



Edinburgh Esoteric Climbing

Loïc Galland
V 3.0

Introduction

This mini-guidebook aims to present some unusual climbing locations around Edinburgh which have never been blessed enough to be put in print. Lockdown has motivated some individuals to explore these places when they became deprived of gyms and conventional crags. They might not be the most aesthetically pleasing locations but they provide varied challenges and good training.

The quality of this guidebook is far from professional standards. Still, it is my attempt at providing information about obscure crags and hopefully it will give you access to some unusual fun. Depending on the feedback, a decision will be made whether it is worth putting more time and effort into it.

If you have any feedback, don't hesitate to contact me at: **galland.loic@gmail.com**

If you fancy showing your appreciation for the production of this guide by contributing to the Loïc Galland brush and beer fund, you can donate via PayPal:

<https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/LGalland>

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Legend



Loose rock



Highball/borderline solo



No hands problem



Hands only in crack



Feet only in crack



Authorised holds



Unauthorised holds

★ Quality scale

Costorphine Boulders



Costorphine Boulders

In the depth of these woods among the moss and the flaky volcanic rock, sanity through discovery is achieved or is it madness...

Rock type: Dolerite & Sedimentary rocks

Climbing development in this park has historically been limited to trad climbing in Barnton Quarry. Unfortunately, the World War 2 bunker renovation team has forbidden the entrance to climbers since February 2013.

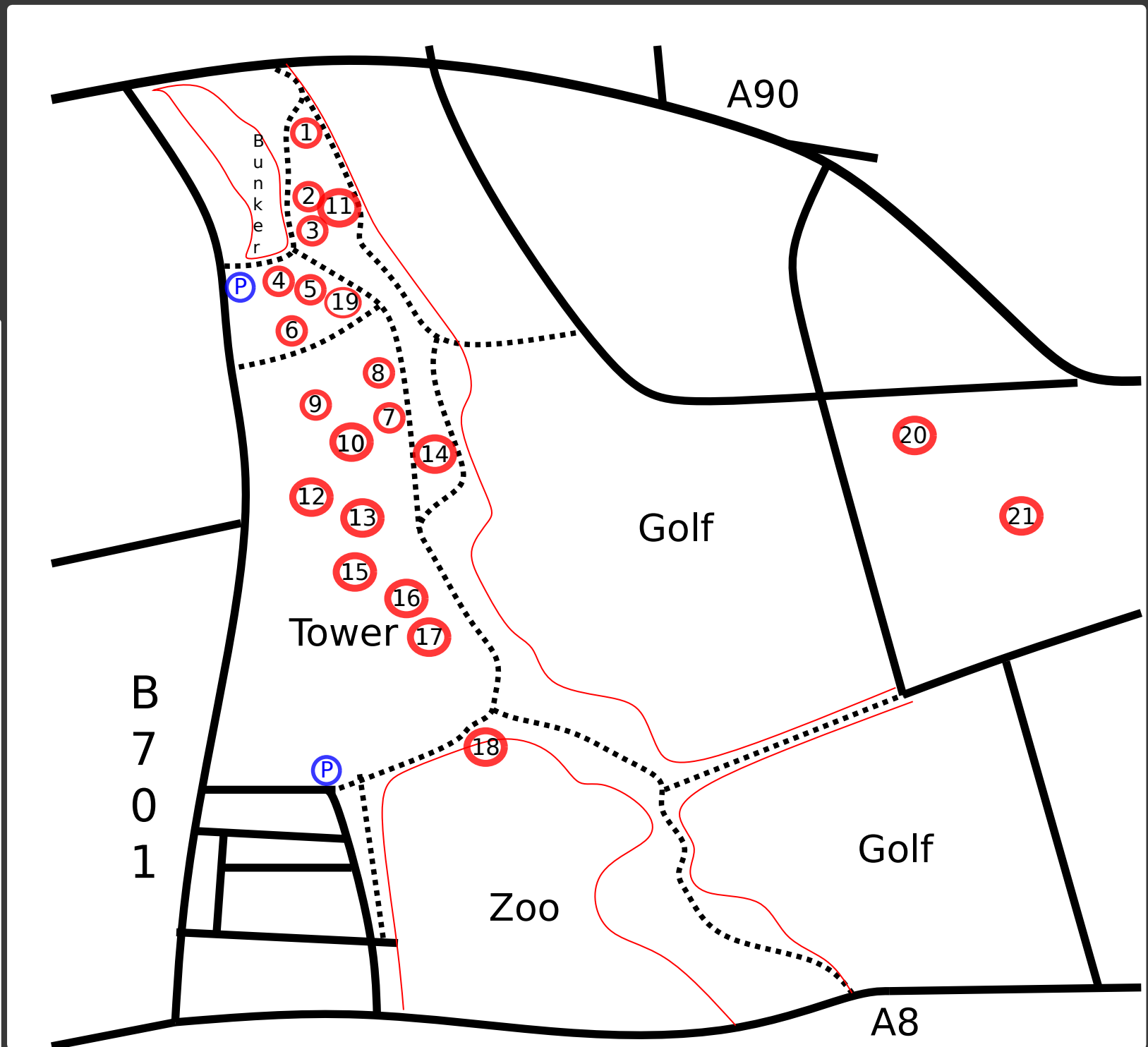
Unexpectedly, some untapped potential was awaiting under a layer of moss in the rest of the park away from the bulldozers. Living close by, the author has discovered its bouldering potential during the last few years and has been establishing some problems of various styles and heights. The sit-starts are common to make full use of the modest stature of some of the boulders.

The rock is volcanic and varies significantly in quality from solid and compact to crumbly hell. The problems have all been cleaned using a shoe brush and a nut key for the flaky bits. The use of wire brushes is not encouraged as it damages the delicate grains of the rock. Gently brushing the chalk off after a session would be appreciated too.

The grading is up for debate as the number of judges was limited and I'm not really vertically challenged.

- Road
- Path
- Fence
- P Parking
- 1 Sectors

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Green Wall



□ 1 : Green wall traverse 6b+/6c ★★: Traverse from left to right to finish with both hands on the right edge of the wall (Only climb when absolutely dry and beware of the rock above your head)



- ☐ 1 : Normal Route - 4
- ☐ 2 : Arete - 5 / SS 6a+
- ☐ 3 : Eliminate 6a / SS 6a+
- ☐ 3.a : Shelfless act 6b / SS 6b+
- ☐ 4 : Lanky 6a / SS 6b ★

- ☐ 4.a : Drop Mania SS 6b+ ★
- ☐ 4.b : V1.85 SS 6b+ ★
- ☐ 5 : Sidepull 5 / SS 6a+ ★
- ☐ 5.a : Pendulum SS 6c
- ☐ 6 : Low Traverse 6a

- ☐ 6.a : Low Rider SS 6b+
- ☐ 7 : High Traverse 6a+
- ☐ 7.a : High Traverse 6a+

The Sentinel

1 - Normal Route - 4: Take the line of least resistance.

2 - Arete - 5 / SS 6a+/6b: Follow the arete. Alternative: Sit start from under the bulge using side pulls for hands.

3 - Eliminate 6a / SS 6a+: Climb on the right of the arete without using it. Alternative: Sit start on poor slopers to reach the break and wiggle your way to the top.

3.a - Start on slopy crimps between the two breaks and make your way to the top without using the slopy shelf or the left arete (for the SS start as for Eliminate).

4 - Lanky 6a / 6B: Start with both hands on the slopy ledge above your head (might require a jump for the shorties). Alternative: Sit Start at the juggy low break and use the intermediate crimps to get to the top.

4.a : Drop Mania 6B+: Same start as Lanky but a left foot is authorised in the left corner and the intermediate crimps before the slopy ledge are out.

4.b : V1.85 6B+: Same start as Lanky but the intermediate crimps are out.

5 - Sidepull 5 / 6a+ : Start with hands on the right facing side pull and a sloper on its right. Go straight to the top. Alternative: Sit start at the juggy low break and dyno to the high slopy ledge and finish as stand start.

5.a Pendulum SS 6c: Same start as Sidepull SS but the juggy rail of the High Traverse is not in.

6 - Low Traverse 6a: Traverse from left to right with hands on the low break and shuffle along with feet low until you reach the furthest point along the break without your ass touching the ground.

6.a - Low Rider SS 6b+: Full R-L traverse of the low crack. SS at the right-hand face, traverse along the crack line until natural end at the left-hand face.

7 High Traverse 6a+: Start with feet on the low break and shuffle from left to right with hands on the high break until you reach the sidepull of the Sidepull problem. Reverse and get back to the start.

7.a High Traverse Campus 5+: Start on the right edge of the high break and campus along it until the ledge ends.

Shield



□ 1 : Technical Knee 6b ★: Strenuous start below the nose and get to the top through the overhang.

Lockdown Wall



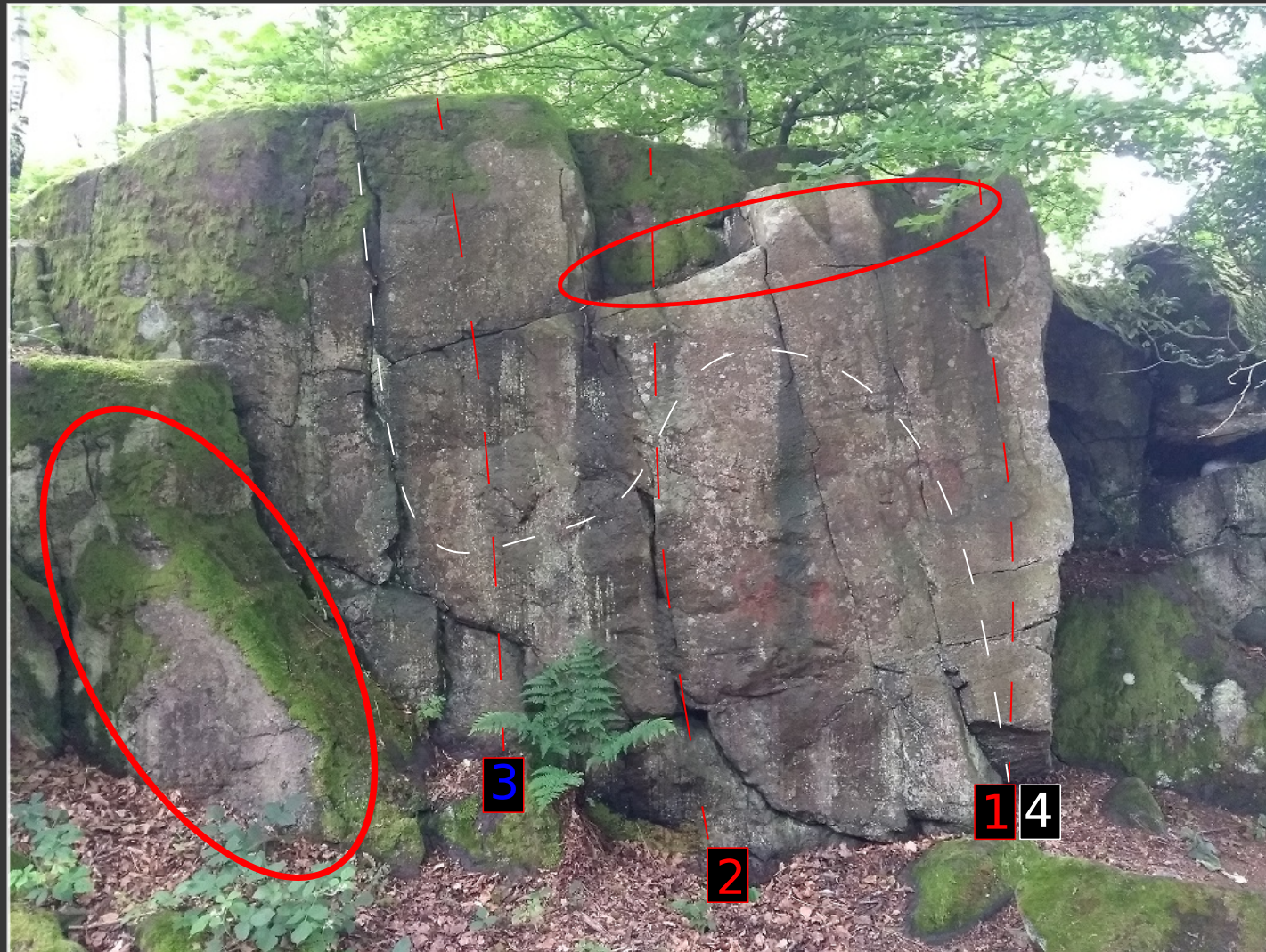
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 : Round Arete 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8.a : Slimey Fist 6b (climb the fat crack beside left arete) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 : Straight 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 : Left arete 5 ★ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 : Dyno 5+ ★ / SS 6a ★ (no right wall) | <input type="checkbox"/> 9.a : Left arete eliminate 6a (hands on arete/feet on left wall) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 : Jam Pot 5 ★ 🟡 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9.b : Left arete SS 6b+ ★ (no feet on left wall) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 : Hop 4+ | <input type="checkbox"/> 9.c : Koala SS 6c ★ (hands on arete only and no feet on left wall) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 : Fridge 4+ | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 : I Loic it! 6b (no aretes allowed) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 : Slide 4+ | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 : Right arete 6a / SS 6b |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 : Mind your head 4+ | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 : Mind your butt girdle 6b |

Side Bloc



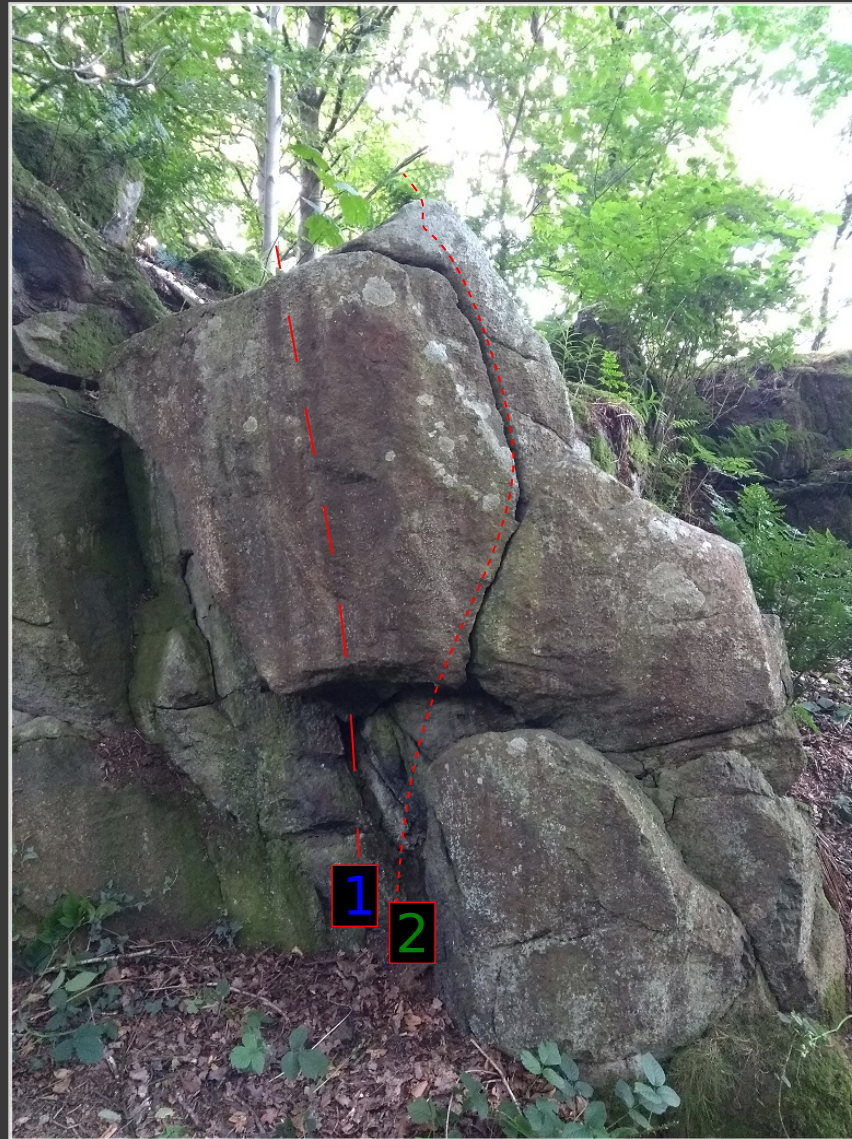
□ 1 : Side bloc 5 (SS 6a)

Malcom



- ☐ 1 : Frog 6a+★ / SS 6c ★
- ☐ 2 : Middle 5+/ SS 6b ★ (aka Malcom in the middle)
- ☐ 3 : Side bloc 5
- ☐ 4 : Traverse SS 6c ★ (traverse R-L without the circled jugs/ledges)

Wee Malcom



- ☐ 1 : Dyno SS 5
- ☐ 2 : Crack SS 4

Little Well Being



- ☐ 1 : Little Well Being SS 6b
- ☐ 2 : Layback SS 5

Norse Rituals



- ☐ 1 : Freya Ritual SS 6a : Use both aretes (the lower the start the more glory you achieve)
- ☐ 2 : Loki Ritual SS 6b : Left arete is out
- ☐ 3 : Yggdrasil SS 6b : Hands only on left arete
- ☐ 4 : Thor Ritual SS 6a+ : Climb the central groove without using the aretes
- ☐ 5 : Langskip SS 6a+ : Use only the right arete

Rock Band



- ☐ Knuckles Eater SS 6a+ (white circles)
- ☐ Finger Chewer SS 6b (red circles)
- ☐ Rock Show SS 6b (same start as FC but go straight to the top)

El Cap



- ☐ 1 : Free Rider SS 6c ★
- ☐ 2 : The Nose SS 6b ★
- ☐ 3 : Traverse 5 (Hands on the lip only until finishing as for The Nose)

All problems are topping out.

Goliath



- ☐ 1 : The sling 5 SS ☐ 2 : David 6c ★★ / SS 6c+ ★★
☐ 3 : Goliath 6b+ ★/ SS 6c ★★ ☐ 4 : The stone 6b ★
Jugs marked in red circle are only allowed for Sling
All problems finish at the same jug

Egg



□ 1 : Equilibrium 6a+ / SS 6b ★
(stay on the rounded face)

□ 2 : Murmuration 5
French SS 6a+ ★ (right wall allowed for the foot of the first move)
Italian SS 6b ★ (right wall is out)

Tower bloc



- ☐ 1 : Tower bloc 4
- ☐ 2 : Tower bloc Eliminate 4+ (aretes are out)

Welcome to the Jungle



□ 1 : Welcome to the Jungle SS 5+ ★

Ivy



□ 1 : Ivy League 5 / SS 6a (the right shelf is out)

Tradition



□ 1 : Normal route 4

□ 2 : Corner 5

□ 3 : Squeaky 6a+ ★

Atlantis



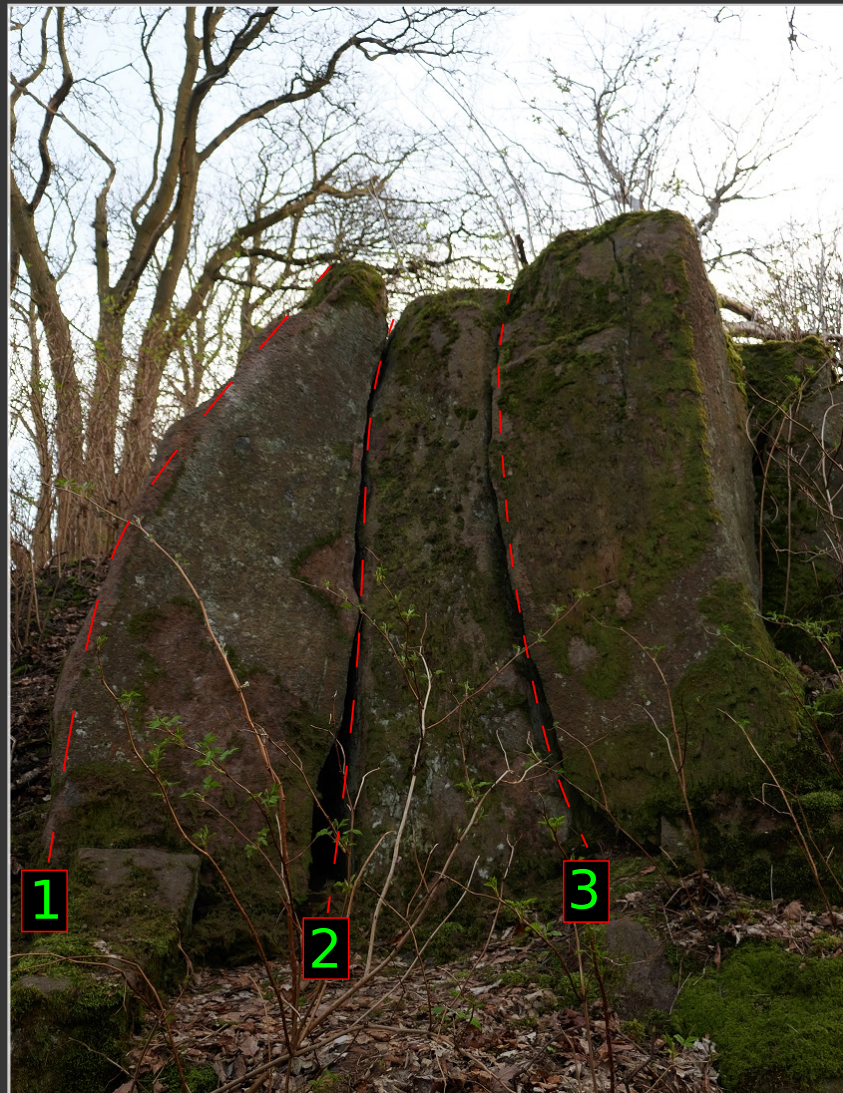
- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 : Parkour SS 4+ | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 : T-Rex 5+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 : Inspector Gagget 5+ | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 : Beastmaker 1000 6a ★ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 : Beastmaker 2000 SS 6a+ ★ | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 : Happy Tree friends SS 5 (arete) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 : Arthur's stool SS 6a+ | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 : Arthur's seat SS 6a (yellow circle is out) |

Mossy Mantle



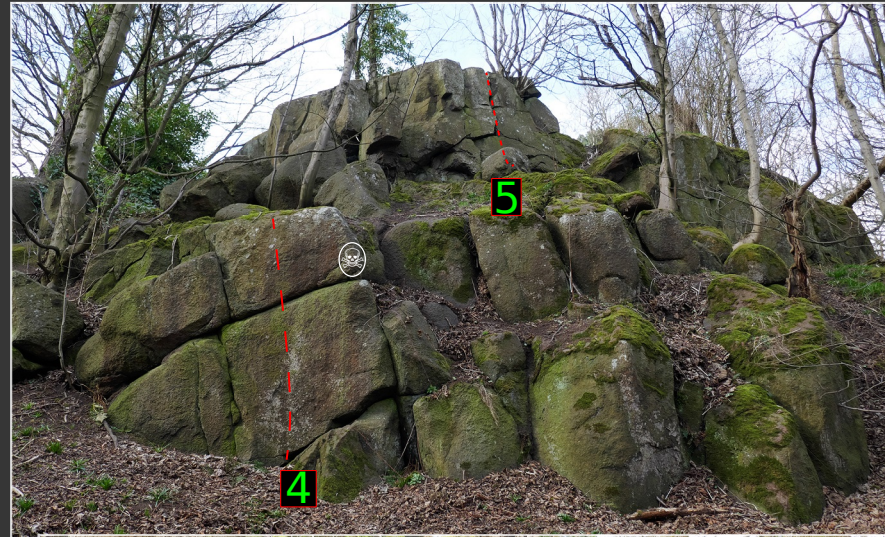
- ☐ 1 : Malcom's Mossy Mantle SS 5+ (circled rocks are in)
- ☐ 2 : Mashed Potato SS 6b
(start with both feet jamming in the crack and circled rocks are not in)
- ☐ 2.a : Fish and Chips SS 6b+
(same rules as Mashed potatoes but swing directly your leg on top)

The menhirs



- ☐ 1 : Arete 4+
- ☐ 2 : Left crack 4 🟡
- ☐ 3 : Right crack 4 🟡

Jumble boulders



☐ 1 : Arete SS 5+

☐ 2 : Face SS 5+

☐ 3 : Crack SS 4+ 🟡

☐ 4 : Step 5

☐ 5 : Cracker 4 🟡

Moss Carpet



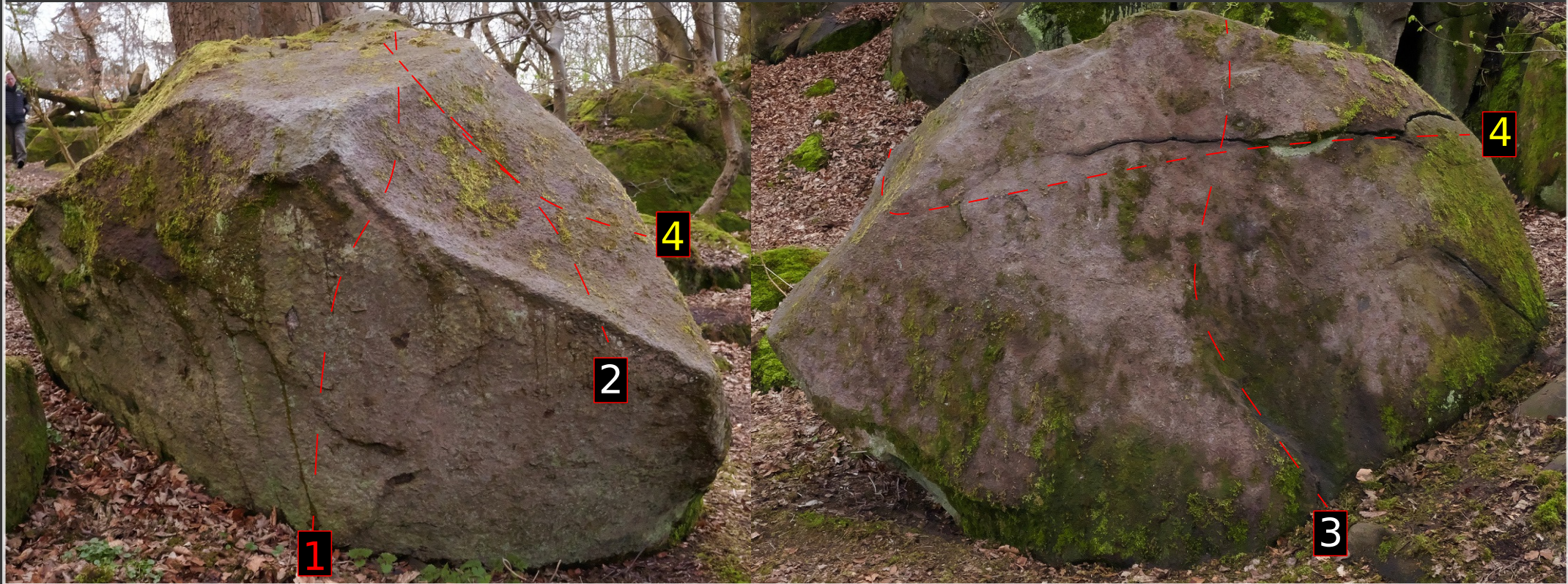
- ☐ 1 : Baby steps 4 (path of least resistance on the slab on the left of the arete)
- ☐ 2 : Arete lover SS 6a+ (stay on the face and hands on the arete only)
- ☐ 3 : Ballerina SS 5+ ★
- ☐ 4 : Hand full of most SS 6a+ ★ (the crack is in for the right hand)

Bunker



- ☐ 1 : Bunker Crack SS 5 ★ 🟡 🖐️
- ☐ 2 : Fridge Delivery SS 5
- ☐ 3 : Pebble killer 6b+ ★ (Crack and circled hold are not in)

Discworld



- ☐ 1 : Mort SS 6b ★
- ☐ 2 : Stepper 🖐️
- ☐ 3 : Zen Master ★ 🖐️ (can be run for extra fun)
- ☐ 4 : Traverse SS 6a ★ (traverse R-L)
- ☐ 4.a : Weatherwax traverse SS 6a ★ (traverse R-L but top is not in for hands)

Overhang and Ridge



□ 1 : Overhang and Ridge 4

Compress



□ 1 : Compress SS 5+

Ravelston



Ravelston

To torque or not to torque the wobbly flake? That is the question.

Rock type: Sandstone

This quarry is the dry tooling fix for any Edinburgh-bound aspiring mountaineer. Occasional climbing has taken place here for several years based on the presence of very rusty pitons.

The rock is generally compact but the occasional wobbly hold or man-size flake can be found.

Helmet and top ropes are strongly advised as the venue has not seen enough traffic to be purged to a family friendly level yet.

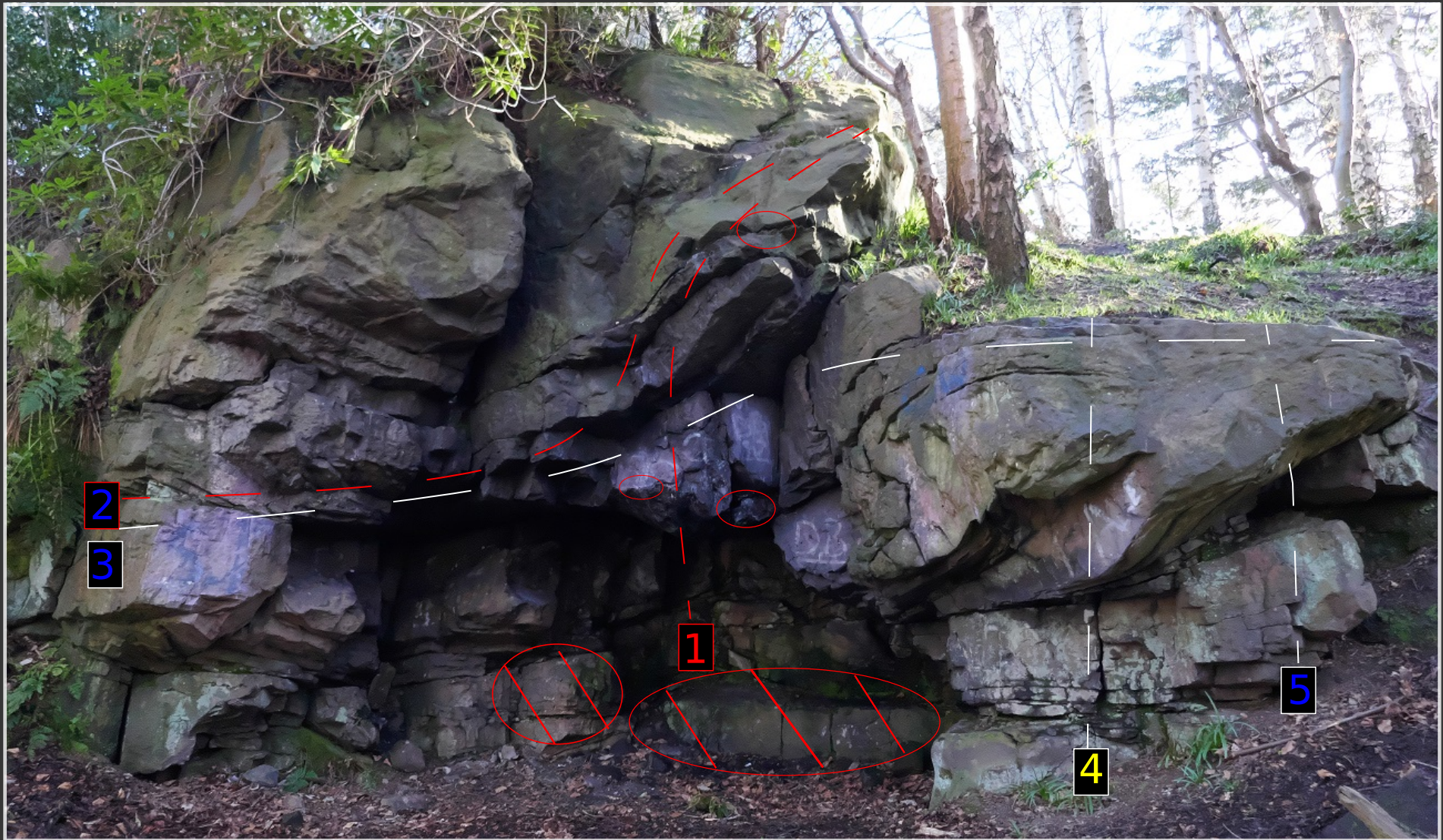
Several variations of these routes have been done and the provided grades are just a general indicator.

Ravelston Quarry



☐ 1 : Warm Up Route M5 ☐ 2 : Face Route A M5+ ☐ 3 : Face Route B M5 ☐ 4 : Face Route C M6+

Fire Starter



- ☐ 1 : What we do in the shadows 5 / SS 6b ★
(circle shelves are not in)
- ☐ 1.a : Campus version 6b
(start at the circles and finish at the circle)
- ☐ 2 : Short traverse 5

- ☐ 3: Plateau traverse 5+
- ☐ 4 : Gollum SS 6a
- ☐ 5 : Grovel SS 5+

Plastic Duck



□ 1 : Floor is lava SS 6a
Top is off until the top out
□ 2 : Left crack 4+ SS 🟡

□ 3 : Right crack 5+ SS 🟡
□ 4 : Plastic Duck SS 6a+ ★

Holy Tree



□ 1 : Reindeer Trap SS 5
□ 2 : Holy Tree 4+

□ 3 : Snow flake 6b
(Circled arete is out)

Crack Den



Crack Den

Don't do crack, kids, go cracking instead !

Rock type: Concrete

The potential of this Murrayfield bridge underbelly has been discovered at the beginning of 2020 and has seen rapid development from a small team of devotees. Famous names have already put their mitts in these concrete cracks by on-sighting the first ascent of “Edward Paddle Hands” or establishing routes involving a finger lock. The Crack Den was even considered as the perfect crack training establishment by one of them.

For us mortals, pride needs to be left at home when first encountering the smooth and painful 20-meter long cracks. If you manage to overcome the initial humbling sessions, you will be able to access a whole range of jamming techniques which will make your next trip to your favourite crack mecha a much more pleasant experience.

Problems start by sitting at the Stadium side of the crack and usually end by touching the wall of the opposite side with both feet.

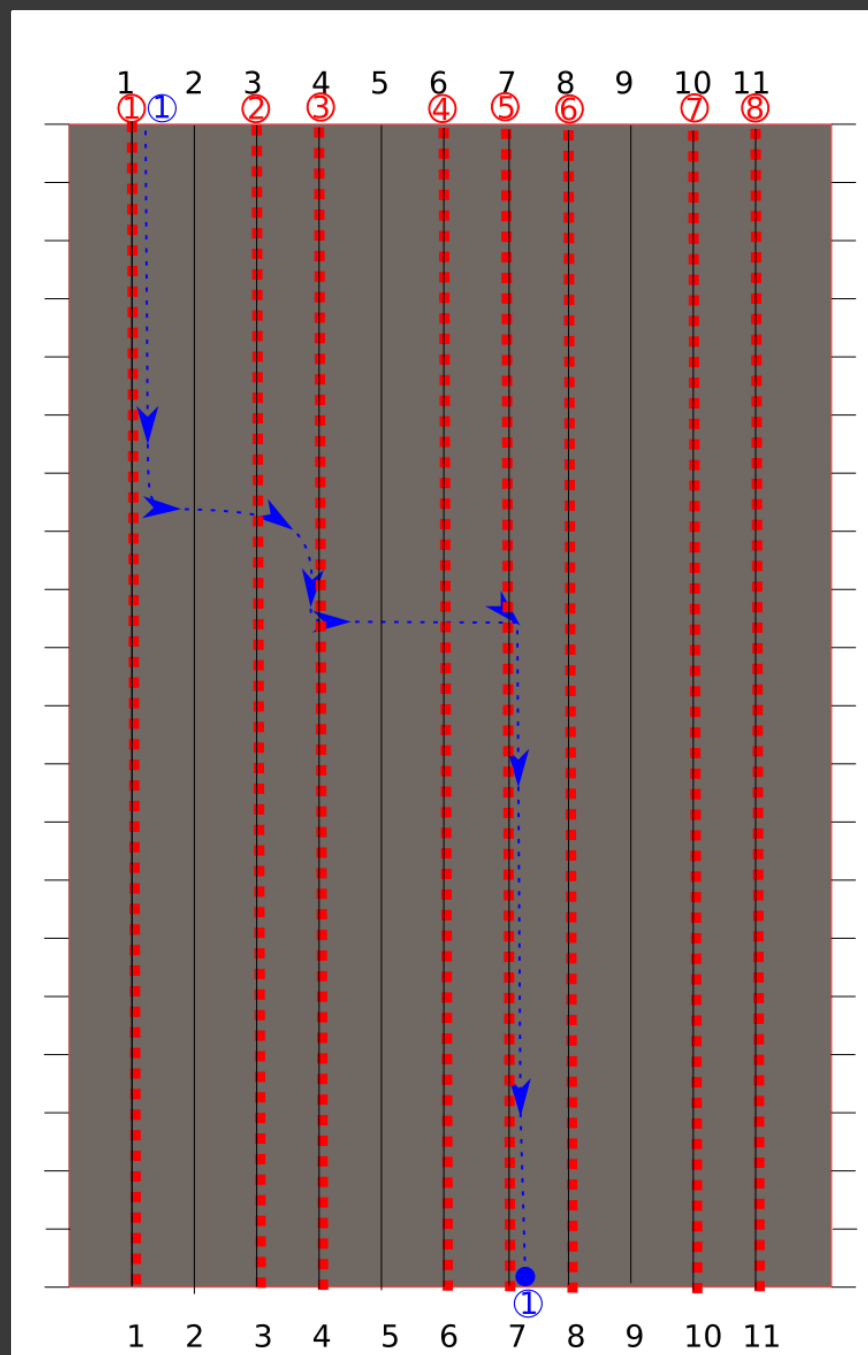
Crack gloves are useful to avoid a lot of taping but they might need some extra padding for sensitive hands as concrete jamming generates more pressure wound than the usual climbing and the concrete edges which lurk in some of the cracks take no prisoners.

Flat shoes, a bouldering mat and some tape would ease you into your wonderful journey at the crack den.

Crack Den over Ground

Towards
Stadium
(East)

Towards
River
(West)



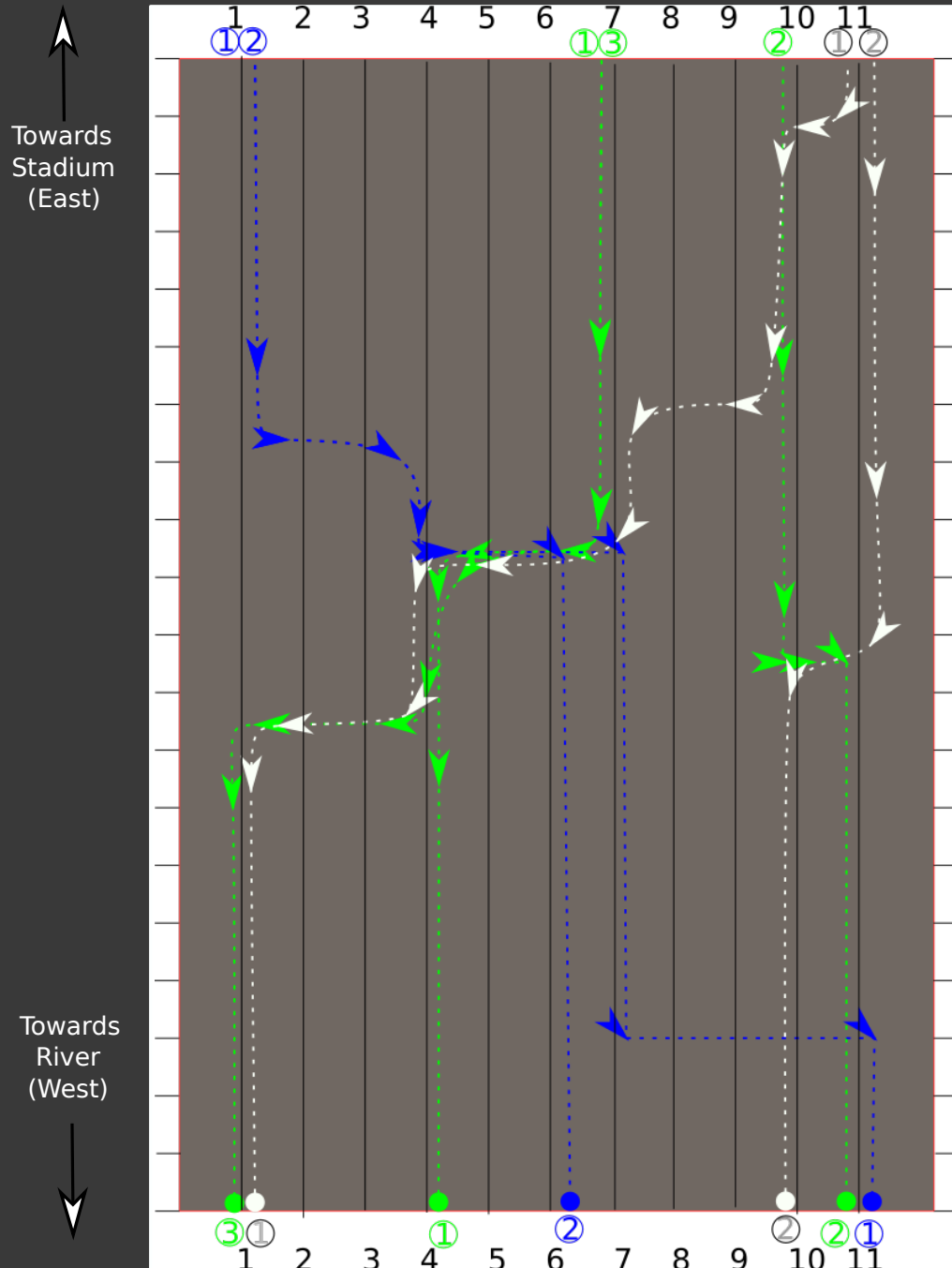
Red:

1 - Crack School (C1) ★★★	5.12d
2 - Fisting Pablo (C3) ★★	5.11d
Mix of 2 and 3 Red - Squeeze	5.11d
3 - Lockdown (C4) ★★★	5.11d
3 - Lockdown 2.0 ★★	5.12b
3 - Lockdown 3.0 ★★	5.12d
4 - Edward Paddle Hands (C6) ★★★	5.13b
5 - Slim Jim (C7) ★★★	5.13b
6 - Baggy Trousers (C8) ★	5.11d
7 - Second Wave (C10) ★★★	5.13a
8 - Parallel Universe (C11) ★★★	5.13a

Blue:

1 - Bridge of Dreams ★★★	5.13d
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Crack Den over Ground

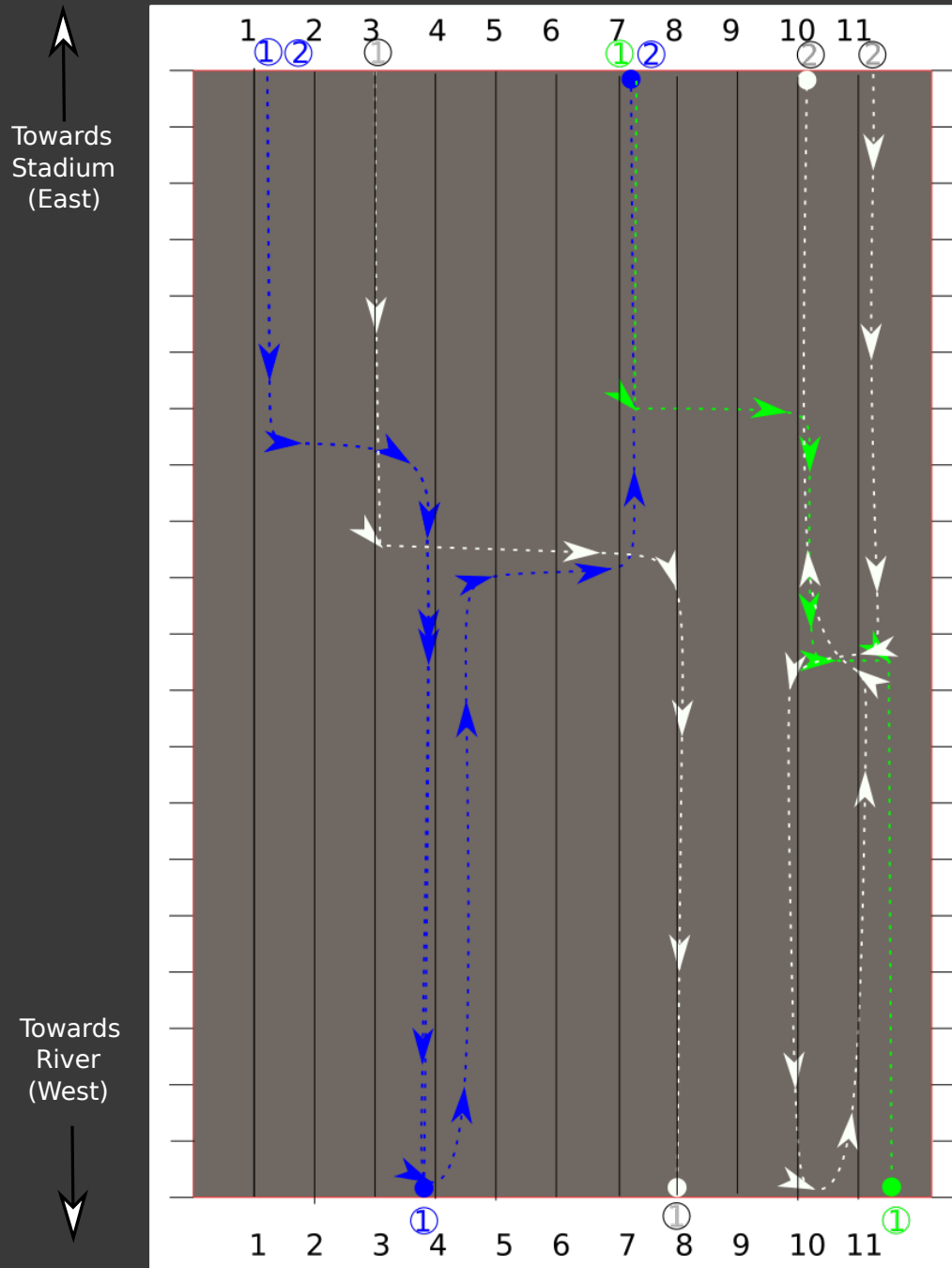


1 Blue - Finding Light ★★★ 5.13c
 2 Blue - New Variant ★★★ 5.13b

1 Green - Pablo Smokes Crack ★★★ 5.12c
 2 Green - The Dab Direct ★★ 5.12d
 3 Green - Middle Aged Troll ★★★ 5.13a

1 White - The NeverEnding Bridge ★★★ 5.13b
 2 White - Struggle Seeker ★★★ 5.13b

Crack Den over Ground



1 Blue - Spacer ★★

5.13a

2 Blue - Eat Yer Bread ★★

5.13a

1 Green - Dab Crew ★★★

5.13a

1 White - Fist Around and Find Out ★★ 5.12c

5.12c

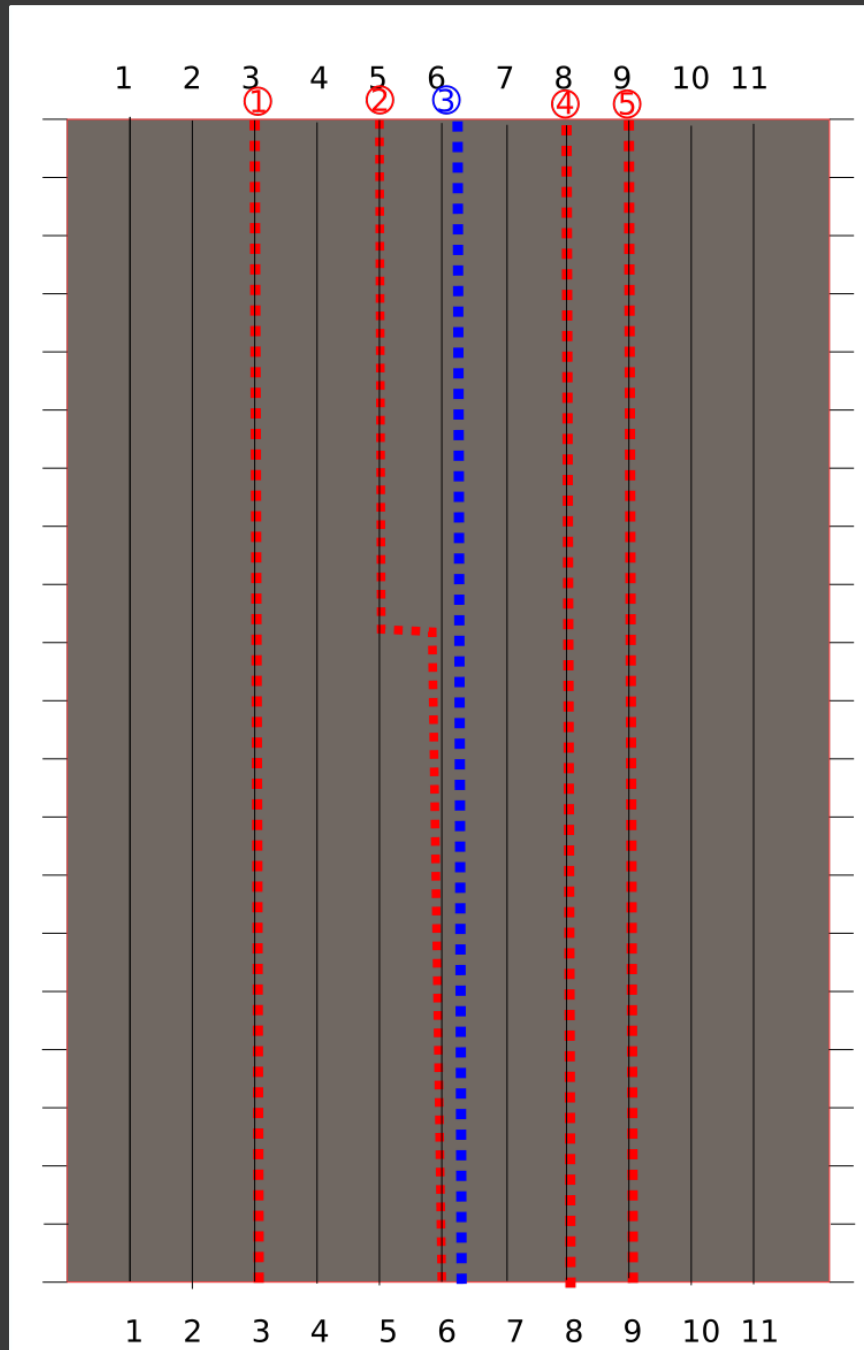
2 White - Mutant X ★★★

5.13b

Crack Den over Water

Towards
Stadium
(East)

Towards
River
(West)



- | | |
|-------------------|-------|
| 1 - Tetanus | 5.11d |
| 2 - Leptospirosis | 5.11c |
| 3 - Weils Crack | 5.12b |
| 4 - Salvon | 5.11d |
| 5 - Covid Crack | 5.12c |

Old Railway Bridge

Expect baffled stares from dog walkers

Rock type : Sandstone

During desperate times, desperate measures were taken to train pockets while imagining warm Spanish limestone crags.

This old railway bridge provide short problems which need a dry spell as the sandstone is quite soft and particularly friable when wet. Don't expect high quality problems but it is a nice change from crimping the fingerboard.

No grades have been given to these problems and plenty of other eliminates can be created with a bit of creativity.

Golf course Side



☐ Black Arete SS ☐ White ☐ Green
☐ Red ☐ Blue

Back Side



☐ Blue

☐ Green

First Ascents

Corstorphine

All FA were done by Loïc Galland or Alessandro Sisto or Justin Gress except from the following ones:

Andy Hein: I Loic it!	Jamie Bickers: Malcom in the Middle Frog SS Finger Chewer	Overhang and Ridge Compress Traverse (Malcom)	Thor Ritual Malcom's Mossy Mantle	Patrick Heger: Slimey Fist
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Ravelston Quarry

All ascents have been done on top rope and it is unlikely that someone will lead them.

Crack Den

All FA were done by Andy Hein except from the following ones:

Robbie Phillips: Pablo Smokes Crack Lockdown 3.0 Dab Crew Baggy Trousers The Dab Direct The NeverEnding Bridge	Pete Whittaker and Tom Randall: Edward Paddle Hands
Morna Baillie: Second Wave	Loïc Galland: Struggle Seeker Mutant X
	Charlie H and Hugo T: Fist Around and Find Out

Ravelston bouldering

All FA were done by Loïc Galland or Alessandro Sisto.

Old Railway Bridge

All FA were done by Loïc Galland.

Disclaimer

I decline any responsibility for injuries incurred during an accident or persecutions for trespassing.

Use your own judgement to establish if the climb is safe and within the limits of the law.

Keep in mind the usual dangers of outdoor climbing: flakes can break, mud is slippery and midge bites are an acquired taste.



Climbing is a dangerous sport

Future Updates

- New Costorphine Sectors
- New Ravelston Sectors



The author in his element