crags & boulders	32 Hogsback	40 Morgan Bay	Transkei	51 Gamkaskloof Bouldering
4 Sleepy Hollow	33 Stutterheim	41 Bola	46 Hole in the Wall	52 Swartberg Pass
5 Elands River	Langkloof	Winterberg	47 Hill of Execution	
6 Kirkwood	19 Nguniland	42 Mary & Martha	48 Port St Johns	
7 Cape St Francis	20 Kouga Wildernes	43 Hangklip		
Groot Winterhoek	21 Uniondale Pass			
8 Tygerhoek	Garden Route			
9 Naga's Kloof	22 Titzikama			
10 Eagle Gorge	23 Groot Rivier			
11 Momentum Gorge	24 Piesang Valley			
12 Pinnacle Gorge	East London			
13 Cockscomb	34 NSA			
14 Grootbos & Kleinbos	35 Windmill Hole			
15 Nivera	36 Buffalo River			
Baviaans				
16 Grips				
17 Kudu Kaya				
18 Waterkloof				
Grahamstown				
25 Alicedale				
26 Howison's Poort				
27 Moodie's				
28 Bouldering				
29 Thornkloof				

More route guides can be found on
www.easterncaperockclimbing.co.za

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**.

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 . All information will be greatly appreciated.



Access: Access is open, but complicated. There are 4 land owners involved. Please contact the scribe, Derek Marshall, at info@easterncaperockclimbing.co.za for help with arranging access or go with people who have the access process organized.



1. You need to pay for parking on the northern side. The farmers there have a deal with the farmer who owns most of the land that you will walk over.
2. The MCSA owns T.Numqua Cave. Access is via permit from hut warden. Free to MCSA members. R50 per night for non-members. Non-member parties must be accompanied by a member.
3. The path & property close to *Echo Cave* is private property. You must get written permission to cross this land & there is a fee to stay in this cave. The MCSA Hut Warden can assist with this.

Walk-in: 2 options. Currently option 2 is the better option.

1. Up the ridge between Pinnacle Gorge & Grootbosrivier. Park & walk-in as per *Pinnacle Gorge*. At *Maltese Cross* (prominent) cross the stream & walk up to the top of the ridge in front of the *Maltese Cross*. There is a sort-of path. Over a fence on the ridge. There is a prominent easy gradient & cairned path up the ridge. Follow this to a contour path that skirts around a hill. There are a few scary drop downs, one at the neck & again at *Tokolosh Cave*, the cave with paintings. At the saddle at the base of *Cockscomb*, contour R to *T.Numqua Cave*. The cave is substantial & could sleep 30.

2. Up the ridge between Pinnacle Gorge & Momentum Gorge. Please note that you need written permission from the owner of *Echo Cave* to use this route as it crosses his land. Park & walk-in as per *Pinnacle Gorge*. At the top of the only "uphill" section (15m up) of the path into *Pinnacle*, follow the path that moves L and upwards in the direction of some nice-looking slab faces. This path goes onto the easy gradient ridge. The path is good & well cairned. Follow the ridge path for about 5km. At the fence/gate take the RH path, over a bit of easy scrambling & into *Echo Cave*. Below *Echo Cave*, find (slightly tricky) the path down to the *Pinnacle Gorge Stream* & onto the saddle to the junction of paths. To get to *T.Numqua Cave* (slightly tricky): at the saddle follow a path for 20m away from *Cockscomb*, in a downstream direction, over a tiny ridge pimple in the saddle. Then take a good path down to *T.Numqua Cave*.

The walk/scramble to the summit is obvious & cairned. Grade 8-ish. It looks steep & unlikely, but not steep enough to require ropes or rock shoes.

Where to Stay:

1. Best stay is in *Echo Cave*. This is privately owned & strictly controlled. Please contact info@easterncaperockclimbing.co.za for more details. Nice & clean nice matrasses, running water, flush toilet (kid you not) & a shower.
2. MCSA's *T.Numqua (Mountain of Mist) Cave* is the normal stay. Most rock climbing parties have used *T.Numqua*. They have some mattresses, water tanks, log book, fire place & a bog with an amazing view. MCSA members stay free, non-members pay R50/night. Non-members need to be accompanied by a member. Please contact info@easterncaperockclimbing.co.za or the MCSA for more information.

History: See the separate history note.

Security: Not an issue at all. The farmers in these parts take no nonsense. Still take the usual precautions.

Environment: Please educate your entire group properly on all these points. Never

Star Ratings	
★	Good route at this crag
★★	Good route in the area
★★★	Classic route in this province
No star	Reasonable to bollocks
Abbreviations & Symbols	
15 ₁₈	Bolted sport route & grade
16 ₂₃	Project / In-progress & ± grade
13 ₁₆	T Trad route, natural gear & grade
6B	Number of bolts
C	Chains or top anchors
⊖	Chains or top anchors
P	Piton
RB	Removable bolt
	Afternoon Shade
	Morning Shade
	Shade all day
	Sun all day
	Dappled shade all day
	Can be climbed in wet weather

presume that they would know.

1. Don't spit **tooth paste** in water or on rocks.
2. Don't leave any **rubbish**. Not even braai bones.
3. There is a braai grid & a set fireplace. Please only use that one fireplace.
4. **Smokers**, please carry your stompies out with you. Don't throw them down.



T.Numqua Cave Terrace



This is the face that houses *T.Numqua Cave*. It is much larger & harder than it looks. It stays in the shade till about 14H00 in summer & does not require further walking...this is a massive plus!

1. Chicken Neck – 15

20m Allen Luck & Craig Bester 18/01/2013 (T)

Route is about 150m R of *T.Numqua Cave*. As the path takes a sharp dip, the route starts below a large dead protea. Start in small cracks to the R. Traverse L to under a small roof. Up the large wide crack under the protea & the diagonal crack to the top.

2. Chicken Hawk – 14

18m Allen Luck & Craig Bester 18/01/2013 (T)

Start to R of *Chicken Neck*, below a feature that is shaped like a hawk's head. R of the hawk's head is a chimney. Climb the face to the R of the chimney.

3. Peri-Peri Chicken – 122

12m Craig Bester & Allen Luck 18/01/2013 (T)

70m from the *Cockscomb Peak / T.Numqua Cave* path junction, in the direction of *Tokolosh Cave*, about 35m off the path, in a veg chimney; climb the broken blunt arête to the L.

4. On the Wing of a Chicken – 13

12m Allen Luck & Craig Bester 18/01/2013 (T)

10m R of *Peri-Peri Chicken* is a thin crack that looks like lightning. 2m R of this climb the broken featured face.



5. Fudge Monkey – 17

19m Terence Trevaskis & Ruben Snyman 04/03/2018 (T)

15m L of the prominent overhanging boulder on the path to *T.Numqua Cave*. Scramble up to a ledge below a low roof. Start under the low roof, up to the roof. Traverse R under the roof & up an open book. Bamba to the top.

6. Ask for More Chicken – 16

42m Terence Trevaskis, Ruben Snyman, Yannis Marinopoulos 21/01/2016 (T)

Up rampy break & then up scattered face into slab open book. Gain the ledge, step R around the nose. Up boulder scramble to the top.



7. Rose for the Apocalypse – 17

42m Derek Marshall, Gordon Munro & Kaamilah Adams 21/01/2016 (T)

Up groove, through chunky easy overhanging bits & broken crack to gain a ledge. Step R across the ledge, up crack in steep short face, then bamba for the top.





8. The Ultimate Conjurer – 23 A0

Juan-Dray & Derek Marshall 23/12/2012 (T)

Starts on a medium size boulder, as you enter T.Numqua Cave from the water tank side.

P1 – 21 - 24m Strong moves through the initial overhanging section, to gain a good rail. Traverse L trending upwards over sloping ledges into a wide open book. Move R to belay on a sloping ledge with a boulder

P2 – 23, A0 – 22m Up the open book moving R to better grips & gear. At the roof traverse L (using gear for aid) & around the corner onto a sloped ledge. Travers up the sloped ledge for about 7 meters to a stance.

P3 – 23 - 36m Off the ledge on the LH side. Pull through the roof & then up powerful spaced jugs. Keep on directly up to a cave with a large chock stone. Belay here.

P4 – 20 - 42m Stand up on chokes tone to gain grips above. Range L & R finding the easiest way over big moves with nice jugs

P5 – 13 – 18m Easiest scramble over veg ledges & through small overhangs.

Walk off in the direction of the saddle between this pudding peak & the main Cockscomb Peak.

9. Draconian - 19

Derek Marshall, Gordon Munro & Ruben Snyman 21/01/2016 (T)

P1 – 19 – 40m Start about 10m R of the toilet. Up bulging arête into big rail. Up ramp open book break. Traverse R into the big open book. Up the big open book, onto a large veg ledge.

P2 – 15 – 33m Directly up broken open book. Then bamba over various veg ledges & rock bands.

10. Arcane Rain Fell – 19

Derek Marshall, Gordon Munro & Ruben Snyman 22/01/2016 (T)

P1 – 19 – 26m Same start as Draconian. Start about 10m R of the toilet. Up bulging arête into big rail. Up ramp open book break. Traverse L on ledge, past 4 open books. Up below overhanging open book. Traverse R to a sweet stance on the arête.

P2 – 16 – 44m Traverse R into the big open book, same as Draconian. Up the big open book, onto a large veg ledge. Step about 5m R & up a blocky cracked face. Then bamba up over veg & as much rock as possible.

11. Service with a Smile – 21

Aurélien Hees & Derek Marshall 25/10/2015 (T)

This route is 15m L of the toilet.

P1 -19 - 33m Rail L into a L facing open book, up the open book, moving L around a huge precarious boulder. Up a few more meters to a stance with a ramp to the L.

P2 – 17 – 30m Up the ramp for 4m onto a blocky break through a small roof. Onto a small ledge. Up a nice clean face to a large ledge. Traverse 7m R.

P3 – 21 – 15m Move around the corner, up a steep face with an awkward layaway break, below a roof. At the roof rail L to the break. Make a stance a few meters further.

P4 – 14 – 46m Directly up the easiest path with the most rock.



South Face



1. Healthy One – 15

Andrew Forsyth & Wayne Clausen 27/09/1981 (T)

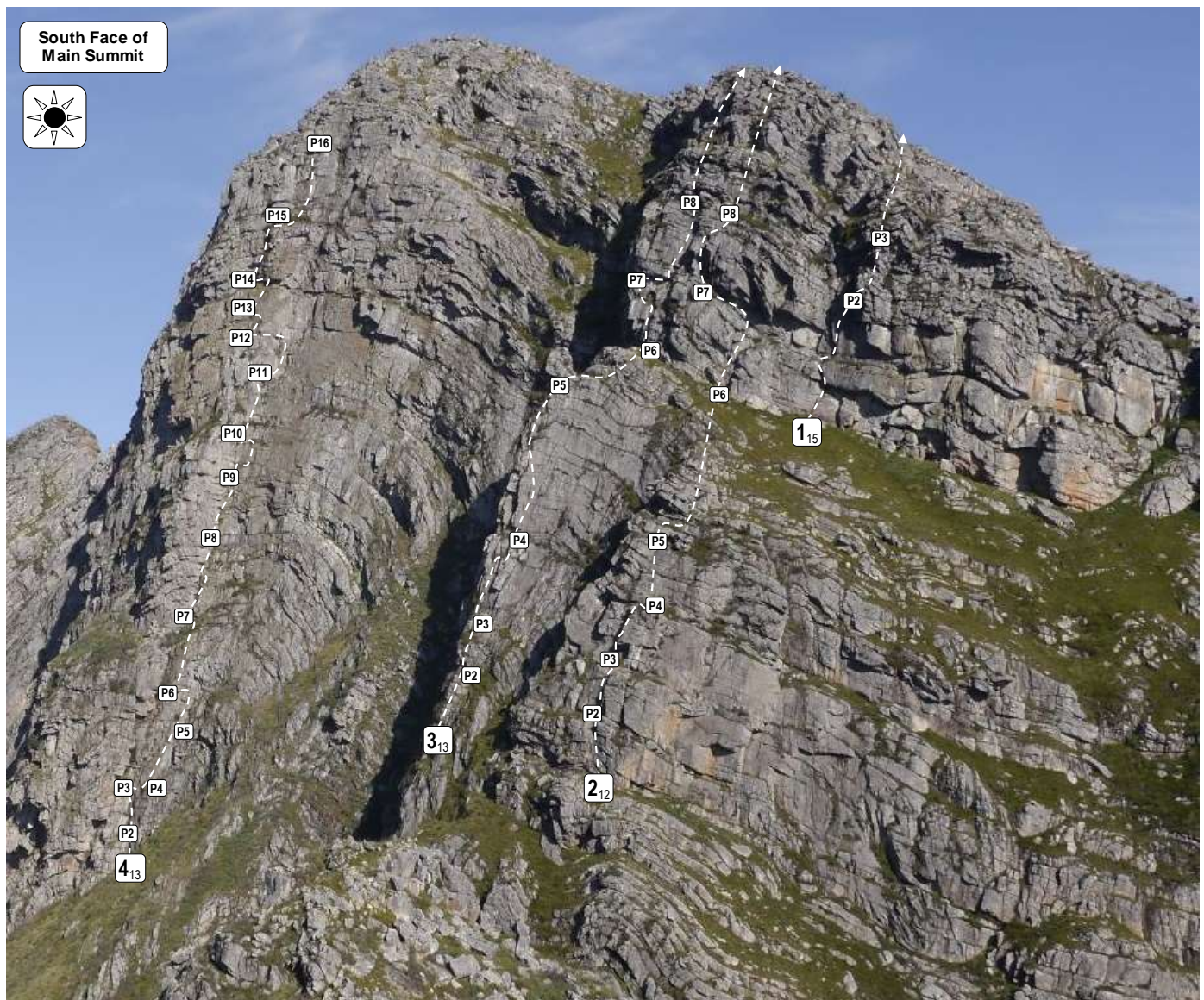
This climb is short, but delightful. From T.Numqua Cave walk to the neck & up the path to the Summit for about 50m.

Traverse L to a fence. Start just R of the fence.

P1 - 30m - 13 Up the diagonal break to the L for 5m, onto a ledge. Traverse 1m L of a small overhang & up the crack to a sloping ledge. Move to the center of the ledge & up to the handrail below the small overhang. Traverse 1m R & pull onto the steep face. Climb diagonally L & then up a crack. At the top of the crack traverse R to a comfortable grass ledge.

P2 - 15m - 14 Traverse 1m R, up the face moving R.

P3 100m Scrambling to the top.



2. Coronation Buttress – 12 ★★★

Arthur Harlow, Bill Clarke, Geoff Streeter, Frank Mclachlan, John Damant, D. Baily, Tim & Crystal Robertson 01/06/1953

Route starts on the grass band that runs from the junction of Cockscomb Peak / T.Numqua Cave path in the saddle. Follow the grass band towards the eastern peak. Climb starts close to the corner formed by the buttress, which it follows as closely as possible.

P1 – 10 – 15m From the cairn climb the wall to the broad, grass platform to a piton belay point.



P2 – 10 – 10m Up the open book recess. Above the crack to the R, there is a small platform with a belay anchor a few meters above.

P3 – 10 – 13m Up the wide crack for 3m, the traverse R on good holds to a nose. Climbing on this nose is delightful, safe & exposed.

P4 – 9 – 10m Continue up the crest to the broad grassy traverse.

P5 – 10 – 30m Climb the broken rocks to the overhang. From beneath the overhang, climb up a grassy crack running upwards & to the L till a belay point inside the crack is reached.

P6 – 12 – 20m Continue for 4m up the grassy crack to a wide chimney with grass inside.

Scramble to the summit.

3. Smokey Buttress – 12 ★★★

Ben Loots, Gillian Hill, John Chapley, Robin Chappel, Mervyn Chappel & Bill Baxter Dec 1961

Route starts on the grass band that runs from the junction of Cockscomb Peak / *T.Numqua Cave* path in the saddle. Follow the grass band towards the eastern peak. Climb starts close to the corner formed by the buttress, which it follows as closely as possible.

P1 – 10 - 14m Scramble up to a comfortable ledge.

P2 – 10 - 14m Scramble up to a comfortable ledge.

P3 – 12 – 23m Up the corner to a small overhang. Traverse L under the overhang & around the corner, then up. Or take a more direct variation. Slightly more difficult but less exposed. Starting at the beacon, up a small crack on the R to underneath a small overhang. Continue up to a grass ledge & another 3m to a stance.

Historically, Geoff Streeter was busy with the variation pitch, when he was almost incinerated by the rest of the party warming their hands in a fire. Hence the name Smokey Buttress.

P4 – 12 – 38m Start on the corner, directly up the RH face which has small cup like holds that become progressively thinner.

P5 – 9 - Scramble up jutting rock to a wide ledge that lies at the base of a partially overhanging wall. Near the center of this is a white patch.

P6 – 10 – 23m Start is marked by a beacon. Start under a saddle by reaching for high up hand holds. Follow a small vertical crack, using a long rectangular rock wedged in it to the base of the white patch. Traverse diagonally L across the face on small holds to a good stance to the L of the Boulder. Progress is stopped by an overhang.

P7 – Traverse L across some large boulders, then up an open book gully for 4m. Up the vertical crack for 13m, then move diagonally L to some small ledges leading to the top.

Scramble 30m over jutting rocks to the north peak. Then scramble up to the main summit.

3. South Face Route – 12 ★

Bill Clark, Mervyn Chappel & Mike Streeter 1958

P1 – 10 – 7m Up vertical crack.

P2 – 12 – 13m Continue up vertical crack. Belay from below an overhanging rock, just to the R of a prominent deep crack.

P3 – 10 – 8m Traverse to the R across a fairly difficult boulder.

P4 – 10 – 25m Start above a white rock at the end of the traverse. Slightly diagonally R to a belay on top of an overhanging boulder.

P5 – 10 – 10m Climb straight up above the boulder, then traverse L on a grassy ledge, which leads back to the main vertical crack.

P6 – 12 – 15m Up the crack, then move out R near the top. Move back to the wide grassy ledge on the L.

P7 – 10 – 27m Up the crack in the corner, occasionally moving out R, till the wide ledge is reached.

P8 – 12 – 30m Up vertical crack to grass ledge.

P9 – 10 - 15m Traverse 8m R on grass ledge, then up trending slightly R.

P10 – 10 – 20m Up the prominent crack.

P11 – 8 – 9m Up inside the crack & exit through a wormhole onto the face, where a 17m traverse L, ends on a grass ledge.

P12 – 10 – 15m Up diagonally R, around a boulder, traverse along a ledge & then up through a bush to a ledge.

P13 – 10 - 17m Traverse back along the ledge to the R, then diagonally R to a broad grassy ledge.



P14 – 13 – 32m Start at a beacon that is near a large rock on the ledge, then diagonally R under an overhang. Up directly, then traverse R & up past some bushes.

P15 – 10 - 28m Directly up, then slowly work to the R to the top of a large boulder.

P16 – 9 – 34m Easy scrambling to the summit.

4. The South Pillar – 14 ★★

John Moss & John Rous 19/01/1974 (T)

Start 150m L of South Face Route. Route takes the front of the pillar which dominates the central part of the face.

P1 - 12 – 30m Up grassy break, then over a short rock band & into a large recess capped by a huge overhang. Move diagonally R to a stance.

P2 – 14 – 12m Traverse R, onto a nose & across to a small recess.

P3 – 17 – 20m Up the arête on the RH side of the recess, then diagonally L to a ledge below a steep wall.

P4 – 14 – 33m Up & diagonally R across the wall to a recess. Pull out of the recess to the R, then up & back L. Climb a short steep rib, then traverse R to a stance.

P5 – 13 – 30m Up to the overhang, move L & squirm through a horizontal slot. Up a veg rock to a stance.

P6 – 9 – 40m Scramble up & diagonally R to reach the foot of the pillar.

P7 – 14 - 37m On the LH side of the foot of the pillars is a ramp, gain this & follow the ramp diagonally R to a large stance on the foot of the pillar.

P8 – 14 – 30m Move round R to gain the foot of a steep groove, up this moving R at the top. Traverse back L to regain the front of the pillar.

P9 – 13 – 40m Up & slightly L to gain a short, damp corner. Up this, then easily up to belay below a wall.

P10 – 13 - 20m Up & to the L. Climb the wall via a steep, moss filled crack.

P11 – 13 – 20m Follow a diagonal break to the L to gain a large ledge below a white wall.

P12 – 14 – 30m Diagonally R, then make an exposed traverse L for 3m to reach a crack in the recess. Up the crack, moving L at the top.

P13 – 10 - 50m Easy rock, up & to the R, then scramble to the summit.

South West Amphitheatre



1. Between Madness & The Moon – 21 ★★

Derek Marshall & Morne van de Mescht 18/01/2003 (T)

This route is on the South Amphitheatre of Cockscomb. Walk back from T.Numqua Cave to the junction of the peak and cave paths. Traverse R on big grass sloop to the amphitheater. Route starts +-70m from where face takes a 90° turn. Start has a good beacon...well did have.

P1 - 38m - 15 Start up easy R trending ramp. The ramp leads to a huge cavern. Belay on the LH side of huge cavern.

P2 - 25m - 17 On the LH side of huge cavern, traverse L into awkward chimney. Trend R to a belay ledge. This is a rather crap pitch.

P3 - 28m - 17 Climb broken face to a small, sloping, but comfortable cave.

P4 - 42m - 20 Up the open book in the roof. Trend L past a cave full of dassie turds. Up open book to medium size belay ledge.

P5 - 22m - 19 Up broken stepped face. Traverse, then onto L trending ramp. Up poorly protected face to below roof. Break out R onto grassy slope.

P6 - 45m - 9 Up the grassy/ bushy steep slope to off width open book on the RH side. We drank our last water.

P7 - 12m - 20 Start 2m R of off width open book. Up big moves with poor pro to awful ledges. Traverse L to above off width open book. Belay from this cracked corner.

P8 - 45m - 16 Traverse R along slopping lichen covered "ledge" (this is way scary) to an easy scramble. Up a short grassy slope to below the next face.

P9 - 43m - 21 Start up the huge flake. This is the easiest looking line available and is on the RH side of the grassy slope. Up tricky moves to a short/ small chimney. Into an open book. Gain the perfect 1m wide belay ledge.

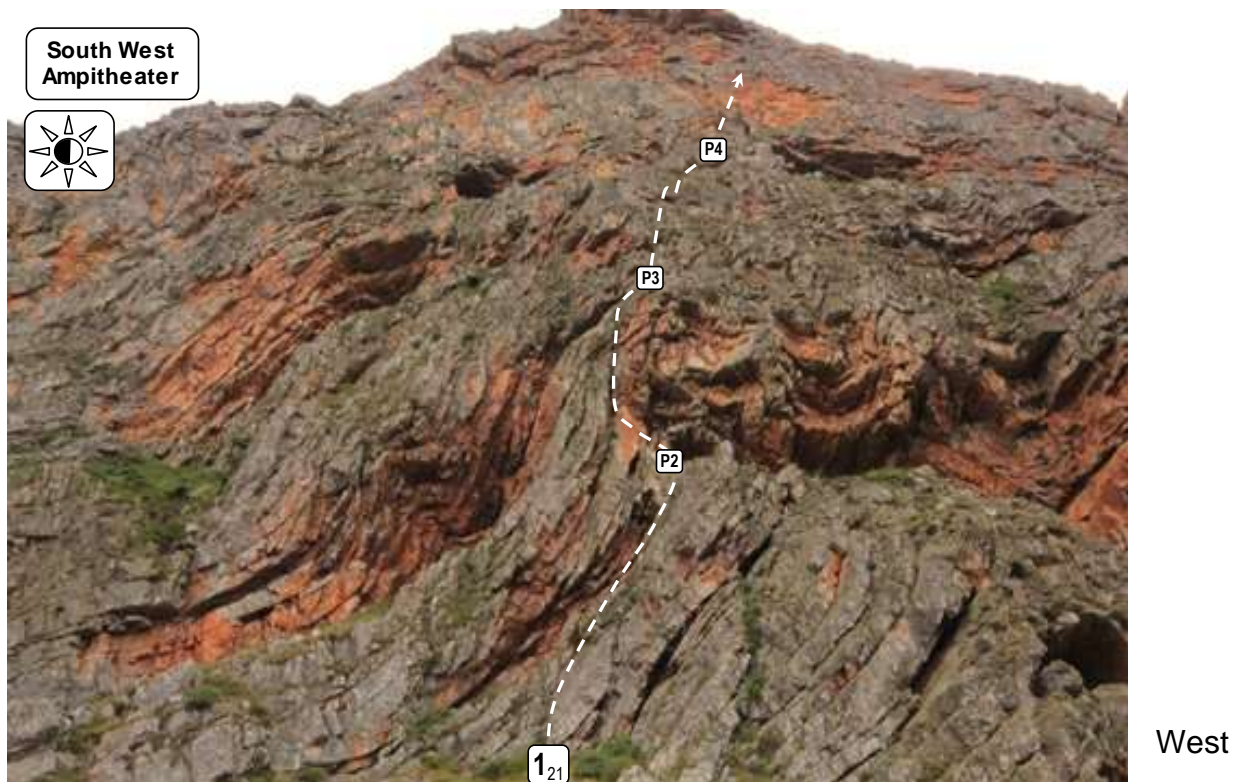
10 - 22m - 19 Trend L to a very poor stance below a big roof. At this stage we were climbing in pitch darkness.

11 - 55m - 18 Traverse R & trending upwards to escape the roof. Up a very crap veg chimney to gain a steep bushy slope. Run to any station.

12 +-200m of grade 10 scramble to gain the neck between Cockscomb & the other peak. Scramble another

Time: We walked in on the Friday night which was pleasant & cool. Got to T.Numqua Cave at 00H30. Started climbing at 07H30. Ran out of water at 13H00. Topped out at 21H30. Found the path down at 22H30. Back at the cave at 23H15.

Completed alcohol at 24H30. Suggest an early start and keep moving. Carry lots of water & a head torch.



Face



1. Cockscomb West Face – 16

John Moss, Maggi Beneci & Karl Dauter (T)

Looking from T'Numqua Cave, the Face is situated on the R flank of the main Massif of the mountain. Follow the path of the North ridge ascent of Cockscomb. About 70m above the saddle. When the slope begins to steepen, a small path leads to the R. Stay at the same level. After 40 minutes, Muggies cave is reached, from here you can see the shallow amphitheater on the L. The first 2 pitches are shared with the spiral route. After that the climb follows the face & turns finally into the neck above.

P1 – 14 - 33m Starting on the RHS of the amphitheater, about 35m inside the ridge. Go around the buttress & then straight up for 35m to a beacon on the L on a large step.

P2 – 10 - 28m Up, slightly L at first. Later traverse R onto another ledge.

P3 – D - 28m Keep slightly L, then head to an apparent weak line in the face.

P4 – 16 - 20m Keeping slightly L again, a grey steep crack allows entry to the bulging face. Traverse R on thin stuff, over a hand traverse to gain a bushy & prickly ledge. 4m further belay from a small tree.

P5 – 10 – 35m Straight up on easier rock.

Then scramble for 3 pitches following the strata of easy rock to an obvious neck. Scramble along this neck to the summit.

2. Route 1 – 16

Karl Dauter, Maggi Beneci & John Moss 1975 (T)

Start as for *Spiral Route*. After one pitch, where the *Spiral Route* traverses to the R, go straight up for 25m. Continue directly up, trending L into a huge recess, climb this easily to the col between the main & western summits. Continue to the top of the peak.

3. Route 2 – 14

Kim Cadle, John Moss & Brian Hoskins 1975 (T)

Climb *Spiral Route* to below the first col with a rock turret on the L. Traverse around to the L on a large ledge & climb a series of cracks & corners to the western summit. Length of route is 120m done in 5 pitches.