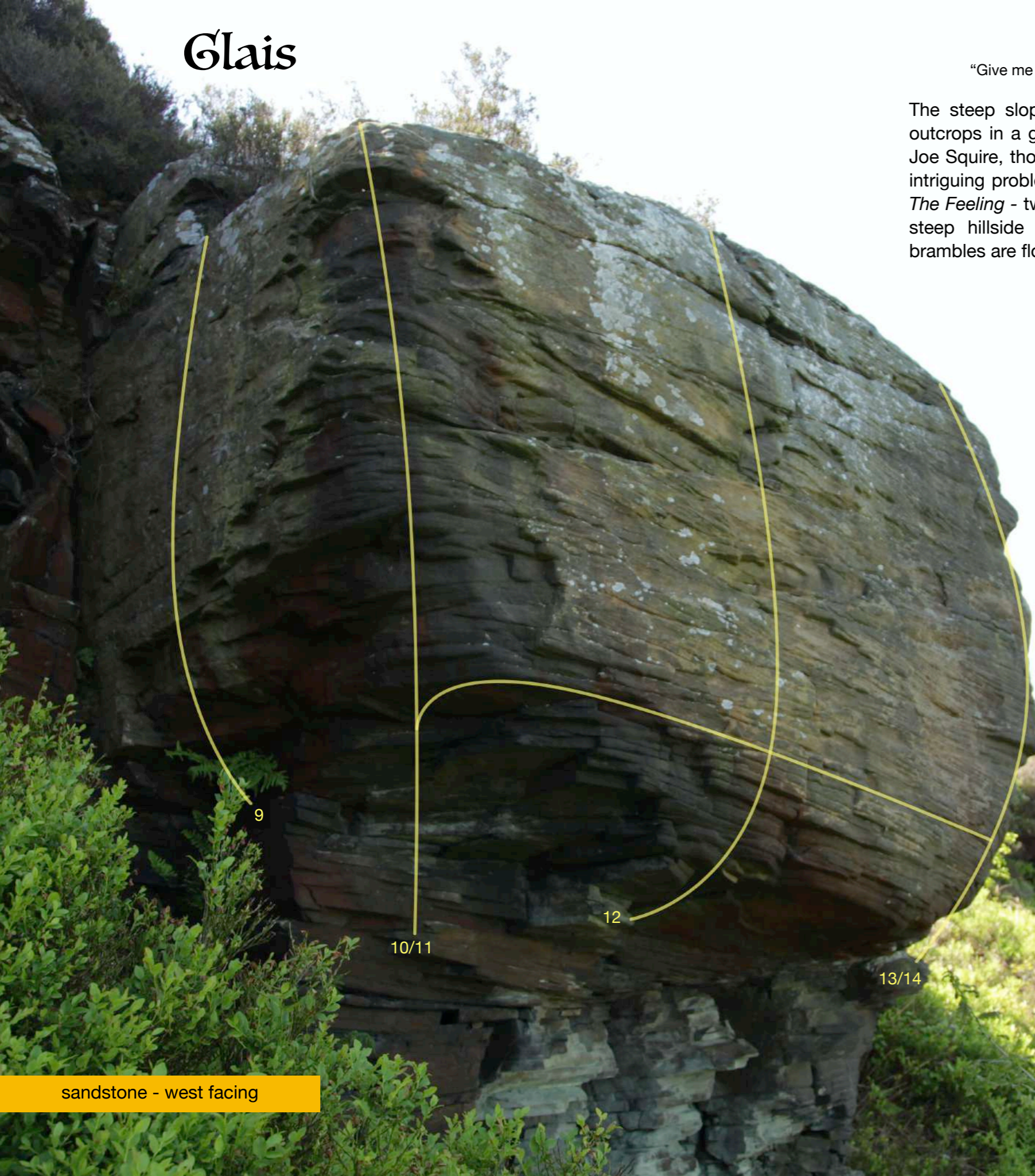


Glais

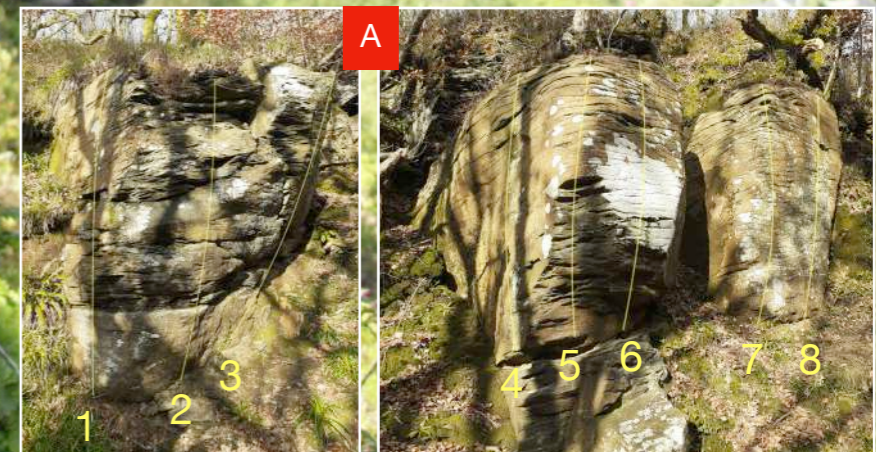
“Give me man’s hell, not God’s remorseless heaven” - Niclas y Glais

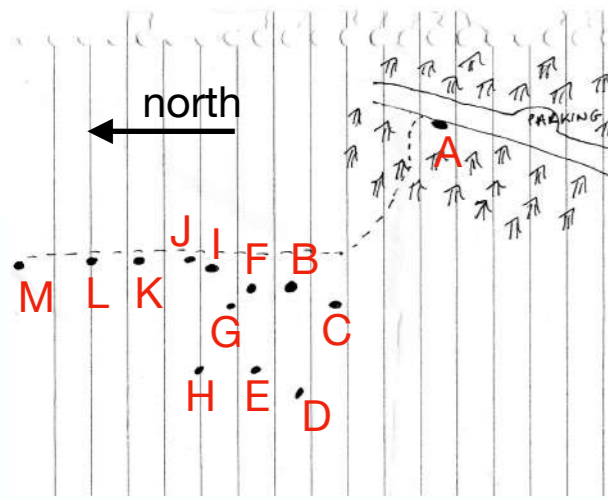
The steep slopes above the village Glais have a scattering of natural outcrops in a gorgeously peaceful hilltop situation. Initially developed by Joe Squire, those now following in his footsteps will discover a variety of intriguing problems on lovely natural rock, including *The Watchtower* and *The Feeling* - two of the very best in South Wales. But moving around the steep hillside can be tricky, especially when heather, bracken, and brambles are flourishing.

Approach - from the A4067 roundabout at Glais turn south into Birchgrove Road (signposted Glais/Birchgrove B4291) to cross the Tawe river. Take the second left into Graigola Road (SA7 9HS) then second right (just after Balaclava Road) into Graig Y Pal (SA7 9HP). Follow this uphill into oak woodland where there is room for a car to park beside the entrance to Craig y Pal quarry (not described here) and before a small roadside buttress (**A**) on the left. Walk from here to take a small path uphill (north) just after the buttress and follow this a short distance to reach a larger track. Turn right and continue up through woods then out to open hilltop. Continue along the edge of the hillside, veering left beyond a small bench to head downhill beside some low rocks to reach *The Watchtower* (**B**) and an area of buttresses (**C-J**). Other sections (**I-O**) can be found by continuing along the path which runs along the top edge then dropping down the hillside (occasionally literally depending on your ability to read the ground beneath the heather) at appropriate points (as described).



sandstone - west facing





2. **Name unknown** [4+, ss] The front of the buttress (*fa unknown*).

3. **Name unknown** (4+, ss) the right side of the overhanging buttress, starting at some cracks (*fa unknown*).

4. **Slots** [5+, ss] link two slots on the left side of the bulging buttress. Tricky to start and with a bad landing (*fa unknown*).

5. **Glais roadside** [4+] an attractive line up the bulging arête beside the road. Quite good (*fa unknown*).

6. **Face-off** [5] climb the front face of the bulging buttress (*fa unknown*).

7. **Arête** [6a] the left arête provides a tricky few moves but has a bad landing [P.Tucker & O.Keynes 12/19].

8. **Face** [5] Reach and use a good slot on the right side of the vertical wall. Bad landing [P.Tucker & O.Keynes 12/19].

Descend off the hillside to reach the aesthetic 'watchtower' (**B**):

9. **The Knife** [5] The sidewall left of E.T.A from a low start (Joe Squire 2011).

Two small buttresses (**A**) beside the road offer a handful of problems but take care with the landings here.

1. **Roadside** [4] The left side of the overhanging buttress by the road (*fa unknown*).





Just beside the 'watchtower' is a small jutting arête (D) of good quality sandstone offering two problems.

16. **Arête** [4, ss] Sit-start the arête and use large holds to gain the top (Joe Squire 2011).

17. **Right of arête** [4+, ss] The wall right of the arête (Joe Squire 2011).

Around 20m right (south) of the 'watchtower' is a wall of broken outcrop (C). The problems here have flat landings.

18. **Name unknown** [4] The left section of wall (Joe Squire 2011).

19. **Name unknown** [4, ss] Left arête, broken crack, and all else to the top. Can be done eliminating various features at a similar difficulty (Joe Squire 2011).

20. **Name unknown** [4+, ss] A tricky sit-start from a sloping shelf leads to an easier finish (Joe Squire 2011).

21. **Name unknown** [4+, ss] Sit-start the shelf at a square recess and head up (Joe Squire 2011).

22. **Name unknown** [4+, ss] The right side of the shelf (Joe Squire 2011).

There is a small problem (D) hiding at the bottom of the hillside. To find this head straight down around 50m from the 'watchtower'.

23. **Nice in Glais** [5+] Tackle the rounded bulge of good quality sandstone jutting out from the base of the hillside. Hard to find but worth seeking out (O.Keynes 12/19).

10. **E.T.A** [4+, ss] The left arête from an obvious rail is a good problem overshadowed by its more illustrious neighbours (Joe Squire 2011).

11. **What a feeling** [6a, ss] Link *E.T.A* into *The Feeling* by traversing the roof lip. Linking it the other way is slightly harder (Liam Fyfe 13/6/14).

12. **The Watchtower** [6a, ss] From an obvious flat hold climb through the bulging roof and up the middle of the wall above. A classic problem in a superb situation, and one of the best in South Wales (Joe Squire 2011).

#southsidetour

13. **The Feeling** [5+] The right arête is a fantastic problem, holding its own as another one of the best in South Wales. Satisfying moves and pleasing holds lead up the gritesque arête from a sloping shelf. Finish in a stunning position with a smile (Joe Squire 2011).

#southsidetour

14. **Lichen ledge** [5] The wall right of *The Feeling*. Start from the sloping ledge (Joe Squire 2011).

15. **Hands full of heather** [5, ss] From the sloping ledge use a left-hand side pull to reach into a sloping finish (O.Keynes 27/11/18).

Contour the hillside (north) just above (D) for around 30m to reach (E), a small outcrop of good stone leaning back to create an interesting slab.

24. **Name unknown** [5] The left arête is not so easy as it looks (Joe Squire 2011).

25. **Name unknown** [6a] The centre of the slab from an obvious shelf is surprisingly tricky and a very good problem (Joe Squire 2011).

26. **Name unknown** [5+] The right arête (Joe Squire 2011).

Close to the 'watchtower', at about the same height 20m further north along the hillside, is another large buttress (F).

27. **Crack up** [4+] The crack on the left feels quite high (Joe Squire 2011).

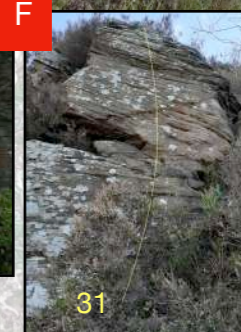
28. **Stay fly** [5+] The wall between the crack and the arête. Easy to start, tricky to finish (Joe Squire 2011).

29. **On the fly** [5] An excellent line with a strong sense of exposure. Start in the groove at the front of the buttress and climb through the intimidating bulge above on large holds (Joe Squire 2011).

30. **Name unknown** [5, ss] Left of *Crack up* is a small blunt rib of good looking rippled rock. Crouch[?] start as low as you can go using a good foothold at the base [Joe Squire 2011].

31. **Name unknown** [3] A few metres further left is a slabby section of broken rock (Joe Squire 2011).

Contour north for another 20m to reach a small attractive buttress (G).





Joe Squire has *The Feeling* (above) and on *The Watchtower* (below)



32. **Name unknown** [4+, ss] From a low start in the recess climb through the overhang using large holds. A nice basic problem (*Joe Squire 2011*).

33. **Name unknown** [4+, ss] Traverse up and left above the overhang from a sit-start at the front-centre of the buttress. Finish as for 32 (*Joe Squire 2011*).

34. **Name unknown** [4, ss] The centre of the wall. Pleasingly simple (*Joe Squire 2011*).

Around 30m diagonally downhill north from (G) is a small undercut outcrop (H). This has a trio of very good highballs.

35. **One step** [5+] The rounded left side of the buttress, with a committing move from the plinth (*O.Keynes 12/19*).

36. **Two steps** [6b] The bulge is a tough number and feels high with a bad landing. A great classic problem (*O.Keynes 12/19*).

37. **Three steps more** [?] The scoop is another tricky problem (*O.Keynes 12/19*).

Contour 20m (north) across steep hillside from (F) to reach (I).

38. **Name unknown** [4+] The left arête of the roof (*Joe Squire 2011*).



39. **Name unknown** [6a] A good line through the middle of the roof (*Joe Squire 2011*).

40. **Name unknown** [4+] The right side of the roof (*Joe Squire 2011*).

41. **Dead ivy** [4] The right side of the buttress feels a bit scrappy but is quite entertaining (*O.Keynes 12/19*).

There are some boulders (J) 20m further along, just off the top of the ridge.

42. **In Patagonia** [4] Pleasant front left side of the tall, thin buttress (*O.Keynes & P.Tucker 12/19*).

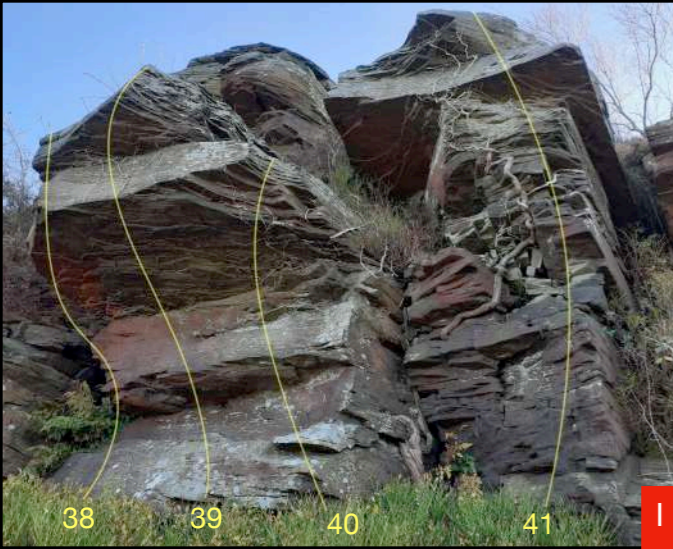
43. **Dripping in Patagucci** [5, ss] Right side of the tall, thin buttress, from a big low hold beneath the overhang (*O.Keynes & P.Tucker 12/19*).

44. **Ughh** [4+, ss] The centre of the left overhang is an unpleasant one move wonder (*O.Keynes 12/19*).

45. **Eurghh** [4?, ss] Left of the jutting roof on snappy-feeling rock, with a tricky mantle finish (*O.Keynes 12/19*).

46. **Arghh** [5, ss] Direct through the obvious roof. Is it really worth it? (*O.Keynes 12/19*).





Continue along the hilltop path for about 50m north before cutting downhill a short distance to reach a tall slab (K).

47. **Name unknown** [3] Left side of the tall slab (Joe Squire 2011).

48. **Name unknown** [3] Centre of the tall slab from a ledge (Joe Squire 2011).

49. **Name Unknown** [3] The pleasant groove/arête on the right of the tall slab (Joe Squire 2011).

Just left of this are two small problems, side-by-side:

50. **Name unknown** [4+, ss] The left problem has a tricky start and is the better of the two (Joe Squire 2011).

51. **Name unknown** [4, ss] The right-hand problem (Joe Squire 2011).

Continue further north along the hilltop path for another 50m before dropping down towards a single fir tree. The next buttness (L) here is split in half, characterised by a taller right side of good rock but with steep landings.

52. **Name unknown** [6a, ss] A big move on the far left (Joe Squire 2011)



53. **Name unknown** [5, ss] The side wall of the left section from a low start (Joe Squire 2011).

54. **Name unknown** [4] Left of the right section through a scooped feature (Joe Squire 2011).

55. **Name unknown** [5+] The bulging centre of the righthand section, starting from an obvious pocket. A good highball line, tricky to start with a bad landing (Joe Squire 2011).

56. **Name unknown** [5] The right arête lulls you into a false sense of security (Joe Squire 2011).

The final area is found another 200m along the hillside. Head downhill by a large boulder lying close to the wall. The buttness (M) features a classic looking square cut arête.

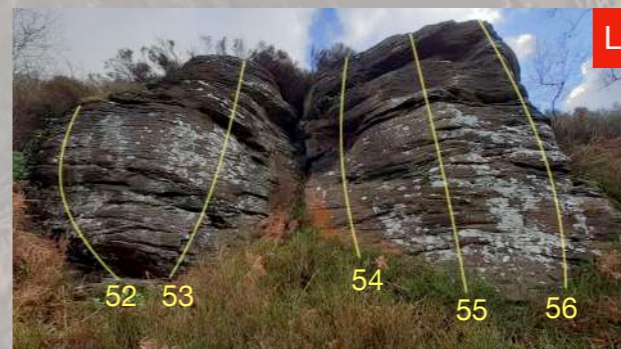
57. **Name unknown** [4, ss] The left sidewall (Joe Squire 2011).

58. **Nana Rogers** [4+, ss] The classic looking arête is a great problem and well worth the walk to reach it (Joe Squire 2011). #southsidetour

59. **Red wall** [5] Centre of the front wall. Another very good problem (Joe Squire 2011).

60. **Name unknown** [4] Beside the square-cut buttness is a smaller laid back slab (Joe Squire 2011).

Hidden in the trees around 15m further north is an area of broken outcrop. At the bottom of this is a large buttness (N) that, despite it's size, has only one worthwhile line. There is also a worthwhile boulder at the top (O).

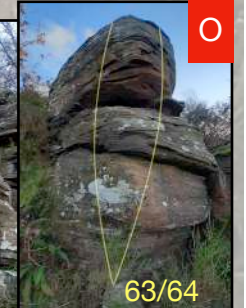


61. **Name unknown** [5?, ss] Just left of the obvious jutting roof (Joe Squire 2011).

62. **Name unknown** [4+] The centre of the wall has an obvious line of good rock (Joe Squire 2011).

63. **Name unknown** [4, ss] From a low start on the rounded nose head up left (Joe Squire 2011).

64. **Name unknown** [4, ss] Start as for 63 but head up the rounded front (Joe Squire 2011).



Paul Tucker feeling out *Nana Rogers*

