

Mardale Head Boulders

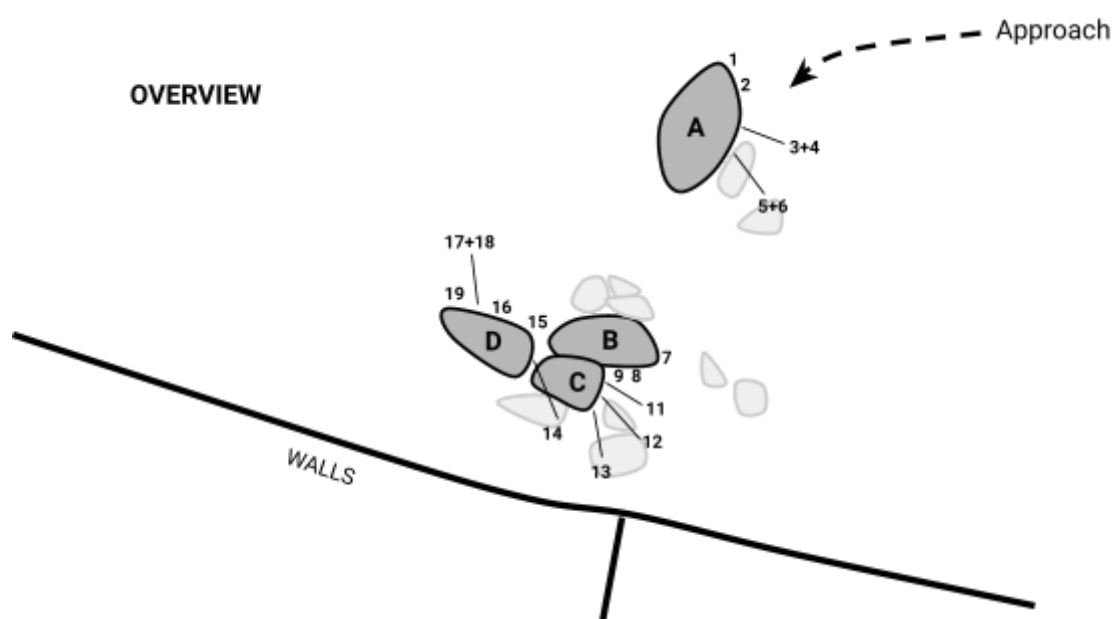
By LakesBloc.com



A concentrated boulder field in a picturesque setting just 15 minutes from the parking at Haweswater's southern end. The circuit features a decent range of grades and styles over generally good landings, but these can be damp in winter or after prolonged rain. Being north facing the area gets little sun, so be aware of this on cold or blustery days. The best problems include the excellent Gimme Shelter (7A), Verna (7C+) and Giza Arete (7A).

Approach

From the parking at the end of the Haweswater road, head up the path towards Gatescarth Pass. After 10 minutes and a steepening, take a kissing gate on the right onto grassland and follow a fainter trail (wet in places) which descends slightly to the boulders. Total approach time: 15 minutes.



A: The Ogee Boulder

1. **The Groove** (6C) SDS The slight groove straight up and mantle slightly to the right.
2. **The Mackens** (7C) SDS Start up the previous problem but once established traverse right a meter or so, then throw for top from a decent heel (back left) and mantle it out.
3. **Verna** (7C+) The crispy steep board like wall above the old wall. Sit start on the undercut, crimp moves lead to a mantle top out.
4. **Micromégas** (7C+) SDS Start as for Verna but having pulled up, use poor holds to move right and ultimately make a final long stretch to gain the ramp of Gimme Shelter and finish up this.
5. **Gimme Shelter** (7A) SDS The irresistible diminishing ramp line builds to a slap for the lip and a testing mantle.
6. **Point Break** (7A) Begin at the base of the ramp as for Gimme Shelter. Use the blunt arete on the R to gain the big flatty and top out rightwards on sharp holds. The stand from the flatty is 6A+.

B: The Pyramid

7. **Giza Arete** (7A) Start on a patio, matched with a head-height jug. A big move leads to crimps on the arête which eventually lead to an easy highball finish. The sitter to this and the eye-catching arete to the right (also accessed from the same sitter) are classy projects.
8. **Pyramid 2** (3+) The left side of the arete.
9. **Pyramid 1** (5) SDS The L hand line on the S face of the pyramid. Start on two low adjacent crimps and make a move diagonally up and L to a good edge. Things ease to the summit.
10. **First Course** (6A) SDS Start as for Pyramid 1, then follow flaky crimps diagonally up and right to bigger holds just below the lip and an easier top out.

C: The In Pinn

11. **Mardale Original** (6A) From good holds, smear, rock and stretch to the obvious finger slot and top out. Be careful not to roll down the other side!
12. **Mardale Eliminate** (6B+) Thin wall climbing to the L of Mardale Original. Get established using a small foothold on the lip. Finish direct.
13. **Pinn Up** (5+) SDS The short SW arete of The In Pinn from a good platform. This is also the descent route.

D: The Bottlenose

14. **Bottle Nose Direct** (6C) SDS Takes the overhanging SE face of The Bottlenose. Use the L arete and layaways for the RH to gain sumptuous holds on the lip. Top out via the juggy beak.
15. **On the Bottle** (6C+) The blunt sloping arete-like feature climbed on its right side, swinging left at the top.
16. **Squama Slab** (6A) Use a high left foot to pull up hard onto the slab. Finish precariously.
17. **Bottlenose 1** (4) The thin seam right of the center of the slab.
18. **Rendezvous** (7C) SDS Start just right of the previous problem. Pull on and follow the lip leftwards to eventually finish up the sloping arete, ultimately gaining the highest point of the boulder.
19. **Bottlenose 2** (3) Towards the R end of the slab without use of the arete.