

Raven Crack 65 m, 5.11a [A]

Chas Yonge and Al Pickel, October 2014

FFA: Mark Criddle and Peter Hungle, October 2014

The route follows an impressive corner system in the centre of the main face and is the most obvious line on an otherwise improbable section of rock. It was originally credited to an early exploratory line climbed by Rene Boisselle and Rob Mitchell in 1977 (p28, *Banff Rock*, 2012) but this was almost certainly in error given the grade of the climbing and the amount of loose rock and the cleaning required. Their route may possibly lie in the corner system to the immediate left where a rappel sling has been in place for many years. The current climb has been cleaned extensively and is completely bolt-protected. However, sections of loose rock remain (probably a lot!) and unfortunately melt water tends to make the upper crack system dirty in early season. The climb definitely needs more cleaning but the line is compelling and could clean up well with more traffic. Caution is necessary in the Spring or after heavy rain as the large upper bowl tends to funnel debris on to the climb. The climb is completely bolt-protected and set up for rappel. The exact number of bolts on the second and third pitches is not known.

1. 15 m, 5.7. (5 bolts) Start immediately left of the shallow corner at the base of the ramp and climb broken rock to a ledge on the left. Moderate climbing, with one move of 5.7, leads up to a ring-bolt station.

2. 25 m, 5.10d. (10+? bolts) Follow the bolts trending right at first, past a difficult steep section, and up onto a left-slanting face. Continue up to a loose band and go up right to a ring-station on a slanting ramp at the start of the upper corner/crack.

3. 25 m, 5.11a. (8+? bolts) Move right on the ramp and climb the right wall of the corner to the start of the upper crack. Steep crack climbing (good jamming and layback moves) leads to the upper bulge where a tricky sequence (on dirty rock) is required to reach good holds just below the station. The corner widens into an easy gully above and the climb ends at this point.

The Ramp Area:

Immediately right of *Raven Crack*, at the base of the cliff, a smooth curving ramp angles up to the right. There is an old rappel station in place near the top of the ramp and a route may have been climbed here in the past (p29, *Banff Rock*, 2012). The rock in this area is waterworn and compact and recently three sport routes have been added that make use of this feature. All three are on very solid rock (unusual for this crag) and are good, technical climbs. Some caution is necessary as they lie directly under the upper part of the *Raven Crack* drainage and should be avoided during Spring melt and after heavy rain.

The Ramp 18 m, 5.10a (8 bolts) [B]

Chas Yonge, 2015

Technical and balancy with one wobbly move on the edge of the slab.

Off-Ramp 18 m, 5.10a/b (8 bolts) [C]

Chas Yonge, 2015

Ramp Wall 18 m, 5.10b (9 bolts) [D]

Chas Yonge, 2015

Perhaps the best of the three.

Raven Crack



