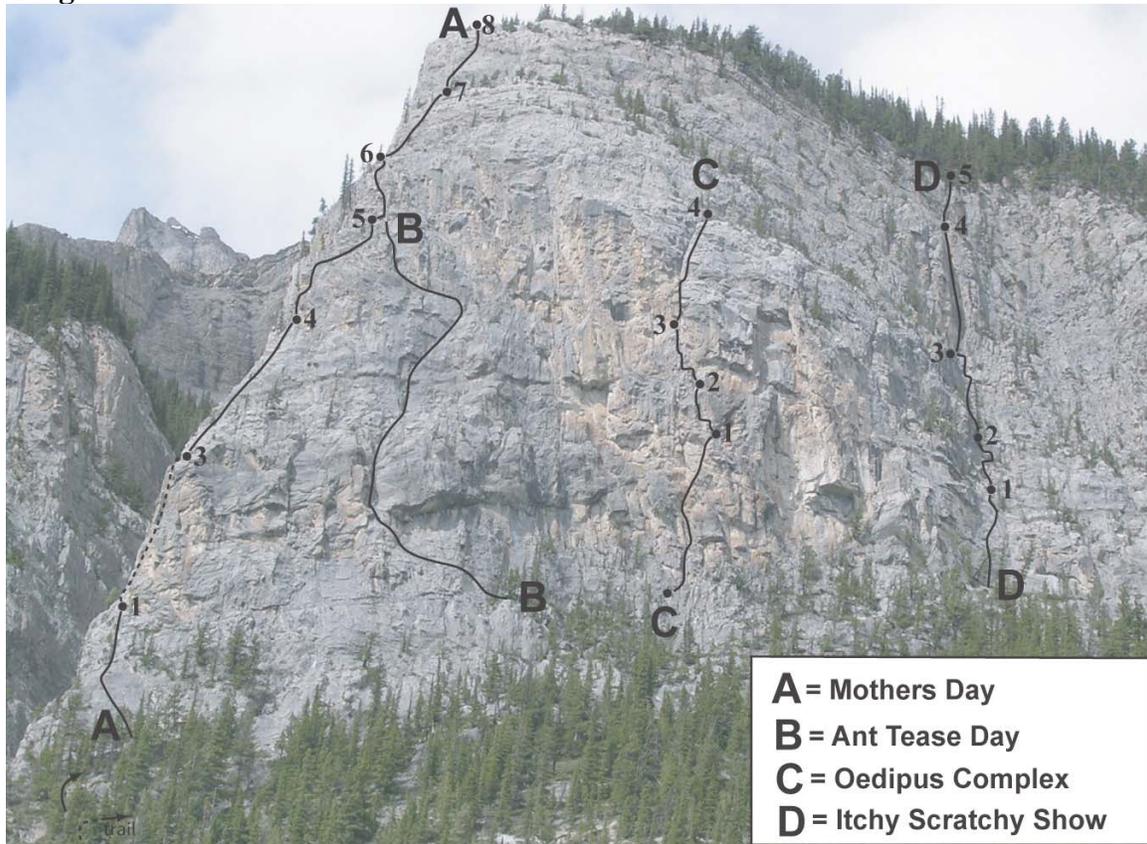


Mothers Day Buttress

© 2006 Chris Perry
Banff Rock

The left side of this buttress forms an attractive prow which is very prominent from the highway and is the line of the classic, moderate route *Mothers Day*. Currently, there are only four routes on the buttress despite it having some of the best rock on the entire band of cliffs. One particular area of interest is the steep, gray rock in the lower part of the buttress to the right of *Mothers Day* and each side of *Ant Tease Day*. A few bolts and some effort may produce some good one or two pitch sport routes in this area. Farther right, the relatively recent route, *Oedipus Complex*, climbs a big left-facing corner system.

Crag Photo:



Approach: From the Trans-Canada Highway, drive east on the Lake Minnewanka road and continue past the animal grid for 0.3 km (0.6 km from the highway) to a small paved turn-off on the right (old entrance to the Cadet Camp). The buttress of *Mothers Day* is directly above. Walk a further 0.2 km along the road to a small, gravel out-wash on the north side, below the drainage on the west side of the buttress. Follow the dry creek bed up for about 100 m and then cross over to a well-defined trail (cairn) on its right-hand (east) side. Follow the trail up through trees to a rock step and scramble up this, moving

left at first and then back right up a small gully. The gully ends at a rib overlooking the main drainage gully. Traverse right immediately (not left into the big gully) and go up a short groove with small trees to regain the rib. Follow braided trails more or less straight up the slope staying close to the main drainage gully. About 75 m below the main cliff a small rock band angles up right and the trail turns east below it. To reach the start of *Mothers Day*, the best approach is to turn left at this point, skirt around the west end of the cliff band, and scramble up to the base of the slab – see topo. For *Ant Tease Day* and routes farther east, stay on the main trail heading east below the cliff band and where the cliff band ends, scramble up through a clump of trees to a fainter trail, marked by cairns, that continues across to the right below the main face. Time - 25 minutes to the cliff band.

Descent: The best means of descent from the top of *Mothers Day* is to make a long traverse left (west) across the top of the cliffs to the *Lion's Layback* descent near *Rogan's Gully*. It takes about 1.5 hours. From the flat area at the top of the climb, walk up for a short distance and then follow a good trail that contours left across the hillside and then drops down into the first drainage. Climb up a little on the opposite side to find the continuation trail and then follow it through the trees, across the *Cascade Waterfall* drainage, and over to the *Lion's Layback* descent on the east (near) side *Rogan's Gully*. The trail descends the rib, easily at first and then more steeply until it is necessary to move over to the right slightly (looking down) to find a chained station at the top of a short gully. A 20 m rappel reaches the ground and then braided trails lead leftward through scree and bush down to the main *Cascade Waterfall* tourist trail a short distance west of the car.

Mothers Day 335 m, 5.6

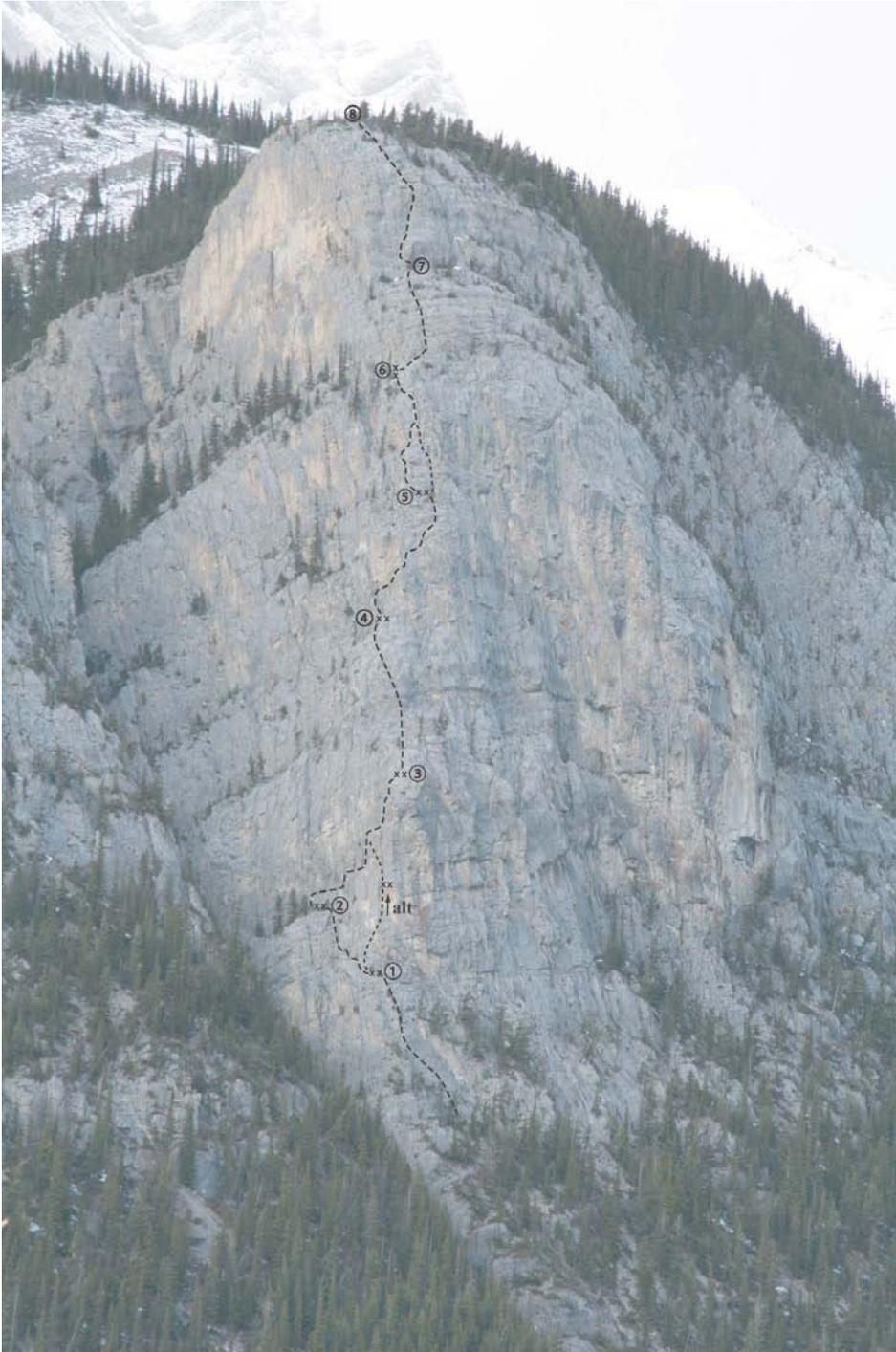
Lloyd MacKay and Gunther Boehnisch

Topo:

Photo:

This classic eight pitch route follows a very aesthetic line up the sharp prow on the left side of the buttress. The climbing is mainly straightforward with little in the way of technical interest but the line and situation makes the climb well worth doing. The rock is rough textured and reasonably solid and the climb has cleaned up well over the years. Bolted stations mark the way but the line may be varied somewhat, particularly in the upper section. A small selection of gear is required and some long slings. It is possible to retreat from anywhere on the route with two 60 m ropes but this is not a recommended means of descent because of rope snagging and rock fall hazard when pulling the ropes.

Photo:



Start: There are two possible ways of beginning the climb. The recommended, and more modern way is to start up an easy, but poorly protected slab directly below the upper prow. The slab is reached either by skirting left around the lower cliff band or by following the main trail past its right-hand side and then traversing left above it - see topo and the *Approach* section above. The original way of starting the route was to scramble

up well to the right of the slab and then traverse left across a ledge system to join Pitch 1 a few metres below the first belay.

1. 40 m, 5.4. From the high point at the base of the slab, climb easily to a small ledge with a tiny tree (small cam placement). Continue up and left to a shallow groove leading up to a tree in a short corner (no protection). Climb the corner to a major ledge system (alternate start from the right) and continue on blocky rock to a chained station at a perfect ledge, left of a tree.

2. 25 m, 5.3. Traverse easily left on ledges and climb a broken groove that slants up left to a large scree ledge with trees. Belay on the left at a 2-bolt station on the far wall.

3. 40 m, 5.6. Climb a short crack on the left to a small tree. Traverse right below a large block and go up into a steep bowl. Make a couple of steep moves up the right hand side of the bowl and then climb up and left to a small ledge and piton in a prominent right-facing corner. Go up past the piton for about 2 m and then make awkward moves out right (5.6) and up to a piton in a small ledge. Continue up to a short corner with a piton at the base and climb the corner making a steep move at the top to reach a chained station on the ridge.

2. & 3. alt. 5.7. From the station at the top of pitch 1, move left and climb up to a steep right-facing corner. Climb the corner to a fixed station and either split the pitch here or continue to the top of the corner and then go up and left to join the normal pitch 3 at the big corner before the crux traverse right.

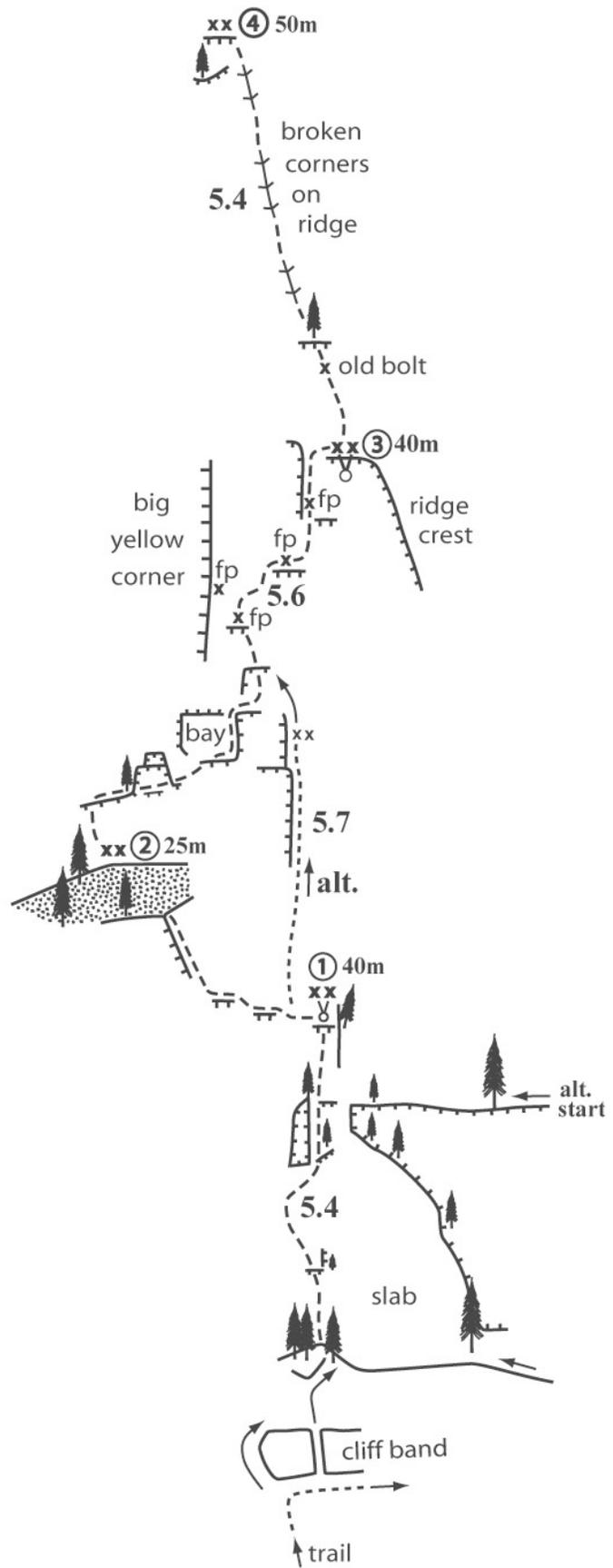
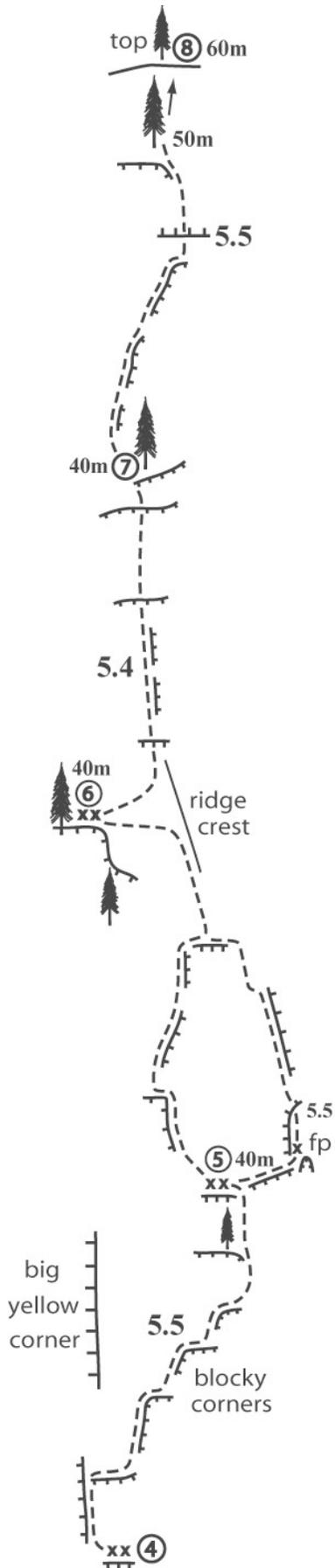
4. 50 m, 5.4. Climb easily up the ridge past a tree and then follow a series of broken corners, angling slightly left, to a 2-bolt station below and right of a short, steep corner.

5. 40 m, 5.5. Move left and climb the corner and then make a steep rising traverse up and right following a series of short, blocky corners. Climb up past a tree to a 2-bolt station on a steep wall.

6. 40 m, 5.5. There are two possibilities above. The easier alternative is to move left and climb a short corner that leads to easier ground and then on to the ridge crest higher up. The same point may be reached by traversing right from the belay to a piton in a corner and then climbing the corner, making a steep exit left at the top. Once on the ridge crest, continue easily for about 10 m and then move left and down to a hidden 2-bolt station near a big tree.

7. 40 m, 5.4. Move back right on to the ridge crest and climb a series of broken grooves to a good tree on a big ledge.

8. 60 m, 5.5. Move left and climb a broken groove that angles up and right and ends at a small roof. Make a steep move over the roof to reach easier ground and belay either at the first big tree (50 m) or stretch to rope out to a tree at the very top (60 m).



Ant Tease Day 300 m, 5.8

Rene Boisselle and Peter Monod, July 1984

About 100 m right of *Mothers Day*, a major roof line runs rightwards across the lower part of the cliff. *Ant Tease Day* climbs through a weakness on the left side of this and starts below and to the right, on a treed ledge. The climb has seldom been repeated and no additional information is available besides the first ascent description. It follows a good line through the lower overhangs but moves left near the top to join the upper pitches of *Mothers Day*. Perhaps with the modern use of bolts a more direct finish could be added through the steep upper section. The rock is fairly compact and at present, a small selection of pitons is probably worth taking.

Note that no ants were harmed during the naming of this route which is a pun on the word *aunt* – say the name quickly! Rene Boisselle denies all responsibility and the likely culprit is Murray Toft, during preparation of the first *Banff Rock*.

Start: Follow the main approach trail up past the right-hand side of the first cliff band and then pick up the fainter, cairned trail that goes across to the right. Climb a short gully through a second cliff band and then scramble up and left to a tree at the left end of the ledge.

Climb up towards the roof until it is possible to traverse out left under it to a small belay. Continue up a slab in an open corner to gain a right-leaning ramp line. Follow this to its end and climb steep corners moving left to finish up the last two pitches of *Mothers Day*.

Oedipus Complex 130 m, 5.10c

Peter MacPherson and Jeff Perron, 2001

See also Topo -Text description.

This modern route climbs a striking corner/crack system on the wall about 200 m right of *Mothers Day*. The corner faces left and ends at about two thirds height. The climbing is interesting throughout and there is one short, difficult section which is protected by bolts. The upper corner is easier than it looks and overall the route manages to find good climbing and stay away from some sections of loose rock.

Gear: Medium rack to 4 in.

Start: After climbing the short gully through the second cliff band (see *Ant Tease Day*), continue farther right following the faint, cairned trail until a steep left-facing corner system looms directly overhead. Gear up on the right and then scramble up easy slabs moving left and then back right to a ledge with a small tree and single bolt belay, below and slightly left of the start of the corner system.

1. 45 m, 5.9. From the bolt belay, move up right into the corner and go up past an easy, wide crack to ledges. Step left and climb a slabby face past two bolts (5.9) to a right-leaning slot. Follow the slot up and right past two fixed pitons to a station at the base of a blocky corner. Either split the pitch here or continue up the corner (5.6) to a bolted station on the right below a bulging wall.

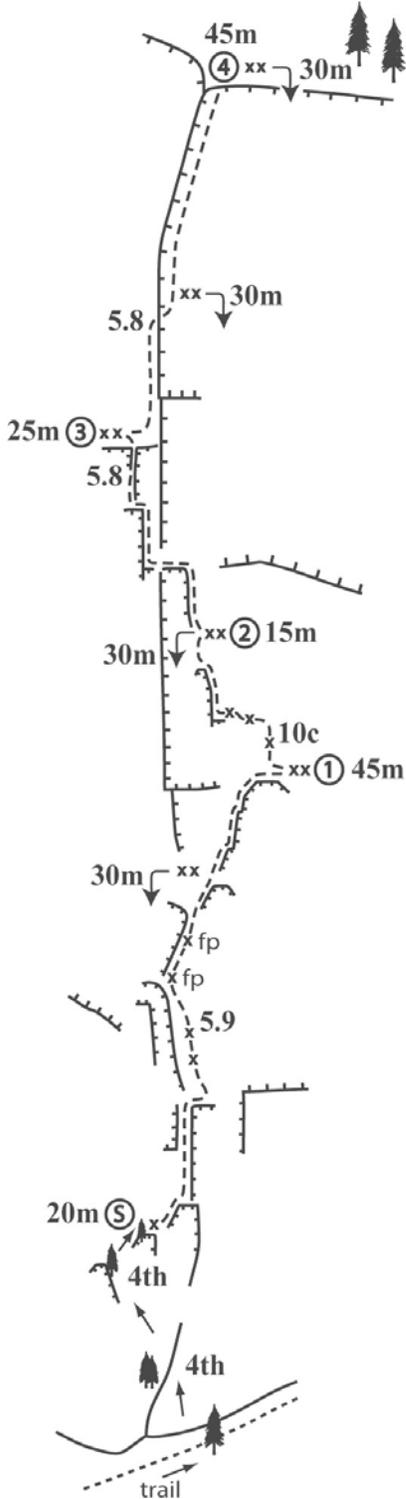
2. 15 m, 5.10c. Move left to a bolt and make a couple of steep moves up the wall to reach good holds. Hand traverse left past two bolts to a short corner and a good resting place. Climb the corner and the arête above on excellent rock to a fixed station a short distance higher.

3. 25 m, 5.8. Climb up for about 5 m to a ledge which leads left around the arete into the main corner system. Go up to a higher ledge and then move left and climb a short crack to a bolt belay at a big ledge, below and left of the upper corner.

4. 45 m, 5.8. Follow the corner for about 10 m and make a steep move right to a break on the front face. Climb up past a fixed station and continue more easily on good grey rock to the upper ledge.

Descent: Four 30 m rappels from ring bolt anchors.

Topo -Text description:



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2. 15 m, 5.10c. Move left to a bolt and make a couple of steep moves up the wall to reach good holds. Hand traverse left past two bolts to a short corner and a good resting place. Climb the corner and the arete above on excellent rock to a fixed station a short distance higher.

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Descent: Four 30 m rappels from ring bolts anchors.

The Itchy and Scratchy Show 160 m, 5.10a

Kelly MacLeod and Dan Dufresne, August 2004

See also Topo -Text description.

This mixed sport/gear route follows a prominent open-book corner in the upper part of a wide bowl near the right end of the cliff. The corner is reached by a series of sport pitches on the lower-angled bottom section. At present, the two upper pitches have no bolts or fixed stations and if the climb is completed to the top, the long walk-off descent to the left must be used. Alternatively, descent may be made by rappel (with two ropes) from the top of pitch 3.

Gear: A small TCU or medium sized nut is useful for the traverse on pitch 2, and some long slings. Large gear and a good selection of sizes are required for pitch 4.

Start: The start of the climb is identified by a prominent, right-leaning tree, visible from the road, directly beneath the upper corner. Approach as for *Oedipus* and continue traversing right for about 100 m to the tree.

1. 30 m, 5.10a. Climb prickly slabs past a number of bolts to a ramp heading up left to a tree. Branch climb out right at the top to a fixed station on a large ledge.

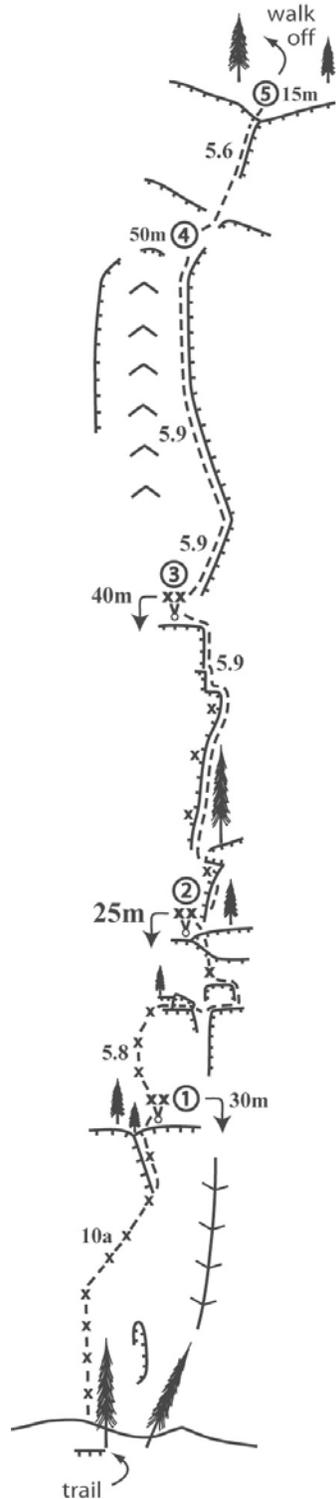
2. 25 m, 5.8. Climb straight up above the belay past two bolts and then angle right past a third to gain a ledge system. Traverse right along the ledges, stepping down to cross a gully, onto easier ground. Move up and left to a bolt and then climb up to mossy ledges and a fixed station.

3. 40 m, 5.9. Climb easily up to a small overhang, reach out left for a good hold, and then layback up to easier ground and a large tree, also visible from the ground. Climb clean rock on the left and where it steepens at a bolt, move up and right into a layback corner. Go up this and flakes above to a small ledge and fixed station.

4. 50 m, 5.9. Move up and right to the base of the big corner and climb it to ledges at the top (no fixed station).

5. 15 m, 5.6. Continue up to trees at the top of the cliff.

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