Moses Rocks Climbing Guide

Krish Seewraj

Warning about Rock Climbing

Keep in mind that this is only a guide, it helps climbers to find out what climbs have been recorded and that is all. The information given is true and accurate to the best of the author's knowledge.

Remember climbing is an adventure sport and as such accidents may result in serious injury or death. The grades and descriptions may be subject to debate as many of the climbs have only had a few actual and/or known ascents. Therefore, be warned that you must exercise your own judgment with regard to the route location, description, difficulty and your ability to safely protect yourself from the risks of rock climbing.

You should not depend on any information gleaned from this mini-guide for your personal safety. Your safety depends on your own experience, equipment and climbing skill. If you have any doubt as to your ability to safely attempt any route described in this mini-guide, do not attempt it. When you use this mini-guide, you accept and acknowledge the risk that it may contain errors. The responsibility for your safety is solely yours.

Moses Rocks as seen from on top of the dunes at the car park

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Front cover image: Chris Howe on Pickup (17)
Rear cover image: Ryan Doe during the first accent of The Beach (16)

Introduction

The first routes at Moses Rocks were recorded in 1987 and by 1990 it seemed activity at this crag was exhausted, however in recent years a number of good lines have been established. The earlier routes were last listed in Margaret River Rock (1996), which has been out of print for some time and is hard to come by. This mini-guide has been developed to continue to allow everyone access to the knowledge of the area and to record the more recently developed climbs.

There is still potential for more routes to be set, but one of the hidden gems of this area is the amount of bouldering to be had. Many people have had a play on the boulders here but to date no lines have been recorded, and as such there is no mention of bouldering in this mini-guide.

Warning: Freddy's Zawn and Rumpole's Rock are very close to the ocean with some climbs starting just above the water line, it is important to check and observe the conditions before attempting to access these areas. Climbing is not recommended when there are high swells or winds, note also on seemingly calm days freak waves can occur along this area.

Location and Access

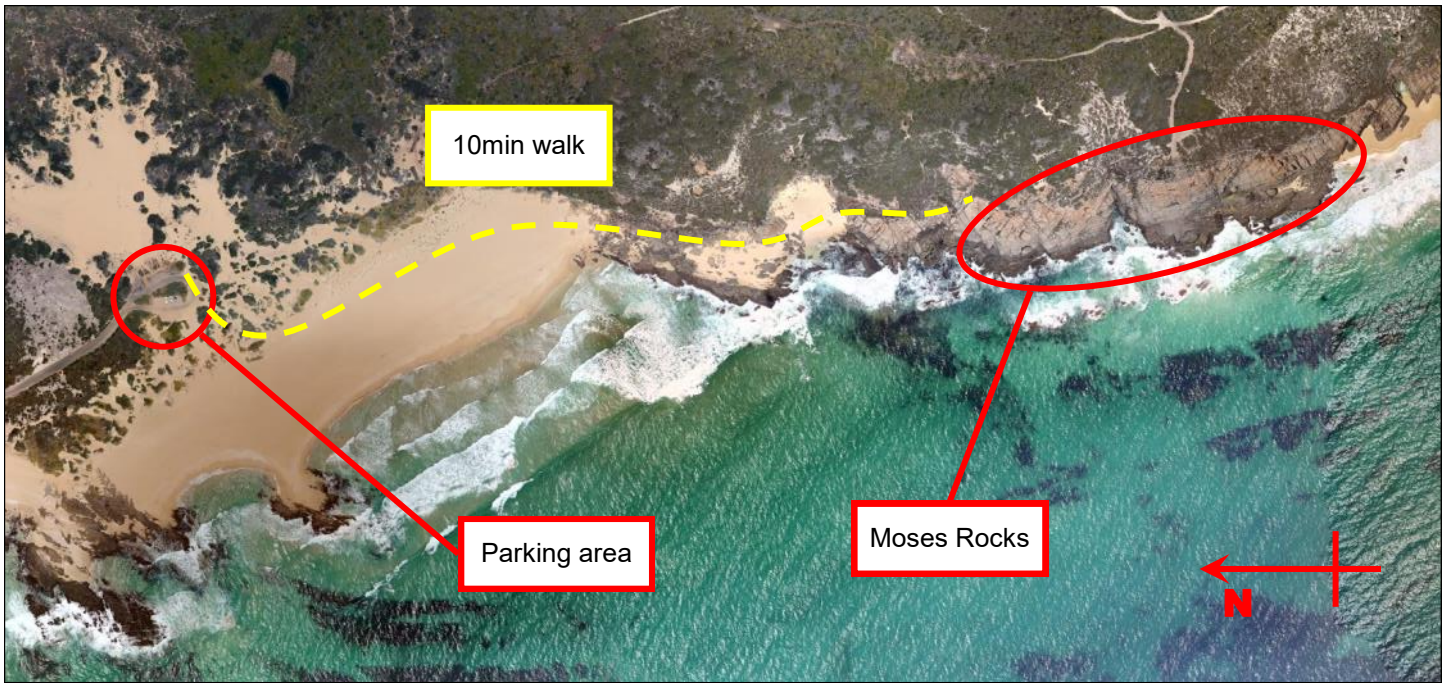
The crag is approx 260km drive from Perth and forms the headland just north of and visible from Willyabrup Cliffs.

Head towards Margaret River on the Bussell Highway. Approx 18km after the roundabout at Vasse Newtown turn right onto Metricup Road and when this ends turn right onto Caves Road. After 3km turn left onto Moses Rock Road which is followed for 3.5km, at the T junction turn left where the road turns to a gravel surface usually horribly corrugated. Where the road descends towards the beach it becomes sealed again all the way to the car park, at which there are no facilities.

Moses Rocks comprises six areas which are a short 10min stroll from the car park, heading south.

Future Development

If anyone would like to share their past or future experiences in this area, details of new or listed routes as well as any reference issues, typos or mistakes in this mini-guide email them to kermit@iinet.net.au.



Rock, Protection & Grading

Moses Rocks provides a fun and friendly granite experience; in some ways the little brother to Smith's Beach Rocks with routes generally being shorter (4 to 15m), lower grades (4 to 23) and less intimidating. So this is an ideal place for beginners as well as for those who are not hung up on numbers. The area is a relaxing and calming place to climb, and you will often have the place to yourself.

The granite is smaller grained than found at Smith's Beach giving it a smoother texture, but is solid and has superb friction. Holds often comprise small smears, rounded pockets and/or parallel cracks. While most of the climbs start well above the ocean, the crag is often subject to sea spray.

Climbs on Rumpole's Rock and in Freddy's Zawn do start at sea level. During high tide the sometimes sandy base at Rumpole's Rock can be underwater and with larger swells waves often overtop the seaward rocks that seemingly protect the belayer. Freddy's Zawn is more open and prone to wave wash, so care is required.

A number of the lines have a similar nature and feel to gritstone climbing, as some of the names elude to. However unlike gritstone routes, bolts have been placed to make some of the less protectable climbs safer. The original bolts looked a little scary but they were all kindly replaced by Kym Hartley in November 2011.

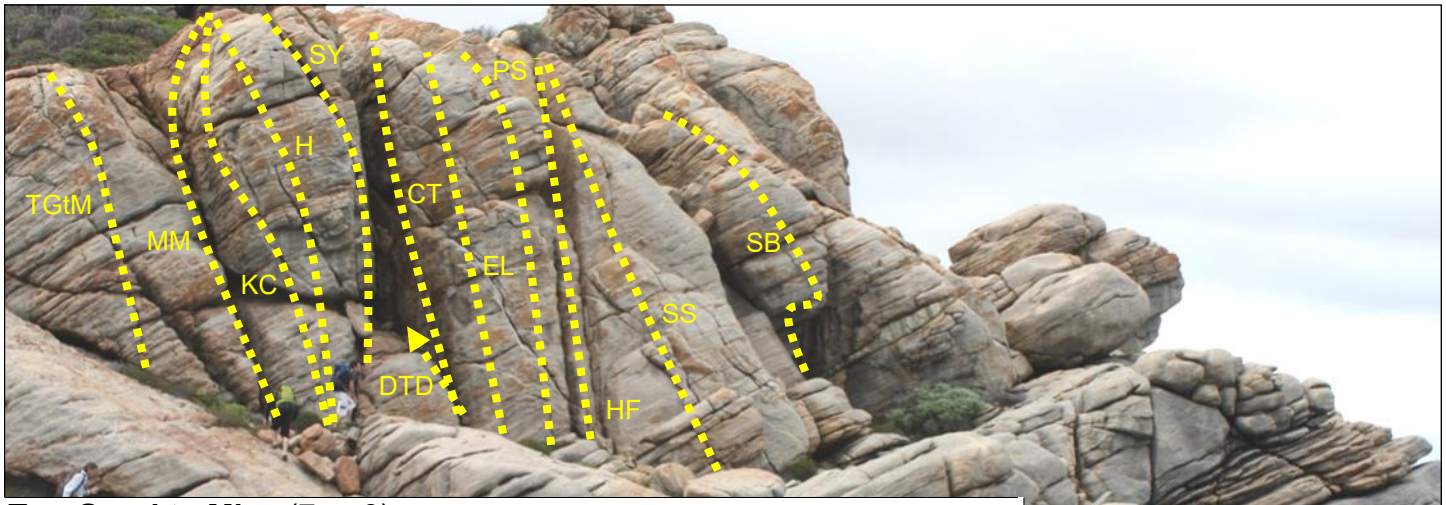
Four bolt plates and a standard rack will get you up anything here, noting a set of cams can make things easier. There are no bolts for belay anchors, but there is plenty of gear to be found on top of each crag.

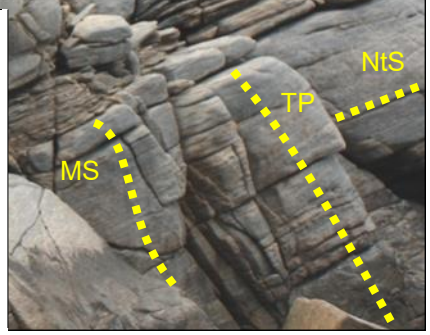
Grading has and always will be a contentious issue, subject to personal preference, skills and stature. Local climbers often talk of distinctly suspect grading here but a friend told me '*re-grading lines in my opinion is more contrived than a sandbag from a beard stroking hex lover and should be avoided to avoid further controversy*'. Yes it is true I do love a good hex placement, and no I have not tampered with the grades of the older lines.

Bearing all this in mind, grades should always be treated cautiously, maybe more so here, and it is best to carefully read the description, look at the climb and make your own judgment before heading up.

General Area Topo

Northern Blocks





Too Good to Miss (7m, 8)
Head for the crack line (Craig Johnson Jun 2018).

Mansfield's Motion (8m, 13)
Bridge up the widening chimney finishing up the right wall (Curt Hofmann Feb 1989).

Kami-kaze Catfish (8m, 20)*
Climb the flake on the right wall of the chimney, without bridging out for a rest. At the horizontal break continue up the arête (unknown).

Hathersage (8m, 15)*
A fine outing right up the front of the buttress, strong moves to gain a stance on the headwall before delicate moves to continue upwards (Curt Hofmann Feb 1989).

Stanage Youth (8m, 13)
Fun moves up to gain a stance on the left wall of the next chimney, after which this climb peters out (Mark Turner Feb 1989).

Drop The Donk (6m, 8)
Scramble up the narrowing chimney just right of H (Curt Hofmann Aug 1989).

Classic Thrash (10m, 15)
steep climbing up the right wall of the chimney, only keeping the grade if you don't make use of the wall that gets closer and closer behind you (Curt Hofmann Aug 1989).

Easy Listening (10m, 8)
Wander up the left side of the face right of the chimney of DTD (Mark Turner Aug 1989).

Pathetic Sharks (10m, 10)
The right side of the face proves slightly harder with a good move to get past the top headwall (Curt Hofmann Aug 1989).

Hungry Fish (10m, 10)
Straight up starting just right of PS (Mark Turner Aug 1989).

Seaside Solo 10m, 8)
An easy stroll up the next face to the right, pick your line and make your moves (Mark Turner Aug 1989).

Spoilt Bastard (7m, 20)
Reachy moves are required to get round the roof, clip the bolt before pulling up onto the headwall after which the angle and grade ease (Roland Tyson Aug 1989).

Morning Stretch (6m, 15)
The holds on the left tending flake all seem to slope the wrong way, but once the break is reached you can breathe a sigh of relief (Craig Johnson Dec 2009).

The Plough (8m, 18)*
True gritstone style is needed on this direct line up the rounded wall. Make use of the horizontal breaks, with a sketchy final move to gain the top (Krish Seewraj Dec 2009).

Nothing too Serious (8m, 14)
For added atmosphere best done when the swell is up, traverse along the handrail until forced to finish up the slab (Krish Seewraj Jun 2018).

Red Wall

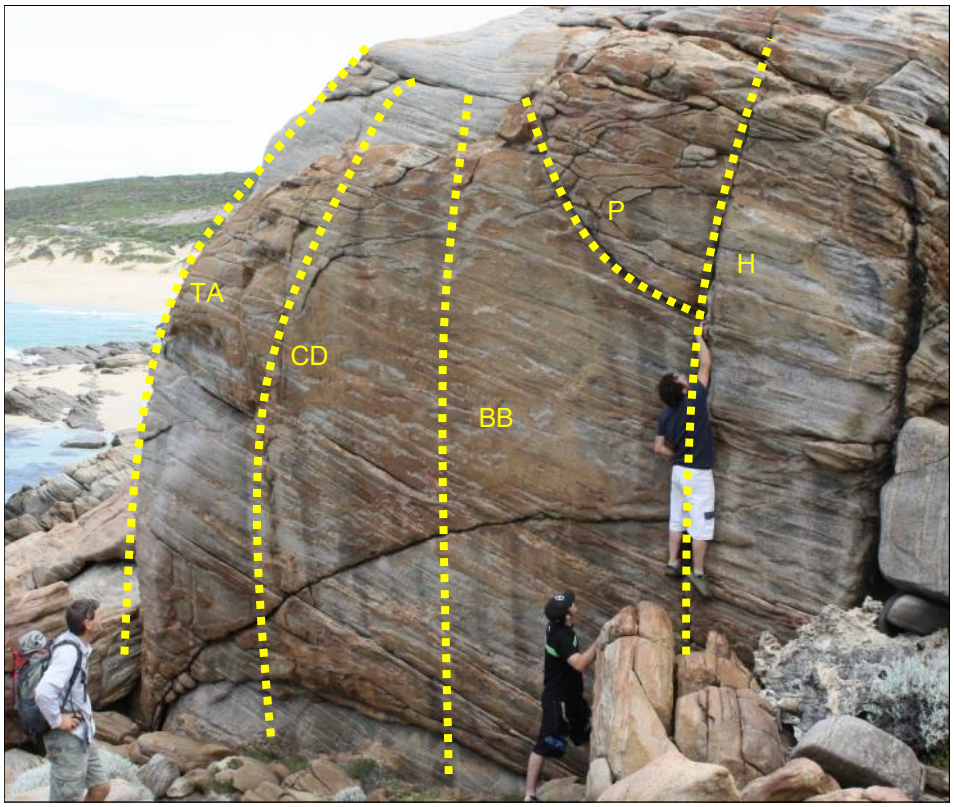
The Arête (6m, 11)
Direct up the arête (Krish Seewraj Jun 2018).

Chow Down (6m, 17)
Balance up the thin seam with insufficient protection (Curt Hofmann Feb 1989).

Body Belches (6m, 23)
The smooth face in the middle of the wall with one solitary bolt will yield if you can reach and use the small holds (Dave Wagland Aug 1989).

Pickup (6m, 17)
Up the right hand crack, and at two thirds height traverse out left along the weakness (Kym Hartley Jan 2012).

Hickup (6m, 16)
A direct line up the right hand crack that gets hard the higher you go (Curt Hofmann Feb 1989).



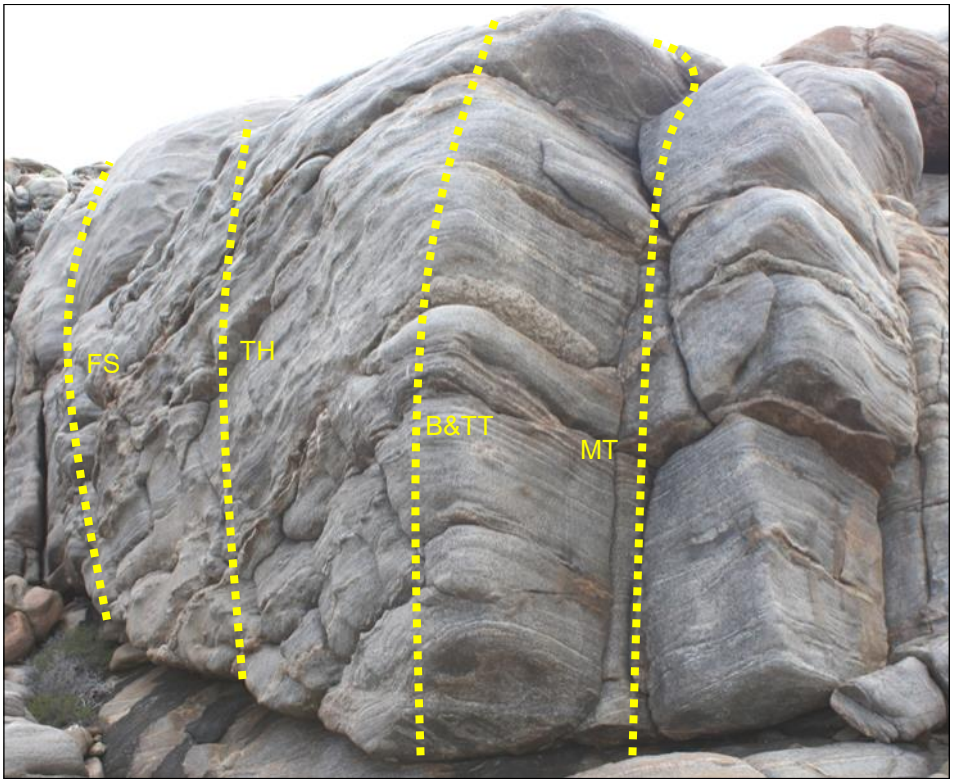
Blake's Block

Follyfoot Solos (4m, 8)
The left hand crack on the northern face (Dave Wagland Aug 1989).

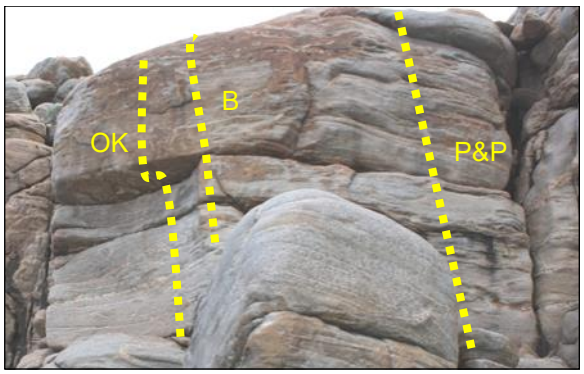
Thundering Hooves (4m, 9)
Up the middle of the northern face (Dave Wagland Aug 1989).

Blake and the Thoroughbreds (5m, 12)
The arête provides fun climbing (Dave Wagland Aug 1989).

Mini Thor (5m, 13)*
A great but unfortunately short climb, good gear makes it a great lead for beginners (Dave Wagland Aug 1989).



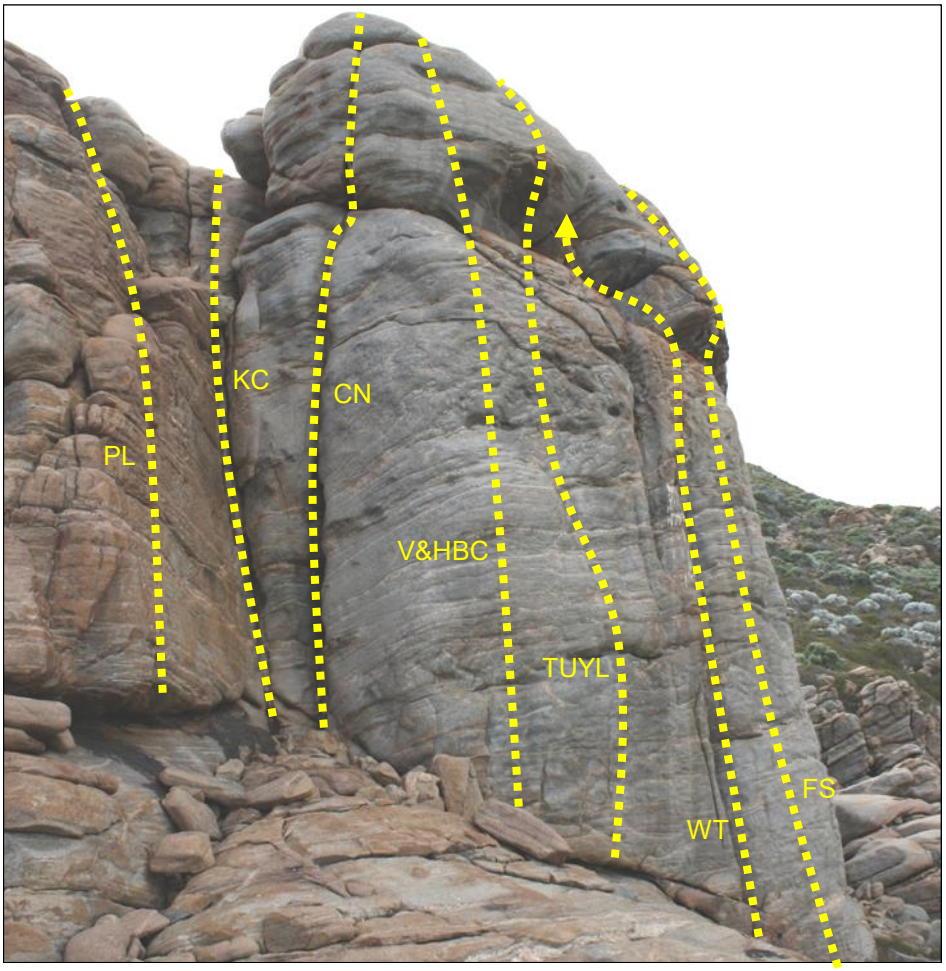
Hand's Up Wall (north face)



Obscurity Knocks (5m, 21)
The next three routes are a stones throw north of Hand's Up Wall, this one goes boldly over the prominent roof with no protection (Shane Richardson Sep 1990).

Backdoor (5m,16)
If OK seems too hard or scary this is a more relaxed alternative that avoids the roof (Craig Johnson Sep 2006).

Pink and Purple (6m, 12)
Amble up the wall just left of the corner (Roland Tyson Feb 1989).



Pink Licker (6m, 8)
The short wall provides a fun line, getting harder and less protected the further right you stray (Curt Hofmann Feb 1989).

Kiddies Corner (8m, 10)
Lots of holds and protection make for a good beginners route (Curt Hofmann Feb 1989).

Cornish Nasty (15m, 18)*
A true test piece - the crack on the right wall of the corner with a peapod in the bottom half, a traditional thrutch up the crack and then finishing up the headwall above. Unfortunately the grade only holds if you don't use the other wall of the corner (Curt Hofmann Aug 1989).

Victor and His Boa Constrictor (15m, 17)*
A good climb with an airy start immediately right of the arête to clip the high bolt, sustained climbing that eases as you reach the break with a less intimidating finish than it looks (Roland Tyson Aug 1989).

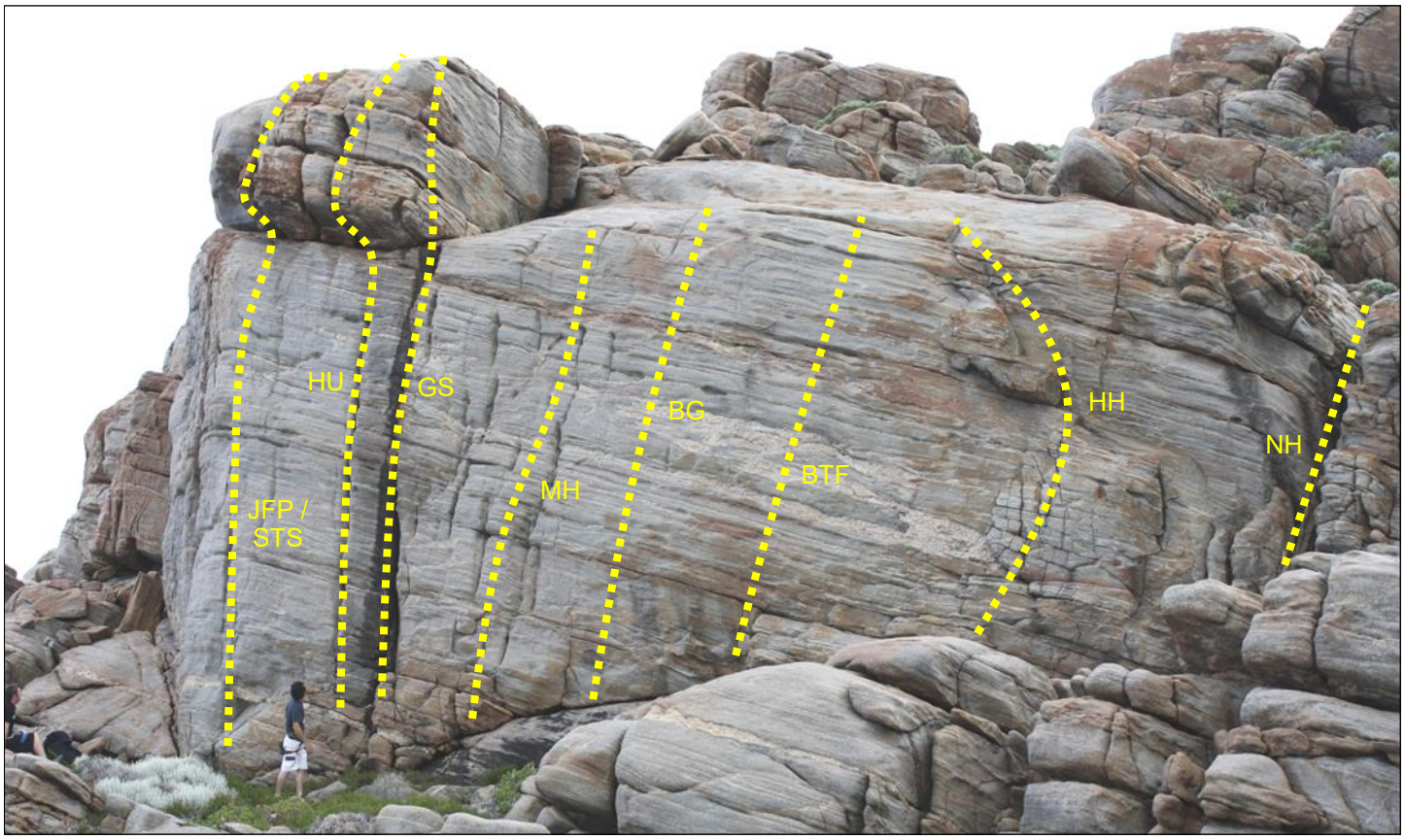
Twist Till You Lock (15m, 21)
Up the middle of the face following a line of four bolts, contortionist moves to get started and a hard finish over the roof, unfortunately the climbing in-between is a walk in the park making for an inconsistent climb (Roland Tyson Aug 1989).

Wheely Things (15m, 15)**
A great sustained climb up the crack right of TTYL, jam, crimp or lay your way up this lovely climb - with an escape left half way up for those who find the going too tough (Lindsay Hart Aug 1989).

Fat Slags (15m, 19)***
The classic of the crag, a solid and sustained face climb with some airy moves on small smears to get past two bolts and natural gear (Roland Tyson Aug 1989).

Johnny Fartpants (15m, 18) (see next page)
Immediately right of the rounded corner are two bolts, which provide the protection that unfortunately makes it possible to escape right for an easier exit from the slab (Roland Tyson Aug 1989).

Hand's Up Wall (south face)



Sid the Sexist (15m, 20)**
While Kym Hartley was part way through re-bolting the crag this climb was led in true gritstone style with natural protection, which forces you to stick to the line and also gives it that gritstone 'I don't want to fall off feeling' (Krish Seewraj Nov 2011).

Hands Up (15m, 15)*
The rounded crack requires a level head because the gear is not easy to find and place (Curt Hofmann Feb 1989).

Gothic Streak (15m, 15)
It is hard to miss this black streak, which is also the last climb to finish up the headwall. Easier climbing and better protection than it is neighbour HU (Curt Hofmann Aug 1989).

Many Hands (10m, 14)
Follow the flutes up the wall just right of the black streak, protection can be tricky to find and it feels a little run out if your head is not in the game (Curt Hofmann Mar 1989).

Buster Gonads (10m, 18)
Not as hard as it looks, one bolt identifies the line with small protection found higher up. The grade increases the further right you stick (Roland Tyson Aug 1989).

Billy the Fish (11m, 20)
Similar climbing to BG but more sustained, again with one bolt to show you the way (Roland Tyson Aug 1989).

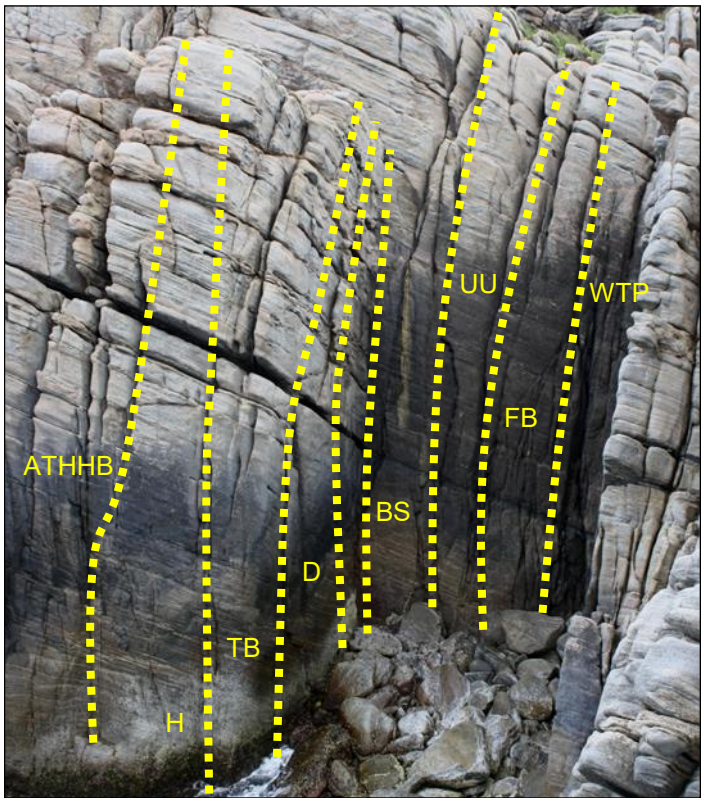
Hard Hands (10m, 8)
A pleasant ramble up the S shaped flakes, a good beginners line for practicing to place gear (Curt Hofmann Mar 1989).

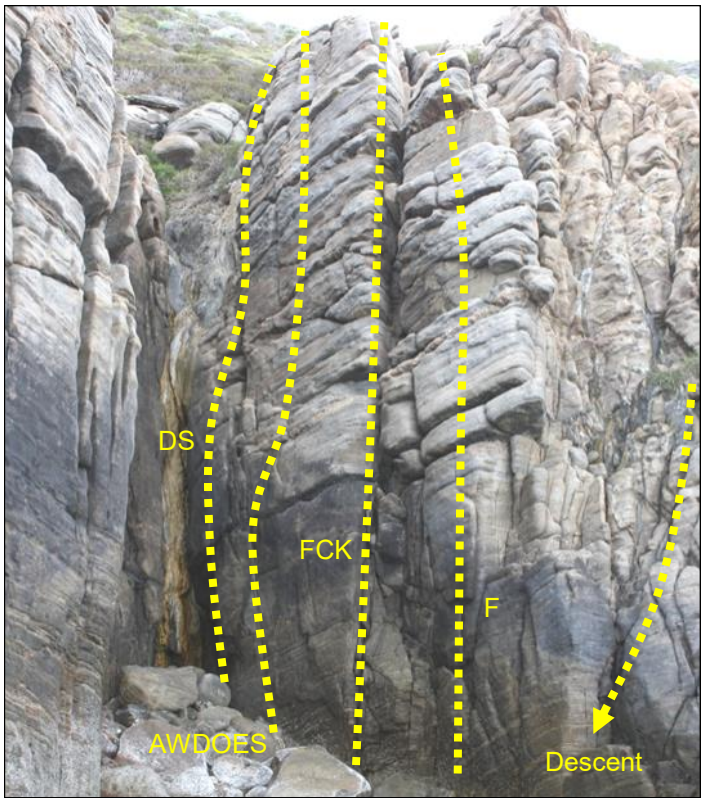
No Hands (10m, 4)
The chimney at the right hand end of the crag is often used as the decent (unknown).

The next climb is located in the **Freddy's Zawn**:

After the Horse Has Bolted (10m, 13)
When it is too wet to get to the start from the zawn (which is nearly always) an ariy scramble from the left (looking in) gets you down to a small stance just above the waterline, from here up and slightly right (Krish Seewraj Dec 2011).

Freddy's Zawn





Hallucinations (10m, 16)
Bouldery moves up the thin crack at the right hand end of the face, before easy climbing up the wall above. Ryan must have thought he was on drugs to find the usually wave washed and weed covered bouldery base of the zawn as a sandy beach and completely dry - as the rear cover image proves (Ryan Doe Dec 2010).

The Beach (10m, 16)*
Just round the corner of H a hard start to get onto the flake, then up the steep headwall above - and like H perfect conditions are needed to get onto this climb (Krish Seewraj Dec 2010).

Dreamweaver (10m, 15)*
The right hand side of the face, to keep the grade avoid using the corner to gain the ledge from here up the steep bulging headwall (Krish Seewraj May 2011).

Broken Surf (15m, 10)
The left hand corner (Kym Hartley Jan 2012).

Um Um (15m, 10)
The often wet back wall has a number of lines, this being the left hand one looking in. Gear isn't as easy to place as it looks and the wall is often wet (Alan Rokich Aug 1990).

Freddy's Bidet (15m, 11)
The middle line with better gear but slightly harder climbing than UU (Alan Rokich Aug 1990).

Wetting Thy Pants (15m, 13)
The hardest line up this wall (Moyses Aug 1990).

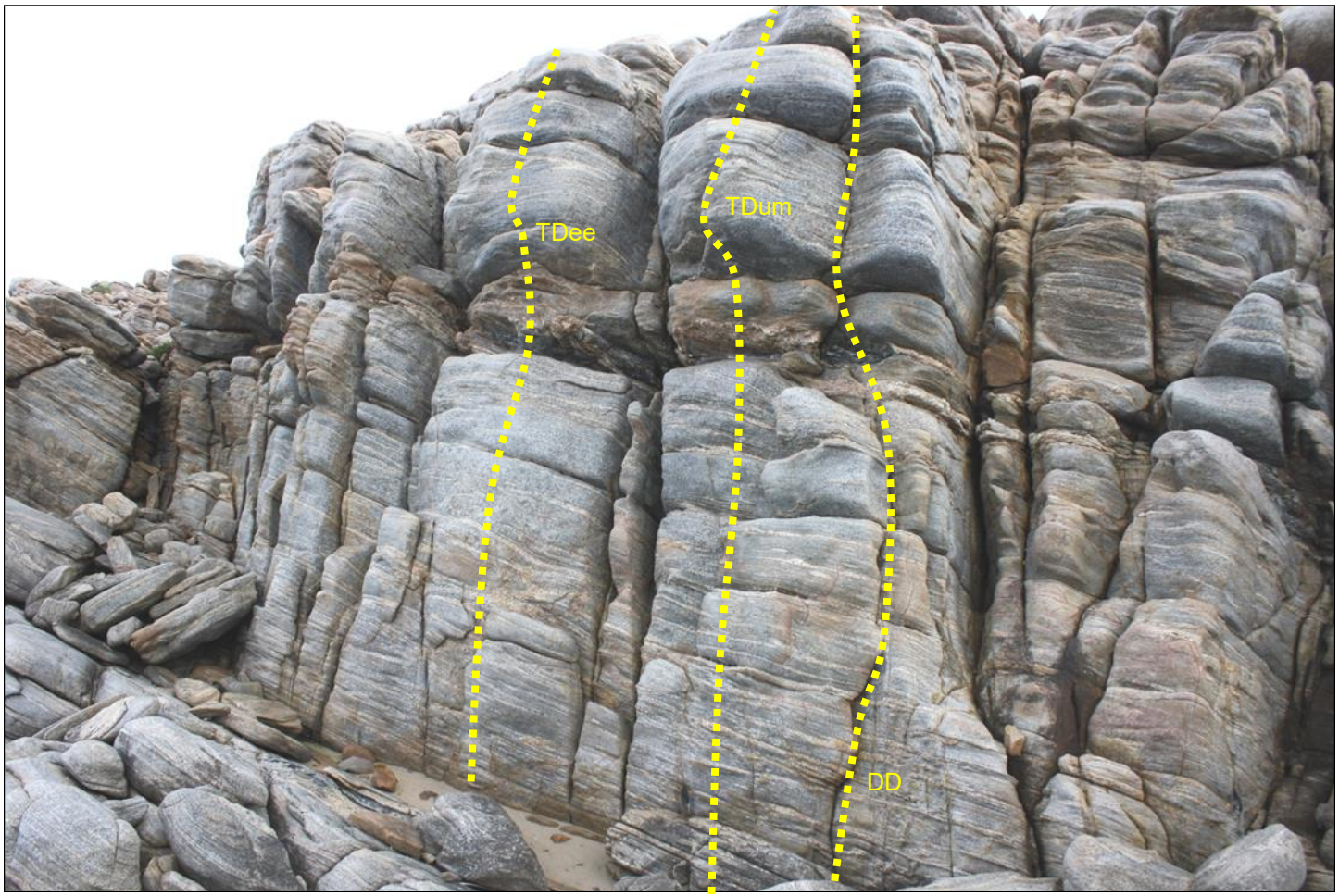
Dry Spell (10m, 13)
The wall immediately to the left of the crack used by AWDoES, using the crack to lay off. Continue up the face staying close the arête (Chris Howe Dec 2023).

A Wet Dream on Elm Street (10m, 13)*
A fine line up the left hand end of the wall, balance up the thin crack and continue up the headwall where all the holds seem to slope the wrong way but offer tons of gear (Roland Tyson Aug 1989).

Freddy Kruger's Claw (10m, 10)*
Enjoyable climbing up the arête right of AWDOES (Curt Hofmann Aug 1989).

Frontpage (10m, 12)
Up the middle of the next buttress to the right, a blank looking start followed by easier climbing and a roof to top out (Krish Seewraj May 2011).

Sand Blast Wall



Tweddle Dee (6m, 11)
These twin buttresses can be found two thirds of the way between Freddy's Zawn and Rumpole's Rocks. The bottom wall is ascended on rounded holds, then place your gear and make your way over the roof (Krish Seewraj Dec 2009).

Tweedledum (6m, 12)
Similar climbing to it's twin but with a slightly harder roof, as long as you don't sneak right up the hanging corner (Craig Johnson Dec 2009).

Dee Dum (6m, 10)
Up the flakes on the right of the buttress finishing up the hanging corner (Craig Johnson Dec 2009).

The next two climbs are located on **Rumpoles Rock**:

Rude Awakening (6m, 17)
The short wall left of RW starting from the shelf at half height, an awkward move to get going followed by a strong move to pass the upper wall (Krish Seewraj Jan 2012).

Rarely Wild (12m, 14)
An easy scramble to a shelf then continue up the shallow corner before finishing through the off-width (Curt Hofmann Sep 1987).

While bolting is an accepted practice here is a little reminder of the kind of bolting that really should be avoided

Rumpoles Rocks

Hexed (15m, 15)
Scramble up to the shelf followed by a tricky move to get past the flakes (Krish Seewraj Jan 2012).

Burning Both Ends (15m, 17)
A few meters right of RW up the crack in the bottom wall then straight up and over the brown overlap at the top (unknown).

Yogurt (15m, 14)
Halfway up H&S follow the left tending flakes and then over the overlap (Krish Seewraj & Chris Wiggins Feb 2014).

Hot and Spicy (15m, 11)
Over the bottom wall a few meters right of BBE before continuing up the nice steepening cracks unknown).

Off the Rails (15m 17)
The short wall, blank slab, and two rooflets. Good but a little contrived as you have to avoid the temptation to use the crack systems of H&S and C&G (K Seewraj Jan 2024).

Chillies and Garlic (15m, 16)
Up to the small capped corner, good moves back out onto the face before heading past a couple of overlaps to finish (Roland Tyson Sep 1987).

Jugs Galore (15m, 14)
Head to the two round flakes in the middle headwall which looks intimidating but yields with great holds (Krish Seewraj Feb 2014).

Square Cut (15m, 17)
Half way up NSFP step left and ascend the rounded crack and headwall (Chris Wiggins Feb 2014).

No Spinach for Popeye (15m, 16)
A true thrutch to get past the bottom wall via the rounded crack, then have a rest before ascending the crack in the face above which provides some nice climbing (Curt Hofmann Aug 1987).

The Bunyip (15m 19/20)
Struggle over the rooflet via the small right facing square cut corner, and then enjoy left hand arete of the right-hand pillar above (K Seewraj Aug 2022).

Olive Oil (15m, 16)
Getting past the bottom wall is nowhere near as hard as for NSFP, and again there is some nice climbing on the face above (unknown).

Finger Licking (15m, 16)
Head for the finger crack at the right end of the crag , then up the fine flakes on the southern face of the block above (Krish Seewraj Feb 2014).

Ryan Doe on Cornish Nasty (18)

Krish Seewraj on the first ascent of The Bunyip (19/20)

Craig Johnson on Spoilt Bastard (20)

Chris Howe on the first ascent of Dry Spell (13)

Jan 2024