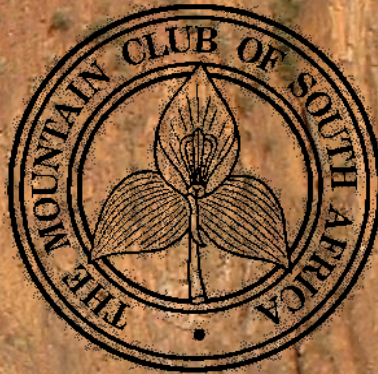


ROCK CLIMBING ROUTES AT WILGEPOORT



DATE OF PUBLICATION: January 2013

**PUBLISHER: MOUNTAIN CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA
(JOHANNESBURG SECTION)**

PO BOX 1641

HOUGHTON

2041

Preface

This guide is basically a reprint of the previous update to the route book. A number of new routes have been included and in a few cases, existing routes have been described differently, in an attempt to make it easier to find/follow a route. As far as possible the volume is complete. If however, any routes are missing or incompletely described, this is unintentional.

The intention behind the publication is to provide frequent issues of the route guide each containing the latest set of route updates. Feedback regarding any errors, omissions or additions is most welcome. Please submit all feedback to ClimbZA (www.climb.co.za), the MCSA or the author.

A big thank you to Russ Dodding (amongst others) for helping to compile the information in this guide.

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All photos were taken by the author unless otherwise stated.

Andrew Porter, January 2013

Indemnity

Mountain climbing, rock climbing, abseiling and other related activities are dangerous and can lead to or cause serious injury, material loss and death. The Mountain Club of South Africa advises you not to participate in these activities unless you are competent to do so or are under the guidance of a competent person, and unless you are using the correct equipment.

This route guidebook serves only as an indication as to those routes that have been done before and the degree of difficulty encountered by the opening party. The degree of difficulty expressed herein is highly subjective and will vary from person to person. There is no warranty, express or implied, that these routes are safe for you to do, that you will be able to do them, that you will find and identify them correctly or that you will stay on route.

You climb entirely at your own risk. While every effort has been made to ensure correctness and accuracy, the Mountain Club of South Africa accept no liability or responsibility whatsoever for any accident, injury, death or material loss arising from the use or misuse of this guide book.

Conventions Used

The access to Wilgepoort is delicate, so please contact the MCSA before venturing out there to climb.

The routes in this guide are arranged from left to right when facing the cliffs.

The star rating of the individual climb is a guide to the quality of the route. In general the following applies:

No stars	No rating has yet been given. Climb the route if it looks like fun, or give it a skip.
*	A route of little merit
**	A mediocre route
***	A good route
****	An excellent route
*****	One of the finest. Exceptional.

For grading, the newer numeric system is used. Grades have been converted from the old alphanumeric system, using the convention as per the article "Grade Comparison Guide" by Clive Curson, p118 of the MCSA Journal #98 of 1995. This is a guide only so some of the grades may be out by a grade or two. The 19's in particular may feel rather solid.

General

Wilgepoort has been a firm favourite with a small but enthusiastic number of adventure climbers from the Pretoria/Johannesburg area since its discovery in 1966.

The crags are located in an area of wild, African scenic beauty. It is not uncommon to see a pair of Black Eagles, the resident gymnogene, giant kingfishers and otters fishing in the Big Pool, nor to hear the bark of baboons. When the leaves on the trees and bushes are turning colour, especially those located at water

level, the place is a sight to behold.

The rock comprises weathered Waterberg sedimentary rocks of excellent quality, and vertical cracks predominate on the Main crag. There is some loose rock at the top of some routes, so you are advised to wear a helmet. Most routes follow cracks, open books, grooves and chimneys. A standard trad rack, supplemented by additional camming devices usually suffices. The size and duplicates of camming devices to be carried can usually be determined in advance, once the width of the crack to be climbed is observed. (If ever in doubt, take MORE).

Most routes will require some jamming at some point, so it will be advantageous to have or to acquire the required skills.

The grades attributed to each route are generally accurate, with very few anomalies. NEW GENERATION has a reputation of being very hard (and bold) for 23. The third pitch of BOTTLENECK BULGE (graded F2 + when opened in 1968) is hard for the 'translated' grade of 16; it remains, however, a very good route.

Water from the river must be sterilised. Immediately right of the start of SOME LIKE IT HOT is a water drip. This drip is perennial (even in drought conditions), and is a source of safe drinking water.

Fire hazard is high: take all precautions. All rubbish shall be removed, not burned or buried.

A big thank you to Russ Dodding for putting in many hours, compiling all the routes and other information.

Access

The roads are passable with normal cars. Contact MCSA for latest access details, they change fairly often! The MCSA has been working hard over the years to keep the access to this area open. Please be quiet, don't litter or do anything else that would upset the owners of the property and possibly close access in the future, always please first contact the MCSA.

Walk upstream on the true right of the river from the car-park, and over the ridge. Continue horizontally at first and then diagonally down to the water's edge, following a vague path. Continue until the way ahead is seemingly blocked by a ridge running down into the river.

At times of low water it will be possible to cross over the river before reaching the large pool and then back over the river below the Main crag. (This is the fastest approach to the cliffs).

At times of high water it is necessary to keep on the true right bank. Make a tricky move up on to the ridge and down it on to the rocks in the river bed. Otherwise continue along the rocks (still on the true right-hand side of the river) and then up a bushy grass ramp leading up from the bottom edge of the large pool. Follow the vague path, scramble 3m down a short corner (there is a stamvrug tree to hang on while descending) and then continue traversing horizontally along a grassy, exposed ledge (you are about 25m above the large pool at this stage) until you reach The Broad Gully with the prickly cactuses and tree thorns, from where the going is easier (if pricklier). These can be avoided by taking a slightly higher line when you gain The Broad Gully. Follow the gully down to the river and continue further to the climbing area.

Please keep all gates closed.

Safety

Under the tree (a Bequaertiodendron magalismsontanum or Transvaal Milkplum/A: Stamvrug) 20 metres up and 10 metres true right of the water drip. The climb WALKING ON AIR starts at the tree, that is between the climbs LET IT BE and RELUCTANCE. The 20 metres up to the dump is a grade 7 climb. It is advisable to use rope protection to climb to the dump and also a rope to lower the stretcher or drum in case of an emergency.

Aspect

The Main crag is West-North-West-facing, meaning that on summer's days it can be unbearably hot. Consequently it has become more frequently visited during winter, when the temperature on the rock is more bearable. The open aspect of the main crag means that it is much warmer than the deep Magaliesberg kloofs, on most winter's days. Due to the large pool below in the river, sunlight reflects off this, making the wall even hotter.

Descents

By the gift of nature the routes on the northern half of the Main crag may be descended by using The Ramp. This feature curves around the northern end of the Main crag and is clearly visible as one approaches Wilgepoort. It is loose in places and helmets should be worn for this descent; novices may need to abseil the bottom third of the descent - trees are available for this. The Ramp can also be used after climbing routes in The Broad gully, if the particular route finishes in its vicinity. (For routes higher up in The Broad gully, descend by gaining the top of the gully itself and then walking down it).

In winter 1994 Clive Curson equipped the general line of the combination route CABERNET/MUSCADEL as a swift and safe descent route from the southern half of the Main crag. The first

rap is off the tree at the top of BOTTLENECK BULGE and then three raps (alternatively, with 50 metre ropes, 2 raps) off large U-bolts bring you back to terra firma.

Routes located at the far southern end of the Main crag can be descended by scrambling upstream to a broad, vegetated gully which runs beyond the ridge taken by the route NABOOM NUISANCE.

Descent off the Pillar of Eros (aka The Western crag) is via rapping off trees.

Conservation

Climbing is not allowed on the separate Western crag (also popularly known as The Pillar of Eros and situated 800 metres upstream of the Main crag) during the Black Eagle Nesting season (April to Mid- November).

Camping

It is possible, and pleasant to camp at the spot where you park the car. Bring your own water.

Finding Routes

The enormous corner system in the center of the crag is taken by a lousy route called MADERIA.

A little to the right of this is another prominent corner system at mid-height. This is taken by the second pitch of MUSCADEL CRACK.

WILGEPOORT: List of Climbs

Climb Name	Grade	Stars	Pg
C'EST L'ESCALADE	25		30
DANCING ON A HIGHWIRE	24	****	41
OLD SCHOOL	23/24		10
CRANKENSTEIN	23	***	38
SCARY MONSTERS	23	***	3
NEW GENERATION	23		10
WITBLITZ	22	****	37
AMERICAN WEREWOLF	22	***	47
ALL-SPICE	22	**	47
THE KEY	21	*****	39
THE GRIPS OF WRATH	21	***	34
VINTAGE 48	21	***	25
GANG-BANG	21		45
THAT FURRY THING	21		39
THE MANGLER	21		18
WISE CRACK	21		27
SOME LIKE IT HOT	20	****	42
AUSTRALOPITHECUS ROBUSTUS	20	***	9
INDEPENDENCE DAY	20	***	12
MATURE WINE	20	***	48
TASSENBERG	20	***	48
AUSTRALOPITHECUS ROBOTIX	20	**	11
GROUP-GROPE	20		43
ROCKIN ME GENTLY	20		21
SHISA	20		45
WALKING ON AIR	20		44
MCFAT'S LGP	19	*****	19
CORPUSCLE	19	****	22
JESD	19	***	33
SWEET LITTLE MYSTERY	19	***	15
BRAZILIAN BANDIT	19		49
GRATER	19		1
LET IT BE	19,A2		43

Climb Name	Grade	Stars	Pg
CABERNET / MUSCADEL	18	*****	36
COMBINATION			
CABERNET	18	***	34
FIREBALL	18	***	8
RELUCTANCE	18	***	46
IRISH STEW	18	**	9
DEEPHEAT	18,A0		2
HIDDEN STING	18,A0		6
OH BOY!	18		7
SARDINE RUN	18		3
MUSCADEL CRACK	17	***	32
TOOTHACHE	17	***	17
VAN DER MERWE'S CRACK	17	**	23
ARROW OF EROS	17,A2		51
HANEPOOT	17		24
IDEM DOLE	17		16
OUINK	17		5
STUCK-A-TACK	17		2
BOTTLENECK BULGE	16	****	31
COCKROBIN	16,A2		50
CONTINENTAL	16		28
HOT HOUSE	16,A1		5
MADEIRA	16		26
TOOTHPASTE	16		18
GEMINI	15	***	15
GENERATION GAP	15		14
PILLAR OF EROS	15		52
A COLUMN FOR NELSON	14	**	11
SESAME	14		29
DRIP 'N DRAG	13		13
NABOOM NUISANCE	13		50
SQUEEZE 'N SQUIRM	13		12
DILUTION	11		7
HOTPLATE	11		4

Climb Name

IGNOTO

Grade

11

Stars**Pg**

4

The Broad Gully

Also known as the North Face, this feature lies to the north of The Main crag, i.e. to the left of The Main crag when you are approaching from downstream. It comprises a wide, steep gully, running up from the Big Pool. The gully is thickly wooded in places and also houses some thick stands of nettles and thorns. The routes are on the true left of the gully. The crag here faces north and climbing is on the bedding planes of the rock.

GRATER

19

The main feature of this climb is a jamming crack situated to the left of a broken shallow recess.

1. 15m 17 Climb left hand jamming crack in corner to ledge and tree belay.

2. 25m 19 Step up right and around corner and climb jamming crack to below small overhang, climb out left then ascend crack to ledge.

3. 25m 12 Ascend broken face to below final rock wall then traverse left for approximately 7m to recess and stance.

4. 20m 13 Climb up into recess and hand-traverse right across hanging slab on face for 4m. Climb diagonally right to tree belay. Scramble to top.

First ascent: Oct 1977 J. Linke, and R. and E. Druschke.

DEEPHEAT

18,A0

1. 25m 18 Straddle a layback open book to tree (10m). Climb past tree as high as possible. Traverse right into shallow recess using 1 sling for aid. Continue traverse right to sloping ledge and chock belay.

2. 20m 14, A0 Climb crack above stance to top of block. Tension traverse 4m right into recess. Follow recess (crack) to large ledge.

3. 23m 12 Walk left 6m along ledge and climb this face to another ledge. Walk right past Naboom to end of ledge and ascend recess to tree belay.

4. 30m 13 Climb face 2m left of open book (which has chockstone and hornets nest halfway up) to large tree.

First ascent: Jan 1977 Romey Stapley and E. Druschke.

STUCK-A-TACK

17

Start 10m to right of boulder leaning against rock face.

1. 25m 17 Climb to top of recess. Surmount bulging face to left of recess. Traverse 4m left and up to ledge and block belay.

2. 20m 14 Step right and climb steep crack to tree. Scramble diagonally left to tree belay.

3. 30m 13 Step right into bottomless crack and climb recess to large platform. Climb up righthand side to below rock buttress and tree belay.

4. 15m 12 Mantleshelf to bottom of open book and climb same to top.

First ascent: Nov 1976 Romey Stapley and E. Druschke.

SARDINE RUN

18

Step off from a block which is on a ledge 2m above the ground.

1. 40m 18 Pull up into shallow recess and continue to tree on narrow ledge. Traverse right along this narrow ledge to corner. Climb corner to next ledge. Traverse left to open book and stance.

2. 25m 17 Hand-jam crack for 4m and continue up crack to tree in corner. Do off balance move left up block. Traverse left to below recess and ascend this to stance.

3. 15m 9 Walk left up ramp for 15m.

4. 25m 16 Walk diagonally right to below open book. Ascend open book to large ledge.

5. 25m 10 Climb to foot of rock buttress and follow crack system to top.

Note:

The first free ascent was in 1988 by K. and M. Smith.

*First ascent: Oct 1977 J. Linke and R. and E. Druschke.
(Pitch 1 17, A0 one point of aid).*

SCARY MONSTERS

23 ***

The route is situated on the North Face at a point about two-thirds of the way up the Broad Gully. It climbs the righthand of two dihedrals starting about 15m above ground level. (The left dihedral is followed by the second pitch of SARDINE RUN). The dihedrals are visible in the route-photo as well as from the campsite in the morning. Start approximately 6m to the right of SARDINE RUN (cairn).

1. 25m 23 From a ledge at 2m, climb leftwards up to a narrow ledge and then right to a small tree. Move up to a higher ledge then traverse back left a few metres to a narrow sloping ramp. Climb straight up, making a tricky mantleshelf move to beneath steep rock. Traverse delicately right to the base of SARDINE RUN's dihedral. Continue traversing along a sloping ledge to stance at a long block.

2. 20m 23 Climb leftwards up a stepped break to a ledge at the base of the right dihedral. Climb the dihedral, exiting left to a ledge above.

Scramble up right, then up and back left to a higher ledge

3. 40m 17 Climb up to the next ledge. Follow the right trending break and then climb up to the top of the crag.

Note:

The grades cater for the boldness of the pitches.

First ascent: Jun 1987 M. Cartwright, K. Smith and S. Middlemiss.

HOTPLATE

11

1. 100m11 This route starts about 40m to the left of DILUTION. It follows a fault running diagonally to the left. Climb the fault to a smooth wall, then mantleshef up to a ledge with a tree belay. Walk across to a ramp and climb it diagonally to the left to a stance. Climb another 7m then follow a long ramp diagonally to the left to the top.

First ascent: Nov 1968 P. Solar, B. Naude, J. Winkler and A. Koster.

IGNOTO

11

1. 100m11 Start is synonymous with HOTPLATE in same fault. Climb recess to big ledge. Continue up recess bearing left in upper section.

First ascent: Date unknown Party Unknown.

HOT HOUSE

16,A1

The climb starts about 8m to the left of OUINK and crosses over this climb on the big ledge.

- 1. 25m 13** Climb the open book and face to ledge (common stance with OUINK).
- 2. 20m 15** Climb crack 2m to the left of the open book scramble diagonally right and climb short face to the left of a big rock tooth (chockstone belay).
- 3. 30m 16,A1** Climb prominent open book (tree above), to a ledge. Traverse right along ledge and then up steps diagonally left until it is possible to traverse right into the second open book. Climb open book (one aid move) and up to large ledge and tree belay.
- 4. 20m 10** Move to the left and climb crack to a common finish with OUINK.

Variations:

- 3. 30m 17**continue along steps to a shallow open book (first to the right of OUINK, about 2m). Climb up open book to ledge above (Crux, off balance move).
- 4. 15m 19** Climb crack slightly to the right of tree stance to a tree directly above.

First ascent: Jul 1977 J. Linke and E. Druschke.

OUINK

17

The climb starts left of the climb DILUTION in a clean right-angled corner with crack, marked by a small square block sticking out at 3m offering an excellent hand-hold. The line is more or less straight up.

- 1. 30m 16** Climb the cracks and finally a short wall to ledge along which one can traverse a considerable distance to the right.
- 2. 40m 17** Ascend corner on the left (crux) and continue up over a series of easy ledges until a right-angled corner with crack formed by a block is reached. Ascend crack (about 3m)

then up to steep wall left of a prominent large recess. Climb wall, then move round to the right into recess just below a tree.

3. 30m 13 Step up sloping ledge, ascend chimney above. Move up wall and then up a prominent jamming crack in centre of blocks near the top. Continue up the remaining blocks to block belay.

First ascent: Sep 1975 E. Druschke and J. Linke.

HIDDEN STING

18,A0

The climb starts on the open face to the left of the start of DILUTION, next to a big tree.

1. 30m 17 Climb face to big ledge.

Scramble to foot of the prominent overhanging recess.

2. 20m 18,A0 Climb recess to overhang, surmount overhang (sling aid) and climb to ledge. Tree belay.

3. 30m 13 Climb face to the right of the recess and then up crack to the left of corner on the right side to top.

Variation:

1. Climb corner to the right of face for common start with DILUTION.

First ascent: Jun 1977 J. Linke and R. and E. Druschke.

OH BOY!

18

This route has a common start with DILUTION on the North Face.

1. 45m 18 Climb up the recess. Instead of taking ramp of DILUTION carry on up the recess. Eventually you will be on the left hand side of the recess. At about 18m get back into the recess and carry on up into a cubby-hole. Use layaway holds to get up and out to the right of the cubbyhole to a good ledge. Use the flake above to gain a hand-traverse taking you back into the recess. Cross the recess and move up to a large ledge.

2. 45m 11 Use any of the above lines to the top. The right hand crack (DILUTION) takes you to the descent ramp.

First ascent: Apr 1983 Kevin Kruger and Mark Giddy.

DILUTION

11

This route is situated on the north face approximately 33m from the bottom of the descent route. The route starts behind the second big tree that grows against the foot of the rock face. After initial difficulties some 13m higher a ramp leading diagonally to the right is reached. This crack is followed by an "eye" in the rock and then by a crack that leads to a large ledge.

From here a large number of easy routes exist, the most interesting being a line that involves climbing diagonally to the right in a slit in the rock and then up the rock face at the top. A pitch of mild standard follows the line of least resistance to the top.

First ascent: Jul 1968 K. Kroger, D. Steenkamp and E. and D. Lubbe.

FIREBALL

18 ***

The climb starts in a corner to the right of DILUTION more or less below a huge flake found at the end of pitch 2.

1. 35m 17 Climb steps diagonally left to a steep open book. Move up and traverse left to another corner below a tree growing out of the rock face. (Alternatively, climb up the face directly below the tree). Climb up then left onto face past the tree and up to a ledge. Move up left to a horizontal crack, continue traversing left and surmount a ledge.

2. 20m 18 Ascend open book to ledge (about 5m) and traverse right over some blocks and continue traversing as far as possible before gaining the ledge to the right of the huge flake. Walk through behind the flake to big ledge. Tree belay. The route more or less continues up the big face just right of the centre, i.e. to the left of the prominent diagonal crack of DILUTION.

3. 35m 15 Move up ledges to the left of the abovementioned crack to gain a ramp or staircase running to the right. Stance on top of the ramp.

4. 20m 17 Climb a short crack to gain a traverse line leading to the left. Traverse up and around corner moving into a steep recess. Slightly up and around right onto face. Continue up to stance.

5. 35m 16 Walk a few metres to the left and ascend a short face to ledge (just around corner). Climb up the crack in centre of last face, up to small overhang (horizontal break). Pass overhang to the right and up to top.

First ascent: Nov 1976 E. Druschke, J. Linke and Romey Stapley.

IRISH STEW

18 **

10m to the right of FIREBALL is a large tree growing out of the cliff face, approximately 15m up. This is about 150m up the Broad Gully from the pool. The route follows a crack system that goes up the wall behind the tree.

1. 30m 18 Climb up tree roots to base of crack. Follow crack up wall behind tree. The crack becomes a chimney which is followed to a belay ledge.

2. 30m 17 Move up left through overhang past tree. Follow break in wall diagonally right through bulge to belay ledges. Scramble off to ramp.

First ascent: Aug 1986 S. Middlemiss and A. Margetts.

AUSTRALOPITHECUS ROBUSTUS

20 ***

Start 6m down the gully from IRISH STEW. Scramble up to top of large pillar/flake.

1. 45m 20 Step left from the top of the pillar onto the steep face and move a few metres left to a small upstream-facing corner. Precarious moves up onto sloping ledges and then diagonally right to an upstream facing corner. Climb this, moving right at the top, where a swing to the right can be made. Carry on climbing up to the right passing a small tree until the ramp can be reached by scrambling.

First ascent: Jan 1987 T. Holt and S. Middlemiss.

NEW GENERATION

23

This route is located in the Broad Gully, below The Ramp. Start below the obvious line of bolts up the wall to the right of the blocky pillar.

1. 15m 17 Climb to the top of the pillar. (Hint: starting directly below it, sneak 5m right and then go diagonally left and up.)

2. 25m 23 Join the dots with an interesting exit sequence going right and up.

Notes:

1. The expansion bolts on this route are bad and need replacement.

2. There isn't much pro on the first pitch.

First ascent: May 1988 Mike Cartwright and Cathy O'Dowd.

OLD SCHOOL

23/4

1. 25m 23/4 Climb the wall right of NEW GENERATION to an abseil tree.

Note:

There is not a lot of gear on this pitch, so falling is not a good option. (Cleaned and top-roped before 1st ascent.)

First ascent: 1989 Stewart Middlemiss.

AUSTRALOPITHECUS ROBOTIX

20 **

Starts approximately 70m up from the pool and follows a diagonally right trending crack system up the wall. This route is about 40-50m down the gully from IRISH STEW. Scramble up to a cubby-hole with a large tree.

1a. 35m 20 Follow the rightward trending crack system to where it steepens (at the level of a small roof). Move 1 ½ m right and pull through the bulge on small holds. Continue up to the ramp.

1b. 40m 14 Follow the rightward trending crack system to just below where it steepens. Traverse right for 7m along an easy sloping ledge then climb up trending leftwards to rejoin the route and continue up to the ramp.

Note: Both variations were led.

First ascent: Jan 1987 S. Middlemiss and T. Holt.

A COLUMN FOR NELSON

14 **

Starting at the same point as INDEPENDENCE DAY, scramble easily to the broad-leaved wild fig tree at 10 metres. Directly above the tree is a column/pillar which constitutes the arete; the crack down its right-hand side is obvious - the one down the left-hand side less so.

1. 42m 18 Traverse left from the tree, gain the narrow ramp above, which leads leftward to below the jagged crack down the left-hand side of the pillar. Make a tricky move to gain the base of the crack. Climb to the top of the pillar. Move left and then climb easier rock to the top, keeping within two metres of the arete all the way.

Notes:

1. A small tribute to the immediate past president of South Africa, Nelson R. Mandela.

2. Descend by either rappelling off the stout wild fig tree at the top of the route, or by scrambling further to join The Ramp.

First ascent: Jul 1999 R. Dodding and H. Murch.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

20 ***

At the right-hand end of the Broad gully there is a river-facing open-book, 20 metres off the ground. The right-hand wall of the open-book features a Y-shaped crack, when observed from below. Start at a small V-shaped notch, vertically below the open-book. This is approximately 30 metres right of the start of AUSTRALOPITHECUS ROBOTIX.

1. 20m 16 Climb easily up to a broad-leaved wild fig tree. A short wall, climbed immediately right of this tree leads again to easy rock and a belay on a ledge at another stout tree.

2. 20m 20 Gain the ledge above the tree. Climb the (main), steep open-book above strenuously to a sloping ledge on the left. Continue up the open-book more easily, to a tree belay. Exhilarating stuff.

Note:

Rap off another stout wild fig tree which is located 4 metres above the top of the route, alternatively scramble higher to join The Ramp.

First ascent: Jul 1999

Russ Dodding, Heather Murch.

SQUEEZE 'N SQUIRM

13

The route starts at the same point as DRIP 'N DRAG and keeps 3m to the left of it.

1. 30m 13 Move up a wall diagonally to the left to a small nose. Climb past a tree into a corner, then continue up a crack to a platform with a tree belay.

2. 30m 6 Climb the ridge to a good stance below a rock face.

3. 33m 13 Climb the lefthand one of three prominent cracks, emerging on a small platform at the base of a steep wall. Climb diagonally to the bottom of a nose that forms a small chimney with the rest of the face. Squeeze through the chimney (awkward) and continue up to a good platform with a tree belay.

4. 26m 8 Climb a ramp-like gully to the base of a chimney with some large chockstones. Climb the chimney to the top, then move to the right around the corner and ascend the gully to a large platform with a beacon and block belay.

First ascent: Dec 1968 J. Pipich and E. and D. Lubbe.

DRIP 'N DRAG

13

The route starts below a vertical corner to the left of the descent ramp, 13m up from the start of the face.

1. 23m 13 Climb a steep ramp to a bush in the corner, then climb 10m up the corner to a ledge. Continue straight up (dirty) or alternatively traverse to the right onto a prominent nose and climb it to a tree belay.

2. 30m 5 Climb the ridge to a large platform where the descent route, The Ramp, passes by.

3. 35m 13 Walk 13m over to the right to two cracks in the wall. Climb the righthand one of these cracks to an overhanging bulge, then move around to the right and continue up to a small platform. Move over to the left and climb the steep face to a small gully, then continue along the gully to a series of platforms and blocks to eventually reach a block belay at a beacon.

4. 33m 8 Move to the right into a corner and continue up on a small bulge, passing some small trees. Traverse out to the right at the steep wall and surmount a couple of ledges to gain a good stance with a tree belay.

First ascent: Oct 1968 D. Steenkamp, K. Kroger, J. Schoeman, J. Austin and E. and D. Lubbe.

Main Crag

This is the predominant feature of Wilgepoort, and is where the rock is at its highest. The crag faces the Wilge river, i.e. West-North-West. Access is via either of the approaches described in the Access notes, above. The crag is split vertically by the swathe of a deep gully / crack / chimney, taken by the route MADEIRA. Almost the entire crag features cracks which run vertically the full height of the rock. There is a series of very impressive overhangs and roofs towards the southern end of the crag. Generally the routes on the Main Crag are demanding. Climbers often make a base at the foot of the route CABERNET.

GENERATION GAP

15

1. 50m 5 Scramble up the descent ridge to the ledge at the start of the third pitches of DRIP 'N DRAG and SQUEEZE 'N SQUIRM. The climb proper starts in the corner to the right of DRIP 'N DRAG.

2. 20m 15 Climb the corner for 10m to the overhanging roof. Climb the righthand face (strenuous), moving out to the right after 4m. Climb up 4m and then traverse to the left to a ledge above the overhang. (Peg and nut belays).

3. 10m 11 Climb diagonally to the left up the corner, moving delicately to the left around the bulge to a ledge with a nut belay.

4. 30m 11 Climb the chimney above, moving to the left above the chockstone. Move back across the chimney after 3m and continue up the righthand face to a tree belay.

5. 10m 6 Continue up the broken face to the top.

First ascent: Jun 1973 H. Boshoff, J. Schooling, K. Kroger and D. Lubbe.

GEMINI

15 ***

The route starts 6m to the left of TOOTHACHE on the right hand corner of the descent route.

- 1. 30m 11** Climb the left hand side of the nose for 13m then traverse 3m to the right before proceeding straight up to a small ledge with a block belay. There is a beacon 3m higher up.
- 2. 30m 13** Traverse 13m diagonally to the left to the foot of a small buttress. Climb the crack that separates the "twins" for 15m to reach a stance on top of the left hand "twin".
- 3. 30m 15** Traverse 10m diagonally to the left to a corner. Climb 3m to the crux move, which involves a straddle and layback move to break through a small overhang. Climb another 15m in the crack to a tree belay on a ledge.
- 4. 33m 7** Pleasant ledge and crack climbing leads to the top.

First ascent: May 1968 J. Mosman, J. Vorster, A. Klette and K. Kroger.

SWEET LITTLE MYSTERY

19 ***

Start as for the second pitch of GENERATION GAP (that is: scramble up the first section of The Ramp to the obvious amphitheatre, to below the corner described below).

- 1. 25m 16** Climb to the base of the right-tending corner, which is bordered on its left by an overhanging face. Ascend this until it is possible to step left onto a flat, rectangular ledge.
- 2. 50m 19** Traverse diagonally up and left to the base of a grassy groove (8m). Ascend this on good gear, keeping slightly left and away from grass (16) until it is possible at 5m to traverse slightly left into the next obvious groove. Climb this with some delicate moves for 8m, until it is possible to step left. Continue straight up face for 15m to the base of a short hand crack. Climb this and then traverse left to make a stance.

Note:

The first sections of both these pitches are common with the first sections of pitches 2 and 3 of GENERATION GAP.

First ascent: 1996

Mark Seuring and Claire Keeton.

IDEM DOLE**17**

This route is situated between GEMINI and TOOTHACHE and starts 2m to the right of GEMINI. IDEM DOLE is Slovak for "I'm falling off!"

1. 26m 11 Climb straight up, following the line of least resistance along a rib, to sloping platform with a beacon.

2. 24m 17 From the beacon climb the face directly above. Traverse diagonally to the left for 4m to the bottom of a small recess. (This route is at present blocked by a huge hornets nest on the crux move). Alternative: From the stance of pitch 1 traverse diagonally to the left for 6m to the recess on GEMINI. Climb up 1m to the right of the vertical crack to reach a loose-looking yet solid "letterbox" then proceed 5m to the right (17) to the edge of a block and continue into the recess. Climb 5m up the recess, then traverse to the left to the edge of the block. Ascend 3m then continue slightly to the left or right and finally up to a platform.

3. 20m 15 Traverse to the left hand side of the platform, climb 3m up the recess then traverse to the left into a small recess topped by an overhang. Turn the overhang utilizing a small horizontal crack. Follow broken rock to a small ledge. Move diagonally to the right onto a bigger ledge with a beacons stance.

4. 33m 15 From the left hand side of the ledge traverse 2m to the left, then climb 10m straight up to a small stance. Follow the line of least resistance on rock that becomes less severe to the top.

First ascent: Feb 1969

J. Pipich and K. Kroger.

TOOTHACHE

17 ***

This climb is situated on the left hand side of the west face 6m to the right of the descent ramp. A prominent "open book" halfway up, with a "tooth" 16m high in it, forms the main feature of the route.

1. 33m 16 Climb a small crack by-passing the overhang on the left. Continue up the steep face, keeping a little to the left for 13m then move over to the right at the grassy patch. Continue up the small crack to a stance and piton belay.

2. 30m 16 Move to the left and continue over a series of blocks and a small overhanging bulge to the base of the "tooth". Climb the left hand crack for 10m then traverse to the right across the tooth and into the right hand crack. Climb up to a narrow ledge. The 5m to the top is the most difficult part; using sloping handholds at the top straddle up as far as possible and then mantleshelf onto the top of the tooth. There is a block and chockstone belay.

3. 30m 17 Climb the left hand crack for 3m, using small footholds to a narrow ledge where it is possible to rest. Layback for 6m and climb over the bulge to the left at the overhang onto a ledge. Continue over a series of blocks to a smooth face with good handholds on top. Continue 6m up to the stance on a platform.

4. 40m 8 Take the line of least resistance to the top.
Variation:

3. 30m 18 Climb straight up the corner above the tooth, pulling through the small roof. Climb the left wall above up to a ledge. Scramble to top. (Jan 1985 C. Edelstein and S. Brown)

First ascent: May 1968 K. Kroger, K. Dauter, E. Meyer and D. Lubbe.

TOOTHPASTE

16

This climb is pasted next to TOOTHACHE.

- 1. 30m 15** Start up the crack just to the left of MCFAT'S LGP and climb it until it is possible to traverse to the left to the first stance of GEMINI.
- 2. 30m 16** Climb the corner to the right of the stance for a few metres (towards the tooth) then move diagonally up to the left on the steep wall to the corner of the arete on the left of TOOTHACHE. Climb up a few feet, make a difficult move into a shallow corner on the right and then continue up to a large ledge.
- 3. 15m 13** Climb the left hand wall to a large platform in the recess.
- 4. 40m 15** Climb the wall to the left of the zig-zag crack. Move into the crack at half height and continue to the top.

Variation:

- 4. 40m 15** Climb the zig-zag crack from bottom to top.

First ascent: Mar 1974 J. Linke, T. Hoy and J. Bullock.

THE MANGLER

21

A steep open-book recess which faces the big pool is situated about halfway up the left hand corner of the main Wilgepoort cliff. The route takes the overhanging jam-crack in the left hand wall of this recess. On the ball route finders will notice that THE MANGLER lies between TOOTHACHE and MCFAT'S LGP.

- 1. 20m 17** Starting to the left of a smooth gash at the base of the cliff, climb the face to reach an open cubbyhole stance about 10m below the steep open-book recess.
- 2. 20m 20** Climb easy rock for a few metres, into the base of a shorter corner. Move up this, then right (tricky) onto a steep slab. Climb the jam-crack (strenuous), moving out right at the top to a blocky stance (shared with MCFAT'S LGP).
- 3. 35m 18** Climb up leftwards to the skyline, and then climb the small open book on the left of the obvious nose.

Continue over easier rock to the foot of a left-facing wall. Climb the break 1-2m in from the right hand edge of the wall.

First ascent: Feb 1980 Kevin Smith, Andrew Smith and Michelle Mears.

MCFAT'S LGP

19 *****

Start at the foot of the shallow crack 10m to the right of TOOTHACHE.

- 1. 25m 16** Climb the crack, making a small detour to the right at 10m, to a ledge below the overhangs. (Peg belay).
- 2. 25m 19** Traverse 5m to the right to the base of a prominent crack system leading up to a small cubbyhole in the overhangs. Continue up the recess above for 3m before traversing delicately to the left and climbing up to a small ledge.
- 3. 40m 19** Climb the steep jamming crack immediately above the stance to easier rock at 10m. Continue up to a big ledge, step to the right past the tree and then climb the recess above to a stance and tree belay.

Scramble to top.

Note:

Pitch 2 opened on aid.

First ascent: Aug 1971 P. Fatti and A. McGarr.



Chris Ziranek completing the 2nd pitch of MCFAT'S LGP

This is a very direct route varying not more than a metre or two over its extent. To the left of the main fault in the middle of the cliff one encounters a deep off-width crack at ground level.

CORPUSCLE takes the jam-crack 6m to the left of this off-width crack. Start a few metres to the left of the start of CORPUSCLE.

1. 25m 17 Climb easily diagonally left for 10m, ascend steep rock on buttress 3m to the left of CORPUSCLE's jam crack. Continue up thin crack to ledge below overhangs.

2. 30m 20 Climb overhanging face (high handholds) one metre to the right of the overhanging CORPUSCLE crack. Move slightly left after 5m to a resting point. (CORPUSCLE moves left across the slab at this point). Directly above is an overhanging hand-jamming crack, climb this strenuously. Where the crack ends move up and gain a narrow ledge with difficulty on the left. Above is a small overhang, step right and climb recess to just below another overhang, move left onto arete and climb through break onto large ledge.

3. 20m 16 Directly behind the stance is a steep jamming crack. Climb this for 10m, pull through left of overhang and climb easier rock to large ledge.

Scramble to top.

First ascent: Jan 1981 John Brown and Campbell Cairns.

CORPUSCLE

19 ****

In the Mountain Club one finds a number of lean specimens of the species Homo Sapiens. When one day one of these claimed that he could alleviate this condition, he was warned that for every extra pound of fat one requires an extra mile of corpuscles. Perplexed faces followed. Both climbers agreed that they had left a mile of corpuscles on the second pitch, but were still doubtful about fat. Eventually everybody decided that our fat expert meant an "extra mile of capillaries".

To the left of the big main fault at Wilgepoort. The base of the rock has its furthest cut-back (except for the sides). In the centre of this concave cut-back is a shallow chimney left of which is a grey face followed by a 20m long crack whose horrifying feature is an overhanging open book. Start climbing from the tree growing directly at the base of the rock and beside this crack.

1. 25m 17 Climb the crack to ledge below overhangs.

2. 30m 19 Climb the overhanging crack behind stance (next jamming crack right from MCFAT'S LGP) for 5m, step left across slab towards recess, then surmount overhang upwards to the left to a small narrow ledge. Traverse left into crack of MCFAT'S LGP and immediately back diagonally right into a recess and crack. Climb crack to where it becomes overhanging, move right onto buttress to a large ledge.

3. 25m 16 Traverse left for 5m on ledge (crossing MCFAT'S LGP) climb right hand edge of arete for approximately 5m then ascend a shallow groove. From near the top of this groove, step left into crack and climb to large ledge. Climb and scramble to the top.

First ascent: Aug 1975 E. Druschke and J. Linke.

VAN DER MERWE'S CRACK

17 **

This climb starts about 35m to the right of TOOTHACHE and 16m to the right of a rock drip. The start is at the base of a recess containing a noticeable dead tree. The climb takes a very direct line from base to top of crag.

1. 43m 12 Move straight up the bulge immediately right of the recess. Continue up a sloping ramp to a crack system. Follow the crack system to the right and then move left into a grassy recess. Continue up the grassy recess until one can move left 2m to the base of a prominent crack system with a tree belay.

2. 35m 17 Climb the off-width crack, about 7m to the left of the conspicuous large open book, and itself situated in the corner of a small open book. The crack initially comprises a closely spaced dual-crack which eventually forms a single crack further up. Continue past a ledge with a tree on the left hand side and remain in the crack until a small sloping exposed ledge is gained. Good tree belay.

3. 25m 17 Climb through the tree above the belay and follow crack to an overhang. Move to the right of the overhang and make an awkward move (crux) onto the bulge. Mantleshelf up and make a delicate traverse 2m left to a recess which is followed to a tree belay.

Scramble to top.

Note:

This is a superb and direct line with good protection.

Variation:

3. An easier route may followed up a grassy recess to the right of the bulge.

First ascent: Feb 1984 M.V. Richter, N. Margetts, L. J. Richter and D. Margetts.

HANEPOOT

17

Start 3m to the left of the main fault in the middle of the cliff.

1. 25m 15 Climb diagonally to the left for 15m to the base of a chimney. Climb the corner on the right to a ledge under the main overhangs.

2. 20m 15 Traverse 3m to the right from the extreme right hand edge of the ledge. Negotiate the bulge to gain a standing ledge above it. Move up to a small stance in the chimney on the right.

3. 35m 17 Chimney up to the overhang. Move to the left to the base of the chimney crack. Climb this to a ledge on the left. Move up to the left of the overhang blocking the chimney until it is possible to traverse across it to the right. Climb up to a tree, then to the ledge and thence up to a broad ledge.

4. 30m 13 Move to the left and climb a big recess with a preliminary bulge. Climb diagonally to the right to a stance.

5. 45m 7 Climb faces to the top.

First ascent: Sep 1974 H. Boshoff, G. Graafland and C. Malherbe.

VINTAGE 48

21 ***

Start as for HANEPOOT, but instead climb straight up the prominent overhanging off-width crack. (Wet at certain times of the year).

1. 30m 19 Climb the crack strenuously for 8m, stepping out left. Continue up the crack to the huge blocks under the next overhang. Step carefully on to the bigger block to gain access to the narrow chimney above. Climb this for about 6m to a small stance in a cubby-hole. (Common with the second stance of HANEPOOT).

2. 30m 21 Climb to the top of the cubby-hole and step right below the overhang. Climb steeply up and right to reach the second of two small layback holds which is used to pull through the overhang on to the steep rock above. Continue steeply for another 3m on rounded holds and then traverse right to where the angle eases. Climb up on the corner for a few metres, step left awkwardly past a bulge and continue up the steep crack to a ledge and tree.

3. 30m 12 Continue up the obvious line to the top.

Note:

On the first ascent, a rather devious line was followed to avoid the crux section of pitch 2. The pitch as described was opened by Paul and Gordon about two years later.

First ascent: Nov 1991 P. Fatti and G. Erens.

The climb follows the prominent crack in the centre of the krantz.

1. 30m 11 Start in the gully and climb some wet mossy rock to a block and tree belay.

2. 50m 11 Continue up the gully into the chimney to a block belay 10m below the roof of the chimney.

3. 30m 16 Straddle up to the roof of the chimney. Move out under the roof on smooth faces (strenuous for short persons), using the furthest wall (after passing the fang) for the feet. Move up into a chimneying position until it is possible to gain footholds on the back wall. Climb up for 8m to a stance behind some bushes.

4. 40m 11 Climb the crack for 18m to a large tree in a corner. Step across to the right above the tree and climb the wall to a platform and beacon.

First ascent: Feb 1968 K. Kroger, A. Koster, E. Meyer and D. Lubbe.

WISE CRACK

21

One third of the way up the main MADEIRA crack/chimney is a thin finger-lock crack which starts on the right hand retaining wall.

1. 25m 21 Climb the crack through a few small breaks to a small roof where the crack narrows considerably. Ascend to a small ledge and continue up the finger crack to a good ledge.

2. 10m 16 Move right and onto a face and ascend to a large tree.

First ascent: Sep 1985 P. Schlotfeldt and R. Dodding.



The view from the main crag

The route starts a few metres to the left of SESAME and MADEIRA halfway up.

1. 30m 11 Two large trees block the foot of the first deep crack to the right of MADEIRA. Climb past the trees in the crack, pull up on to the overhanging slab and climb out to the right on to the face. Continue over some large boulders to a bushy stance shared with MADEIRA.

2. 17m 6 Climb the ridge and gully to tree. This pitch follows roughly the same line as a portion of the second pitch of MADEIRA.

3. 36m 16 Traverse to the left into a corner, step across the gap on to a ledge and climb up diagonally to the left into the corner. Climb the face for 7m until one is level with a big block around the corner to the left. Move to the left around corner on to a block. Climb the lefthand wall, move onto a corner to the left and continue up to a small stance below a tree.

4. 17m 7 Climb a face to the right of the tree to an overhang, then move to the left into a gully and ascend to a large platform.

5. 33m 9 Climb the ridge to the left and continue up to the top.

First ascent: Nov 1968 J. Pupich, P. Solar and E. and D. Lubbe.

The route starts on a diagonal slab 16m to the right of the main fault in the krantz.

1. 30m 10 Climb the slab, move into the crack and then continue to the left, over a large block behind a tree. From the top of the block move over the face and diagonally to the left to a cubbyhole. Climb to the left, around a corner, to a tree belay.

2. 33m 14 Proceed up a gully to big tree below chimney. From the tree climb straight up the left hand face to a ledge. Climb the face on good handholds and straddle on to the face on the left. Move up 3m to a small ledge and belay point.

3. 26m 14 Step off the left hand side of the ledge and climb up on awkward holds until it is possible to continue diagonally to the right. Continue up on the corner to a ledge with a tree. Climb a crack above the tree to reach a broad ledge, where a beacon will be found.

4. 40m 8 Move 5m to the left and take the first obvious crack, which is climbed for 10m. Take the line of least resistance to the top.

First ascent: Aug 1966 J. du Plessis and D. Lubbe.

C'EST L'ESCALADE

25

This route climbs a crack system up the obvious steep wall to the right of MADEIRA. Scramble up to a ledge and small tree at the base of the wall.

1. 25m 25 Climb diagonally right to the right arete. Move up the arete about 3m, then traverse left onto the wall to gain the crack just above a gentle bulge. Climb the crack and left-trending rail to a sloping ledge. Climb the final crack to a flat ledge and piton.

First ascent: Oct 1988 K.M. Smith.



Looking upstream towards the Pillar of Eros

BOTTLENECK BULGE

16 ****

The route is situated in the crack just to the right of SESAME.

1. 33m 11 Climb 13m up the crack, move to the left underneath a large loose boulder, then continue up in a recess by means of some off-balance moves to a ledge and tree belay.

2. 33m 11 Continue up the face over some broad ledges until the crack used by MADEIRA is reached. Move out to the right at a large tree on the ledge, climb over the face to a narrow ledge, then continue along the ledge to the right until it is possible to move up to a bigger ledge and a small tree.

3. 40m 16 Move to the right on to a corner. Climb 2m to reach a high handrail, then proceed around to the right and traverse to a big block. Climb the prominent crack to a small cubbyhole halfway up. Either continue up the crack, which widens into a narrow chimney, or move to the left onto the face and climb it to bypass the overhang. Ascend a narrow slope, keeping diagonally to the right, to a ledge. Climb the vertical face for 7m before moving around the bulge on the left to the face, which is climbed to a good ledge. Move a few metres to the right to reach a bigger ledge and tree belay that is shared with MUSCADEL CRACK.

4. 13m 14 Climb the crack behind the tree (overhanging start) to a big tree at the top (beacon).

First ascent: Aug 1968 K. Kroger, D. Steenkamp and E. and D. Lubbe.

MUSCADEL CRACK

17 ***

The route starts to the right of SESAME where the rock forms a crack above a small overhang 10m up.

1. 30m 17 Climb the face to the small overhang. Using a balance press-up move diagonally to the right onto the face above the overhang and continue up to the crack. Climb 3m up the crack before moving out to the left onto a steep face. Climb 3m up the face then execute a tricky move on very small footholds to the right, back into the crack. Continue up the crack to a small ledge and chockstone belay.

2. 33m 13 Climb up a series of blocks, keeping slightly to the right, until a corner is reached with an overhang at the top. A narrow slit on the right hand wall provides a way up onto the next block. Continue up a series of cracks onto a large boulder with a piton and nut-runner belay.

3. 25m 15 Continue directly up the crack for 13m keeping slightly to the left at the top, to a platform with some loose blocks. From here, traverse to the right into a corner. Continue the traverse, using friction footholds, until it is possible to swing onto a ledge. Ascend 3m to a broader ledge and piton belay.

4. 33m 17 Move up into the narrow crack in the middle of the wall (the first 5m is strenuous) and continue past the first bulge to a comfortable position in the chimney like crack. (Alternatively, traverse to the right along the ledge around a corner, climb 3m and then traverse back to the left into the chimney along a small ledge). Continue up the wide crack to its very top. Using small footholds and a good handhold above the overhang, step over (or swing) to the left onto the corner ridge. Climb diagonally up to the left around a corner to a platform and tree belay.

5. 16m 14 Traverse back to the right into the corner to the base of a prominent crack. Climb the crack to top.

First ascent: Apr 1968 K. Kroger and D. Lubbe.

The intention was to do a quick warm-up, but things never turn out as one expects them and the whole thing turned into a swinging dilemma. The climb starts on the face below BOTTLENECK BULGE and continues more or less on the arete to the left of this climb.

1. 35m 15 Start just to the left of a bottomless pillar. Climb into the open book and traverse right, climb pillar for about 2m and then return into the crack to the left. Climb crack, then up an open-book and finally bearing slightly left make a stance on a small ledge.

2. 20m 16 Climb up wall and cracks to the left of the stance (passing some loose rock) and continue up the arete and finally traverse right to a stance on a huge block from where the prominent crack of BOTTLENECK BULGE starts.

3. 25m 19 Go back left to the arete and climb a crack running slightly right until a ledge is reached. Move left along the ledge then over two more ledges, step right to a crack and climb this until a small off-balance ledge is reached (piton in place). Make an awkward hand traverse to the left, to a good ledge to the left of the arete.

4. 15m 17 Climb wall behind stance about 2m left of arete (thin), move onto block and continue up crack slanting to the right.

Note:

Pitches 3 and 4 are sparsely protected.

First ascent: Jul 1977 J. Linke and E. Druschke.

THE GRIPS OF WRATH

21 ***

Start 2m left of CABERNET, below the slabby wall between that route and MUSCADEL.

1. 25m 21 Starting in the middle of the wall, climb up the centre of it to below the stepped overlap at 10m. (Side runners available in CABERNET to protect the middle third of the wall). Climb boldly through the overlap at a small white left-facing corner (crux). Follow a thin crack system up the wall above until able to traverse right to the rap bolts.

Note:

Lovely stuff.

First ascent: May 1995 Russ Dodding (after an original idea by Gordon Erens)

CABERNET

18 ***

Start approximately 20m to the left of the perennial drip, at a point below the large dihedral 40m above.

1. 40m 17 Climb the right hand of the 2 hand-jam cracks to a small overhang 10m up. Bypass the overhang on the right, climb up and diagonally to the left, crossing the crack and then move straight up to a small platform. Climb diagonally back up to the right, re-crossing the crack to easier ground.

2. 40m 18 Scramble up to the obvious crack in the prominent long dihedral. Climb the crack past rap anchors and an awkward bulge. Continue up the crack until possible to step right to a ledge with rap anchors.

3. 10m 5 Traverse to the right, descend a little and move around the corner to a tree belay.

4. 25m 11 Climb the broken face just to the right of the rib on the skyline to a cubbyhole. Move to the left and up through a gap between two protruding ribs to a stance.

First ascent: Jun 1974 H. Graafland and H. Boshoff.



Nearing the top of the 2nd pitch of Muscadel Crack

CABERNET / MUSCADEL COMBINATION

18 *****

By combining the best part of the routes CABERNET and MUSCADEL CRACK, it is possible to create a 5 star climb. Start approximately 20m to the left of the perennial drip, at a point below the large dihedral 40m above.

1. 40m 17 Climb the right hand of the 2 hand-jam cracks to a small overhang 10m up. Bypass the overhang on the right, climb up and diagonally to the left, crossing the crack and then move straight up to a small platform. Climb diagonally back up to the right, re-crossing the crack to easier ground.

2. 40m 18 Scramble up to the obvious crack in the prominent long dihedral. Climb the crack past rap anchors and an awkward bulge. Continue up the crack until possible to step right to a ledge with rap anchors.

4. 33m 17 Move up into the narrow crack in the middle of the wall (the first 5m is strenuous) and continue past the first bulge to a comfortable position in the chimney like crack. Continue up the wide crack to its very top. Using small footholds and a good handhold above the overhang, step over (or swing) to the left onto the corner ridge. Climb diagonally up to the left around a corner to a platform and tree belay.

Notes:

1. A rap route enables you to abseil straight back to the start of the climb. Abseil from the tree straight back down the main corner system.

2. An excellent variation is to move left at the start of the 3rd pitch, and to continue straight up the main break (mostly MCFAT'S LGP) at grade 19

Start 4m right of CABERNET, i.e. left of the corner taken by THAT FURRY THING. There is a 30cm overlap 4m up.

1. 30m 22 Boulder-out the start, to gain a cubic block at the right hand end of the overlap. Traverse daintily below the overlap and layback around its left hand end to gain a foot ledge above. Climb up and then trend left (a bit run out), to gain easier ground above (and gear!). Diagonally up to the right is an overhanging, left-facing corner. Gain this and climb it strenuously and deviously to exit onto a small slab (crux). Gain the rib up on the right and continue more easily for 10m to a ledge with many cubic blocks. An excellent pitch.

2. 25m 19 Twelve metres above and slightly to the left is a short, white, right facing corner, (approximately 5m left of the main corner-crack taken by CABERNET). Gain the corner, exit leftwards awkwardly past the roof and then follow the blocky, broad arete for 10m to a small stance below a black left-facing corner-crack. (This stance is crossed by the 3rd pitch of MUSCADEL CRACK).

3. 45m 20 Follow the steep corner above directly for 10m. At the point that the crack closes, swing out to the right arete (the corner goes direct, also at 20); a short corner on the right allows a ledge above the main corner to be gained. Above this ledge the line continues as an off-width crack; circumnavigate this by climbing the crack in the right hand corner and then regaining the crack up to the left, in an exposed position. Follow the crack more easily to a blocky ledge and finish up the left facing corner directly below the tree (the last 5m common with BOTTLENECK BULGE). Alternatively, climb the short wall left of the corner, at 20. Another great pitch.

Note:

A long-overlooked eliminate in the British tradition. Bring a strong set of fingers.

Variation:

1. 22 30m The Mantle-Piece : Starting 5m left of the original start, that is 2m right of the CABERNET crack, climb up to below a 150cm wide ledge at 5m (under protected). Gain the ledge by an obvious move at grade 21, traverse right and hence re-join the original route at the end of the initial delicate traverse. Aesthetically pleasing. (1995 Russ Dodding)

First ascent: Oct 1993 Paul Fatti, Russ Dodding and Gordon Erens .

CRANKENSTEIN

23 ***

Takes the large, steep left-facing pink corner to the right of the corner taken by the first pitch of WITBLITZ. Start below the corner in a short, i.e. 2 metres left of the main arete (which is climbed by THAT FURRY THING).

1. 25m 23 Climb on to a ledge on the right; step left and follow firstly a rib and then a corner on the left to below the main corner. Climb this with increasing difficulty, to a rest (of sorts) below the roof. Crank easily through this using the blocks on the right and the jam crack on the left. Amble up to the rap bolts (a further 6m).

Notes:

Gear on the crux is good. Climbed with pre-placed gear on the first ascent.

First ascent: May 1995 Russ Dodding.

THAT FURRY THING

21

Start 3m left of THE KEY.

1. 25m 21 Start in a corner just left of the arete which is left of THE KEY. At about 10m climb diagonally right onto the right wall of the corner. Gain a wide crack which leads through roofs. From a shake-out under a roof move right and up to a stance.

2. 20m 17 Climb straight up to the stance below the crux pitch of THE KEY.

3. 25m 20 Start up the book which is SOME LIKE IT HOT's top pitch. Traverse right into a small corner and climb this to a small tree on a ledge.

4. 40m 13 Climb up to easy ground.

Note:

First free climbed in Jun 1987 by G. Mallory and C. Edelstein.

First ascent: May 1984 T. Holt and C. Lomax (with rests).

THE KEY

21 *****

In the centre of the crag there are two prominent open books. The right hand one is bounded by a steep smooth wall; immediately to the right again, at halfway height, there is a short open book to the left of the large overhangs. The route gains the tree at the foot of this by ascending the wall below, then ascends the thin crack in the left hand wall and continues almost directly to the top. Start 10m to the left of the water drip and immediately below the tree in the short open book.

1. 20m 17 Ascend the deep jamming crack for 5m then step to the right and climb up into a recess below an overhang. Traverse to the right (peg runner) for 5m and make an awkward step across a shallow groove, then climb up and to the right to a small stance and peg belay in the corner.

2. 10m 19 Move to the left and gain the slab. Move up to the left (awkward), then climb down to a good foothold just above the overhang. Move up and across to stance.

3. 20m 17 Climb the recess behind (5m), then climb up to the left to a detached block. Move to the left around the arete (5m below the small overhang) and continue up to a small stance at the foot of a short steep groove.

4. 6m 17 Climb the right hand wall of the groove and move across to a belay just above the tree.

5. 10m 21 Traverse to the left to the arete and follow the crack up and to the right where it steepens. Climb up to a good small stance and belay.

6. 10m 20 Move a few metres up to the crack and climb to where the crack widens, then make strenuous moves up to the top.

7. 43m 10 Move around the arete on the left to a detached block, then proceed up and to the right on a ramp to the base of vertical cracks. Climb these to a recess below the final overhang, then follow the recess to the top.

Note:

First free ascent in May 1982 by K. Smith.

Variations:

1 & 2. 26m 19 Climb the jamming crack mentioned in pitch 1 and then climb straight up pulling through a roof to the cubbyhole stance at the top of pitch 2.

3 & 4. 23m 18 Follow the recess mentioned in pitch 3 and continue straight up, moving slightly left to the stance.

First ascent: Aug 1968 T. Barley and J. Anderson.

DANCING ON A HIGHWIRE

24 ****

The hand-crack through the middle of the 3-metre roof 45m above the drip. Start 10m left of the drip.

1. 20m 17 Climb more or less straight up to stance in a hidden square recess just above a square blocky roof. (First 10m as for THE KEY, and stance is at the top of pitch 2 of THE KEY).

2. 15m 21 Traverse 5m right from the stance to a crack and climb this to a vague stance.

3. 15m 22 Follow the crack-line to just below and left of the roof-crack. Make a tricky move right and stance beneath the roof. (LET IT BE traverses out right from here).

4. 8m 24 Climb the roof crack and stance on a pleasant ledge up to the left.

5. 45m 10 Scramble to top of the crag.

First ascent: Nov 1985 K.M. Smith with G. Mallory and C. Edelstein on pitches 1-3.

SOME LIKE IT HOT

20 ****

On a hot summer's afternoon two climbers were dripping just as much as the famous Wilgepoort water drip just below. In the winter the gradings may not seem to be quite so severe.

1. 15m 16 Start immediately left of the water drip up a shallow groove and up to a small ledge (first stance of THE KEY). Move to right around corner to tree belay.

2. 18m 20 Climb the crack to below overhang, then climb up the crack to below large overhang and move right onto ledge and piton belay.

3. 25m 18 Traverse left 3m, move up flake, traverse left around corner (good protection left in place). Climb up the face for 4m and then traverse across face to tree and up to small ledges.

4. 30m 20 Climb crack for 5m and continue up into chimney. Climb chimney and crack to large ledge and tree belay.

5. 30m 16 Start at tree and climb crack just to the right of the nose sticking out high up. The middle part of the pitch has an obvious chimney. Delicate crux near top of pitch just right of the nose.

Note:

First free ascent in 1979 by K. and A. Smith.

First ascent: Nov 1975 J. Linke and E. Druschke.

LET IT BE

19,A2

The climb is situated to the right of THE KEY and follows a line through the big overhangs directly above the water drip. Scramble up the ramp to the right of the water drip. The ramp follows diagonally up left to where the rock face steepens. Traverse left into a vegetated recess, up this recess and around the corner to the stance. The stance is immediately above the trees above the water drip.

1. 20m 17 Climb up shallow recess and crack directly above the stance until small overhang is reached when it becomes possible to step out left and up to block piton stance.

2. 25m 19,A2 Climb left crack for 5m. Surmount bulging crack (A1). Climb up then follow crack diagonally right and up to roof of big overhang (free and A1). Traverse directly out right under overhang to ledge and stance. (One piton in place - A2).

3. 30m 13 Climb up directly behind stance to big ledge. Scramble to large tree growing out of rock face in recess.

4. 35m 13 Ascend recess and follow cracks keeping slightly left and then to the top.

Notes:

1. Pitch 1 has been climb by various odds and bods.

2. A good selection of pitons is advisable including one bong for one move in the lower section of Pitch 2.

3. Pitch 2 has been climbed with only one point of aid by K. Smith at 22,A1

First ascent: Jul 1975 J. Linke and E. Druschke.

GROUP-GROPE

20

No description available, but it follows the crack system to the left of SHISA and WALKING ON AIR.

First ascent: 1979 D. Cheesmond and C. Lomax.

WALKING ON AIR

20

Starts up deep recess between GROUP GROPE and GANG BANG, that is from the tree where the stretcher and first-aid drum are kept.

1. 18m 20 Up recess to below roof, make fancy move out left under roof, continue up crack system past roof until forced 2m left to ledges.

2. 30m 18 From stance go back right, swing right around corner and up continuation groove (awkward). Climb steep wall above trending slightly to the left. Do not continue up obvious easy break above but rather climb diagonally right to where it is possible to break through the roof using an excellent crack and jugs above. Easier ground leads to stance.

3. 30m 16 Above are a number of cracks. From the stance climb up lefthand crack until able to move right into good crack system. Climb crack past an off-width move, continue up and break through roofs above.

First ascent: 1986

J. Brown, I. Slatem and D. Young.

SHISA

20

SHISA (which means "burn" in Zulu) starts 3m right of LET IT BE, below a crack, after scrambling up the ramp which is situated above the water drip. 15m or so above is a large overhang with a crack through it. This is the roof of GANG BANG or GROUP GROPE. There is a bush marked "First Aid Dump" on the topo. (A first pitch can be added if you like.)

1. 35m 20 From 2m left of the bush, ascend crack to 3m below the roof (10m) before making a thin move right into the corner and then up to some semi-detached blocks. On the right is a whitish overhanging face split by two rails about 1 ½ m apart. There is a block in the upper rail which looks like a loaf of bread. Rail round the arete using this block (very psychie). Step right into a good nut crack. Continue up to the black roof, which is split by an off-width crack. A difficult move brings you onto the RELUCTANCE traverse. Move onto the stance.

2. 40m 16 Continue directly above up the obvious break, tending left at the top. Superb climbing with the odd grade 16 move.

Note:

After the handrail on the first pitch it might be necessary to make a hanging belay in the "good nut crack" because of rope drag.

First ascent: Apr 1983 C. Edelstein and A. Lambert.

GANG-BANG

21

No description available, but it follows the crack system to the right of SHISA and WALKING ON AIR.

First ascent: 1979 D. Cheesmond and C. Lomax.

RELUCTANCE

18 ***

The start of this route is on the right hand section of the cliffs at the base of a large open-book topped by an overhang. There are two prominent lines of overhangs just to the left of the open book.

1. 43m 7 Scramble and climb 43m up the line of least resistance to the base of the open book which is level with a tree. Use nut belays.

2. 36m 18 Climb the open book which involves a series of awkward moves, to a bulge in the facing side of the book. Then move to the left and into a bottomless crack that breaks through the first prominent line of overhangs. (A sling was used on the opening ascent but the move has since been done free). Move into the crack and climb up via a good hold in the crack. Climb a further 10m up the crack to a ceiling, then move out to the left and continue up to a stance 6m higher. Use a piton belay in a small cubbyhole.

3. 36m 16 From the ledge move to the left and proceed up through the second overhang into a crack. Climb the crack and continue diagonally across the face to the left into another chimney. Climb the chimney all the way to a ceiling at the top, move out to the right, then move to the left and proceed onto a stance with a tree belay.

4. 24m 13 Climb the face immediately behind the stance via an open book. Scramble to a belay.

First ascent: Aug 1968 I. McLachlan and M. Makowski.

ALL-SPICE

22 **

The route follows the corner to the right of RELUCTANCE, capped at half the height of the cliff by a large overhang.

1. 40m 14 Start at the base of the corner and climb it to a sloping ledge about 3m to the left of the corner. (Nut belays).

2. 35m 19 Climb up and diagonally back to the right into the corner and continue up to a tiny stance with peg and nut belays immediately below the large overhang.

3. 8m 22 Move up into the overhang and then traverse to the right with difficulty to a ledge at the base of a chimney. Climb up easily to a good stance in the chimney.

4. 45m 16 Climb the chimney for 10m to where it becomes more difficult. Traverse 5m to the left and then climb up through a small overhang to where the climbing again becomes more difficult. Traverse 3m to the left under some small overhangs and climb up past them on the left to a large ledge.

5. 40m 9 Climb the broken face above to another ledge and then continue to the top.

Note:

First free ascent in 1985 by C. Edelstein and G. Mallory. (Pitch 3 was initially opened with one point of aid at 17,A1)

First ascent: Jun 1974 A. McGarr and P. Fatti

AMERICAN WEREWOLF

22 ***

Start as for TASSENBERG.

1. 40m 22 Climb the corner as for pitch 1 of TASSENBERG. Continue up the steep corner above the stance passing two pegs. Climb up to the left sloping roof/crack above and follow it up to a small stance in the base of a chimney/groove.

2. 30m 19 Swing scarily around the arete to the right and move right onto a face. Climb straight up the face to the top.

First ascent: 1982 T. Holt and L. Chambers.

TASSENBERG

20 ***

The climb goes up the buttress just to the right of ALL SPICE. Start 4m right of the corner which forms the line of ALL SPICE.

- 1. 30m 18** Climb straight up for 15m to a sloping ledge in the corner just above a loose block and just below a steep shallow open book. Straddle up the open book to a small sloping ledge on the right.
- 2. 12m 19** Swing around corner to left (underneath or above overhang) and climb up 3m to base of an overhanging off-width crack. Climb crack (strenuous) to ledge and nut belay.
- 3. 18m 20** Move right along ledge into crack. Climb crack, moving right at top (4m). Move up into base of chimney to stance on top of large chockstone.
- 4. 20m 18** Climb chimney which narrows down and requires some strenuous jamming to large ledge on top of buttress. Either traverse off to the right at this point or continue via the easiest way to the top.

Notes:

- 1.** Pitch 4 is relatively unprotected.
- 2.** The original route description has been amended to match the route as climbed.

First ascent: Jun 1975 A. McGarr and P. Fatti.

MATURE WINE

20 ***

A direct line between TASSENBERG and BRAZILIAN BANDIT. Start at the base of a short open book, directly behind a large prominent Naboom.

- 1. 35m 20** Climb the open book, step left and gain the crack system above and slightly right. Follow this to a distinct blocky notch in first roof (small chockstone). Climb the groove and layback crack above, then exit right onto a sloping stance beneath the triangular roof.
- 2. 35m 19** Pull through the roof, on the right and then climb the continuation crack past the left hand side of a small

roof, and then up to a large ledge (tree belay). Halfway up this pitch one is within 2m of TASSENBERG'S sinuous top chimney.

First ascent: Jul 1989

Paul Fatti and Russ Dodding.

BRAZILIAN BANDIT

19

On the right side of the main face at Wilgepoort (i.e. right of RELUCTANCE) is a large buttress. When coming from the waterdrip the start of the climb is found in the first recess, with a large slanting tree growing in it at the bottom of the buttress. The route for the first 25m follows a crack just left from the front edge of the buttress, marked by a tree growing from it.

1. 25m 17 From the sloping tree move left and ascend a short face for 5m, then go back right into the crack. Ascend crack past tree and continue for another few metres until it is easier to climb on the left side. Move up to small ledge and a hanging belay (piton).

2. 15m 19 Move right up and across steep wall (good handhold above) and onto ledge on the front of the buttress. Climb another 10m to good stance. (Initially opened with 1 point of aid at 17 A1)

3. 35m 15 Climb slabs keeping in a slightly leftward direction, making use of cracks in the upper part of the pitch, finally moving into a 2m V-shaped recess at the top of the pitch. Tree belay.

Notes:

1. From the top of the first pitch a traverse can be made across a sloping slab, with a horizontal crack in the middle, past a crack, around a corner and then to the first stance of TASSENBERG.

2. First free ascent in May 1979 by K. Smith and C. Edelstein.

First ascent: Nov 1975

E. Druschke and J. Linke

COCKROBIN

16,A2

The climb is situated on the front of the buttress right of the main face of Wilgepoort (i.e. right of RELUCTANCE). Start approximately 5m right of the sloping tree in recess heading for a prominent narrow bottomless chimney.

1. 20m 16,A2 Climb right wall then aid climb in corner until it is possible to move into the chimney. Ascend chimney and continue up to good stance and tree belay.

2. 30m 15 Move up the right wall then the slabs and cracks bearing slightly right until top of ridge is reached.

3. 35m 13 Move horizontally on left side of ridge to wall. Ascend first crack then traverse left to small tree in next crack. Climb to top.

First ascent: Nov 1975 J. Linke and C. Ward.

NABOOM NUISANCE

13

The climb follows the ridge on the righthand extremity of the krans and starts at the lowest point of the rock wall where the rock almost reaches the river at the crossing point. Apart from the first pitch, which is of F standard and can be passed on the right, the climbing is of D/E standard throughout and follows the line of least resistance to the shoulder below the final rock face. From here a number of variations of different grades may be climbed to the top.

First ascent: May 1968 D. Steenkamp, E. Meyer and D. Lubbe.

The Pillar of Eros

This is also known as the Western Crag, approximately 800 metres upstream of the Main crag, in a bend in the river is this crag. The crag faces South-East. Approach by walking upstream from the Main crag, staying on the true left of the river if possible for the entire way. A pair of Black eagles nest on top of the pillar, so avoid climbing there during the Black Eagle Nesting season (April to Mid- November).

ARROW OF EROS

17,A2

The climb starts on the wall just to the right of the obvious pillar on the upstream cliffs of The Pillar of Eros, and follows the recess marked with overhangs on the right hand flank of the pillar. There are some well placed rocks at the bottom.

1. 30m 16,A1 Climb up from the blocks for 4m onto a small nose. Aid up a small crack until it is possible to move onto a small off-balance ledge. Move up the corner to the left of the ledge (good handhold) and continue up to a good ledge. Traverse to the left into a corner and then diagonally to the right to a large tree belay.

2. 30m 16,A2 Move to the around the corner and climb a grey slab to a rotten looking corner. Climb the corner on nuts to the overhang and continue on nuts under the overhang to the bottom of a broken recess. Climb the recess free to a small resting place and then continue by aiding up the crack in the right hand wall to the next overhang. Move to the right into the bottom of the next crack, using a delicate peg. Throw a nut high up into the crack and use it to get into the recess, from where it is possible to move to the right to a small but good stance.

3. 25m 17 Climb up past a ledge to a crack with a bulging stone in it. Climb this crack (crux) until it is possible to traverse

to the right for 7m into an open-book recess. Climb this recess to a sloping platform.

4. 35m 15 Climb the recess until it is easier to move to the left onto the front of the pillar, which is followed to the top.

First ascent: Aug 1974 J. Linke and E. Druschke.

PILLAR OF EROS

15

The route goes up the right hand side of the obvious pillar on the cliffs 0,5km upstream of the main face, the Pillar of Eros.

1. 40m 8 Starting at the only break in the rock, 40m to the right of the pillar, traverse to the left and then mantleself (or climb) to the ledge leading to the two trees on the immediate right of the pillar (tree belay).

2. 13m 15 Either do an awkward chimney or climb up on thin holds to a folded slit in the rock. Move out and up to a stance with an eye-hole belay.

Scramble to the base of an obvious ramp (peg belay).

3. 22m 13 Climb the ramp, stepping across about 3m from the top.

Scramble up the pillar on the corner opposite to the ramp.

First ascent: Aug 1973 P. Dawson, P. Norton, C. Sherlock, T. Hoy and M. Asher.