



**Ladye Bay climbs**  
by Martin Crocker

## Ladye Bay climbs

A guide to the climbs of Ladye Bay, Clevedon, North Somerset (OS ref. 409731 - 409729)

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Published privately and available solely on the website [www.martincrockerclimbing.com](http://www.martincrockerclimbing.com)

Front cover: *Racing Boat*, first ascent? (March 2003) Pic: Jonathan Crocker

### **This is a Free Guidebook, but Please Make a Donation to the Cliff Rescue Team**

It's a pleasure to make this guidebook available without my pocketing any of your cash. All I ask is that you make a donation to ASSAR.

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ASSAR, a registered charity, has been providing cliff rescue services for Avon Gorge, Cheddar Gorge, and the area's other cliffs since 1975. (Avon Gorge and Cheddar Gorge rescue teams amalgamated in 1990.) More recently, in liaison with the police, ASSAR's remit was broadened to include a search and rescue function – saving lives other than those of climbers. Few would dispute that we owe ASSAR a huge debt of gratitude. The team's creation was the cornerstone in the climbing access agreement for Cheddar Gorge in the late-70s, which set the framework for all subsequent agreements. Furthermore ASSAR volunteers have given their time freely to support local partnership initiatives such as Cheddar Gorge's CragAttaK festivals and ClimbBristol.

ASSAR has no paid executives, just dedicated unpaid volunteers on standby 365 days/year 24hrs a day. But in order to operate effectively the team runs up significant running and capital costs. Please make your **donation** using either of the following links:

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### **North Somerset Coast Guidebook Series**

*Ladye Bay Cliff climbs* is one in a series of free guidebooks to the climbs and bouldering of the cliffs of the North Somerset coast. The aims of this series are to make available for public use details of some activists' explorations and to use this opportunity to raise money for a proven good cause. The guidebooks are *not* definitive records of the climbs since legitimate access to, and use of, sources of information outwith the public domain is not always available. The author expresses his apologies, therefore, for any omissions; and he would be happy to receive details of same, so a wider record of the climbing and – importantly – its correct history can evolve.

Abbreviations Used		Grades	
BMC	British Mountaineering Council	D	Difficult
ASSAR	Avon & Somerset Search And Rescue	VD	Very Difficult
RoW	right of way	S	Severe
m	metre	HS	Hard Severe
km	kilometre	VS	Very Severe
FA	first ascent	HVS	Hard Very Severe
Soloist	A self-belay device that enables ground-up lead-climbing without a partner	E1 – E7	Extreme
BR/BB	Bolt runner/bolt belay	F	Sport grade
		V	Bouldering grade

### Guidebook Disclaimer

You climb entirely at your own risk in line with the BMC Participation Statement (see below); this guidebook has been published strictly on that basis. The author and any other party connected with this guidebook cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions or be held liable for any personal or third party injuries or damage, however caused. The inclusion of climbs in this guidebook does not assume any right of access to them; please refer any access queries to the BMC.

### BMC Participation Statement

Climbing, hillwalking, and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept those risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

### Supplementary note for guidebook producers

Please respect the voluntary effort and personal costs of equipping the routes and producing this guidebook. Having regard to moral and liability implications, any copyright abuse would be counter-productive and selfish, and it could cause the fixed gear to be removed.



**CRAG CODE**  
[www.thebmc.co.uk](http://www.thebmc.co.uk)

<b>Access</b>	Check the Regional Access Database (RAD) on <a href="http://www.thebmc.co.uk">www.thebmc.co.uk</a> for the latest access information
<b>Parking</b>	Park carefully – avoid gateways and driveways
<b>Footpaths</b>	Keep to established paths – leave gates as you find them
<b>Risk</b>	Climbing can be dangerous – accept the risks and be aware of other people around you
<b>Respect</b>	Groups and individuals – respect the rock, local climbing ethics and other people
<b>Wildlife</b>	Do not disturb livestock, wildlife or cliff vegetation; respect seasonal bird nesting restrictions
<b>Dogs</b>	Keep dogs under control at all times; don't let your dog chase sheep or disturb wildlife
<b>Litter</b>	'Leave no trace' – take all litter home with you
<b>Toilets</b>	Don't make a mess – bury your waste
<b>Economy</b>	Do everything you can to support the rural economy – shop locally

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I am indebted to Jon Kirk for resurrecting memories of Ladye Bay's golden years and for supplying lots of information and action pics. And 'thank you' once again to Beverley, Jonathan, and Emily for their company 'at the beach' and for their pics. Milo Mehta popped around while I was checking early recorded scribbles and drawings in 2020: his contributions and pics are much appreciated.

## History

People will have scrambled amongst the boulders of the coast as far back as Celtic times, evidenced by what are believed to be Celtic carvings of faces on a few boulders and cliffs here. Recording micro-routes with names may not have dawned on much later visitors, and entries in personal diaries, like those of Martin Crocker in 1977, might have read something along the lines of: 'Walked to Clevedon; threw my EBs in and soloed some nice little climbs in Ladye Bay on the way back home'. One other such local in the late 70s was uncelebrated activist Andy Popp who grew up in Clevedon no more than half a mile from the steps down to Ladye Bay. 'Even before I started climbing I spent much time along the shoreline. But I also did things that were rough approximations of something we'd call bouldering now. But all of this was just my own little private world as a young teenager in love with this new thing (climbing), nothing to do with recordable climbing.'

The first documented route appeared all of 10 years later care of B Barrett and Frank Ramsey – their door always open to adventure. With some lateral thinking – they lip-traversed the sea cave north of Ladye Point in 1989 to become *Kings of New England*.

Around the turn of the Millennium – when both bouldering and sport climbing had become well-established and systemized – a number of individuals started to take a comprehensive look. In 1999, while his kids played on the Ladye Bay beach, Martin Crocker rechecked the cliffs and thought: 'with stainless steel bolts we can make something of this; what a lovely setting for some sport climbing'. Taking an express delivery of staples from Portland maestro Pete Oxley, he duly worked through the possibilities, enlisting Guy Percival and Rob Kingston, the latter seeking out classic *Ladye of the Night*. It had to wait until 2000 however for Crocker to succeed on soggy *Pier Pressure*, after a dry spell. In an attempt to spread the cost of bolting, he published a topo at a concise 4 pages long and a price of £2.00. But selling only six copies in as many months suggested locals weren't biting. So, after one leading climber (who seemed to be missing the point) reacted: 'I ain't paying £2 for that!' the topo was withdrawn.

## LADYE BAY

**THE ROUTES**

1. Bark of a Midge 7a 6BR. *'Full-body pump'. Medium cam between bolts 2 and 3.*
2. Stick Insect 6c+ 3BR. *'(very-long) stick-clip first BR.'*
3. Slipped beyond Imagination 7b 2BR. *'Very bouldery.'*
4. Rab's Ramp 6b 2BR. *'Looks easy? Avoid hanging flake; hand-thrusts to belay.'*
5. An Evening in the Company of the Clevedon Women's Guild 7a 2BR,TR.
6. Fine Art 7c- 1BR over lip (lip-stick clip). *'Powerful underclimbing. Men log.'*
7. Chalked-up Mutant Woodouse 7a+ 3BR. *'The beast lives in the finger pocket.'*
8. Lay Ladye Lay 7b 4BR. *'The hard classic of the crag.'*
9. Ladye Lay 7a 3BR.
10. Green Ice 6c 3BR. *'Tough move to clip the belay.'*
11. Ladye Killer 6b(b)+ 4BR. *'A warm-up of sorts. Easier on the right.'*
12. Waterfall Wall 7e 4BR. *'Rock-up left of the first bolt. Rock 5 can back up top bolt.'*
13. Pier Pressure 7c 4BR. *'Brilliant - after the soft start. If the first underclimb is dropping (normal), use a short hand-ling on the first bolt: no difference in grade.'*
14. Battle of Conyar 7c+ 3BR. *'Project. A war with monos (first BR) full use of goos.'*
15. Snack Religion 6c 3BR. *'Stick to the limit aretes. Flash it?'*
16. Never Trust A Lawman 7b- 3BR. *'Superb moves; super-stop.'*
17. Never Cross A Ladye 7a, 6c+, 6b+ 18 BR, 3 double BBs. *'The gradle! (Project)'*

**BEACH BOULDERING**

**£2.00 BRISTOL SPORT CLIMBS £2.00**

**TOPOS OF TWO NEW CRAGS**

**Ladye Bay, Clevedon; and Bourton Combe, Flax Bourton**

**INTRODUCTION**  
*Ladye Bay*

The action is to be found on an 8.9 metre sea-cliff with family atmosphere; right next to a nice pebble beach near Clevedon. With a sea view and catching the sun mid-afternoon onwards, an inspiring time to visit is a sunny summer's evening, especially with the tide up (it's just about non-tidal). Most of the climbs overhang and can stay dry even in torrential rain (not as the Waterfall Wall, which seeps in a great flood way). The rock is like a soft version of Portland Stone (so soft in places at the bottom that you even risk making holds with a toothbrush). All routes are resin-stations steel bolted, and the well-publicised precautions as to their use apply. *In particular, avoid outward pulls on the bolts, since the porous and soft nature of the rock could compromise the adhesive ability of the resin (a good bet is to place a few natural runners to limit the outward pull on the first bolts while the leader is digging falling-off). There are a few necessary stick-clip bolts. Some adjacent bouldering is identified, as well as safe-dependent places for more bolted routes amongst the short walls and boulders just to the east. Overall, the climbing is average! Finally, the beach is a popular local place to visit; be discreet, and seek harmony with the local community.*

**Bourton Combe**

A modest clutch of resin-staple bolted routes and some neat bouldering offer an alternative to the wall. This is a 10-metre natural limestone crag set in a sheltered, yet south-facing, position in a wooded valley a mere four miles from Bristol. Some seepage can occur in winter, and the crag is best avoided in dank and misty conditions. A public footpath runs up the valley 20 metres beneath the crag. *Ownership is unknown.*

**PLEASE BUY ONE COPY PER CLIMBER**

*All of the proceeds will go towards defraying the cost of equipping the climbs. It costs £2.00 to bolt in materials alone. Only through crag-worm making contributions, one sport climb which last be produced. Even if all of the 100 copies produced are sold the first sectionist will still be way out-of-pocket.*

*Please note that the production of these topos does not imply any legal right to climb on the cliffs described. (No access problems of any nature have been encountered however.)*

Martin Crocker © 1999

While waiting for the cliff to dry out Crocker explored the boulders in front of Waterfall Wall and the Beach Walls – but he wouldn't have been the first: 'met the family after work – all the main bouldering projects vanquished'. Around the same time Matt Rawlinson started bouldering in Ladye Bay, regaling the experience in a letter to a mag. He may well have been the first to succeed on the traverse of the Beach Walls via the three finger-jugs where others' core had failed them; this masterpiece was retrospectively named *Traverse of the Ghosts* (but later became known as *A Brussels Scout*).

Later, in 2003, came bouldering ace Jon Kirk, who boasted strength, reach, and the power to cart around a bouldering mat as big as a snooker table – just what was needed to break through the V6/7ish ceiling of precursor traditionalists. Jon strayed into Backhill Sands and found a lovely prow which he floated up as *Tapdance* (V8). He also dished out similar sit-start treatment to the hanging seaward arête of the WW East Boulder with the phenomenal *Sirens* (V9) and to the innards of Cracked Boulder where he linked crimps and pockets to generate more upside-down V8s. His regular companions, talented future husband and wife team Antony 'Tinny' Neads and Carly Neads, bagged their fair share too, sit-starting problems formerly climbed from standing. Meantime, Crocker had returned to old haunts and was busy charting the problems and solos at Backhill Sands, planning to reveal the whole lot in an area bouldering guidebook. Nobody can be absolutely sure who was first to climb many of these, but it is hard to believe the eccentric *Shock & Awe* – a highlight for him – wasn't new. He also bouldered the hanging arête on Beach Walls, later claimed by Kirk and then James Squire: *Pluralist* (V8). Eventually, in a confluence of alliteration and abilities, Kirk and Crocker crossed paths, and together they climbed an arduous E5 bolted girdle of the left-hand Ladye Bay walls, and the strongman succeeding where the weaker had failed on projects *Enraging Poseidon* and *Fine Art*. Kirk recalls: 'I must have launched, touched, and fallen on your *Fine Art* dyno at least 50 times before finally hanging it. I remember you telling me that it could possibly be done static, though I wasn't anywhere near strong enough, so I needed to jump!'

Some years later the ever-ascendant James Squire visited Ladye Bay and bested one of its remaining challenges with *James's Roof*. Local youths Jack Bradbrook and Rob Stanfield were active too. And Clevedon's own Milo Mehta took a speleological approach to the off-width 'horrorface' of *Anoo* at Backhill Sands. In 2020 Crocker returned to mark 50 years of British climbing exploration with *Loins of Professor Lockdown*, post COVID-19 full lockdown.

It is commonplace for climbing areas, including North Somerset, to witness conjecture about who did what and when. And often there is an unfortunate dysfunction between disparate parties and platforms vying to publish the same enigmatic resource. As a consequence misinformation emerges as a natural default, with no one party, including this effort no doubt, getting it entirely right. OK, politics is one thing, and unsavory at times (including guidebook politics), but another is that Ladye Bay must surely have something powerful going for it: after all, the three wonder-jugs on *Traverse of the Ghosts* have been permanently chalked since at least 1999 (even if the sport routes have not).

Footnote: I've included currently my best shot at the known full first ascent details of the trad and sport climbs. And I've included the date or at least the year of the probable first ascents of the boulder problems where the information source is accessible (which might embolden a few more memories). I apologise for not being in tune with recent social intercourse, but at least the bones of the place are represented here. Chronology, which is about people, is fundamental; and any route names and dates associated with earlier ascents than reported should of course prevail. I'm sure someone – perhaps an ethical volunteer driven only by the facts – will wish to put the entire jig-saw puzzle together one day, missing pieces included.

## Ladye Bay, Clevedon, North Somerset

*Fresh sight of the unclimbed prow under Backhill Point got me fired up, all hot under the collar. What a stunning challenge, and it was bigger than the roof of Hangover at Harrison's. But Hangover doesn't loom over an in-situ lagoon of Severn Estuary slurry (in which you'd wallow last moments should you flounder). Spooked by the back-down crux moves, I top-roped the prow a few times, vowing to despatch it the next day. Couldn't believe my eyes when I returned. By some epiphany the highest spring tide of the year had deposited a flotsam of planks and a wooden pallet next to the prow. As 'they the curious' looked on, within an hour I constructed a raft across the lagoon – a suitable bed onto which I would unfurl my trusty roll of foam. Safe inside a bubble of comfort, the solo burst dream-like to the top; yet all evidence of my industry was washed away on the next tide – like the ephemeral art of sandcastles on Weston-super-Mare beach.*

**General Approach:** From the Clevedon sea front and pier, follow the coast road northeastwards for a kilometre to a left turn into Bay Road (at a church on the right). There is a small car-park here. Walk down the road for 100 metres to steps on the left, which lead down to the beach. Or, for Backhill Sands, ignore the steps and carry on along the coast path for 400m.

### BACKHILL SANDS

Behind the 'sands' (local euphemism for mud) lies a peaceful wonderland of short walls and a jigsaw of big boulders created as the low cliff-line inexorably tumbles towards the sea. They provide nuanced bouldering, headpoints, and solos on pocketed dolomitic conglomerate, mostly at an accessible grade. Access only becomes hampered for a few hours at the highest spring tides. The landings are always rock (but occasionally of *level* rock – if that's any compensation).

For a taster: [Backhill Sands \(Ladye Bay\) Bouldering, North Somerset \(youtube.com\)](#)

### Approach

From the top of the steps to Ladye Bay take the wooded coast path northeastwards around a bend (path to Ladye Point here) and for a further 250m where Backhill Point can be glimpsed through the trees down to the left. Turn left on the first fisherman's path which descends through trees onto the Point where there is a view back southwestwards of the climbing area. Shame about the festering junk some fisherfolk choose to leave behind. To get to the routes, scramble down a wide easy ramp and crack in the centre of the long southwest face of the Point.

### Ethics and fixed gear

Most of the climbing is bouldering and soloing. Bolts have been used only in the *Kings of New England* Cave and in the Labyrinth. There are a few pegs in *The Kings of New England* Cave.

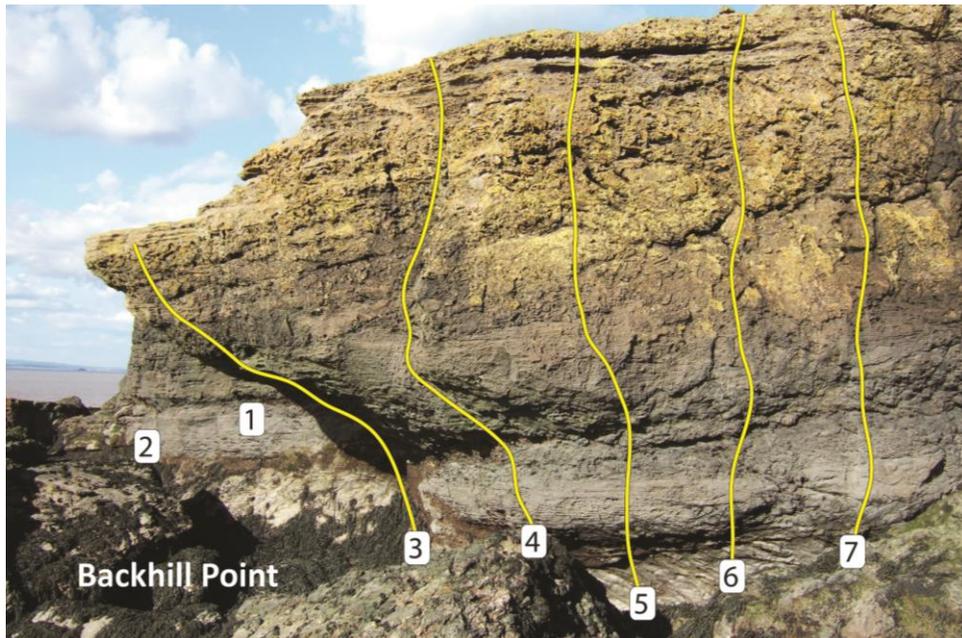
### Caution: fixed gear

The rock is intrinsically soft and weak, which will have a major influence on the integrity of the pegs and bolts and their holding power. And these fixtures will have been subject to weathering and the corrosive effects of the sea. The pegs are especially vulnerable and should not be trusted in isolation: always back them up sufficiently. The bolts are a mix of 12mm or 10mm stainless steel through-bolts with miscellaneous stainless steel hangers. All pegs and bolts date from the first ascents.

**Some bolted sport routes offer a few nut/cam placements and you are well advised to take a small rack with you to back-up and supplement the bolts. No fixed gear is completely trustworthy. In line with the BMC Participation Statement you must realise that it is your decision and yours alone if you choose to use the bolts.**

## Backhill Point

On its west side a long pocketed wall runs all the way to the Point where it forms a mighty prow. Facing southwest it guarantees a quick-drying and sunny winter venue when the clouds part. Care is required with many of the holds which can be crisp and fragile. Apart from *Shock & Awe* all the problems were soloed without mats, mostly on sight. However, why ruin your life: bring a crash mat or two. Access is by scrambling down a ramp in the centre of the wall onto the wave-cut platform.



The routes are described from left (northeast) to right (southwest).

The first two problems start from a flat boulder under the left-hand side of the prow.

1 **Weed** V0- (4c) (21.3.2003) From the base of a cleft, climb leftwards to pockets. Seaweed start.

2 **Fisherman's Friend** V0+ (5b) (21.3.2003) Scary. Make a monster stretch (most will need a little stepping stone) to a pocket for left hand. Hang the lip of the roof and mantel over without using the leg of a fisherman unless absolutely necessary.

3 **\*\*\*Shock & Awe** 6m E5 6a/b (V4) (21.3.2003)

The badass 5m wide roof of the prow. The notional, arguably incompatible V grade assumes immeasurable support resources. There is a gear placement but it arrives after the first crux. My 'little blue book' says: 'link pockets to gain a crack; beautiful rough sandstone'.

FA: Martin Crocker (solo after top-roping)

4 **\*Lagoon-a-Sunset** 6m E1 6a (V2) (19.3.2003)

The right-hand crack over the bulge with a powerful move to get feet on a shelf. Safe if led.

FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)



**5 Unhappy, when Snappy** 6m E1 5c (V0+) (19.3.2003)

Consider the name. Start using an undercut on an embedded block and surmount the nose.

FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

**6 Snappy, when Happy** 6m VD (1977)

The centre of the wall left of the descent ramp.

FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

**7 The Flakes** 6m VD (1977)

Take the friable wall 1.5m left of a crackline on heavily eroded rock.

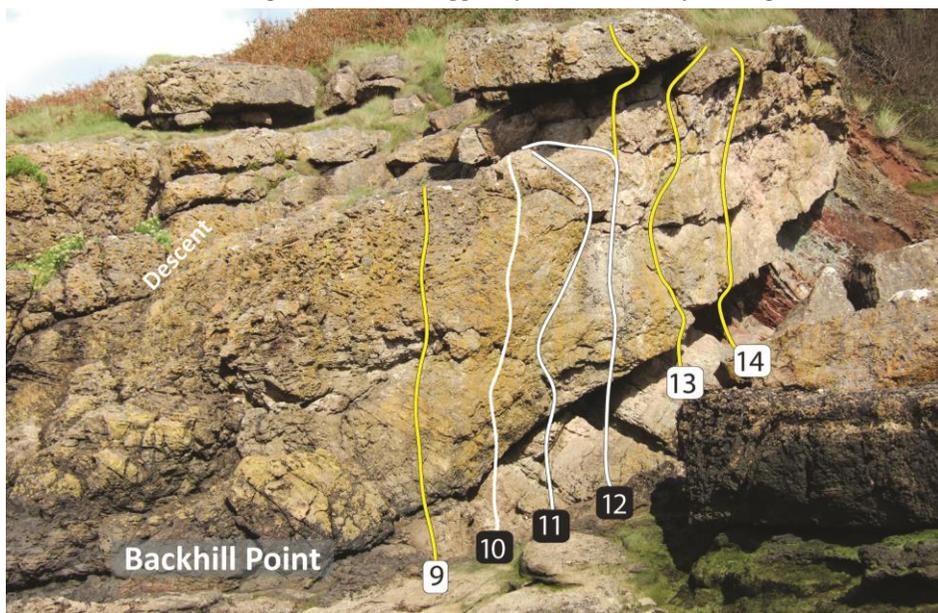
FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

**8 The Crack** 7m D (1977)

Follow the tall crack, which trends right at the top.

FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

To the right is the ramp of the scramble-down. Immediately right of that is a yellow 5m high pock-marked wall which, on its right-hand side, is capped by a roof formed by a sitting block.



**9 Lost for Words** VS 4a (1977)

**10 Spin 4 Spivs** V2 (5c) (19.3.2003) A gripping eliminate just left of the slanting flake crack: small hidden finger-pockets are the order of the day. Best not fall, spinning or otherwise. An E3 solo?

**11 Same Old, Same Bold** V1 (5c) (19.3.2003) Make a powerful long reach into the rightward-slanting flake crack; bear left to exit. Bold. Could be protected, but E1/2 to solo?

**12 Pondlife** 7m E2 5c/6a (V2+) (19.3.2003)

With finger-pocket for left hand, boulder up the grey streak. Continue to a break under the capstone. Pull over the roof on amazing pockets. Protectable. Escape left under the capstone for the V2.  
FA: Martin Crocker (solo after top-roping the roof)

**13 No Guts, No Glory (like Hell)** 6m S 4a (19.3.2003)

The zig-zag corner to exit around the right-hand end of the capstone.  
FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

**14 SM's Vile Underbelly** 6m HVS 5a (19.3.2003)

Naff. Pull over the overhang behind a block and then wobble past a 'death potential' flake (not used) to escape with an exciting mantel. Protectable.  
FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

**Wave-cut Platform Boulders**

The following stuff is located on boulders at the back of the large seaweed-covered wave-cut platform. You get a good view of it from Backhill Point.

Right of a little rock bridge is the Bureau – a boulder topped with a sloping platform.

**1 \*Bureau de Changement d'Couer** V5 (6b) (2003) The shady leaning wall forming the left side of the boulder; matless kneel start (would that equal a SS with a mat?) and tear hard on crimps. (V0+, 5b, from standing, but still worthwhile.)

**2 Mentalo** V1 (5c) (2003) Mantel mentally up the rib with or without help from *Mentalo*.

**3 The Sinkhole** V3 (5c) A lip traverse of the rectangular boulder which is a bit snappy for complete comfort. Start far right, mind the hole, and continue around the bend!

**4 The Bootiful Game** D (1977) To the right is an attractive triangular slab for feet; climb its centre or any other part of it hands-free, dribbling, juggling, chip-passing, or otherwise – whatever.

**5 Tennis, Any Day!** V0+ (5b) (2003) Sit start on a small boulder on the sunny side of the triangular slab. Smash the leaning face on a volley of big jugs.



Thirty metres along the platform are two large boulders: The Jib, which has a leaning frontal wall, and to its right The Spinnaker, a huge rotund boulder with a striking triangular west face. With mats, mates, and the slab of chipboard stowed behind the boulders, the problems here have the potential to boom in popularity (when compared with 2003; maybe they've caught on by now?).

### The Jib

The 4-5m high leaning yellow wall holds five problems which, given the stern landlubber-breaker groundings, are pretty serious and scary without a mat (or two; and also bring a spotter on board!).

**6 Headstay V0+ (5b) (1.3.2003)** Sail up pockets a metre from the left edge, steering rightwards.



**7 \*Centreboard V4 (6b) (1.3.2003)** The flagship of the wall. Use a left forefinger-jam or crimp in the slot to start the centre of the wall, so anchoring small holds above.

**8 Rudderless V0+ (5b) (1.3.2003)** Tack up the wall just left of the right-hand arête.

**9 Jib Talking 4b (1.3.2003)** The small scoop right of the right-hand arête.

**10 \*Jibbering V4 (6a)** A crimp-laden, forearm burning, right-to-left traverse along the low break.

### The Spinnaker

There is a small tree (yes, the crow's nest\*) and good nut belays on top should you decide – in the interests of self-preservation – to headpoint the taller routes. Under calm conditions the underlying platform is clear of the sea except at high tides above 11.5 metres; it is at its driest during neap tides.

**11 Brandy 4b (1.3.2003)** The arête of the little block keeping the two bad boys apart.

**12 \*Walk the Plank V2 (5c) (2005)** Use incuts left of the rib to grab the lip; make a long exciting hand-traverse left to rock up onto the slab. Grade subject to muscle-tightening anxiety.

**13 \*\*\*Bowsprit V6 (6c) (2008)** A must-do, perhaps easier with boastful biceps. First set a board and plastic sheet across the muddy rift. Sit start with both hands on a low finger-jug; and soar up the hanging rib via the long jug. Make an entertaining mantel using pebbly crimps to top out. The standing start is a classic \*V2 (5c/6a) (1.3.2003).

**14 Now Take a Bow V2 (5c/6a) (22.3.2003)** A good intro to this wall. Two pockets; then a hidden one o'er the lip. The sit start is \*V4 (6b), and it has a foothold to get you off the deck.

15 **\*Standing Ovation** V3 (6a/b) (1.3.2003) Execute a powerful move off right hand on a large undercut to tickle the left-hand end of the rising flake at a finger-jam for left hand. **\*\*Sitting Ovation** is the V5 (6b) sit start; fold your mat to fill the runnel, and keep your feet out of the puddle.

16 **Come to the Aid, of the Galley Maid** 6m E2 5a/b (22.3.2003)

Looks unprotected. A white spike (literally) points the way; off you go past the rising flake and onto a short hanging rib. Grope for pockets on the slab above and teeter over with a sigh of relief.

FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

17 **A-lister** V1 (5c) (22.3.2003)

Follow the leftward-rising undercut flake from a large downward-pointing spike.

18 **\*\*\* Broadside** V5/6 (6b) (2005) Awesome! The right-to-left traverse. Start with right hand in pocket, left hand on the pointed white spike (no boulder); cruise left on pockets and slopers to grab *Bowsprit's* jug. Join and finish along *Walk the Plank*. Two mats were used on the first ascent though adding a third or a spotter would be more relaxing.

19 **A Flotilla of Friends** 6m E1 5c (22.3.2003)

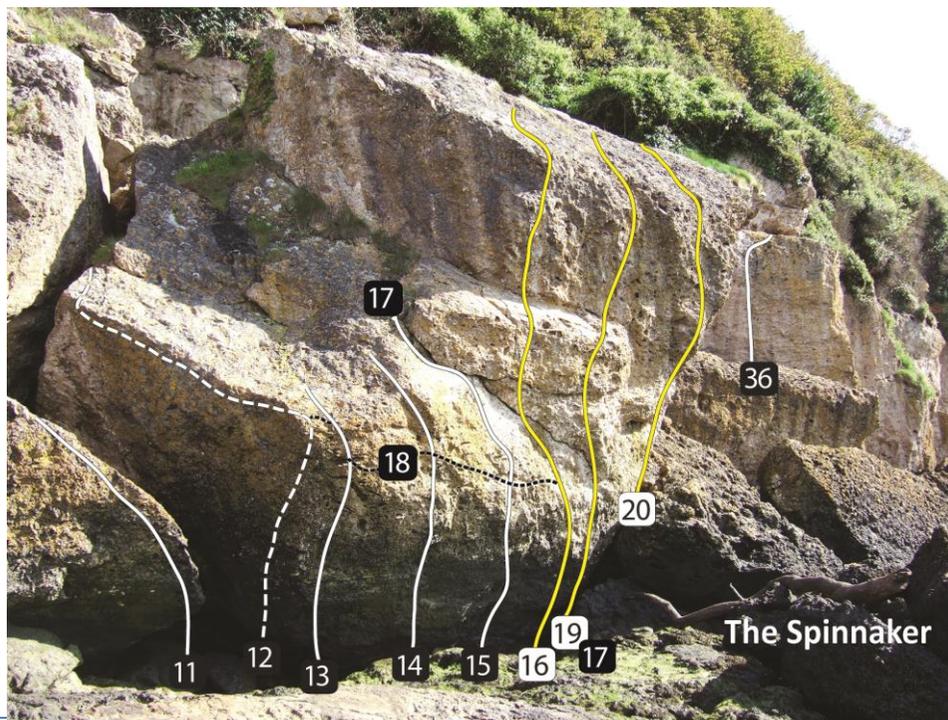
From a bucket next to the large downward-pointing spike follow tricky rough slopers to better holds and an exit on reassuring big pockets. Gear appears to be available.

FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

20 **\*\*Racing Boat** 6m E3 5a/b (1.3.2003)

Petit, yet potent. Blast straight up the bulging left-hand arête of the triangular face. Success will avoid an irreversible trip into 'the pit of doom' 3m lower than the starting level.

FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)



Around the corner is the triangular west face. It's super-steep, and the landing is chaotic, so bring some leading/spotting resources! The first ascents of the lead routes had the benefit of a thread near the top, but it was swiped soon after – presumably by some bored youth with a supersized reach.



24 **\*\*Puri** V7 & E5 (6b) (18.7.2017) Milo Mehta's tour de force which combines *Cool Palamedes* with *Cap'n's Trunk*; and something of a tale of high danger considering you'll arrive at the arête pumped up. This version only allows hands in the crack, feet anywhere.

25 **Anoo** V6 (6b) (6.7.2017) Two metres into the rift, squeeze suitable parts of your body up into the hour-glass and leg-jam rightwards to a jug in order to drop out. Totally bizarre; follow the first ascensionists' topless style if you dare, and choose a bright day. See pic top left on page 13, but turn it 90 degrees clockwise to see where you start (and how you might progress).

### 21 **\*First Mate got Drunk**

7m E3 6a (22.3.2003)

A whisper of Beeston or maybe even Angles sur Anglin? Exclusively pocket pulling up the centre of the face; good wires at half height, missing thread.

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist)

### 22 **\*\*Cap'n's Trunk** 7m E3 6a

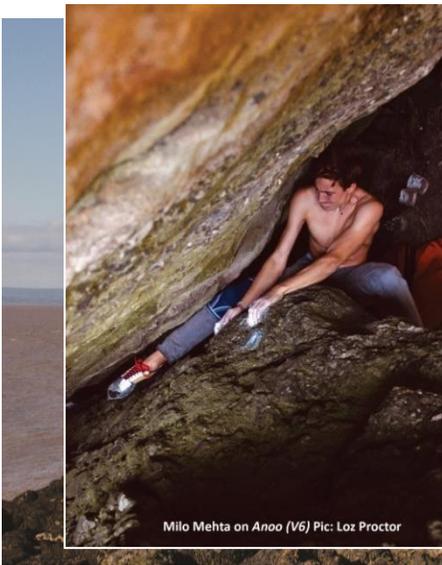
(22.3.2003) Layback the steep side of the right arête (wires in pockets), swinging left into the apex of the wall (missing thread) to pull around. This was subsequently soloed (*Smells Like Teen Spirit* by Jon Kirk, summer 2003 at V3, but more like E5! See pic to left by David Upperton/Kirk collection).

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist); see pic below, by Jonathan Crocker.

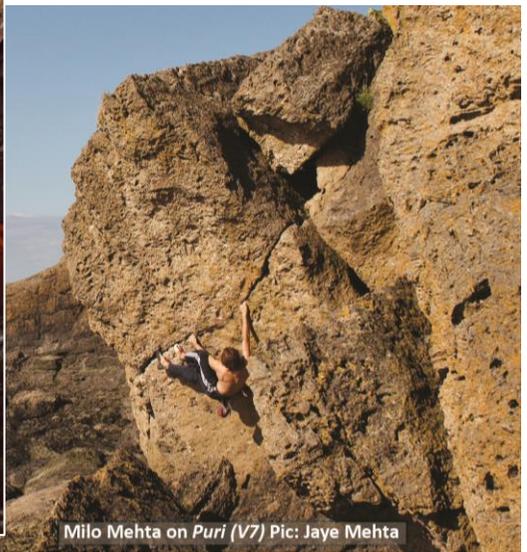
### 23 **\*Cool Palamedes** V4+ (6a)

(2017/20) Sit start under *Racing Boat* and perilously follow the rising crack rightwards to finish with a lip traverse and rock-up on the subsidiary block. (All holds in.)





Milo Mehta on *Αλοο* (V6) Pic: Loz Proctor



Milo Mehta on *Puri* (V7) Pic: Jaye Mehta

### The Labyrinth (Babyface Cave)

Should you forage behind The Jib and Spinnaker you'll vanish into a rift, so joining the Celts. The eight non-tidal problems here are described clockwise starting with the five on the sheer landward wall. The cramped hanging arête before you get there is the nasty **New Abnormal** (V3) (9.6.2020).

26 **Naughty Call** V1/V2 (5c/6a) (2003) Fire up the line of left-hand layaways to a finger-jug at 4m. Best and trickiest without a mat. In any event it is a soft landing, so you can jump off.

27 **Don't you mean Spanker?** V1 to V4 (5c to 6b) (2003) Set your left hand in a high undercut and gut-bust to gain a layaway; then span left for the jug and the jump-back-to-Earthiness. Defo V4 if you span right to a distant fingerhold. Totally dependent upon reach and how much padding you use.

28 **\*\*The Huntsman's Leap** V6 (6c) (18.5.2020) Start 1.5 metres right of 27, left hand on sidepull and right on a wide flat pinch. Power up past a Celtic carving (please don't touch it) and latch a finger-jug up and right. Step up, span left to a second fingerhold; jump off. One mat layer only!

29 **\*Do as They Say Not as They Do** 6m F7b (25.5.2020)

Dedicated to Cummings, Ferguson, Jenrick, and Calderwood. Two miraculous crimps in a blank-looking wall. Start from the projecting block a few feet up the gully (no back wall!). Step up on footholds and use two thin sideholds to reach the first crimp – somehow! 2BRs; BB.

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist)

30 **\*Loins of Professor Lockdown** 7m F7b+ (23.5.2020)

An intense microbe. First, bridge across to pre-clip BR1; then start from a pointed spike. 2BR; BB.

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist)

31 **Frig It** 6m HVS to E2 5b (2003)

Coast up the rightward-trending crack far right: safer to lead. From a good jam in the crack, bridge right across the chimney to descend. On lead it could be extended to a sycamore tree overhead.

FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

32 **Brân the Blessed** V0- (4c) (2003) The slab on the stern of The Spinnaker. A tad crumbly.

## The Maasdam

Right of The Spinnaker is the Maasdam, a pillar of tasty pockets. In front of it is the Cheese Cutter, a flake which has peeled away from the mother lode to reveal a rift of unexpected treasure. Check out the Cheese Cutter's warm-ups: a V2 (5c) sit-starting in a rift via large pocket, a V0- (4b), a V0- (4c) using a horizontal slot, a V0 (5a) from a large pocket, and a V0- (4c) up the prow far right.

33 \***Bounceback** V3 (6a) (2005) Sit start as low as possible under the prow of the Cheese Cutter and thug up to deep jugs. Great fun, so long as you pad out the underlying cleft.

The next three dwell in the rift (they are 'spotted' tightly by the outer flake, so watch the back dabs).

34 **Beauty Sleep** V5 (6b) (2005) Near the far end of the rift, find a terracotta crimp for right hand and strain for a slot. Jug above. No safe exit, so put it to bed by stepping down onto the outer flake.

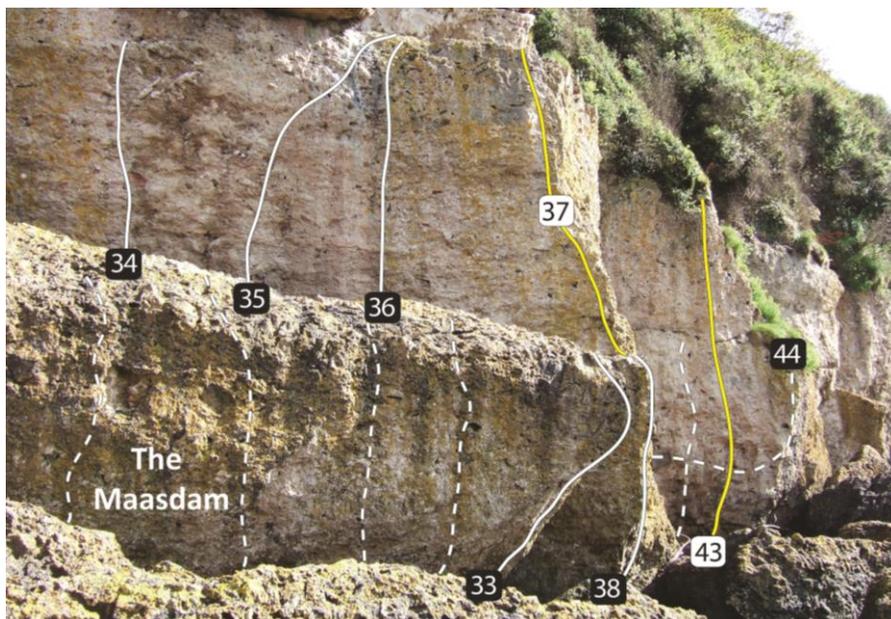
35 \*\***In Your Dreams, Pal** V4 (6b) (3.2003) High, and you have to top out onto the Maasdam above any security provided by the outer flake. Start standing in the centre of the rift at two finger-pocket-jugs. Reach high up left for a projecting flake; then gain pockets up and right before an easy but exposed pull leads to the top of the pillar. 'Be careful' platitude applies.

36 \***Dream you're Asleep** V4 (6a/b) (12.2.2020) Start 2 metres inside the rift from a body wedgie a metre up. From right hand full extension in a black slot, crank up left for a jug; then take pockets to the very bold exit of *In Your Dreams, Pal*. Prepare for some lo.....ng reaches.

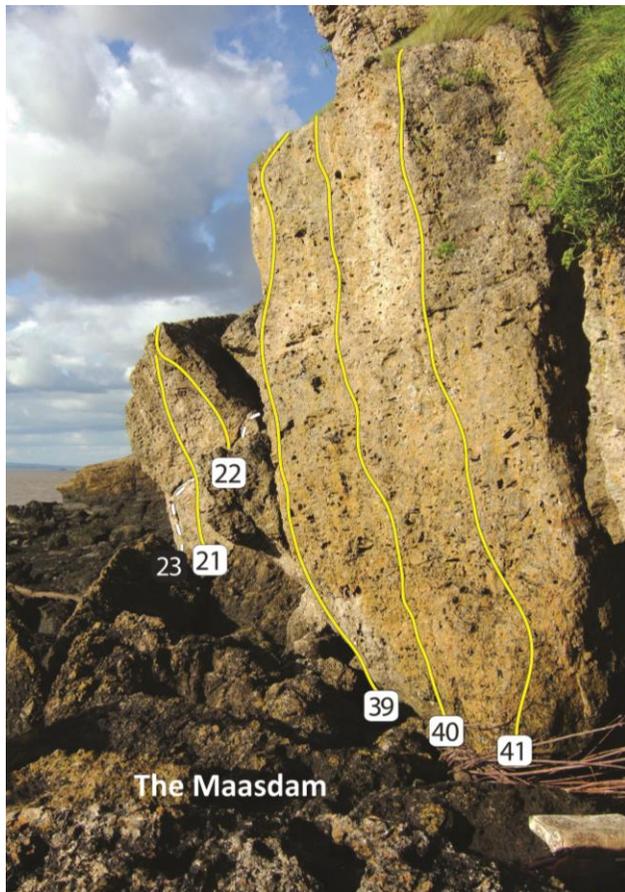
37 \***When Crinoids Cry** 6m E1 5a (3.2003)

Take the exposed left edge of the arête to the top of the Maasdam. This can be started up *Coral Dies*. FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

38 **Coral Dies** V2 (5c/6a) (3.2003) Sit start the arête and power up extravagant pockets to finish boldly up *When Crinoids Cry* (E1) or quit the scare by stepping left onto the outer flake.



Some more amenable routes grace the slabby, lavishly pocketed west face of the Maasdam. Shame they aren't twice the height (though as solos they feel high enough already!). Cam and twisted-wire protection appears feasible. Descent is by scrambling down the gully to its right.



**39 \*Hold It** 7m S (1977)

A gouda route! The face just right of the left arête. FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

**40 \*Smile Please** 7m VD (1977)

The centre of the face past a deep round pocket, gurning Cheshire Cat style. FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

**41 Say Cheese** 7m D (1977)

'Cheese.' The right arête. FA: Martin Crocker (on-sight solo)

The next bunch takes the Battleship Edge-textured face right of the Maasdam. Descend via the grassy break or abseil. A Brent Knoll of mats will convert them to highballs.

**42 Finger's Out** 7m E3 5b/V1 (26.2.2003)

With right hand in Jupiter's eye, take awkward pockets to a flake up right. Pull through blackthorn to the top. A nice \*V1 if you escape leftwards at the break. FA: Martin Crocker (solo after top-roping)

**43 Monogamy** 7m E3 6a (26.2.2003)

A great problem with a simple formula: just pull hard! Starting a metre from the right edge of the wall, use a couple of monos and gain a blind break (sit start optional). Pockets above lead to a scuffle into blackthorn. It is commonplace to convert this to a \*V3 by cheating right along the break. FA: Martin Crocker (solo after top-roping upper wall)

A fine morpho V3 (6a) (12.2.2020) starts with left hand in Jupiter's Eye and works up a slim runnel.

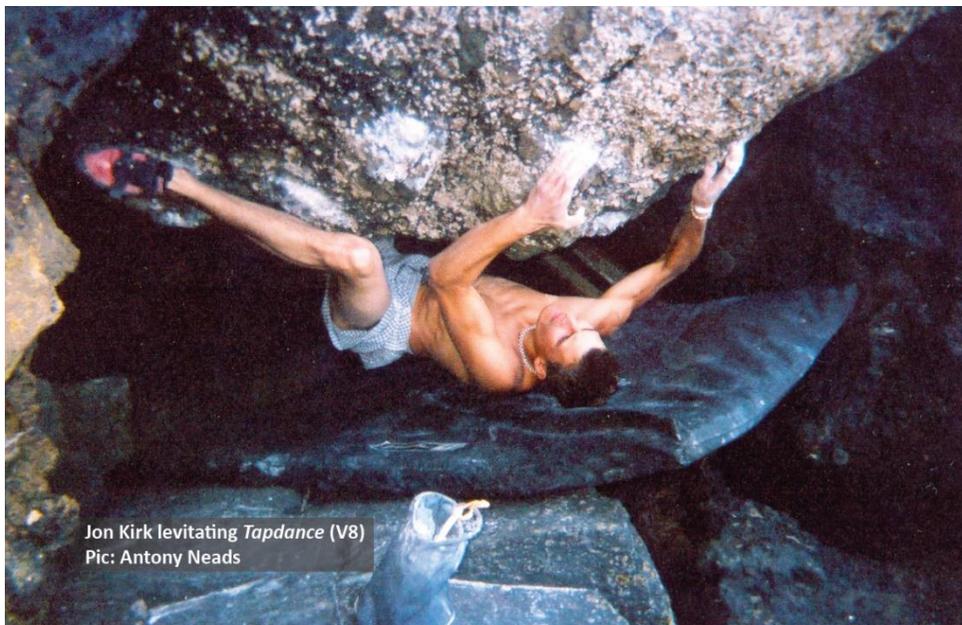
**44 \*\*Unforgettable First Joint** V3 (6a) (2005) A low traverse of the wall, entirely on pockets. Sit start far left; then traverse right, eventually to pick up wonderfully deep two-jointers on the arête, up which you finish, chilled, or even blown out of your mind.

**45 Ganjaman** V2 (5c) (12.2.2020) Traverse the blind break at 4 metres from left to right.

Those not into sit starts and bouldering rules might be forgiven for not registering the significance of the ear of rock to the right. For here, heelhooking from the centre of the Earth is a definitive passage.

46 **Shim Sham S** (2003) Saunter up the groove left of the ear, with happy feet.

47 **\*\*Tapdance V8 (6c)** (2003) Flap heel, stomp, and scuff the hanging arête from sitting, starting from huge undercut at its very base, deep down left. Multiple mats a must. In Jon's words: 'feet must start on the block directly behind the undercuts and not on any of the layered rock beneath.' (**Can't Dance V3 (6a)** is a consolation prize for the power challenged: low sit start under the outer arête with feet on black rock under the overhang; rock left foot into the obvious pocket.)



Jon Kirk levitating *Tapdance* (V8)  
Pic: Antony Neads

To the right is a slightly recessed leaning white wall immediately before a rock-step under a higher platform. Two solo routes take this wall. Both retreat from two expired blackthorn 'trees' (equalised by an ancient first ascent sling), so it will be necessary to drag a short rope to abseil. Alternatively, the grotty corner on the left can be reversed (S). Given the routes were first top-roped, lack gear and now belays, and access to the top is difficult, there may be a case to bolt them (I'd be OK with that).

48 **\*So Softcore** 6m E4 6a (26.2.2003)

Start from a large flat boulder in the centre of the wall and grab the obvious large pocket above. A high reach up left gains the first of a series of good small pockets. Continue straight up past an open pink pocket to the finishing jug.

FA: Martin Crocker (solo after top-roping)

49 **\*They Walked out of Line** 7m E4 5c (26.2.2003)

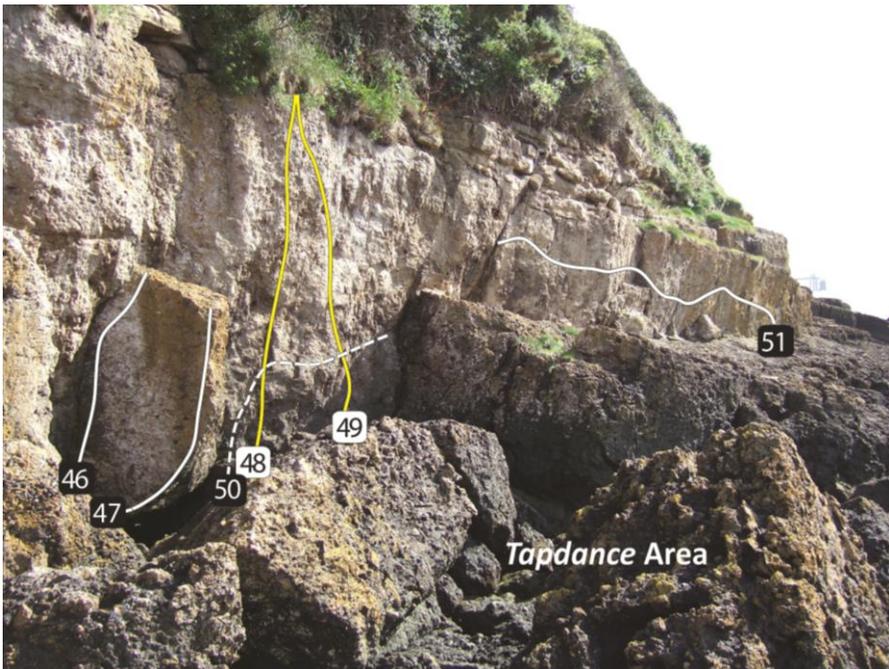
Reach an obvious flat hand-ledge 3m up in the right-hand side of the wall. Stretch up left for a pocket, whereupon another pocket enables a jug at the top to be gained.

FA: Martin Crocker (solo after top-roping)

50 **\*\*Brother Dan All Stars V5 (6b/c) (2005)** An old ska low traverse of the wall, with an undeniable rhythm – so long as you catch the beat. Start on a jug at shoulder height far left. This way you get the hardest part over first, though the whole thing is sustained (rudeboys might skank right to left)! High in the grade! The crux is above a hole, so bring a mat.

Up a step, above a higher platform, is a long low wall leaning to seaward. It hosts various ‘up’ problems that don’t quite pass muster. However the traverse *does* cut the mustard, and there’s a level landing throughout meaning you don’t need a mobile mat.

51 **\*Coalition Force V5 (6b) (8.5.2003)** Traverse the wall – usually in a right-to-left infiltration. There is a patronizing resting-ledge halfway across; it’s tough to get there, though the crux is the intricate and fingery wall beyond (which is hard-V4 in its own right). Keep feet up on the wall and only use the big unavoidable boss near the start and not the smaller low bosses of rock beyond.



### Kings of New England Cave

An unconventional venue on the northeast side of Ladye Point. Here the underlying sandstone and a weird burrito of clay have been hollowed out by the sea to create a mighty roof in the dolomitic conglomerate. The eponymous *Kings of New England* was the crab crawl forerunner to a mix of gutsy routes that clawed out from beneath many years later.

### Approach

From the steps down to Ladye Bay take the coast path northeastwards for 100m to a path branching off left through scrub, which leads onto the point overlooking the bay, Ladye Point. The cave is easily reached via a scramble down a short gully on the right-hand side of the Point (looking seaward). This approach and the routes are only inaccessible at spring high tide.

In front of the cave is a boulder shaped like Little Willie, the 1<sup>st</sup> World War tank, but rather than incriminate ourselves we were lured by its colour and called it Yellow Fever Boulder. It can be traversed hands-on-top for a mild warm-up, but its *raison d'être* is the following must-do.

1 \***Smallpocks V5** (6b) (20.5.2003) Traverse the boulder from left to right without using the top. Two contrasting sections: delicate manoeuvres on smidgens, indents, and dimples on its off-vertical seaward face followed by powerful sideways contortions on its overhanging south face.

Left of the cave is a steep wall with four short routes on good rock. Except for the last route, they all exit onto a scrubby slope. Belays here comprise some small trees 6m diagonally up left.

2 **Handy Cap** 7m E1 5b (10.5.2003)

Climb a slight right-facing corner to a good break (cams). A hard move leads to better holds under the capping block, and then swing right to gain the top.

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist)

3 **Gunks** 7m E4 5c (10.5.2003)

Make a long move to a small rounded spike (sling) 4m up at a slight hand-ledge; cam in pocket.

Superb, if spaced, pockets in the steep wall lead boldly to a break (*in-situ* thread). Pull up to the top.

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist)

4 **Mechanic Falls** 6m E5 6b (10.5.2003)

From the left edge of the large underlying boulder, launch up onto a hanging rib. Small finger pockets, and a slight undercut to the left, require some really hard pulling to reach a break above. Swing left and up to the top. There is one offset nut placement, but hitting the ground is a real possibility if your partner's daydreaming.

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist after top-roping)

5 **Sebago** 8m E2 5c (10.5.2003)

Strenuously enter a narrow hanging groove. Twist into the groove to pull directly out on a grass ledge or hand-traverse right to a shelf. Continue up ledges to the hawthorn tree.

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist)

6 **Frenchman Bay** 8m E3 5c (12.5.2003)

From the left-hand end of the cave step down under a bulging rib and then crank hard on a good pocket for a second shallower pocket up left. Pull up to a shelf and continue up ledges to the hawthorn tree. Protectable by clipping the peg on *Kings'* on the right and with a cam in the pocket.

FA: Martin Crocker (solo after top-roping)

7 **Maine Man** 9m E3 6a (15.5.2003)

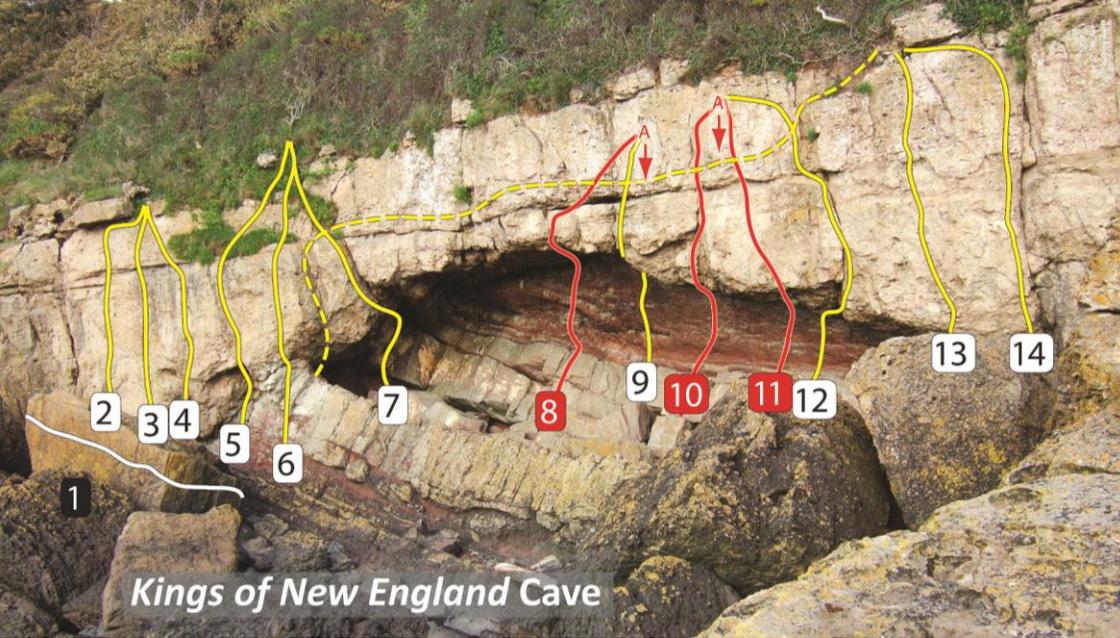
A 'grit crack' with perfect protection. Make a dynamic move to enter the crack at the left-hand end of the cave, and then gain a shelf above. Continue up ledges to a hawthorn tree and abseil descent.

FA: Martin Crocker (on sight with Soloist)

8 \*\***Cassius Claypit** 8m F7b+ (14.5.2005)

'Bristol's' largest free roof? Stick clip BR1. Half-baked moves on the left over the bulging clay lens gains the ceiling. Amazing holds and a straight-left punch aid reaching the lip. A final move and it's a knock-out. 3BR; 2BB. (It is advised you back-up the bolts, to suit, with gear in the roof crack.)

FA: Martin Crocker, Ian Parsons



## Kings of New England Cave

### 9 \*\*\*Weapons of Mass Distraction 8m E6 6b (1.6.2003)

The awesome roof-crack in the centre of the cave. Make a very powerful move up the leaning clay wall to a finger-jam in the crack. Swing right along the crack, with calisthenics, and pull out on a good ledge at the break. Retreat from 2BB. (Glued 19mm stainless steel bar in place of the original two ice-screw placements in the clay lens; otherwise cam protection.)

FA: Martin Crocker, John Harwood (ground up).

### 10 \*Pushme-Pullyou 9m F7a/7a+ (1.5.2005)

Gymnastics or blasé one-armers through the groove in the roof; 3BR to 2BB.

FA: Martin Crocker, John Harwood

### 11 \*May Play 9m F7b+ (1.5.2005)

Topsy turvy fun. Stick clip the BR on the lip of the ceiling left of *Casualty*, and gut-wrench out to a hold. Heave over using a pocket out left. Take the face (BR) to a 2BB.

FA: Martin Crocker, John Harwood

### 12 \*Casualty 9m E4 6a (20.5.2003)

Not as hard as it looks, and safe! Reach and climb the crack across the 2m ceiling to good holds above. Continue to a break, and then trend left to the shared 2BB (or right to the shared thread).

FA: Martin Crocker (on sight with Soloist) *A previous attempt failed because son Jonathan had to go home to watch 'Casualty'.*

Towards the right-hand end of the cave is a crack that rises from a smaller inset cave. The next two routes retreat from a large thread (*in-situ* sling, **which will need renewing**) below the vegetation.

### 13 Tide Timed Wrong 9m E2 5c (14.5.2003)

Use good pockets to pull around the roof 2m left of *OSI* (*in-situ* thread). Climb past a hand-ledge to the thread. Don't get wet.

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist)

**14 OSI 10m E1 5a/b (15.5.2003)**

Very protectable. Pull over the cave roof into the crack and climb it almost to its top whereupon a traverse left gains the abseil thread.

FA: Martin Crocker (on sight with Soloist)

**15 Sand surfing 9m E1 5a (14.5.2003)**

Climb the open corner right of the cave and at its close either burrow through bloodletting prickles to the path or swing right, pain-free, to the belay and the descent of the next two routes.

FA: Martin Crocker (on sight with Soloist)

**16 Did the Earth Move For You? 6m E2 5b (14.5.2003)**

Scramble to a ledge and have a feel of the dodgy flake in the wall left of the short arête. Use the flake to gain a pocket above. Move up to blackthorn trees from which an abseil retreat can be made (*in-situ* slings – which will need renewing). A Rock 7 on the left is a good back-up for the belay.

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist)

**17 Cut Off in Your Prime 6m E2 5a/b (14.5.2003)**

Scramble to a ledge; take a deep breath, then yank up the short overhanging arête right of the cave.

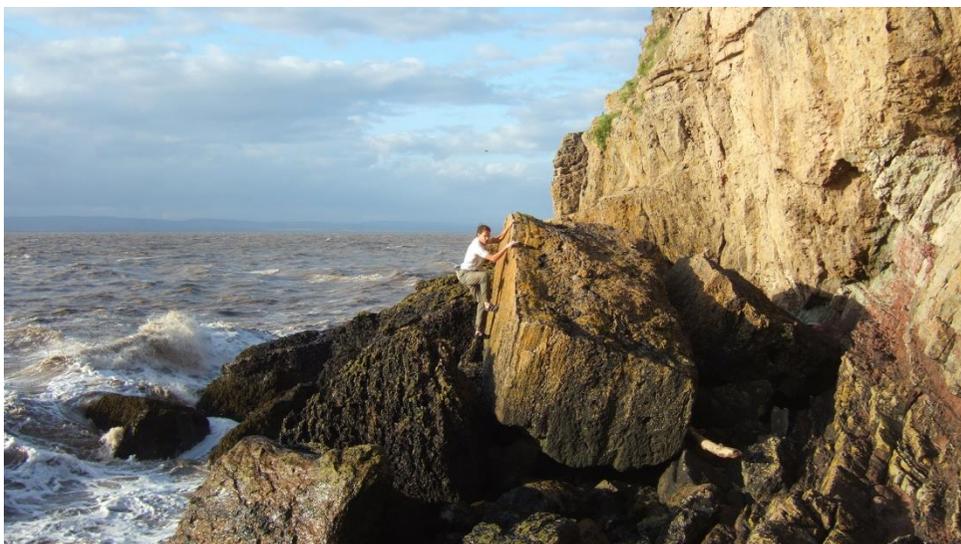
FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist)

**18 Kings of New England 27m E3 5c (15.5.89)**

A character-building left-to-right traverse above the cave. Tread warily or not at all. ('Mind the snappies' warns second ascensionist Danny Brookes.) Start in the far left-hand end of the cave. Pull up past an old peg to reach a groove. Traverse diagonally rightwards across a steep wall to a scoop (old peg and threads). Move up and right, and then cross a bulging section to reach a further old peg at the end of the difficulties. Continue rightwards and up through jungle to the top.

FA: B Barrett, Frank Ramsey

Right of the cave is a 5m high wall with three drab problems above rocks: 19 V0 (5a), the blank wall on good finger-pockets left of the central scoop with a swing right to exit; 20 V0- (4c), the wall and scoop containing a flake; 21 V0- (4c), the wall a metre left of a chockstone in the approach gully.





## Ladye Bay

The climbing action is to be found on a 10m high sea-cliff and adjacent boulders next to a charming pebble beach near Clevedon. With its sea view, family atmosphere, and mid-afternoon sun, the most inspiring time to visit is a sunny summer/autumn's evening – especially with the tide in (access is limited only during spring high tides). Most of the sport climbs overhang savagely and, when they eventually dry, remain dry even in torrential rain (not so the Waterfall Wall, which seeps in a very fluid way). Humid and prolonged damp weather do not agree with the cliff, however, and if you arrive when these conditions prevail, you might even demand the return of your donation to the cliff rescue team (don't do that: just go for a dip instead). The oolitic sandstone rock here is like a soft version of Portland Stone – so soft in places that you even risk 'chipping' holds with a toothbrush or toes. There are a few rock-quality-determined stick-clips, but it is rarely a problem to find a washed-up stick on the beach. All in all, if you've come for the sport climbs prepare to have a hard time: you might find you don't.

Understandably the sport climbing here has never hit the big league, and even cherry-picking commercial guidebook producers have so far snubbed the chance to exploit the investments and efforts of others. Not so the bouldering, which is less condition dependant and mostly pretty good. So much so that Ladye Bay has hosted its own bouldering clientele for a good 20 years, and not always as an offshoot of route making. Across that time new climbers have expanded upon the original underreported problems, sometimes inadvertently renaming them as is the way of social media communitarianism. They will find that this bouldering script is not fully modernized, but at least it sets out much of the classical material which might begin to help set records straight.

**Caution**

Please note that the beach is a popular local attraction; be discreet, maintain full awareness of any members of the public approaching the danger zone where you are climbing, and seek harmony with the local community, dudes.

**Approach**

The Ladye Bay cliffs and boulders lie above the beach at the base of the steps, mostly just to the left (facing seawards).

**Ethics and fixed gear**

Given their steepness, the soft stone, and moreover the lack of natural protection, the cliffs have been bolted. The sport climbing here is complemented by the adjacent fine bouldering.

**Caution: fixed gear**

The rock is intrinsically soft and weak, which will have a major influence on the integrity of the bolts and their holding power. Most of the bolts are resined stainless-steel bolts; and the well-publicized precautions as to their use apply. (In particular, try to avoid outward pulls on the bolts, since the porous and soft nature of the rock could compromise the adhesive ability of the resin. A good bet is to place a low nut/cam runner to limit the outward pull on the first bolt while the leader is dogging/falling-off.) There are also some 12mm or 10mm stainless steel through-bolts with stainless steel hangers including on the girdle traverse. All bolts date from the first ascents.

**Some bolted sport routes offer a few nut/cam placements and you are well advised to take a small rack with you to back-up and supplement the bolts.**

**No fixed gear is completely trustworthy. In line with the BMC Participation Statement you must realise that it is your decision and yours alone if you choose to use the bolts.**

***The Sport Climbs:*** Main Cliffs

To the right of the steps is a parade of boulder problems before the following bolted climbs are reached. Almost all the climbs here have double-bolt abseil stations.

**1 \*Bark of a Midge** 15m F6c+ (27.4.2000)

Is a full body pump on a great line. A medium cam is required after BR2. 6BR. 2BB.

FA: Martin Crocker, Rob Kingston

**2 Stick Insect** 9m F6c+ (18.9.99)

A very long stick-clip for BR1. The Climbers' Club guide mischievously failed to mention that you use this bolt for aid to get established on the wall (whoops!). So, who knows, it may even be free by now? 2BR. 2BB.

FA: Martin Crocker, John Harwood

**3 This Ain't That** 7m F6c+ (16.10.2012)

**Not recommended!** Squeezy (queezy?) and athletic manoeuvres in the overhanging, over-dirty V-groove. Place a cam from the deck; then edge into and up the groove. Swing carefully out left at its top on ledges. Gain a finger-bucket in the headwall, and reach the shared 2BB up to the left (medium cam placement nice to have). 4BR. 2BB of *Stick Insect*. There were some technical issues with the bolts; steer clear until it is rebolted which may be never.

FA: Martin Crocker, unseconded

#### 4 **Scars of Assad** 9m F7b+ (17.6.2013)

Menacing, and shite too if the lower break is sodden (normal). Note that some of the rock is hollow and weak. A cocktail of grot no less. Stick clip BR1; then make an assault over the initial roof using wet holds. A custard undercut on the right enables a stretch for a jug-line, and a frantic few final moves on incuts slightly left. Proceed carefully to the belay up left (**single** bolt at present). 3BR.

FA: Martin Crocker, unseconded after ripping four sideholds off the initial wall causing scarring for life (legs, not rock).

#### 5 **Sloped beyond Imagination** 7m F7b (18.9.99)

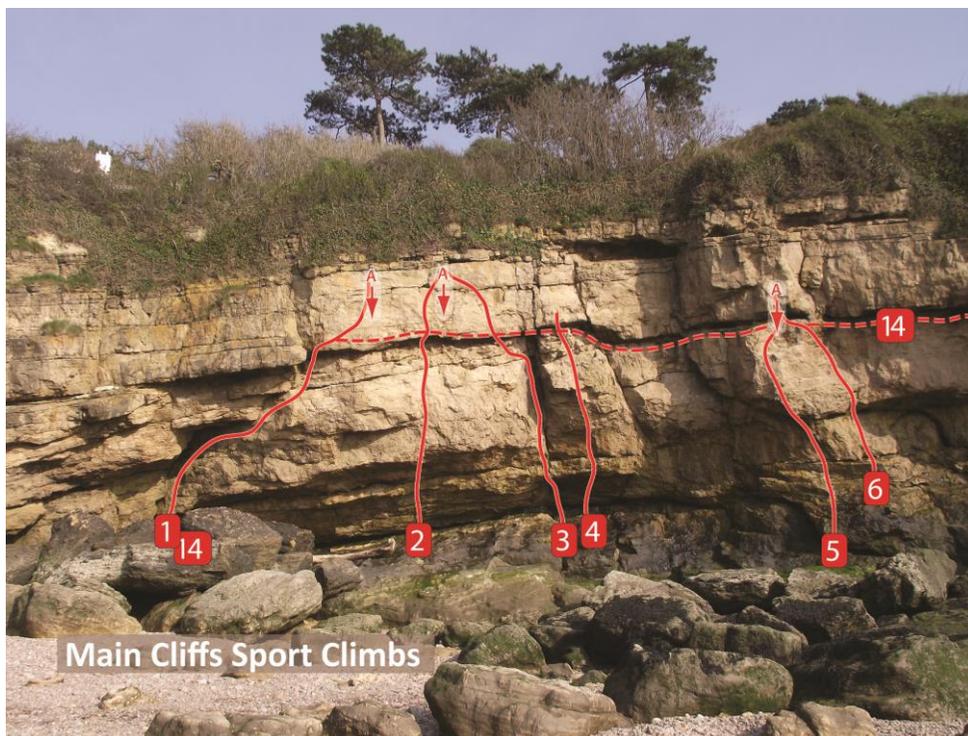
Now this one's much better, but bouldery. 2BR. 2BB.

FA: Martin Crocker, John Harwood

#### 6 \***Ladye of the Night** 8m F6b (27.4.2000)

Looks easy? She ain't. Once above the ramp, avoid the dangerous-looking hanging flake by hand-traversing the break to the belay. 2BR. 2BB.

FA: Rob Kingston, Martin Crocker



### 7 **An Evening in the Company of the Clevedon Women's Guild** 8m F7a (21.9.99)

Quite a night is guaranteed. 2BR, 1 *in-situ* thread. 2BB.

FA: Martin Crocker, Guy Percival

Sliding uncontrollably rightwards over the *Ass over Tit* ledges you'll come across a big roof and right of that a more welcomingly angled wall.

### 8 **Fine Art** 7m F7c (7.2004)

Come as a giant, leave as a God. A gangly stick-clip is required for the single bolt over the lip of the roof. Powerful undercutting; then – yowza – leap! Enjoy a swing out over the beach when you fall (**but** you'd best somehow first back up the bolt given the outward forces upon it).

FA: Jon Kirk

### 9 **Chalked-up Mutant Woodlouse** 9m F7a+ 11.9.99)

Good for one-armers (or snatches for the rest of us). The eponymous beast, *Sid Viscous*, once lived in the finger-pocket; his grandkids probably live there now: do not disturb. 3BR. 2BB.

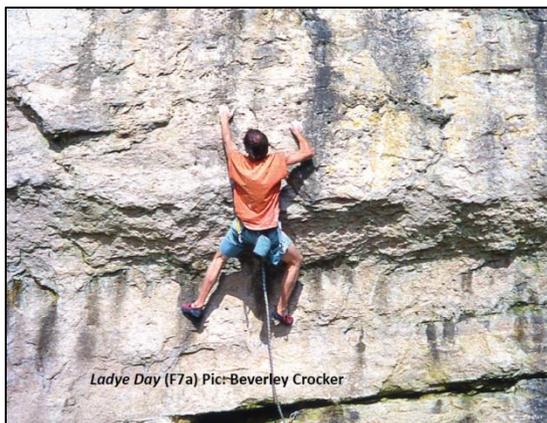
FA: Martin Crocker, Rob Kingston

### 10 **\*Lay Ladye Lay** 9m F7b (11.9.99)

The hard 'classic' of the crag; fingery but OK with a bit of a lank. 4BR. 2BB.

FA: Martin Crocker, Rob Kingston





Ladye Day (F7a) Pic: Beverley Crocker

### 11 **Ladye Day** 9m F7a (11.9.99)

A tad gnarly on the bulge. Trend left to the 2BB of the previous route. 3BR.

FA: Martin Crocker, Rob Kingston

### 12 **Green Ice** 9m F6c (22.9.99)

Tough moves to clip the belay (though you will have already done the crux).

3BR. 2BB.

FA: Martin Crocker (led with Soloist)

### 13 **\*Ladye Killer** (F6b/6b+ 27.4.2000)

A warm-up, of sorts. Easier if taken with a bit of right-hand side (but this isn't snooker). 4BR. 2BB.

FA: Rob Kingston, Martin Crocker

### 14 **\*Never Cross a Ladye** 55m E5 (F7a+) (10.6.2004)

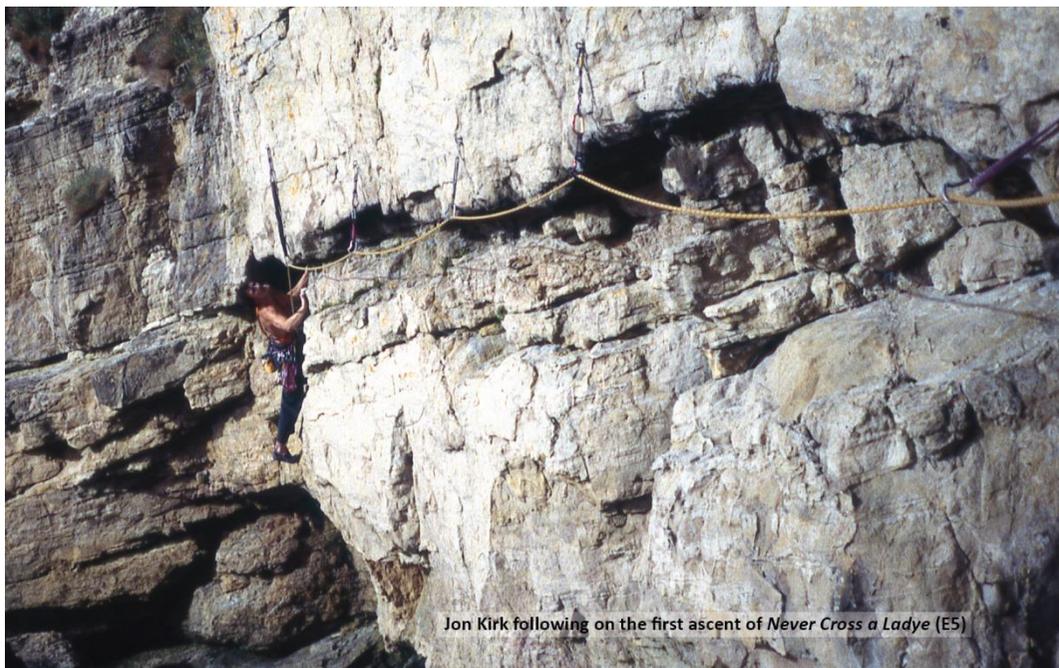
Trad or sport? Well, both actually. This epic has a stunning first pitch but also some loose rock (which should ease). 'Atmospheric' with a spring high tide and rough seas (take waterproofs).

1 30m 7a+ Follow *Bark of a Midge*, but continue the traverse to a rest on a rib after 20m of pumping. Continue into a rotten corner, and make distressing moves right to a 2BB on the rib of *Sloped Beyond Imagination*. 11BR.

2 10m 7a Traverse the break on sometimes unusual, sometimes dubious, holds. 2BB of *An Evening in The Company*..... 3BR; 2 threads.

3 15m 6c The break leads with difficulty initially; then easier climbing leads to the hard last move of *Ladye Killer*. Lower off 2BB. 5BR.

FA: Martin Crocker, Jon Kirk *About five separate abseils to bolt the route required; not much fun carrying Francis Haden's Ryobi, which fumed and coughed and spluttered, eventually catching fire.*



Jon Kirk following on the first ascent of *Never Cross a Ladye* (E5)

Passing a *crud zone* in the cliff you come with umbrellas to Waterfall Wall, which at most times of the year is immediately recognisable as Clevedon's own Zambesi. Before climate change got a grip it would dry up frequently. Not so nowadays. Tell Greta.

15 \***Waterfall Wall** 8m F7c (28.6.2000)

Fools rush in when the crag's not dry. Rock up left of BR1. A *Rock 5* backs up BR4. 4BR. 2BB.  
FA: Martin Crocker, unseeded

16 \*\***Pier Pressure** 8m F7c (20.6.2000)

Brilliant after a mashed potatoe starter on the *gooey band*. Sadly the first undercut is always dripping, so a quick hand-pull on a short sling on the first bolt seems a much more pleasureable and equivalent substitute (*oh just go with it...*). 4BR. 2BB.  
FA: Martin Crocker, unseeded

17 \***Enraging Poseidon** 8m F7c+ (6.2004)

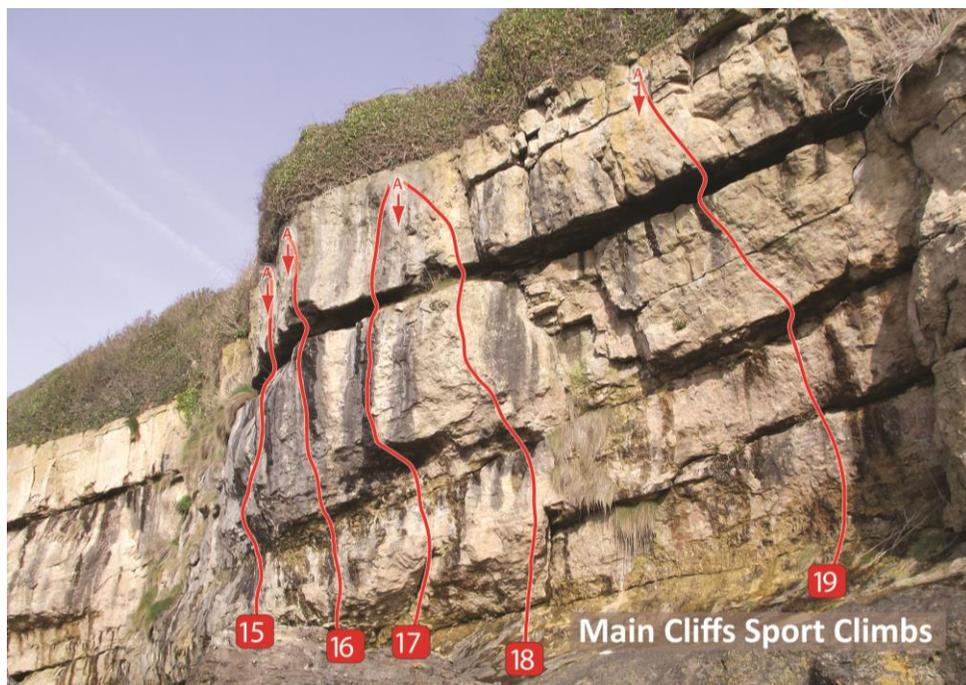
Sign up for 'a war with monos' on the overhanging wall. Tendons beware. 3BR. 2BB.  
FA: Jon Kirk

18 **Smack Religion** 8m F6c (14.9.99)

Stay addicted to the arête. 3BR. 2BB.  
FA: Martin Crocker, Guy Percival

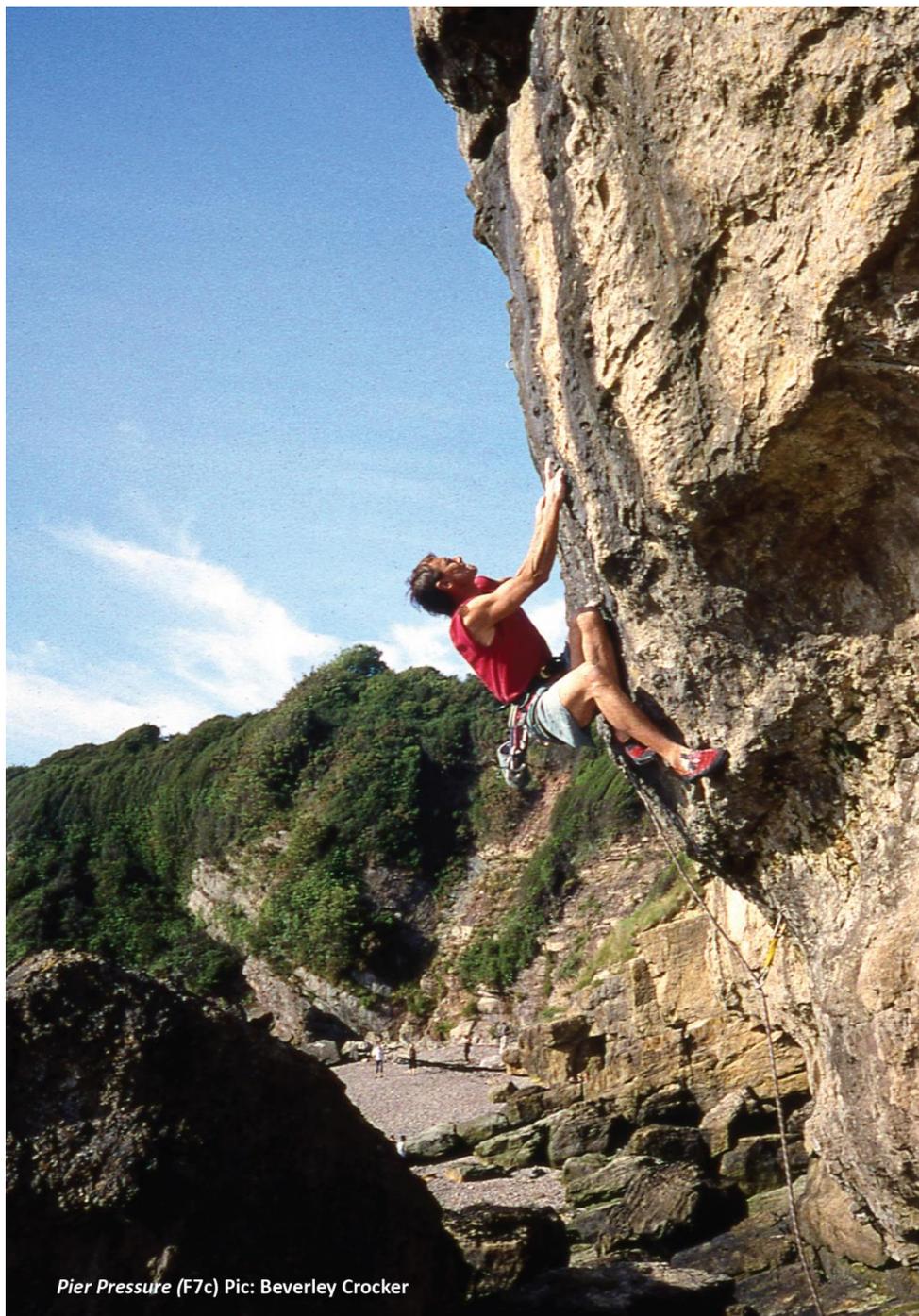
19 \***Never Trust a Lawman** 8m F7b+ (14.9.99)

Faith in your advocate? Superb and super-steep moves up the centre of the final wall. 3BR. 2BB.  
FA: Martin Crocker, Guy Percival





Jon Kirk at war with monos on *Enraging Poseidon* (F7c+) Pic: Chris Halls/Kirk collection



*Pier Pressure (F7c) Pic: Beverley Crocker*

## The Bouldering

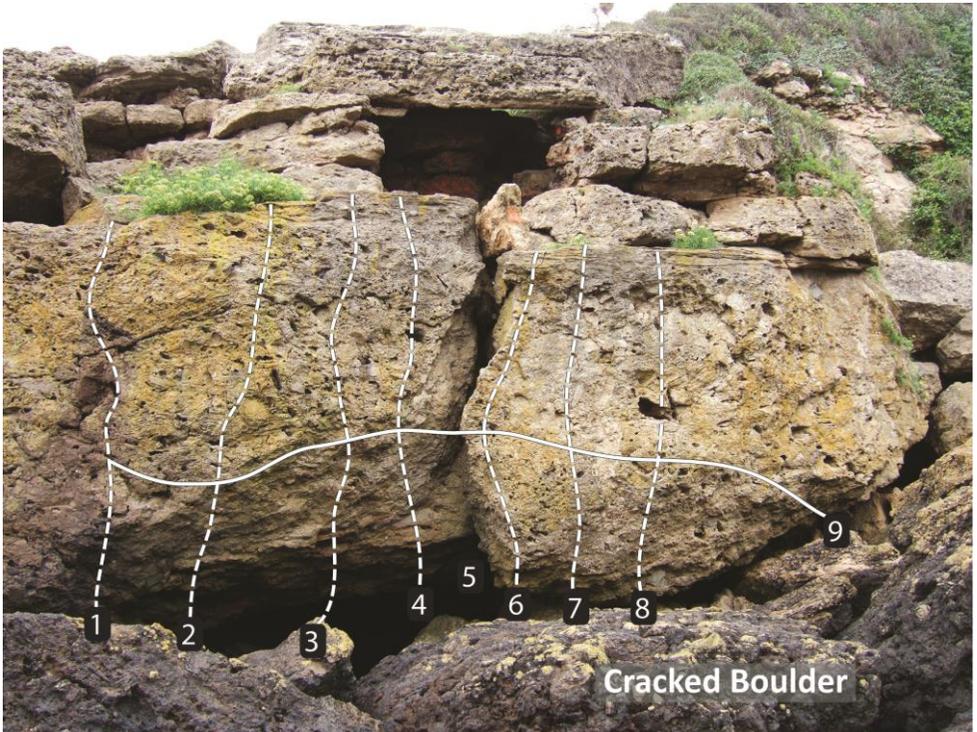
The landings under the Beach Walls are rock, but at least they're relatively even, if sloping. Elsewhere take appropriate and proportionate counter measures.

### Cracked Boulder

There is a stray bouldering site poised pill-box like on the right-hand side (facing out) of the bay. This can be reached just as easily from Ladye Point with a quick scramble. It comprises a southwest-facing split boulder beneath a cave in which generations of local ruffians to say nothing of the experimental middle class engage in all sorts of iniquitous pastimes. It is plastered with pockets on which it was fashionable to yard aimlessly around in the sun. You can choose to do likewise and disregard the following, mostly vintage (1977 or earlier), problems. But do beware the dire landings.

So, left to right are: 1. 3c up a weakness of big holds; 2 V0 (5a) up a rounded rib (which is called *Bullet Hole Barrel* V2 (5c) from sitting (2013)); 3. V0 (5a) using a pocket and then up onto the wall; 4. V0 (5a) up the wall immediately left of the fissure, incorporating obvious pocket; 5. V0- (4b) conquer the dividing fissure; 6. V0 (5a) the right arête of the fissure; 7. V1 (5c) up the constrained wall right of the fissure, and 8. V0- (4c) via the biggest pocket of all (add a few grades if you avoid using the pocket). You can also traverse at will, but the following one is pretty coherent.

**9 On the Run** is a devitalizing \*V5 (6a) (3/5.2003) lip traverse from right to left. Keep very low using pockets no higher than the lip of the bulge, so gaining the fissure. Continue using only pockets on the lip of the left-hand bulge, and mind your back throughout.



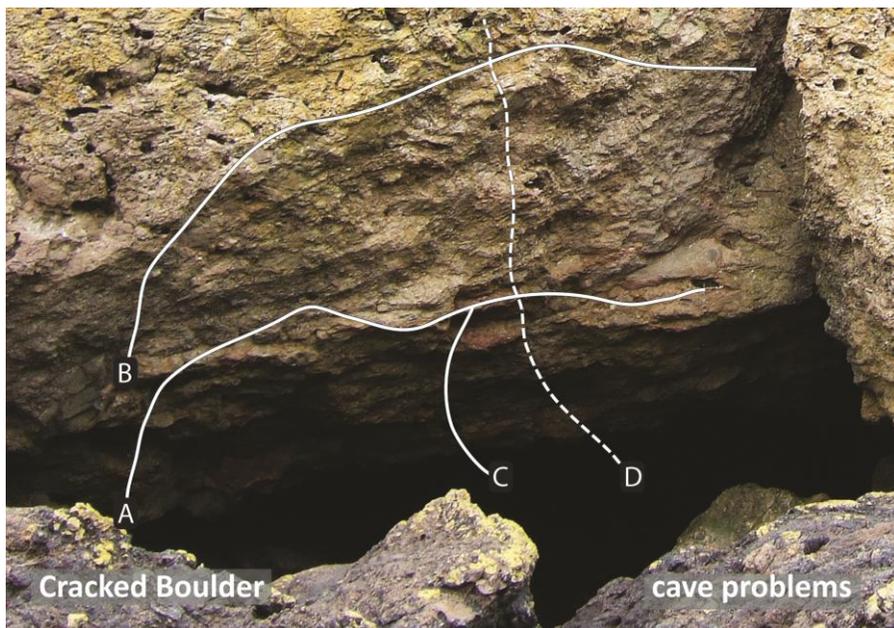
There is also a vortex of hard dynamic problems swirling low within the cave, but a pointed boulder exactly where you don't want it plays killjoy. Jon Kirk has described them in illuminating hold-by-hold detail so you get the full effect: the first two are traverses taken left to right.

**A Golden Balls** V8 (6c) Start lying down under the lowest point of the cave's lip, on the left. From two obvious pockety jugs, move right to the first of two crimps in the centre of the overhangs. Lock off and stretch right for a positive crimp. Finish using the lower of two pockets in the far right section of the cave's overhangs.

**B Doughnut Frenzy** V3 (6a) Start on head-height jugs at the same point as *Golden Balls*. Using a heelhook move up and right to small crimps and then to a large pocket above the centre of the cave's lip. Continue traversing along the main lip to the fissure. This is effectively a reversal of the second half of *On the Run*, which is fair enough.

**C Pretty Little Thing** V8 (6c) Lie down start using a large pocket which is two feet off the floor in the centre of the cave. Extend directly above to a small crimp (used on *Golden Balls*), whereupon a toe-jam aids reaching an adjacent crimp. Swing right for the finishing pocket of *Golden Balls*.

**D V7 (6b)** Sit start at pockets to the right of *Pretty Little Thing* (above a rectangular block). Slap to the mini-lip and pull through to the *Pretty Little Thing* crimps. Take a big pocket onto the wall, and finish on problem 3.



There is a solitary problem up a mini-prow right of Cracked Boulder, which – seemingly like every great problem these days – sit starts in a hole.

**Chaved Duck** V3 (6a) (2011) Use an undercut and finger-pocket to start; then power up via a crimp to escape the hole, Voyager-like. (Not shown on topos.)

## Beach Walls

The core-strength of the Ladye Bay bouldering experience lies in a series of modest leaning walls 6m to 15m left (facing out) of the steps down to the beach. Some sections dry quickly after rain while others carry on raining when dry. They rise to about 5m high and can feel bold (especially without any padding – as some were originally climbed).

Below the steps is a 2-3m high wall above pebbles; there are various easyish short-lived vertical problems and a worthwhile V4 traverse along the break, but the rock is relatively crumbly and often dripping. Also, you might fall on someone. The rounded right arête of the wall is better.

1 **Streak Black** V0 (5a) (90s/9.99) From standing, use the break and then mantel over the rounded arête. Or, better, you can sit start the arête as **Ten Minutes Man** V3 (6a) (2003).

The Beach Walls properly start at a recessed area above a green-moss-boss in the sloping wave-cut platform. There are some neat old skool problems here; unfortunately those on the manky black-streaked part are often minging – rediscover at will! Out of the shadows, the quality begins with:

2 \***Svengali** V3 (6a/b) (9.99) An essential LB tick. The shallow groove; great when you catch it dry.

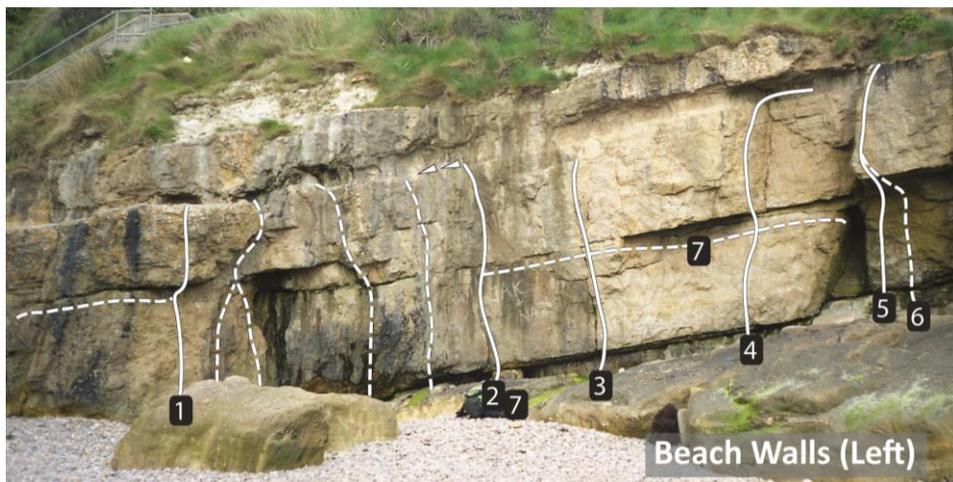
3 \***Moss Boss** V4 (6b) (9.99) The obvious vertical crack behind the green moss. Use a big sidehold to gain poor finger-pockets above. Launch for a high rough sloper and incut. Jump off.

4 **Wit's End** V1 (5c) (2000) The right-facing corner; use layaways and the left arête (not the friable crack in the corner). At the shelf, swing right and descend the crack left of the *Pluralist* arête.

Immediately right is an undercut block between two cracks that forms a striking hanging arête.

5 \*\*\***Pluralist** V8 (6c) (1.5.2003) The beckoning hanging arête: unmissable! Starting from a finger-jam low on the left, slap for and swing out right on a good layaway on the arête. Now lay that arête! Upon success, move right to a crack to descend, and go do some bolt or trad routes.

6 \*\***Excscalliwag** V9 (6c) (2004) A wilder option to *Pluralist*. Start standing on an undercut block under the roof, work out to the lip and launch for the hanging arête. Finish up the *Pluralist* arête.



7 \***Powerbroker** V5 (6a) (2000) No move is desperate, but the pump soon kicks in. From the shallow groove of *Svengali*, traverse right along the thin break to *Pluralist*.

The next cluster takes the perma-dry rectangular wall which has a narrow arcing roof in its centre. They'll feel ESomething or Other without a mat. The standing-start versions were climbed before the sit-start versions so, at the risk of information overload, both types are described. For the first three problems descend the crack on the left (V0-, 4c). The best descent for problems right of and including *Electric Arc* is to hand-traverse the top edge rightwards to a corner and a drop-down onto a block. Or you could mantel out and scrub-bash to the steps.

8 \***Brussels** V3 (6a) (2003) The hanging left-hand arête of the rectangular wall from a sit start.

9 \***Twister** V2 (6a) (2000) The slight rib high up in the left end of the wall from standing features, according to the original description, a good cross-over move.

10 \*\***Carly** V7 (6c) (2003) The blank face left of the arc. From sitting move right to a crimp; then improvise direct on gastons and crimps to a final big move to a sharp hold just below the lip.

11 \***Electric Arc** V2 (6a) (9.99) From standing, use the right-most wonder-jug to climb direct to the left-hand end of the arcing roof. Pull up to the top. (The sit start is *Seaside Scare* (V3 6a, 2004).)

12 \***Riot Act** V1 (5c) (9.99) Pull up the wall to the right-hand end of the arc and then follow the arc leftwards to the common exit. Or you could beguile yourself with the following later version.

13 \***Holiday Flings** V5 (6b) (2004) Follow *Riot Act* to the arc but continue direct with a full armament of 'dynos, gastons, and crimps'; sit start 'discretionary'.

14 **Culture Wars** V2 (5c) (2000) Rock up into the groove at the right edge of the wall.

15 \*\*\***Traverse of the Ghosts** V7 (6c) (late 90s) An absolute classic that's harder for the core-poor tall and other weaklings. Start low left (as for *Brussels*) and make a very powerful low traverse right, via the three wonder-jugs, onto the block on the far right. Familiarly known as *A Brussels Scout*.

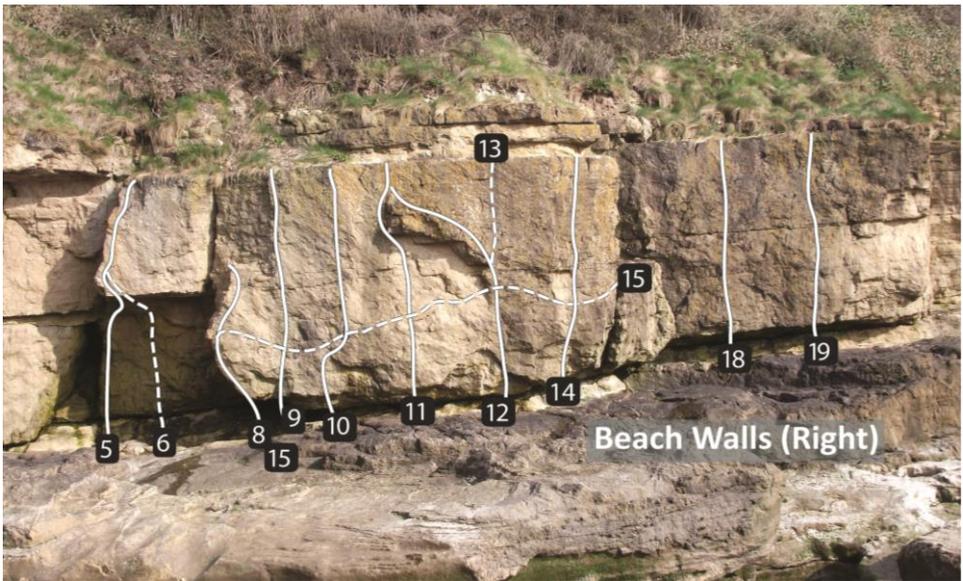
16 \*\***Belgian Brussels** V6 (6c) (2003) An intricate right-to-left cover version where feet are as important as fingers. Sit start on slopers in the right-hand side of the wall and gain a wonder-jug. Use an 'improbably low crimp' to gain the hanging arête (*Brussels*) where heels and toes go hooking mad to enable the finishing jug above to be reached.

17 \*\***Tinny Needs a Break** V9 (6c) (2004) A marathon traverse of the Beach Walls from far left incorporating both *Powerbroker* and *Traverse of the Ghosts*. Start up *Svengali* if frustrated by drainage further left. It avoids both breaks before the *Brussels* arête (including under *Pluralist*).

Beach Walls continue as a second rectangular wall, right of the descent corner. A rock step under the wall is an added danger that warranted '*achtung*' on the 1999 topo. Spotters will earn their keep.

18 **Frosty Reception** V1/E1 (5c) (9.99) Climb the bare face left of centre past a break.

19 **Explicit Risk** V2/E2 (6a) (9.99) Take the face right of centre up a rightward line of pockets.



### Waterfall Wall (WW) Boulders

There are two really good, if limited, boulders in front of Waterfall Wall. The first bunch of problems tackles the left hand (facing landward) and largest boulder. Multiple mats advised, and they'll keep your butt dry.

#### WW East Boulder

1 \*\*\***Sirens** V9 (6c) (2003) The ace hanging arête (the edge of the large roof): possibly Ladye Bay's best. Start sitting/lying on a very low right-angled crimp ("jug" – sic) just left of a small pocket, way over right above a trench. Take slopers and hooks leftwards, and then gain a pocket at head-height. Continue to the arête and finish over the lip of the boulder on failing arms. You can dumb it down to standing by starting from the head-height pocket on the right (V3/4, 9.99) or just by climbing the arête's right-hand side at a major saving at V0+ (5b), 1977 – the ancients' way!

2 \***Muse** V1 (5c) (9.99) The face right of the *Sirens* arête starting with right hand in a finger-pocket.

3 \***Liar or Lyre?** V0+ (5b/c) (9.99) Take the centre of the face on positive holds immediately right of a low minor ramp. It should strike a chord for those not attracted to *Sirens*.

4 **That Girl got a Spell on Me** V0 (5a) (9.99) The right-hand side of the face; first cover the inconveniently situated trench. Much better as a V3 (6a) sit start.

5 \***The Mariner** V4 (6b) (9.99) A fierce right-to-left traverse is eventually lured to the *Sirens* arête; start off the smaller boulder on the right. Keep low and don't use the obvious jug 3 metres up.

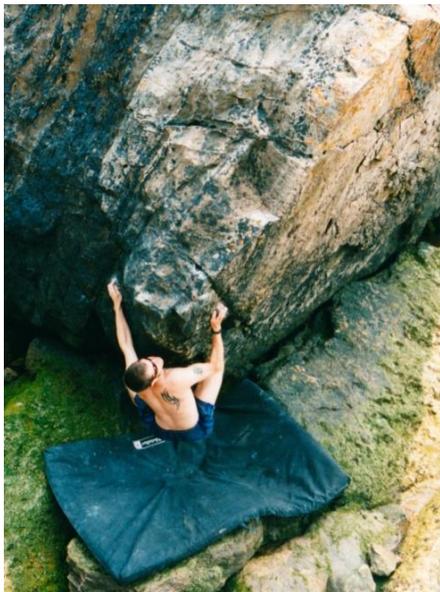
There are a couple of poor (friable rock) V0 problems left of *Sirens* – if you must.



## Waterfall Wall Boulders

### WW West Boulder

A smaller companion of the East Boulder sports a fine seaward face and another unfriendly landing.



Tinny Neads on *Grandmaster Flash* (V3)

Pic: Jon Kirk

6 **Run like Hell** 4a (9.99) The runnel on the left.

7 **\*Master Flash** V1 (5c) (9.99) The seaward face's left arête from standing – cool.

8 **\*\*Grandmaster Flash** V4 (6b) (2003) Sit start the left arête and gain the head-height jug. Move up and lip-traverse right to exit with a mantel to suit.

9 **\*DJing** V0+ (5c) (9.99) Snatch (scratch?) for the top from pockets and hip hop over the top.

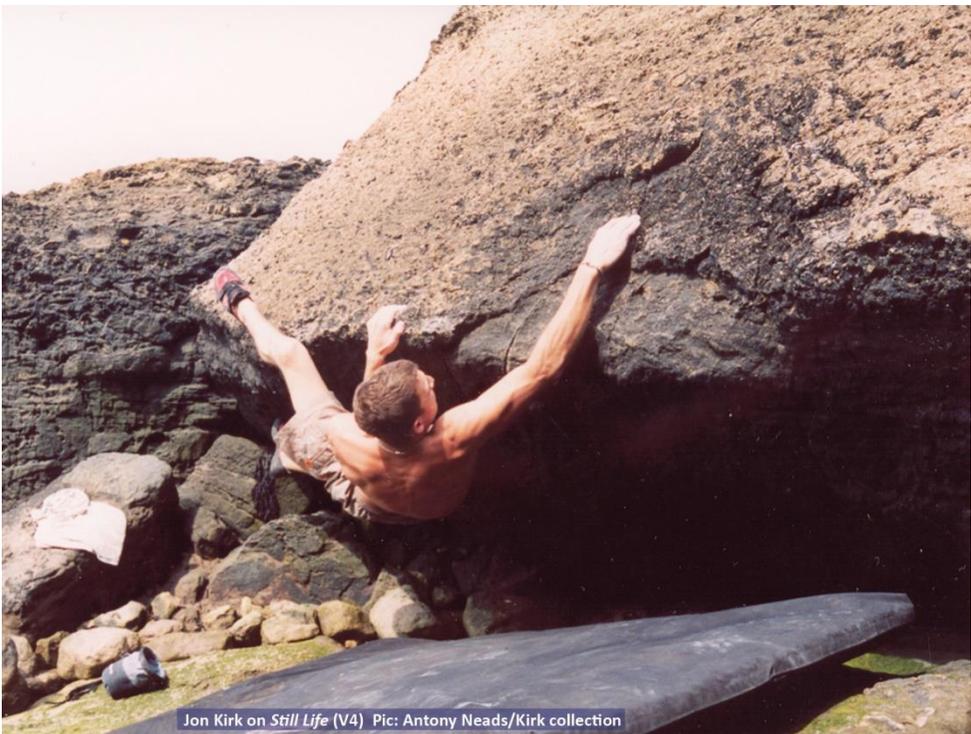
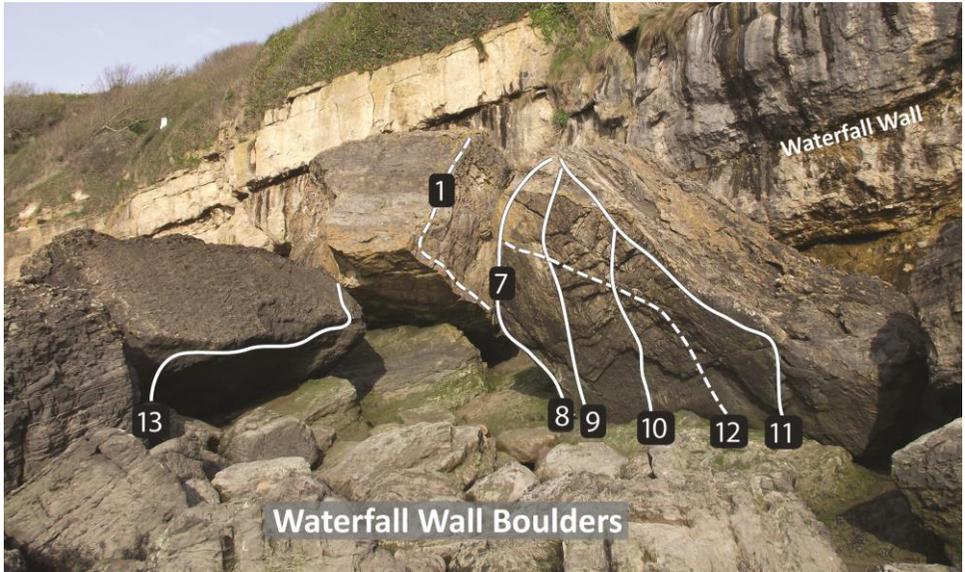
10 **An Eliminate** (V4 6b, 2004). Sit start using an undercut and gain holds in the mosaic above.

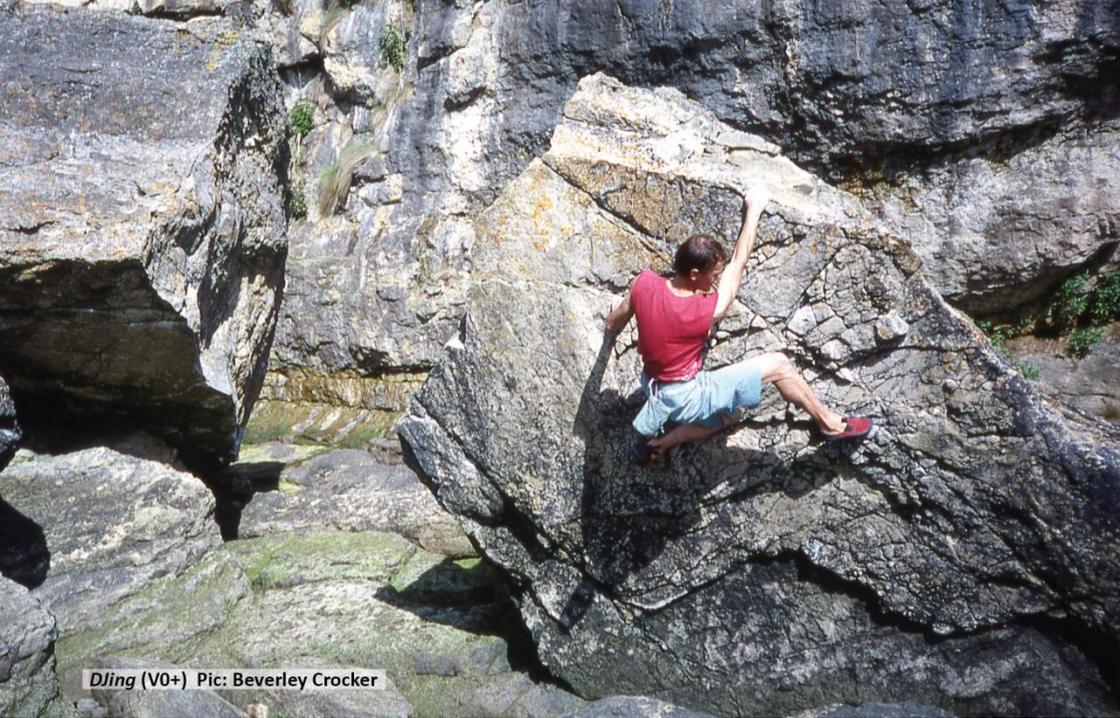
11 **\*Botox Lip** V0 (5a) (9.99) Nicely aerobic. Crouch/sit start, and hand-traverse the boulder from right to left to a mantel at its high point.

12 **\*Fisherman's Tale** V6 (6b) (9.99/2003) A fingery, low traverse. From a sit start, follow crimps and slots left across the face. Easier from crouch.

There is a smaller rectangular block seaward of the East Boulder, with one problem.

13 \***Still Life** V4 (6a) (2003) A looker, but not for office boy hands. Sit start at the left-hand, seaward end, and lip-traverse right to mantel at the far arête. Gritty, but really enjoyable.

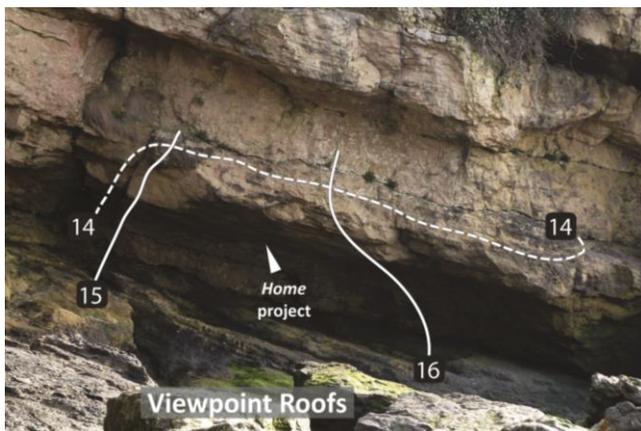




**DJing (V0+)** Pic: Beverley Crocker

### Viewpoint Roofs

The final bouldering sector is a set of tiered, north-facing overhangs in the wooded cliff 60m right of Waterfall Wall. There is a coast path viewpoint up to the right.



### 14 \***Never Trust a Poor Man** V6 (6b) (2003)

A butch left-to-right traverse of the lip of the low roof. Drop to a lower jug-line halfway along. Great heel-hooking, but a bit loose and dangerous. Spotters and a mosaic of mats or a rover are vital.

15 \***Rocket Roof** V9 (6c) (28.8.2012) From a sit start, power over the left end of the roof via left-facing layaways in a seam. Retreat from the ledge between the roofs.

### 16 \***James's Roof** V8 (6c) (12.8.2013)

Start matched on the right-hand side of the roof on a low undercut shield, slap out over the roof eventually to jugs above. No prizes for guessing who first climbed this.

The best line, coveted since the early noughties, is the central line over the roofs. It is dubbed *Home*, an inevitable outcome for every suitor so far. Further right, under the viewpoint, is a 6m-high cliff that would be covered with easy sport routes if it were in SE Wales. And why not?