

OGMORE BOULDERING – AREA 4

APPROACH

Turn off the M4 at junction 35, and head towards Bridgend. Follow signs towards Porthcawl or Bridgend, turning off left at a roundabout, signposted for Ogmores-By-Sea. Continue following signs for Ogmores-By-Sea, turning off right into the large car park above the beach. Alternatively get on the A48 out of Cardiff, turning off before Bridgend when you see a sign for Ogmores. Go through Corntown and Ewenny to join the road to Ogmores from Bridgend.

Follow the path eastwards out of the car park, and head down onto the beach via a concrete ramp after about a mile. Continue in the same direction along the beach, for about 200m, until the rocks rise up, and you can make out the massive overhang in Hardy's Bay (Area 3). A few metres right of this is the entrance to Area 4.

CONDITIONS

Like the rest of the area, this spot is very tidal. The rocks will be out of the water about 3 hours either side of high tide, but the time it takes to dry depends on whether the rock is in the sun, or if there's a breeze blowing. On a nice sunny day most stuff will be dry by low tide, although it is quite possible for part of the crag to be bone dry when the other side is still gopping wet (some of the problems described as projects aren't particularly hard, I just haven't been there when they are dry yet). Often a small patch of wetness can make a good problem unclimbable, although a good going over with a towel can help. Just part of the experience.

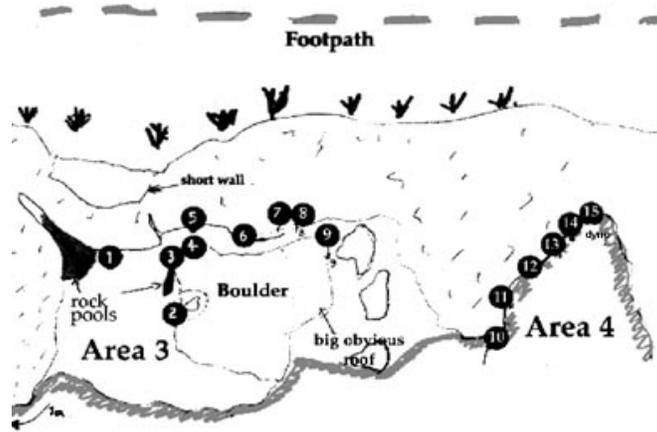
Greenness and seepage also affects some of the problems from time to time, but a good dry day will remove most of the nastiness.

The strong tides also move the rocks and pebbles on the floor of the area around quite dramatically. In fact, I believe it is the pebble level dropping by over a metre in the last couple of years that has made this area climbable at all. The fluctuation of the pebble height can have a large influence on how hard a problem is. It can make start holds harder or easier to reach, and can uncover or hide starting footholds.

Bear all this in mind and just climb what's there: Take an old towel and plenty of chalk, and if something is gopping, leave it for another time; Use a boulder mat, and fold it over if you can't reach the start holds. The undercut nature of the walls make most problems powerful and intense, and generally taxing on the fingers. Don't come here if you want to climb slabs.

The rock itself is generally very solid, and forms micro-edges, fat slopers and welcome buckets. Be careful of limpets, don't chip them off, and if you're climbing near some give them a tap before you put any pressure on them as this will make them stick harder. They won't work as footholds, however, and if you knock them off they die. On this note, the whole area is a SSSI, and while in the area described you aren't likely to do any more damage than the daily tide, this is not true of the non-tidal area on the plateau above. The rock up here is delicate, and riddled with fossils. I'd strongly recommend that you don't climb there; it's not very good climbing and you could do damage to an important geological site.

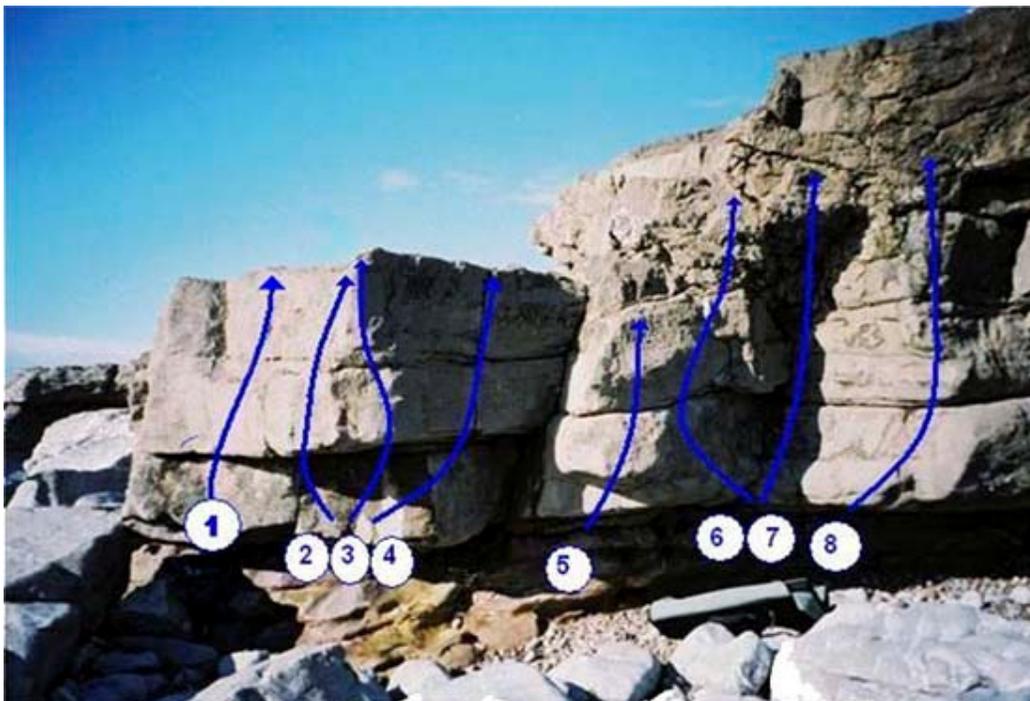
Since the last guide was written (published on <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/swbouldering/>), there has been a rockfall at the back of the bay, which has destroyed problems 14 and 15 on the map ('The Cutter' and 'Arete and Dyno') but made a load of new problems. This puts the map below out of date, but I have used it below as it illustrates exactly where the area is.



Map from <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/swbouldering/>

AREA 4

The problems are described from left to right, with the prominent sharp arête of **Problems 2 and 3** being a good place to get your bearings from. I've used Font grades, as this seems to be the trend, but they are a pretty rough guess. If you can't make the problems match up with the grades either: a) the pebbles have risen and are hiding the starting footholds; b) the pebbles have dropped and you can't reach the starting handholds; c) the holds are wet; d) you can't understand the topo and are trying the wrong problem; or e) you are weak. Only one of these options is my fault. The map above is borrowed from the site, so I've identified which of the problems below corresponds to what on the map.



1. 5c/V1

Through the shelf, from a sitting start using the slot under the roof. Climb up to the obvious shelf, then whack on a heelhook and go for the top. Can be mantled or dynoed by the foolish. (5b from standing)

The next three problems have very similar sitting starts, using the smooth slot and the flake just right of it. All use the wave-washed shelf as starting footholds. Despite their close proximity all feel pretty independent, and have good moves.

2. 6b+/V4 (PROBLEM 10 ON MAP)

Starting with your hands in the slot under the roof, blindly thug out and up to the left of the arête. Make a tough lunge to the top, without using the shelf on the left. Using the shelf on the left makes it easier and less height-dependant, but not as good, and takes you close to **Problem 1**. Please yourself. Needs lots of sun for the slot to dry. (6a from standing)

3. BLS Acid Crew. 6b+/V4

Start in a similar position to the previous problem, but make a reachy move out and to the right to reach a nasty sharp crimp, then slap up to a good hold on the arête, controlling the swing being crucial. From here lunge up the arête as for the previous problem. Painful. Pretty close to **Problem 2**, but feels independent. F.A Owen McShane. (6a from standing)

4. 6a+/V2

Sit start slightly to the right, using the flake near the slot and a crimp around to the right. Pull up and climb straight up the wall, making fingery moves using the sharp narrow slot halfway up the wall. Don't get too far back in the groove. (5c/6a from standing, depending on reach)

5. Mini-Prow. 6b/V3

The next prominent feature after **Hanging Arete** is an undercut prow. Climb this from a sit-start with a very hard move to get off the ground using a crap sloper on the lip and slopey crimp down and left. Finish up the arête above with interest. Well worth doing. If the pebbles are high you can reach past the first powerful move from sitting, which is a shame because it's a good move.

6. The Pinch. 6a/V2

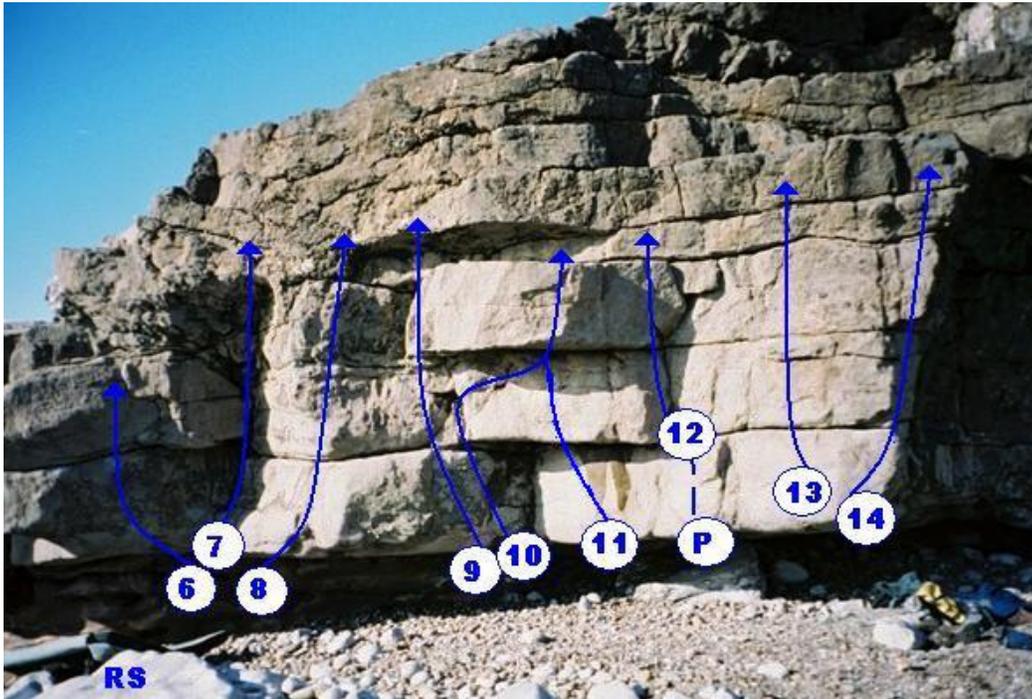
An eliminate on **Problem 7** (which is often a lot drier). Sit starting on the low jugs at the back of the groove around to the right, slap up and left to a couple of good-ish holds, then rock up back right to gain 'the pinch' and then the top. Finish up left, or directly up the steep but easy wall.

7. 5a/V0+ (PROBLEM 12 ON MAP)

Sit start at the back of the groove as for the previous problem, but proceed upwards using some bizarre bridging moves. (4+ from standing).

8. 6a+/V2

Sit start on the handrail just right of the previous problem, but climb the arête, moving rightwards from the start to find the best of the holds. (4+ from standing).



9. 5a/V0+ (PROBLEM 13 ON MAP)

The groove around the corner, from sitting, with a hard move to start before things ease. (4 from standing).

10. Rising Tide. 6a/V2

Sit start on jugs in the groove of Problem 9, and make tough moves to undercut the big (often damp) crack above. Using this, span out to a sloper on the lip of the small overhang up and right, then make funky moves to the top. Can also be done by going up to the big pinch directly above the start, at a slightly harder grade, but with drier holds. F.A. Rob Sanderson/Paul Black (5c starting from the undercut).

11. Crimson Possee. 7a+/V7

Start sitting 1m right of the groove of **Problem 9**, then climb through both roofs direct. Solving this problem involves the use of some slopey holds and a long reach. F.A. Owen McShane

12. 5b/V1

To the right of the small roof is a vague crack. Layback this from a standing start, using the crap sloper on the lip of the roof to slap for the top.

*. Sit start possible, but very hard, due to the lack of footholds. **Project.**

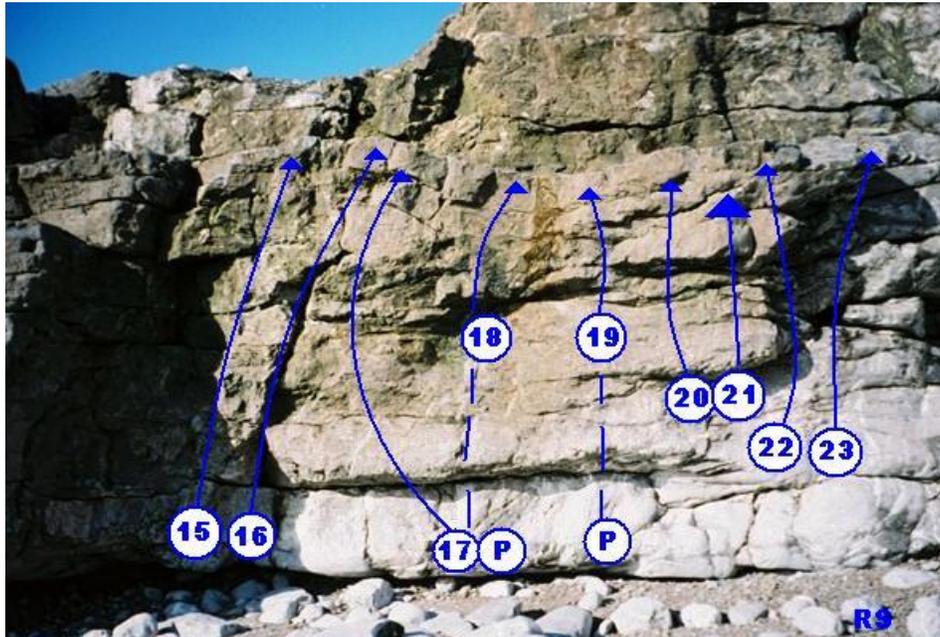
13. 6b/V3

Start hanging the good break, then make a lurch up the obvious holds above, then continue more easily up the wall. Can feel very easy or very hard. (4+ standing start).

14. 6b/V3

The nice rounded arête, on small holds from a sit start. Needs re-climbing after the loss of a block higher up on the arête. Shouldn't change the grade. (4+ from standing, again easier with the shelf on the right).

Further into the bay from **Problem 14** is a steep, blankish wall, formed by a rockfall. The rock in between the last problem and the diagonal crack is poor and probably best avoided.



15. 5c/V1

Sit start some low jugs, beneath a vague rib formed by the broken area to the left and the crozzly crack to the right, and make hard moves directly up the wall/rib, with an exciting finish. Slightly eliminate. (5a standing start).

16. The Crack. 6a/V2

Start sitting slightly right of the previous problem, but follow the crack to the top, with steep thuggy moves to leave the ground. Harder than it looks like it should be. (5a Standing start).

17. Irish Bar. 5c/V1

Sit start under a diagonally slanting crystalline flake, using the big scoop down and right as a foothold. Make hard moves off the floor then climb the wall directly on small but positive holds to meet the finish of **The Crack**. One of the best problems here. F.A. Rob Sanderson/Paul Black. (5b standing start).

18. 6a+/V2

Standing start. If you are tall and/or the pebbles are high, reach the nasty in-cut edge and the small flake up and right. Pull on powerfully and climb the wall directly (no wimping off left to the jugs on Irish Bar). If you are short you can climb into the start from the left, making the problem **5c**-ish.

*. Sit start possible, but the move to link the start to the nasty incut will be desperate. **Project.**

19. 6a+/V2

Standing start. Using the obvious slot, pull on and climb the wall, possibly making use of a mono to the right and a crimp to the left. There is unfortunately a seepage line that keeps all the good holds wet, so needs some strong sunshine on the wall to even try.

*. The sit start will make a mega-hard project for some crimp monster, maybe using some small undercuts under the low overhanging lip. Not for me though. **Project.**

20. 5c/V1

Up the wall, using the positive incut hold at about head height and eliminating the big holds on the vague arête just right. A sit start is possible but a bit pointless. Take care with the top-out.

21. 6a./V2

From the good positive incut at head height, dyno wildly to the top. Again, care advised.

22. 5a/V0+

The vague arête from standing, which can also feel a little high at the top.

23. 4+/V0-

Climb the corner/groove on good holds, from a standing start, with a slightly fluttery top out.

Due to the many horizontal breaks and weaknesses all along this walls there are many possible traverses. The ones described below make the most sense as independent lines. They are not marked on the topos, just to keep things clear for the 'up' problems.

24. Work Hard, Canoe Home. 7b/V7-8

Sit starting in the groove of **Problem 7**, traverse the handrail around the prow to the right, and then along the (often wet) break to finish up **Problem 13**. Thuggy, powerful and pumpy, with lots of heelhooks and cross-throughs.
F.A. Owen McShane.

25. Traverse. Project.

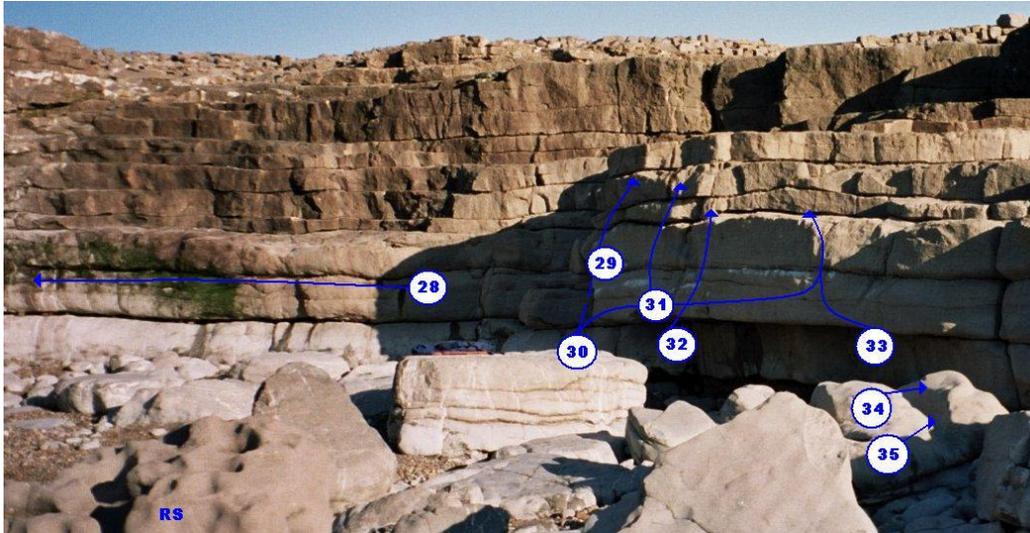
From the same sit start as **The Crack**, traverse up and right, past **Irish Bar** to the start of **Problem 18**, and continue across the wall at this height to finish up the arête of **Problem 22**. Will be very hard, and super fingery.

26. Traverse. Project.

Link **Problem 24** into **Problem 25**, staying low around between the arête of **Problem 14** and the start of **Problem 25** for a mega-stamina link.

27. Traverse. Project.

Start from the shelf of **Problem 1**, traversing rightwards to drop down around **Mini-Prow**, and traverse into the start of **Problem 24**. Continue the full traverse to the arête of **Problem 22**.



28. 4+/V0-

A traverse of the back wall, from right to left with the slopy top for hands and smears along the bottom for feet is surprisingly technical, and a good warm up.

29. 5b/V0+

Standing start to the arête; grab the slopers over the top and pull up using a small foothold.

*. The sit start will definitely go, and will involve a powerful series of moves to get to the slopers, and then use them. **Project**

30. Traverse. Project.

The fantastically sculpted slopy traverse on the opposite side of the bay from **Irish Bar** etc. Start semi-sitting (a thick mat helps, depending on the height of the pebbles) at the far left end of the roof (as for the previous problem), using a sideways crimp and a sloper, with your feet on the sidewall down to your left. Pull up with difficulty, then slap slap slap out right to gain a huge flat sloper. From here thin moves take you rightwards along the break, until you can swing a heel up on the right and desperately slap for slopers up a vague rounded arete, leading to the top. Will be very hard, very sustained, and frustrating, with a crux in the middle and right at the end.

31. 5b/V0+

Standing start problem between **29** and **31**. A one move wonder, using the two holds on the lip of the roof for your left and right foot and the sloper for your right hand. Starting in this unusual position allows you to lock off with your right arm, left foot just hanging, and slap for the break with your left hand followed by an easy top out. The locking off is the crux of this problem.

F.A Dave Wakley

32. Hip Hop Paperboi Scandal. 7a+/V7

Start sitting below the big flat slopy hold in the middle of the traverse, with one hand in the pocket on the lip and the other in the slot at the back of the roof. Pull up, slap out to the sloper, and climb the vague groove above.

F.A. Owen McShane

33. Achilles Heel-Hook. 6c/V5

Starts beyond the far right hand end of **Problem 30**, up the vague rounded arête from a sitting start (or as close to sitting as you can get while holding the start holds). Start with an incut edge for your left, and a sloper for your right, then slap up and left until you find yourself doing the last move of **Problem 30**, and get upset by how hard it feels. F.A. Rob Sanderson

34. Project.

2m right of the start of **Problem 32** is a slanting sloper. Pull on this, and slap up to a good hold just below the top, before topping out. Short, but hard.

35. Jam. 5b/V0+

1m right again is a crack. Start sitting down, laying back on this. Climb to the top, utilising a nice jam near the top if you like. The start can feel desperate, be warned!

There is lots of scope for eliminates and more traverses. You could traverse most of the walls at a number of heights (a half height traverse of the first wall making a nice warm up). It would be also be possible to girdle the whole bay, by doing **Problem 27**, then reversing **Problem 28**, before going into **Problem 30**. Would be very hard, but would have a couple of hands off hands (and a nice sit down at the end of **Problem 28**). I have included a couple of problems that are semi-eliminate, and although there is scope for lots more I don't want to get into describing every last one. There is particular scope for eliminates around the area of '**Rising Tide**' and the stepped roofs of **Problem 11**, and the steep wall of **Problems 15-23**. Enjoy.

Many of these problems have probably been climbed before, perhaps all of them. However, as they have not been claimed and many people don't even know this area exists I thought it worthwhile to describe them all. I have attempted to describe all the obvious independent lines, including ones I haven't climbed (and probably can't). I've identified these as projects, but, as I've just said, may have been climbed before. If you climb any of the projects, let me know, and let me know the grade and a name for the problem if you have one, and I'll update the guide. Feedback on grades would also be useful, although the variable level of the floor makes all the grades 'best guesses'.

Updated 18.03.07