



by Colin Reece

Updated by Paul Badenoch, May 2014

Moonlight Butte is a 10-20m high cliff of brown, orange and white quartzite high on the north-eastern flank of Rawnsley Bluff. Clearly visible from Bottom Camp, Moonarie, it offers some of the cleanest and best one-pitch climbing in South Australia. A number of lines remain to be climbed, mostly in the higher grades, but choose one of the cooler months.

Access

Moonlight Butte is in the Flinders Ranges National Park. Its left end is close to the boundary of Rawnsley Park station. It lies within the area designated for rockclimbing by the National Parks & Wildlife Service. The NPWS Climber's Code of Conduct applies.

The crag is most easily approached directly from Bottom Camp. Walk south along the fence for 600m, cross a creek with river red gums and continue up the hill. Hop over the fence at a cairn and head for the valley, passing the occasional cairn and a small rocky outcrop at two-thirds distance. Increasing vegetation has made following the cairned route more difficult, but if you aim for the valley you'll be okay. After the rocky outcrop, make for the north end of a long ledge which is a convenient path into the valley. Follow cairns on the north side of the creek for perhaps 100m, the marked path then switches to the south side. Eventually sidle left up a bouldery slope near the right end of the red crag (Wallaby Wall, left centre of photo above) which leads to the right end of Moonlight Butte. A tougher approach can be made from Rawnsley Park, up and over the bluff. Another alternative is walking across the plateau from the top of the Moonarie descent gully but recent growth has made that a tough prospect. A five-star bivvy can be found just north of the creek in the main valley at about the level of Moonlight Butte.

For descent at the cliff, either climb down Re-entry or use the abseil chains at the arête L of Over the Moon or above This Route Cannot be Pronounced.

Warnings

All climbing is undertaken at the climber's risk. Loose rock is a particularly dangerous hazard. You must exercise judgement and discretion when using and interpreting this guide. Most routes have had only one ascent.

Rockclimbing is hazardous. The authors accept no responsibility for any inaccurate or incomplete information or any event arising from the use of this guide. The landowners and occupiers accept no responsibility for your actions.

The area is remote from any source of help. Parties should include members experienced at climbing in remote and undeveloped areas. All members of climbing parties should obtain instruction from a skilled rockclimbing instructor.

Climbs are listed R to L facing the rock.

Crack in the Portal 7m 13 The boulder 15m R of the R end of Moonlight Buttress. Michael Hillan, Luke Adams 6.6.09

**** Lift Off 15m 21** At the R end of Moonlight Buttress. Launch up to the roof at 5m, move L with difficulty and weave up the interesting wall. Tim Macartney-Snape, Michael Hillan, Luke Adams, Paul Badenoch 1.6.08

Lunar Tick 15m 19 Begin 8m L of LO and 4m R of GCTMT. A bulgy start leads to a short R-facing corner and a rest on a ledge. Finish up to the R. Colin Reece, Paul Badenoch 29.5.99

Ground Control to Major Tom 16m 18 The finger crack L of LT. Through a bulge then on to easier ground past a bush. Colin Reece, Shane Smeets 8.97

Moonlight Sonata 18m 9 The chimney 2m L of GCTMT. Sonja Klebe, Paul Badenoch 4.4.98

Over the Moon 18m 16 The chimney 15m L of MS. Tubes protect the first 12m. Some loose rock. Colin Reece, Greg Nicholls 4.97

11m L of OTM is a chimney behind a 10m-high shattered flake

Flying Lessons 18m 16 The hand crack 7m L of the shattered flake. Through the bulge and on. Colin Reece, Greg Nicholls 4.97

*** Damons in Space 20m 17** The clean corner-crack 2m L of FL. Colin Reece, Nick Wigg 5.97

Kanyaka 20m 13 The chimney-crack with brief difficulties 5m L of DIS. Tubes/big hexes, cams. Paul Badenoch 7.6.98

Artemis 18m 18 Fist crack and wider 4m L of Kanyaka. Big hexes, #4 cams, tubes to 15cm. Colin Reece, Shane Smeets 8.97



*Paul Badenoch attempting the first ascent of Lift Off.
Photo: Tim Macartney-Snape*

* **Jupiter 16m 19** An offwidth struggle 3m L of Artemis. Big cams, tubes to 15cm. Colin Reece, Nick Wigg 5.97

** **Methane Rain 14m 19** The wall 2m L of Jupiter to a ledge at 4m. Ignore the (surprisingly tricky) steps on the L and continue up the crack. Small wires and cams. Paul Badenoch 2.4.10 (pinkpoint), Michael Hillan 4.12 (redpoint)

You now reach a section of avalanche debris in the centre of the crag.

Jovial 6m 6 The L crack on the scrappy wall L of the debris. Colin Reece (solo) 1997

Square Orbit 14m 18 Begin 3m L of the arête. Up for 3m, then R to a desperate weakness leading to a ledge. Wander over the back and climb a relatively easy corner. Colin Reece (solo) 1989

* **Lunar Module 14m 20** Start 2m L of SO. R onto wall, then attack the overhang at the convenient crack. Saunter on. Colin Reece, Mike Rosato 5.97

* **What Drop Bear? 14m 14** Up the small corner 1m L of LM, then through a small overhang to an easy-angled crack. Mike Rosato, Colin Reece 5.97

Apocalypse Now and Then 18m 13 Begin 3m L of WDB. Ledge, corner, ledge, jam crack. Rob Lamp, Mark Witham 6.97

* **This Route Cannot Be Pronounced 15m 13** A plumb-line incorporating the corner of ANAT. Mark Witham, Rob Lamp 6.97

What Are Friends For? 15m 14 Straight up the clean finger crack 2m R of the big corner. Nick Wigg, Colin Reece 5.97

Blue Moon 18m 12 The big corner. Sonja Klebe, Paul Badenoch 4.4.98

* **Space Disaster 15m 19** Takes the superb wall L of BM. Place nuts as side runners at 5m. Begin in a niche at ground level and head straight up to the crux. Finish in the crack. Colin Reece, Michael Hartman, Mark Witham 6.97

Colin Reece on the first ascent of Cometary Debris.

Moonquake 15m 19 The arête with one brief detour onto the R face. Two small loose blocks at half-height. Paul Badenoch 7.6.98

Getting Sirius 17m 22 Up the crack L of the arête for 3m, then around the arête and climb the face near the thin crack. Hard-to-place wires and cams. Double ropes. Colin Reece, Nick Wigg 3.97

* **Cometary Debris 15m 18** Begin as for GS, but continue through the overhang. Step L around a suspicious boulder and finish up the crack. Colin Reece, Paul Badenoch, Brett Sedunary 29.5.99

* **Moonstone 14m 14** The corner 4m L of GS, then around the roof formed by the 'magic' perched block. Continue up the crack. Nick Wigg, Colin Reece 1997

* **This Route Cannot Be Uttered By The Human Mouth 12m 15** The second crack. Steep for 5m then easier. Mark Witham, Rob Lamp 6.97

** **Atlas 12m 15** The third crack, straight and clean. Colin Reece (solo) 1989

* **Eclipse of the Heart 12m 14** The fourth, wider, crack. FA unknown.

** **Red Dwarf 18m 23** The first route to breach the fine red wall. Take a direct line 3m L of EOTH past a bolt to the summit block, turned on the L. Hard for shorties. Michael Hillan, Tim Macartney-Snape 31.5.08 (one piece preplaced). FLA with the bolt Michael Hillan 11.4.09

** **Bad Moon Rising 16m 22** Another direct line 2m L of RD. FTRA Michael Hillan 31.5.08, FLA Tim Macartney-Snape 1.6.08 (pinkpoint)

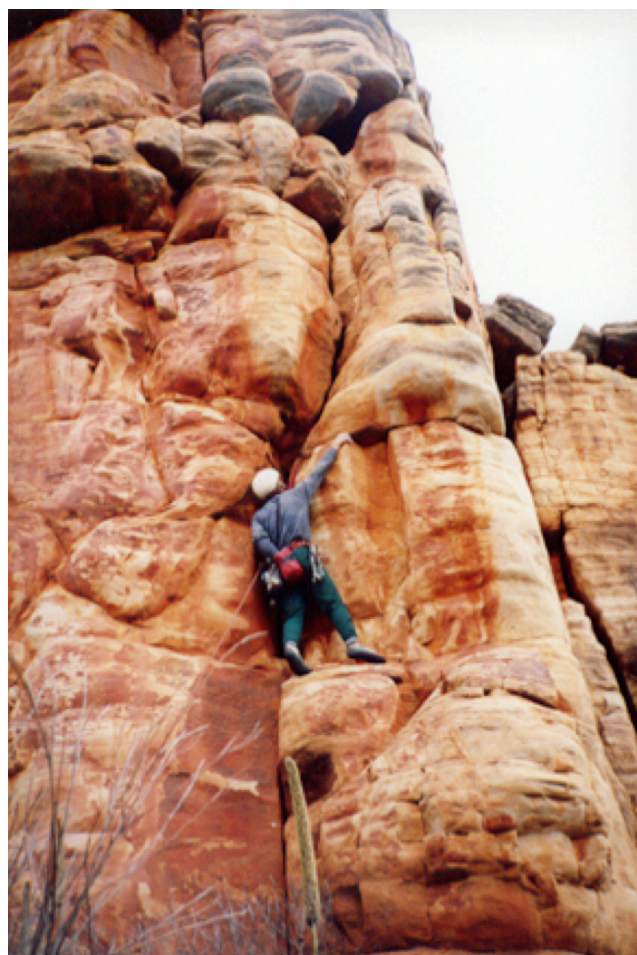
** **Echo Base 16m 25** Start directly in front of the big block at the base of the wall, 2m R of the obvious crackline of Armstrong. Follow the L-leaning line and finish between the blocks. Adam Clay, Garth Wimbush 29.3.13

** **Armstrong 16m 24** The R-leaning crack behind the stump near the left end of the red wall. Finish as for Echo Base. Garth Wimbush, Adam Clay, 30.9.12

Ozone Baby 15m 12 The corner. Brett Sedunary, Colin Reece, Paul Badenoch 29.5.99

* **Life, the Universe and Everything 14m 20** 7m L of OB, around the arête. Sensational climbing. Diagonal crack and flake to a ledge then the thin crack. Colin Reece, Mark Barnett 4.97

Inner Space 12m 17 2m L of LTUAE. Fun with fists. Take two or three #4 cams. If not, two 10cm tubes and some RPs might do. Colin Reece, Mike Rosato 5.97



Re-entry 2 Easy access route. Scramble the joint crack-come-chimney. There is a bushy ledge 5m below the top.

Kill the Body and the Head Will Die 10m 12 9m L of Re-entry. The arête between the black chimney and the weathered scoop, tending R at the top. Rob Lamp, Mark Witham 6.97

This Route Does Not Exist in Any Language 12m 16 10m L of KTBATHWD. Climb through the roof, place a cam, move up, place another, then layback up and L to the arête. Grab a jug and run it out to the top. Mark Witham, Rob Lamp 6.97

Poor Pluto 12m 11 Up between the arête L of TRDNEIAL and the chimney. Paul Badenoch, Luke Adams, Pierre Ebbinghaus 31.5.08

Satellite of Love 15m 19 Up the broken crackline 1m L of the chimney, passing R of a V-shaped roof, to finish on the face just R of the arête. Use the block on the R for a cam placement only, or ignore it completely and place an RP a little higher. Paul Badenoch 6.6.98 (Michael Hartman and Colin Reece may have climbed a route near here in 1997)

Moonlet 14m 7 Up the vague crackline 2m L of SOL, passing just L of the roof at 4m, to a triangular summit block. Paul Badenoch, Sonja Klebe 4.4.98

Tas 15m 12 The shallow corner and crack 3m L of Moonlet to a bushy ledge at 12m. Finish up the L face. Paul Badenoch 6.6.98

*** Another Fat Bush Pig Scenario 15m 15** Climb the wall 2m L of Tas. Penetrate a weakness at the overhang to finish in a thin crack. Mark Barnett, Shane Mitchell 4.97

*** Sweet Surrender 15m 11** 2m L of AFBPS. Corner, chimney, wiggle around the roof. Nice. Mark Barnett, Shane Mitchell, Colin Reece 4.97



Michael Hillan on an early ascent of Red Dwarf.