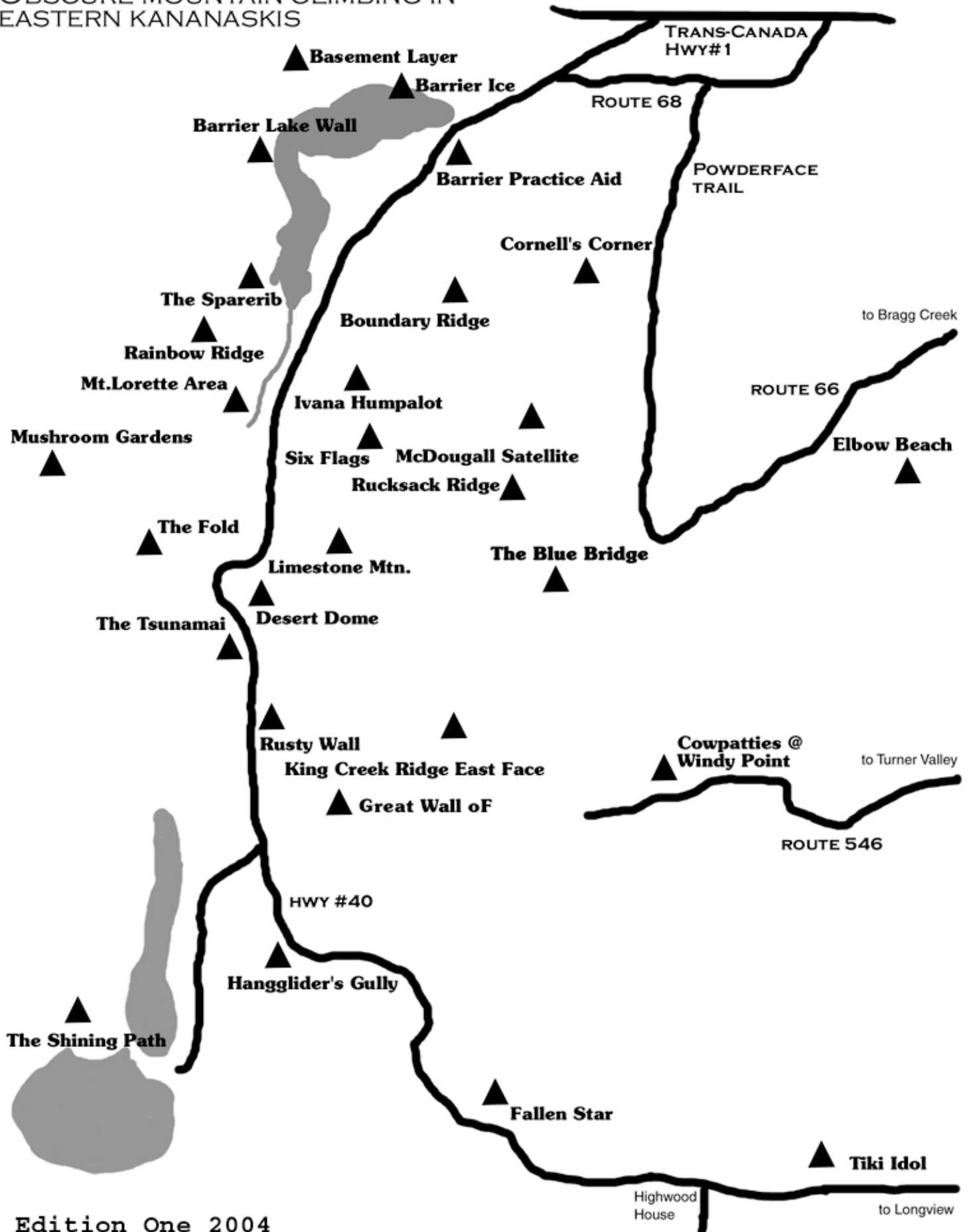


# THE OVERLOOKED, FORGOTTEN AND IGNORED

AN UNDERGROUND GUIDE TO  
OBSCURE MOUNTAIN CLIMBING IN  
EASTERN KANANASKIS



*Mission Statement:* Welcome! to the First Edition of The Overlooked, Forgotten and Ignored: An Underground Guide to Obscure Mountain Climbing in Eastern Kananaskis.

This project was hatched after exploring Six Flags: a good venue that could be forgotten because it doesn't happen on real boulders, yet the concept is the same. Thrilling also is the challenge of trying to produce and distribute a local underground staple bound publication. With so much vast ground to cover in Kananaskis encompassing all climbing styles, no recent guidebook containing the old forgotten routes exists. This First Edition is just a personal sample of mountain routes for the eastern side of K-Country - the vast and shivering west is excluded for now! The eastern possibilities are endless for old lines. Kananaskis rock is not Lake Louise, but can be just as exciting if you want. Old established routes in Kananaskis are typically vague in FA info - leaving an entire mountain chain lost in obscurity. It's nice to have other choices when the weather turns fowl or desires change after breakfast: this First Edition guide is modeled to give other climbing options rather than 'just going to Barrier or Wasootch.' There is nothing wrong with that, but this may be for someone who wants to climb away from the norm. Many American guidebooks include all mountaineering disciplines to a region so your options aren't just sport, or just alpine. To get the ball rolling, this 2004 copy is drawn from personal escapades into what I believe is an awesome, quiet gem of a park: Kananaskis. But the idea is for you to contribute your personal escapades for future issues of this underground guide so we can all share a collection of bizarre routes to go have fun on. For example, it would be nice to see topos or descriptions for some of the following: the multi-pitch sport climbs on the lower east face of McConnell Ridge, trad lines on The Wedge, Mt. Wintour, Wasootch Tower, Gap, Pakenham, Romulus, the east face of Mt. Kidd, north face of Fortress, anybody been to the totem poles near Lineham Creek?, or the east ridge of Sparrowhawk. Do you have a secret crag you top-rope or weirdo trad line on some unnamed mountain we all don't have time to research, what about that stunning craggy ridge we all may stare at from Hwy #40 but either don't know the name of or just overlook as too distant, or how about a secret bouldering wall like Six Flags you would like to share with the local climbing community - this guidebook wants to hear about it!

If you have first ascents or have climbed old established routes (the only criteria is that they are not popular!) you would like to contribute in the future that pertain to eastern K-Country. Remember, all styles of climbing will be acceptable: alpine, trad, bouldering, easy scrambles, neat secret TR'ing cliffs, it is all game!  
Please send them to:

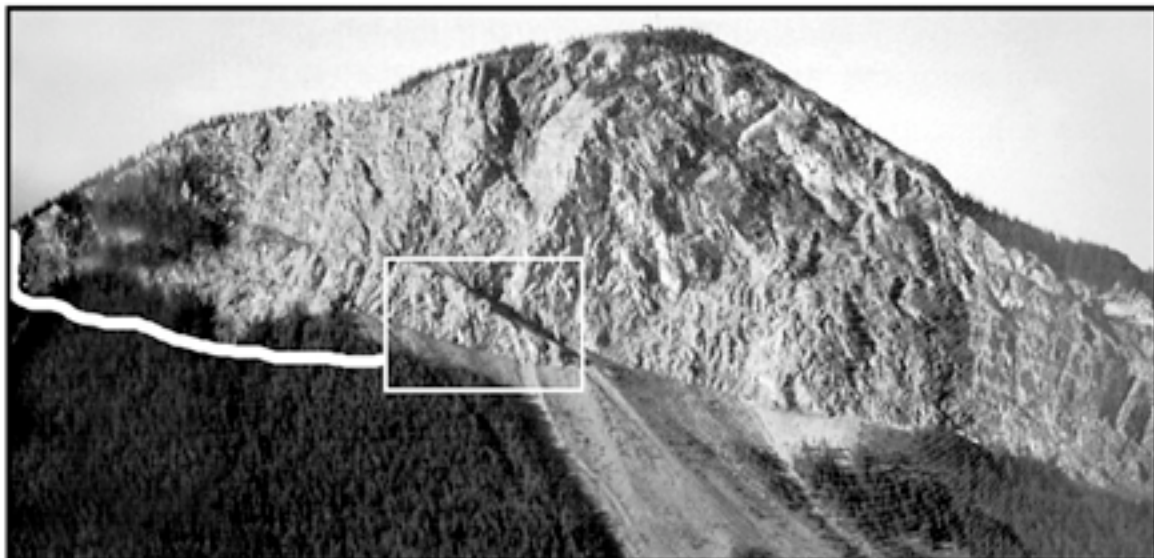
gerglenroc@yahoo.com

\*\*\*When submitting routes, you must include much more info than just '5.5, bring pitons' as this can be easily found elsewhere.

**Warning! Rockclimbing is a dangerous activity carrying a significant risk of personal injury or death and should only be done with a complete understanding of all inherent risks. Climbers using this guide do so entirely at their own risk and accept that rockfaces change - this mini-guide is only a source of what has been climbed and its location and may not be accurate with grades and dangers. Climb at your own risk! Furthermore, all private property must be respected-if in doubt don't go-it is not your legal right to access.**

## McConnell's Basement Layer

Visible from the Trans-Canada when you drive past the north face of this peak opposite the valley from Yamnuska known as McConnell Ridge; something to boulder on only if you go hike up Prairie View Trail to the summit. The Basement Layer is the narrow detached band on the left side of the face. Unlike the main face, the rock here is solid grey and slabby. Played on but nothing recorded. The rockband is from 5m to 25m with a scree slope above so beware. Park at Barrier Dam and hike past the powerstation about a kilometer to the junction of trails. Take the Prairie View Trail which is a winding road up to the summit of McConnell Ridge. Near the top is a large white movie screen structure blocking the trail up. Instead of continuing, hike out north into the descending forest. Shortly the Bow Valley floodplain is in view; hike down and across the treed slopes and scree until bursting into wide open slopes below the north face and Basement Layer. It may be faster to park at either Bowfort Lodge or Hector Lodge off the Trans-Canada and hike up the Yates Trail and meet up with the Prairie View Trail higher up. You may pass another bouldering area going this way!



# Barrier Dam Practice Ice

FA-Unknown

This short seep is a good place to take a beginner ice climber to explain techniques as it is 5 minutes from the parking lot and is only roomy enough for one top-rope so distractions are lessened. The falls are best visited in the spring when snow melts from the surrounding hillside leaving a somewhat steep gush 10m in height. Either use ice anchors or the small tree directly above the flow.

Park at Barrier Dam, walk past the powerstation and walk down a trail into the curve of the dike 30m below the rim, facing north behind small trees and a dirty crumbling shelf.

# Barrier Bluffs Practice Aid Routes

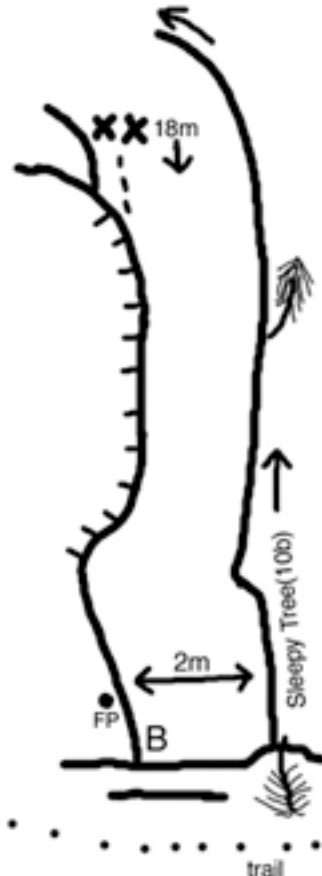
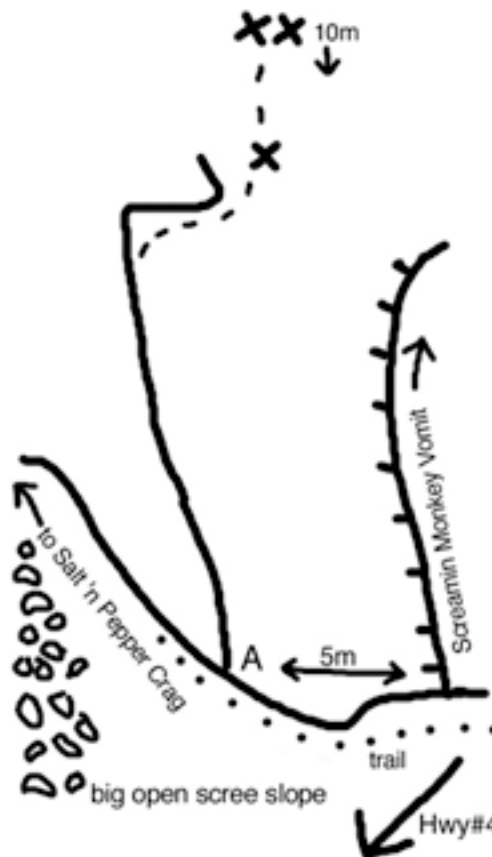
FA's- G.Cornell, alone, May-July, 2003

These 3 lines were done to pop some life into the forgotten north side of Barrier Bluffs. They are all 18m or less ending at bolt anchors, so more than one can easily be worked on in a afternoon. A beaten trail from Yellow Wall hooks around to the north side hugging the entire wall, eventually ending at a new sport cliff called Salt 'n Pepper. It is about a 5 minute walk along the trail between each of the 3 routes. You may need to know the old 80's routes to locate these new ones.

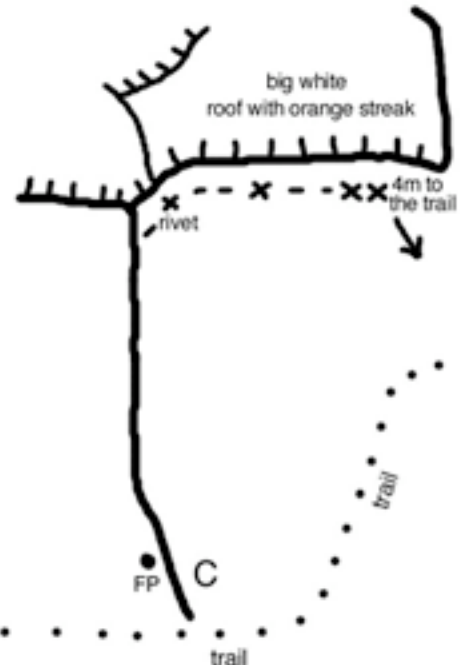
All three routes have good ground cracks to allow soloists to easily build anchors. The gear needed is similiar for all climbs: nuts, cams from .5 to 3", small-medium hexes, RP's, Tri-cams, and a Talon hook helps.

## Kjarkas Flutes (A2)

### Messy Teepee (A1+)



### Adrift (A2)



# Barrier Lake Wall

FA of pitch 4 unknown  
Direct start to pitch 4: T. Devonshire and G. Cornell, July 2003

Barrier Lake Wall is the chunk of rock about 200m high sitting at equal height but south of the documented Barrier Lake Buttress, which consists of a few routes, an enjoyable adventurous 5.9 named 'Friends' being worth the short approach. This cliff and Barrier Lake Wall are easily had in less than an hour by bicycle. Park at Barrier Dam, cross it, and continue to the Jewel Pass Campground by way of Stoney Trail. Either cliff is then attained in about 20 minutes of bushwacking.

A 5.10a direct line was done using many bolts to get to the obvious yellow open book in the center of the cliff seen from the highway. Surprisingly, the pitch below it had a old pin belay and a old SMC bolt just before the corner. Judging from the direct start, this earlier exploration may have been tried using a ledge system coming from the left. It is not known whether the yellow corner was even done as it looks a tad nasty up close. It looks like you can exit into a tree gully above this corner pitch.

Pitch 1.) Start at a crack down and right of the scree slope. Climb it to a ledge and move right about 5m then move up and left around to a short crack that leads up to a small tree and hangerless bolt belay.(5.7, 35m)

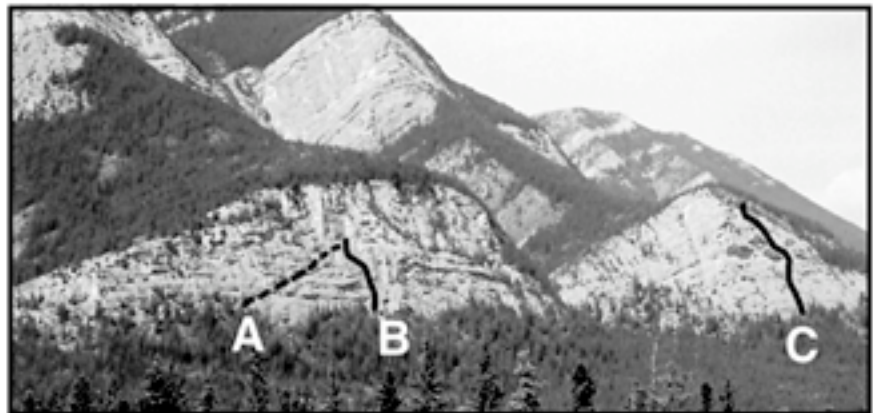
XX ③

Pitch 2.) Traverse left on shattered rock past the corner, and go up steeper rock between two trees to a 2-bolt belay under a roof.(5.7, 30m)

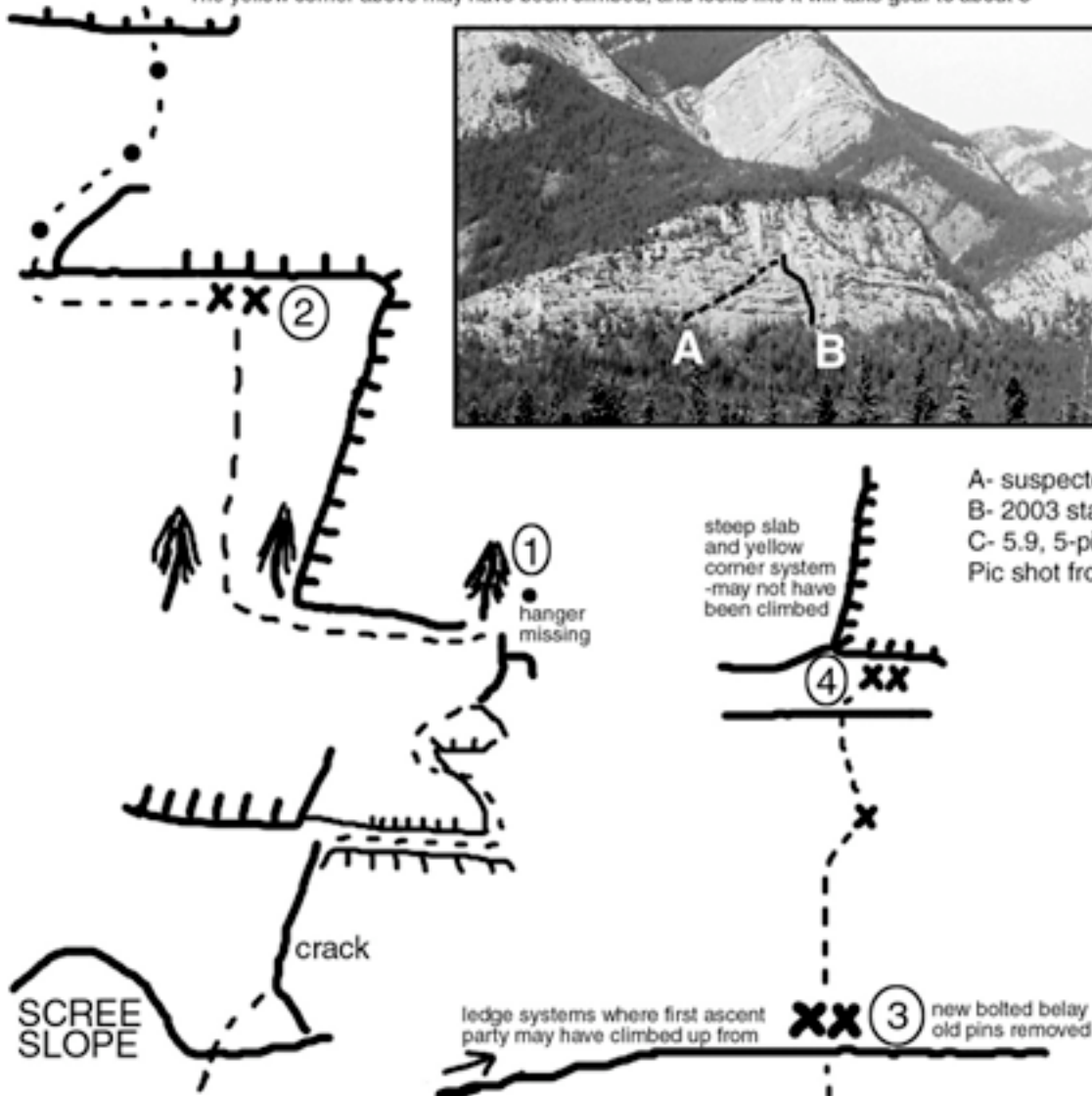
Pitch 3.) Traverse left on nice rock to a bolt(all the 5 lead bolts on this pitch have no hangers)then continue up excellent compact stone, over a bulge, moving left past 4 more bolts to a 2-bolt belay on a ledge.(5.10a, 45m)

Pitch 4.) From the belay climb straight up steep featureless rock with no pro for about 10m to the old SMC bolt. Climb left and up to the good ledge with a 2-bolt belay under an overhang. (5.9R, 15m)

The yellow corner above may have been climbed, and looks like it will take gear to about 3"



A- suspected original start  
B- 2003 start  
C- 5.9, 5-pitch route 'Friends'  
Pic shot from Hwy#40



# THE SPARERIB

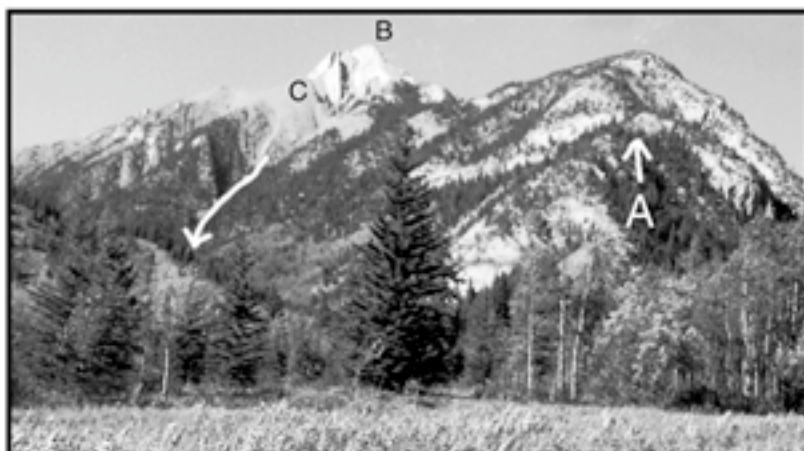
The Sparerib is the east ridge of the peak, known unofficially to some as Mary Barclay's Mtn., covered in bright orange scree that is seen opposite the Kananaskis River from Wasootch (See Canadian Alpine Journal 1999). It is the next main northern peak from Mt. Lorette and can either be accessed by bike from Stoney Trail or by fording the river.

Once on the gravel Stoney Trail, head up the treed east ridge of the peak to a short rocky step about 5m in height. Once above this easy corner, scramble up the narrow ridge to the summit.

Descent is best done by dropping in down west through a gully splitting the two grey, triangle, 'lung' features obvious from the road. Carefully hike down the sharp orange plates of rock to the valley and back to Stoney Trail.



The crux

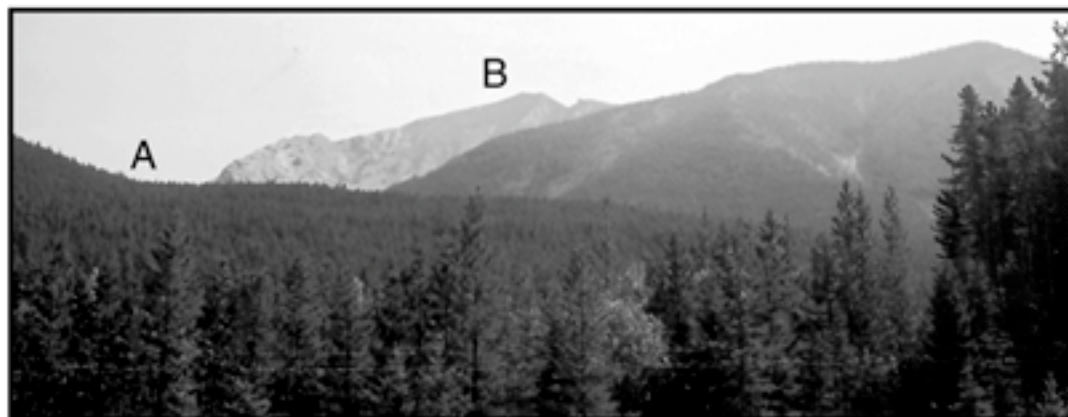


A- gain this ridge B- the summit C- descend to the orange scree

## GR380492 Boundary Ridge

GR380492 / Boundary Ridge is a nice, easy hike to do when the weather turns foul and is easily done in a half day. Park at Baldy Pass Parking Lot off Highway #40 and cross the road. Hike up the nice trail to the pass which gives off some O.K. vistas. From here take the open ridge to your right (south) to the summit of the peak via stepped grassy ledges. To descend either return this way or go down west and into the bowl which faces the road and scramble down it back to the Baldy Pass trail. The mountain is visible from the road with its long north ridge.

Another rainyday option is a bouldery canyon: an exploratory creek 1/2 km south of O'Shawnassy Falls called Prospector's Canyon where two old sport routes may still exist. To avoid downclimbing all the short steps, hike out north on a dirty slope just below where the canyon constricts to an open hillside and catch a good trail back to the start of the drainage near Highway #40.



A- Baldy Pass

B- the summit from Hwy #40

# Ivana Humpalot, 5.7, 135m

FA- G.Cornell and G.Macrae, July 1999

Ivana Humpalot ascends an unnamed SE face directly above the sport climbing venue named Kilowatt Crag, south of Wasootch Creek. Park on the east side of the #40 on a short dirt track leading to an old open pit where the road takes a sharp bend.

Hike up the drainage for 45 minutes following an overgrown creekbed. About 200m beyond where a second watercourse joins the main one, hike up into the gully that now splits the two large grey humps of the peak. Surmount a short slab wall, then hike to the base. The route takes the arete of the left hump on solid stone throughout.

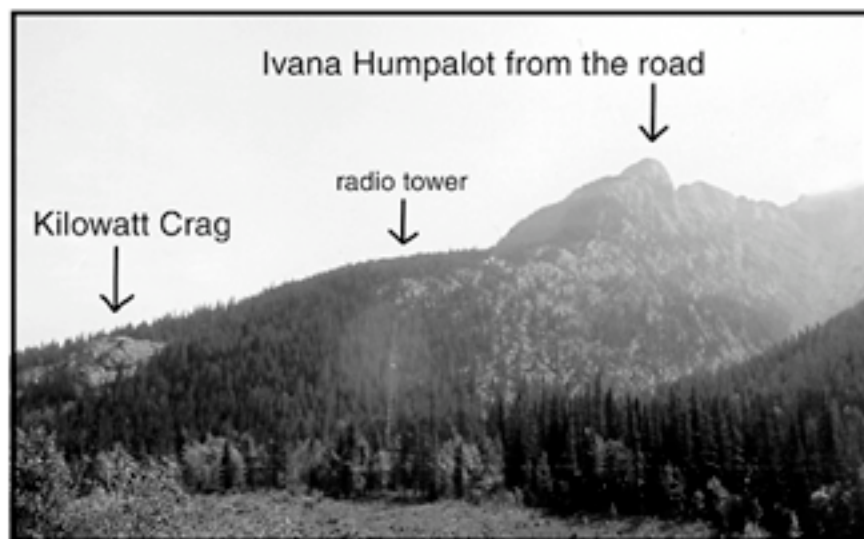
**Pitch 1- climb the shallow brown water runnel on the slab to a bolt. Continue right around the overhang(cruX-3" cam needed)and up the crack to flats. Go up steep runnels to an open book with a nut/bolt belay. (50m, 5.7)**

**Pitch 2- up the ridge and over steep spot to a belay on a small ledge. (30m, 5.6)**

**Pitch 3- climb short steep corner above past a fixed piton. Continue up to a grassy ledge and a two-bolt belay. (30m, 5.6)**

**Pitch 4- go up left to a horn belay. (25m, 5.4),then scramble to the summit**

**Descent: Hike down the ridge to the road**



Have gear will travel:  
all cams, Tri-Cams, small nuts, no pitons  
must have a 3" cam to protect the cruX



# Rainbow Ridge

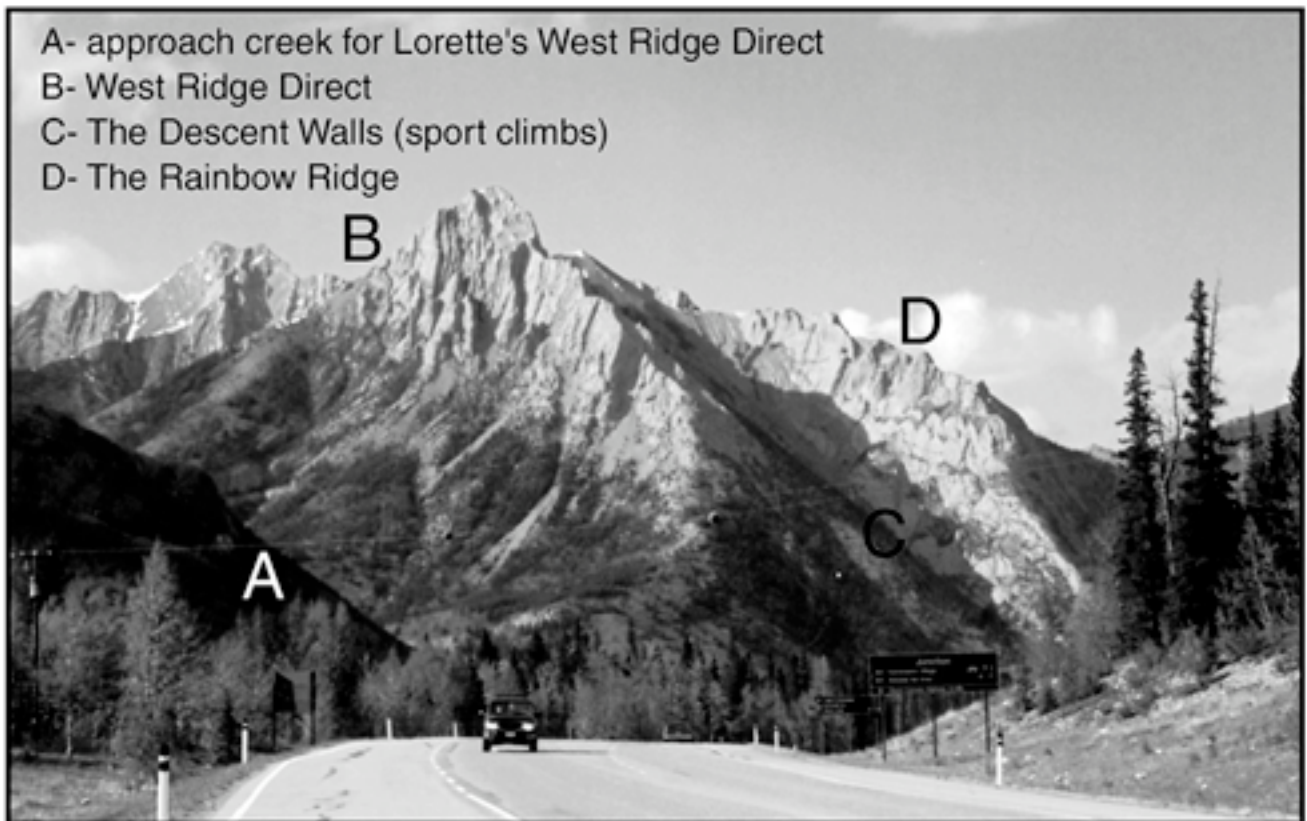
FA- unknown

Forgotten and ignored, this ridge appears as a boring hike from the road, hardly worth the effort of crossing the river for- all the efforts are left for the popular east ridge of Lorette. However, it should be noted this is an optical illusion and this satellite NE wing of Lorette may only be 5.5 or less, it is complex and exposed as it gradually curves higher to its' own summit. Expect up to 15 full rope lengths that is mostly simul-climbed with short cruxes needing a belay. Some may consider this route actually more involved than Lorette and worthy of a popularity shift in the future. A bold statement? See for yourself.

Hike into the Lorette descent gully and gain the humped ridge on the right at its' lowest point, just past the rock bluff snout. Walk up the treed ridge to the start of the rock. Climb up an easy break in the center for about 90m to its' top. Walk up to regain the rock ridge and follow it to the end, a rather unclimactic summit. Continue down a very narrow section back to the scree. Walk down the Lorette descent gully back to Stoney Trail.

This is a peak were the journey is better than the summit glory. Expect very narrow curving ridges, traverses on walls, tetering blocks, downclimbing on lead and only one piece of fixed pro; a piton left just below the true summit. A highly recommended adventure. Don't bring too much gear, a slim rack to 3" and 6 slings is good.

- A- approach creek for Lorette's West Ridge Direct
- B- West Ridge Direct
- C- The Descent Walls (sport climbs)
- D- The Rainbow Ridge



## Mt.Lorette West Ridge Direct, 5.4

FA- G.Cornell and G.Langford July, 1999

Another way to avoid the cool kids on the east ridge is to be silly and bash up the west side of Lorette and meet'em on the summit. Just before the base of Lorette's east ridge, bushwack up into the rushing creek and canyon that cuts a path below the south face. Somewhere downstream, slog up the long slopes that never end to the base of the west ridge. Scramble up rock slopes to the actual beginnings of the ridge. Climb a few rope lengths, passing one bolt for a belay in a exposed notch. Continue up staying on top or just slightly over the less exposed north side for about four more rope lengths to a 2-bolt belay just down on the north side after following a crack. This was the site of a meeting with a ball of Saint Elmo's Fire during the first ascent. Traverse a ledge left to a large scree bowl(visible from the trailhead). At the top of the slope climb a steep but easy yellow corner on jugs for 25m. Walk up to the summit in 40m. Descent is made by hiking north and dropping into the Lorette descent gully and back to Stoney Trail. Don't carry too many pieces - gear to 3" and about 6 slings.

# The Mushroom Garden

The Mushroom Garden is the formal name for this unique stand of conglomerate 25m high pinnacles perched atop the Mt. Allan Centennial Ridge Trail. It is a great place to do exploratory bouldering or possibly trying one of the crack lines; nothing known has been recorded. These sentinels are in a windy exposed spot 5 km from the trailhead, face west and NE- bring lots of water. The scenic green hillsides below also have some small unknown boulders and a neat auguille to climb just north of the Gardens. Park at Ribbon Creek. Take the first junction of Hidden Trail then another left turn a few hundred meters further. The trail begins to rise; stay left and follow a bright orange diamond trail marker with a hiker emblazmed as its' logo. Ignore two old roads then make a left up the third one and continue up steep terrain past the mine scar. High up, you pass Olympic Summit after a short cliff band skirted on the right. Soon after, the Mushroom Gardens. The trail is closed from April to June.



Some of the Garden, more pinnacles are scattered out to the west, and the Claw in the center.



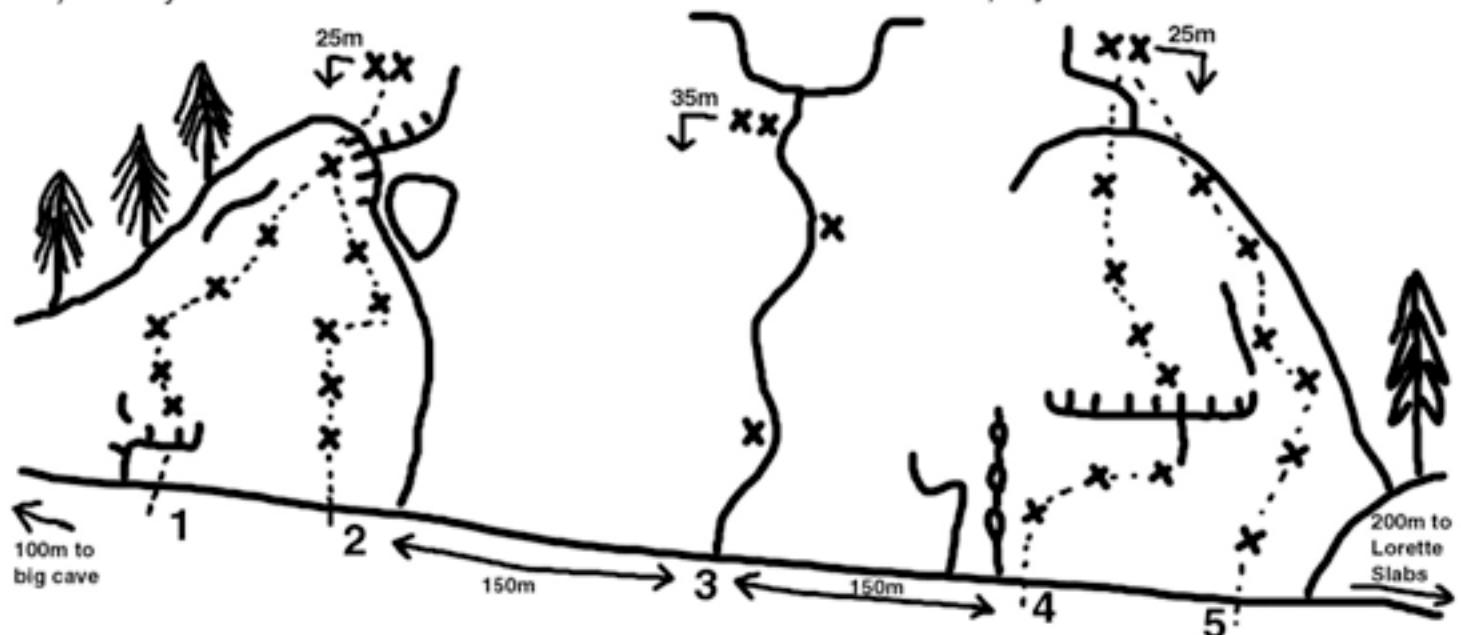
Standing atop the 'aiguille' with the Mushroom Garden behind.

## The Descent Walls (Lorette Slabs Area)

routes by G. Cornell, Aug. 2002

Excellent stone that gives an upgrade to the old Lorette Slabs area and gives climbers coming off Lorette's East Ridge a little something to round out the day on to break up the descent. All routes have rap anchors. Routes #3 - #5 are within 5m of the scree trail and routes #1 - #2 are about 30m from the scree trail. Loads of new sport routes could be fixed here: up to 100m in height. From Stoney Trail, hike the trail up the Lorette descent gully about 200m past Lorette Slabs.

- 1.) Hind Memorial - 5.8+
- 2.) Merseybeat Tribute - 5.10b
- 3.) Boned Up Crack - 5.8+  
standard rack, no pins
- 4.) A Dream I've Had - 5.10c
- 5.) My Side of the Mountain - 5.9





# Rucksack Ridge - 5.7

FA- G.Cornell and J.Miller, Aug. 2003

This ridge is directly above the RCMP/Emergency station on Hwy#40 and is seen as the third of the three subsidiary peaks of a even higher eastern grey slabby crag. It is a north to south running ridge, has fairly solid grey limestone, has some exposure, and can be linked easily with the higher slab wall to the NE.(McDougall Satellite)

Park about 150m before the Kananaskis Village turn at a brown highway sign. The route in it's entirety is visible from here. The deceptive notch near the summit was cause for the ascent party to carry pulleys for what didn't turn out to be the Rockies first legitimate Tyrolean Traverse.

Cross the road and gain a creek-boulder strewn valley and follow it then a well-beaten path along the left side. When the trail heads up, drop into the creek and walk up it to a wide scree field that comes down from the start of the ridge. (2 hours from the car)

GEAR: 5 runners, 55m rope, nuts, cams 1" to 3", no pins.

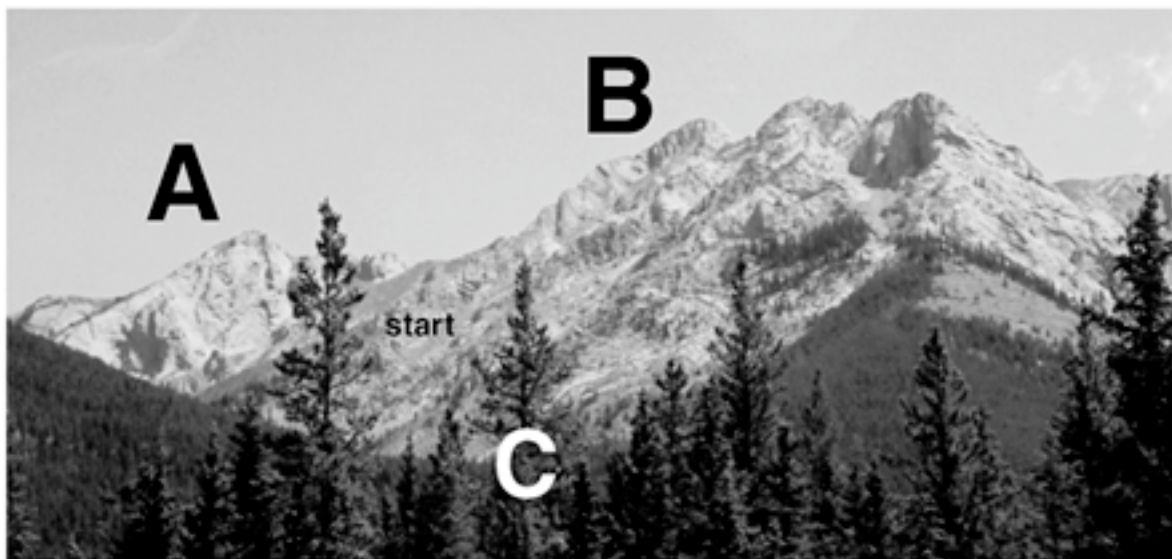
Start about 50m above the ridge's beginnings at a short open book corner. Climb up and move left from the corner and around right onto the ridge proper(5.1, 55m). Hike up the ridge to the base of a steep wall(55m). Climb the excellent rock via a crack to the top and belay at a bolt at the base of the next step(5.7, 55m). Step right onto a steep, exposed orange wall and continue up to belay(5.7, 55m). Follow the ridge crest for a forgotten amount of time, belaying when needed to a small grassy flats with two mini gargoyles. From here the next 35m is very narrow and exposed. Traverse to a fixed piton and either shimmy across or step down east under a bulge and hand traverse to the notch and bolt belay. (The notch was the presumed Tyrolean-optical illusion!) Continue up the ridge making belays where possible for an un-recorded distance to the summit.

Walk 75m to the big north scree slope and descend to the approach creek.

## Mt.McDougall Satellite

FA- unknown

This triangle slabby peak is higher and further north from the Rucksack Ridge. It is an enjoyable scramble with a short section of easy climbing and exposure. Approach same as for Rucksack Ridge but continue up the good trail through the trees instead of dropping into the creek. Follow it around some rock bluffs high up and instead of slogging straight up open scree, which goes to Mt.McDougall's northern summit, leave the trail and find the easiest ledges down to the scree bowl and traverse to the col. Hike the ridge east and climb rubbly ledges to regain the ridge, then, climb an exposed rock fist on over to a scree chute and the summit. Return the same way or downclimb ledges on the north side near the fist and pick your way down the east side of Wasootch Tower to Wasootch Creek and out.



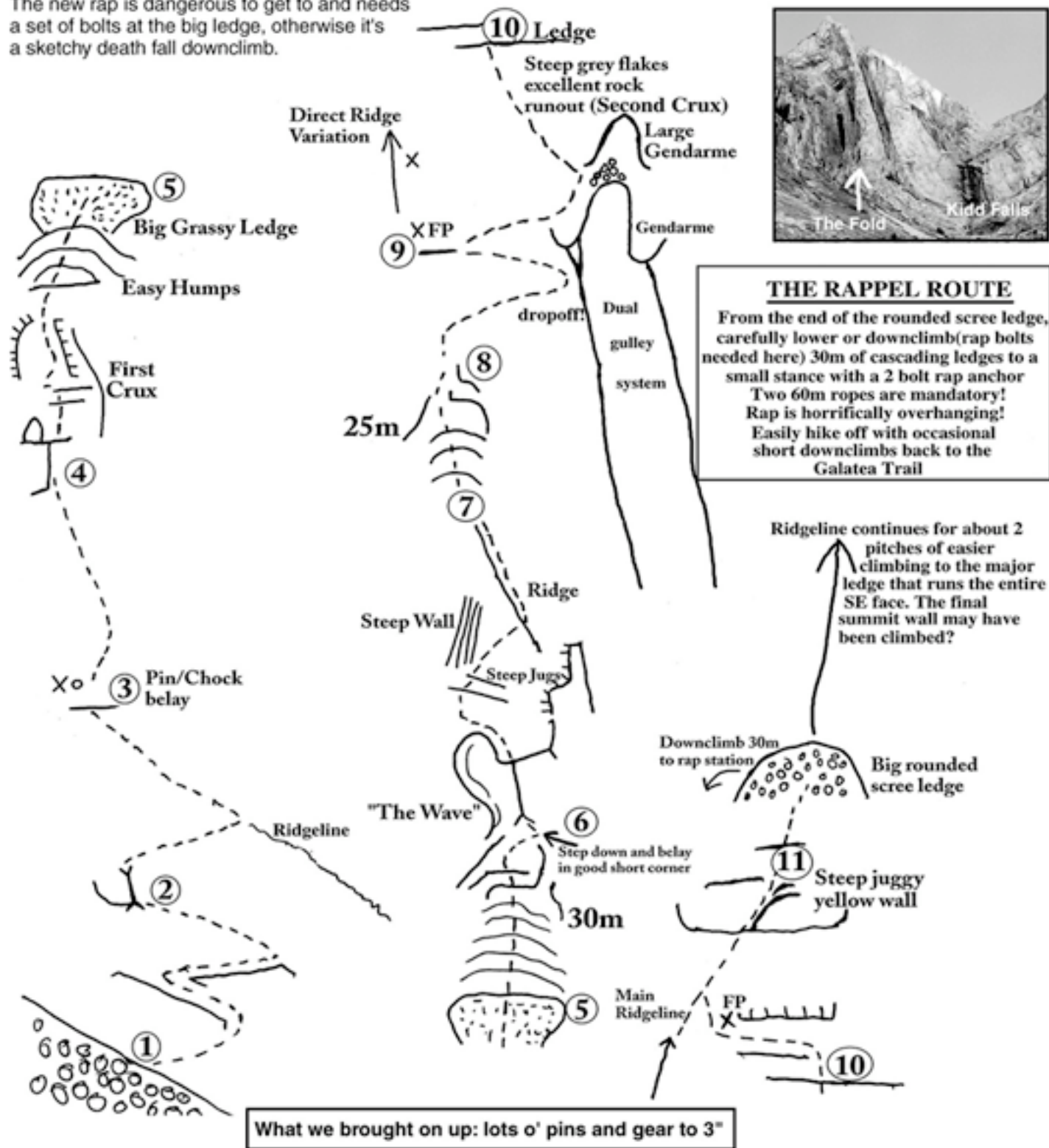
A- the McDougall Satellite, which is summited from the left ridge. It's the highest peak in the group  
B- The Rucksack Ridge, highest of the 3 peaks, showing start of the ridge; walk-off towards 'A'  
C- approach creek for 'A' and 'B' and for the Six Flags bouldering park. Pic taken from Hwy #40.

# 'THE FOLD' - MT. KIDD, 5.8

FA- F.Taxbock and R.Kranabitter, 1985

This exceptional route takes the long narrow rib to the left of Kidd Falls. It has had only a handful of ascents and there is only a few fixed pins enroute. This topo goes shy of a pitch to the enormous east-west descent ledge where a 2-bolt rap station was set-up to avoid what the second ascent party stated as an all day descent. The rap anchors are dangerous to get to so beware! Furthermore, this topo is drawn in nearly full 60m pitches. It is advised to climb fast and carry a bolt kit as retreat may be difficult. The rock is superb, and is highly aesthetic. It may be possible to start the ridge el direct. Enter the scree gully on the left side of the rib and start about 15m beyond a tiny rock step where a curved ramp feature starts the route. It gets on the ridge proper part way up pitch 2. (This is my all time favorite climb I have done.)

The new rap is dangerous to get to and needs a set of bolts at the big ledge, otherwise it's a sketchy death fall downclimb.



**THE RAPPEL ROUTE**  
 From the end of the rounded scree ledge, carefully lower or downclimb (rap bolts needed here) 30m of cascading ledges to a small stance with a 2 bolt rap anchor. Two 60m ropes are mandatory! Rap is horrifically overhanging! Easily hike off with occasional short downclimbs back to the Galatea Trail

Ridgeline continues for about 2 pitches of easier climbing to the major ledge that runs the entire SE face. The final summit wall may have been climbed?

What we brought on up: lots o' pins and gear to 3"