




RAPTOR - Mt RUNDLE

30 min 220m    10c
Mark Whalen

Raptor

Raptor enjoys the best situation and more moderate climbing than its companions on EEOR. The rock is solid, clean, and comforted by both natural forces and the passage of many scuffing boots. The line is well-equipped and has (mostly) roomy and convenient stances at belays. The climb even seems to be sheltered a bit from the wind by the shoulder of the mountain. Be particularly aware of a couple of things, however - 1) other parties on the route can be the biggest hazard and impediment to progress, and 2) though there are long stretches of straightforward rambling from bolt to bolt, there are demanding passages both at the beginning and near the end of the route. Psyche yourself accordingly.

Take

....at least 14 quickdraws and a 50 metre rope, plus helmets and a couple of long slings and locking carabiners. Be prepared for wind and foul weather, which can appear suddenly from the west, over the top of the crag. Some shoes for the descent, water, and food will all help the outing feel more like a holiday.

If you're successful, you'll be coming down a trail along the ridge of Mt. Rundle and won't be returning to the base of the route. Plan to carry everything you'll want for the day and the descent with you on the climb.

The Route

Get organized at the last trees to the right of the big gully. The gully can be a bit of a bowling alley for loose rocks, so try to limit the time you spend on the talus at its mouth. Cross over to the left side, where you can see bolts going up a discontinuous buttress, and get going. Bolt count includes clipping rap-stations.

1) 5.10c 7 bolts 29m

Flip for the first lead. You get the hardest move of the whole climb at the 3rd bolt. It's unfortunate that this greasy crank and mantle has to be part of an otherwise pretty nice route. Bear down on tiny edges and sidepulls, seek in vain for secret footholds, and paw for purchase on the slopers over left. Or just pull on the draws like everyone else does. Find the chains and a semi-hanging stance a little further along.

2) 5.9 13 bolts 46m

Hardest over the terrain above the station, past bolts #1 and #2. Friction, sidepulls, and mantling. Then on the other side of the rap-station there's some low-angle interest, with nifty spans and rockovers. Hit a positive break and ramble up right to chains.

3) 5.5 8 bolts 43m

50 metres of memory-loss. Follow widely-spaced bolts pretty much straight up. Then trend right a bit over big ledges to chains in a corner. If you're having trouble spotting the next clip from the one you're leaving, just follow the trail of boot rubber on the rock.

4) 5.7 12 bolts 38m

Better fun. Up the corner on flat edges. The climbing stiffens a bit circa #5, and then you get a neat layback move at #7. This would be your crux. Find more of the same up a ledgy corner with some cool stemming. The chains are over easy ledges to the right, beneath an evil-looking overhanging corner.

5) 5.10a 8 bolts 26m

Traverse a bit left, then move up and ease back right into the bottom of the bomb-bay corner (thought you were going to miss it, eh?). Grind and grapple your way up the slot, stretching precariously for clips on the left wall. The moves are positive, and the holds are all there, but there *could* be some cursing. Chains are immediately over the last overhanging bit, in a little cockpit to the right.

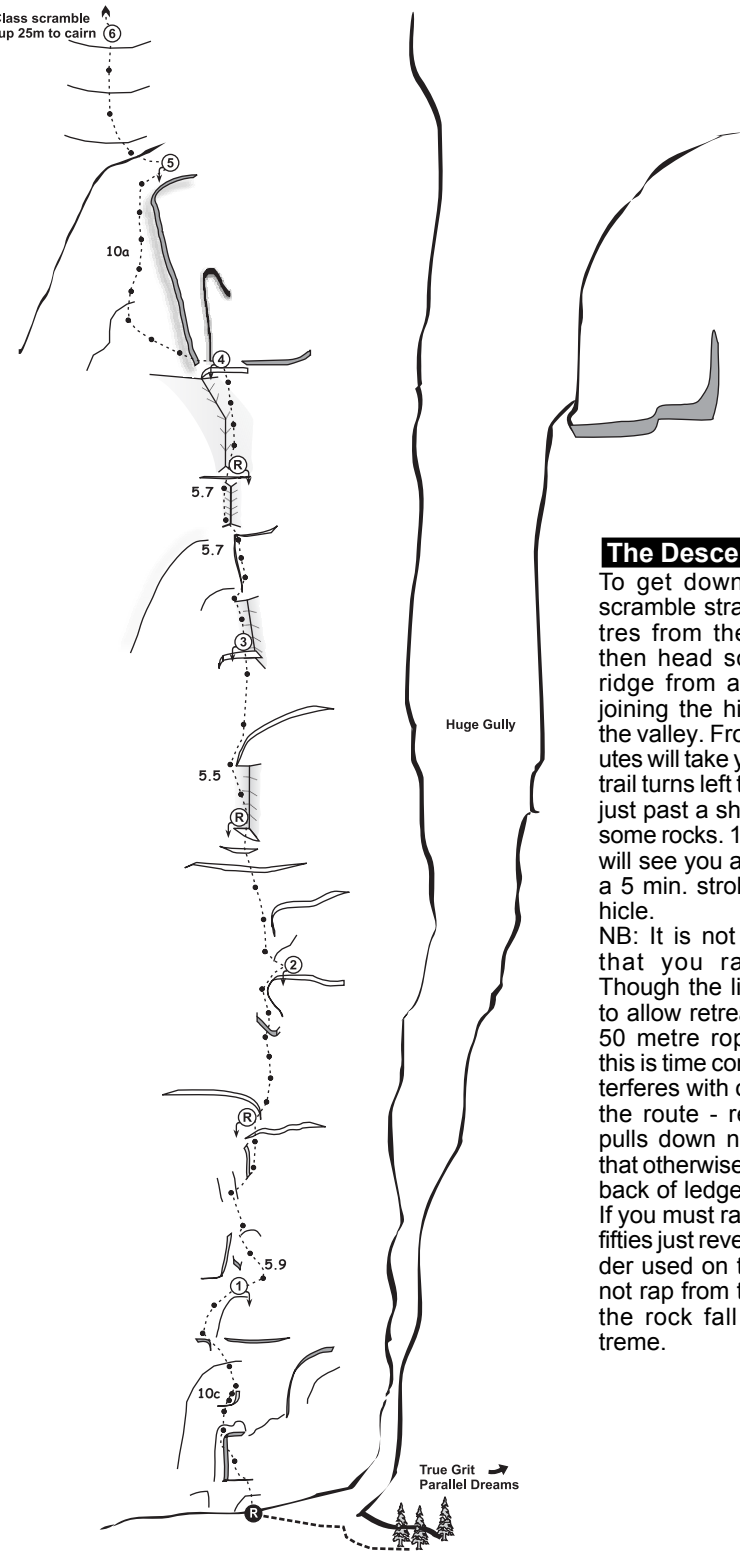
6) 5.3 3 bolts 28m

Basically up, through a rotten band, then over better, cleaner, grey rock to the final station where some ledges run left. Though it might be tempting (you're at the top, after all), don't traverse out on the ledges. Rather, have the second lead through and carry on straight up 3rd class ground another 25 metres to a cairn on the ridge. This is the TOP.

To the man with no knowledge, rocks are just rocks, and trees just trees. To the man with a little knowledge, rocks are more than just rocks, and trees not only trees. To the man with complete knowledge, rocks are just rocks, and trees just trees.

Old Buddhist Proverb

3rd Class scramble
straight up 25m to cairn



The Descent

To get down from Raptor, scramble straight up 25 metres from the final anchor, then head south along the ridge from a cairn, quickly joining the hikers' trail from the valley. From here 25 minutes will take you to where the trail turns left toward the lake, just past a short slot through some rocks. 15 minutes more will see you at the road, only a 5 min. stroll from your vehicle.

NB: It is not recommended that you rappel Raptor. Though the line is equipped to allow retreat with a single 50 metre rope (25m raps), this is time consuming and interferes with other parties on the route - retrieving ropes pulls down numerous rocks that otherwise lie safely at the back of ledges.

If you must rap and have two fifties just reverse the pitch order used on the way up. Do not rap from the 6th pitch as the rock fall hazard is extreme.