

# RAPAKI ROCK

PORTHILLS CLIMBING



**Rapaki Rock**  
**Rev C**  
Tony Burnell (2020)



# Rapaki Rock

## (40 Climbs)

Given a lack of available information, I have assumed that most of the easier, original uncredited climbs included in the various editions of the various guidebooks, were climbed by Don Hutton who produced the first guide (which I do not possess) to Rapaki Rock in 1968.

There is quite a lot of seismic damage across the crag, there is the obvious visible areas of rock fall, & the less obvious movement of large blocks & pillars. Despite the earthquakes Rapaki has some of the best rock in the area & some of the best middle grade trad climbs. Pre earthquake there were around 31 recorded routes at the crag with only 3 protection bolts between them, two on Penile Decay & one on Banalarama, recently some climbers have decided that they would like to climb some of these routes & that to do so they are entitled to add more bolts. I have included all lines (in red) & variations (in green) that I have climbed or that I know have been climbed.

Always viewed as a beginners crag Rapaki Rock can, on a fine day, be infested with people top-roping, but anchors are no longer as easy to arrange as they once were, so with any luck people might get back to leading. There are a number of 12mm galvanised bolts, possibly placed by geo-tech inspectors (as they are not where climbers would have placed them), so in some places if you carry a piece of chain & a spanner you can rig an anchor, you will definitely need long slings & at least one six metre cordalee.

Rapaki was one of the first areas on the Port Hills to be climbed on & as such the majority of 'link-ups', alternative starts, finishes & traverses have been climbed.

### General

*By choosing to climb here you accept responsibility for your own personal safety & must make your own decision regarding the condition of any fixed equipment. Neither the first ascensionist nor the author accepts any responsibility for the condition of any fixed equipment.*

Post quakes the crag fell into obscurity but with the installation of fixed anchors it has undergone a minor resurgence in popularity. The majority of climbing here is good, even the gear isn't as good as one would like, the easier routes can be testing but those less popular can be dirty & in need of a clean.

During 2019 a good number of Stainless-Steel staples were installed as fixed anchors.

Tracks are marked in

YELLOW

Trad or mixed protection climbs are marked in

GREEN

Variations are marked in

BLUE

Earthquake damaged route

PURPLE

*The following Abbreviations / Definitions have been used:*

Br - Denotes bolt runner, # denotes number

Tr - Denotes Trad Route

Mp - Denotes Mixed Protection Route (bolts & trad)

So - Denotes solo route unprotectable

R & L - Denote R & L

A solid circle at the top of route line indicates a belay station

*Replacement of fixed gear is a costly & time-consuming exercise so please do your bit; lower or top rope off your own quick draws. Only use fixed gear for abseiling, by doing this you will extend the life of the equipment considerably.*

As far as possible all known routes have been included in this guide. If you want to know where a route goes read the text as well as looking at the topos, topos & descriptions for this crag are in a L to R order

### Grading

NZ	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
American	5.8-	5.8	5.9	5.10a	5.10b	5.10b	5.10c	5.11a	5.11b	5.11c	5.12a	5.12b
Euro	4c	5a	5b	5c	6a	6a+	6b	6b+	6c	7a	7a+	7b

The above grading systems provide little in the way of information & are normally accepted as just the technical difficulty of a particular climb; it can be tricky to use these grading systems when trying to assess the actual seriousness of any climb. If you are familiar with the period when the first ascent was done & the person who did it then you will have some knowledge of their ability & their style of climbing (bold, hard grading, soft grading, etc).

In this guide you will see a suffix to the grades (S1 – S3) this is to provide the climber with additional information on the overall seriousness of the climb.

- S1 - A straight forward climb with good protection & a low risk of injury from a fall

- S2 - Reasonable protection, but a fall could result in injury
- S3 - Protection is marginal or non-existent & a fall could result in serious injury

Route headers & descriptions are set out in this format:

Ref	Route Name	Given Grade	S Rating	Style	Bolts	Stars	First Ascent (Name & Date)
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#### *Route Description*

Climbers should remember that this additional suffix to the grade is the writer's opinion & in no way scientific, gear can fail, rock can fail & any fall can result in injury

### ***Parking & Access***

240 mts

5 minutes

-43.594076, 172.676021 grid

Rapaki Rock is located on the Summit Road at the top of the Rapaki Track overlooking Lyttelton harbour & the Maori settlement of Rapaki, at the South end of the crag is an old quarried area.

Park in the tar sealed parking area or in the gravel car park slightly closer to the crag. The approach is about five minutes, follow either the established track on the north side, or, go across the padock & follow the fence line on the south side.



### ***Seismic Damage***

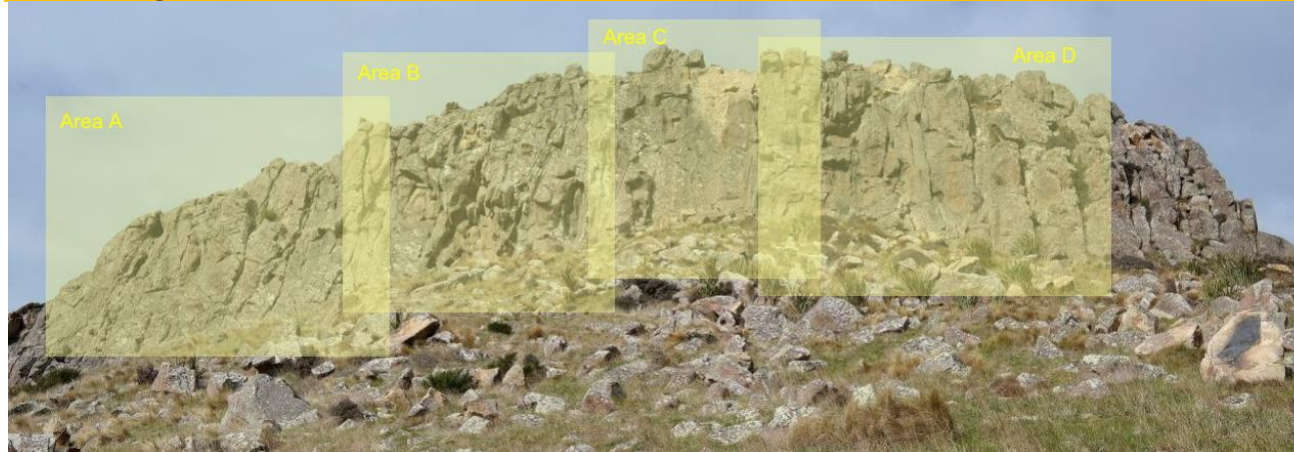


The crag suffered extensive damage in the 2010/2011 Canterbury earthquakes, major areas of damage are indicated in the picture, it should be noted that the majority of rocks on the slope below the crag started life at the top.

***All rock should be treated as suspect***



## Climbing Areas



### Area A



**LA Left Arete** **S3 Tr 0Br**

Start at a newly formed L facing corner approximately 4mts R of the old fence line. Climb the corner then the arête & crack to a ledge, move R & go up the newly exposed end wall to the top of the crag

**LE Left End** **15 S3 Tr 0Br**

On L side of crag. Climb through the runnel to a ledge, move R & follow a short corner to a ledge then up the new arête

**LF Left Face** **16 S3 Tr 0Br**

Start just R of the newly formed corner at the base of a short runnel, up the runnel & slab into a scoop, straight up to a short crack on to the ridge, go up the newly formed slab on the R to the top

**Fa Face** **16 S3 Tr 0Br**

Climb the wall just L of the bulge where 'CN' goes, continue straight up the face using a flake & cracks

**CN Crow's Nest** **12 S2 Tr 0Br ★★**

Two small caves vertically spaced mark the exit point for this climb. Start on a small ledge just R of a steepish, slabby groove, climb through the groove system & the bulging wall to the lower cave, exit slightly on the L of the top cave.

**FV Face Variation 16 S2 Tr 0Br**

Just R of the start of 'CN', climb up through the obvious constriction to a small ledge on R, at the top continue up the same line as the constriction to exit via a thin dogleg crack

**Va1 Variation 1 16 S3 Tr 0Br**

Start up the slabbier wall L of 'BC', step L to join 'BC' at ledge, then go leftwards up the steepening wall to the top

**Ba Barricoe 15 S2 Tr 0Br**

Start in the vertical runnel approximately 4 Mts R of the start of 'CN', straight up the runnel & the vertical crack above on the L side of a bulge, the crack has a hole & chock stone at its start

**Va2 Variation 2 18 S3 Tr 0Br**

Up the next shallow grove to the R, an old iron spikes mark the start. Go up into the big recess, bridge up & turn the roof at the R side, finish easily to the top

**PT Pillar Torque 19 S2 Tr 0Br**

Follows the natural zig-zag line up the face of the pillar, poor protection, there is an old peg in a small pod on the R just above the overlap

**BC Bosuns Chair 16 S2 Tr 0Br ★**

The shallow groove system up the R side of the pillar, there is a vague pizza wedge shaped scoop at six metres, follow the L side up into the corner, up this with a tree on your R, finishing up the final crack behind the tree.

**SP Slim Pickings 15 S2 Tr 0Br**

The line between 'BC' & 'Ra' start up the R trending diagonal groove then zig zag up L to a tree, exit up the curving crack R of the tree.

**Ra Ratlines 12 S2 Tr 0Br ★**

The obvious wider crack system to the R of the broadleaf tree. Finishing L or R of the wedge

**Fo Fo'c'sle 14 S2 Tr 0Br ★**

Up the easy angled corner & step L to a newly formed square hole with a thread on the L, up through here onto a ledge then up the leaning corner to exit L or finish up the prow

## Area B



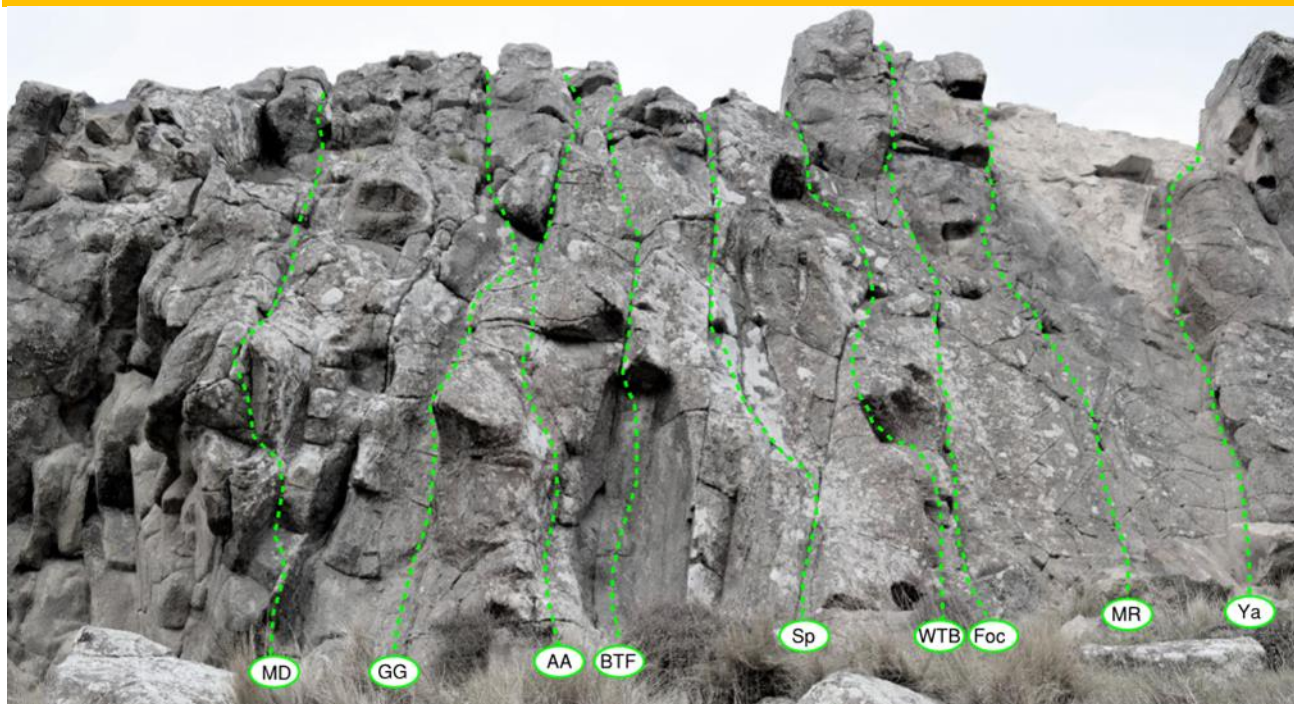
**Sc Scurvy 13 S2 Tr 0Br**

Start up the shallow crack from the base of the crag, at 5mts the crack becomes more defined. Above the small overlap keep trending L up the crack line



<b>MP</b>	<b>Monkey Poop</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>	<b>★</b>	
Follow the smooth rock up the L trending groove, then back R to the top of a small pinnacle, go straight up the vertical crack above. Alternative finish, at the top take the R side & fight your way up past the bush							
<b>BB</b>	<b>Blankety Blank</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>		<i>Tony Burnell 1998</i>
The steep mossy wall, with no pro. Step R & go over the roof via a thin crack.							
<b>WtR</b>	<b>Waives That Rules</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>		<i>Alan Hill, 1998</i>
An easier start to 'BB', up the groove as for 'Ban' but follow the L fork.							
<b>Ban</b>	<b>Banalarama</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Mp</b>	<b>2Br</b>		<i>Dave Fearnley, 1988</i>
Just R of the steep mossy slab is an obvious R trending groove that forms a 'Y' at 7mts, take the R fork past an old Br. The climb has subsequently sprouted an extra Br.							
<b>PD</b>	<b>Penile Decay</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Mp</b>	<b>2Br</b>		<i>Steve Elder, 1989</i>
The next feature is the overhung L facing corner comprising yellowish scaly rock. Straight up the back & out of the top past Brs, then the shallow groove above..							

## Area C



<b>MD</b>	<b>Mutinous Dogs</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>		<i>Alan Hill, 1999</i>
Start round the corner rightwards from 'PD', up the overhanging, climbed direct.							
<b>GG</b>	<b>Galley Gulley</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>	<b>★★</b>	
The obvious crack come groove at the back of a L facing corner, climb the groove, step R then the continuation crack above							<i>Alan Hill, 1999</i>
<b>AA</b>	<b>Anchor's Away</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>Tr</b>			
R again is a 4mt high recess, climb into the recess then step L & exit up the slabby wall & easier ground above.							
<b>BTF</b>	<b>The Bridge Too Far</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>	<b>★</b>	<i>John Howard</i>
Straight up the recess bridging to the high point, exit through the notch on the L to a ledge, then up the top wall.							
<b>Sp</b>	<b>Spinnaker</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>		<i>Lindsay Main, 1979</i>
To the R of the recess of 'Btf' there is a corner then a really thin crack leading up to slabby scoop, up the crack & go L into the scoop, exit awkwardly up the deep curving runnel.							
<b>WTB</b>	<b>Who's Turn in the Barrel</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>		<i>Lindsay Main, 1979</i>
A stepped rib leads up to a ledge at 6mts, gain the ledge then move up to an obvious square block, go up & slightly L to a capped roof, turn the roof on the R then finish easily diagonally L.							
<i>The next area has sustained significant rockfall but all routes, though now altered, have been re-climbed</i>							
<b>Foc</b>	<b>Forecourse</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>		
Climb the short corner at the L side of the slab, once on the ledge step R into the crack, go up, then L & up to the overlap, over this & up to the top							
<b>MR</b>	<b>Main Royale</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>	<b>★★</b>	

The original classic climb now somewhat damaged. Climb the centre of the wall straight up to the R end of the overlap, then straight up newly exposed rock to the top

**Ya** **Yardarm** 18 S3 Tr 0Br

Climb the next corner to the R, when you get to the corner system through the newly exposed rock the gear becomes scarce

## Area D



**Miz** **Mizzen** 18 S3 Tr 0Br ★

Just R if 'YA' is a narrow rib on the edge of the buttresses with a shallow groove, discontinuous cracks & a wider chimney above. Start at the rib & head straight up.

**BT** **Brown Tongue** 22 S3 Tr 0Br *Tony Burnell, 1999*

Start at the crack, just R of 'MZ', straight up to a ledge on the L, move up the arête above then swing round onto the face go straight up to & over the roof.

**SB** **Strawberry Box** 17 S3 Tr 0Br *Graham Dingle, 1971*

Start as for 'MZ', climb to the ledge, traverse diagonally R to exit up the groove above 'FW'.

**FW** **Freekeys Wall** 22 S2 Tr 0Br ★★ *John Allen, 1980*

Climb straight up the wall to the hole, good gear, over the bulge to the horn on the R, finish more easily above.

**BS** **Body & Soul** 19 S2 Tr 0Br ★★★ *Gavin Wills 1967*

Start at the L end of a roof 5mts up, climb straight up, go around the rib on the R onto a slab then move up to the large roof, go direct through the holes above exiting R onto slabby ground move up & go L to exit.

**WB** **Weevilly Biscuit** 18 S2 Tr 0Br

Climb up to the roof by 'FW' cross the roof & go R under the second roof the diagonal groove system to join 'Bil' at the top

**DrR** **Dr Rock & The Carbo Kid** 22 S2 Tr 0Br *Dave Macleod 1988*

Climb up the pillar at the R end of the lower roof, cross the upper roof from the R using the vertical flakes poor pro at the start.

**Bil** **Bilge** 15 S2 Tr 0Br ★★

A classic groove with an elegant solution, start up on the platform below the groove. Climb the groove bridging out of the top before moving L just below the earthquake damaged roof

**FJ** **Flying Jib** 14 S2 Tr 0Br ★

Starts in the bay down & R of 'Bil', climb straight up the parallel groove to where the angle eases, keep going straight up the thinner curving crack above

**BH** **Black Hole** 15 S3 TR 0Br

Climb up to the black hole, go straight up the crack direct, finish up the R diagonal crack at the top

**PL** **Parallel Lines** 14 S3 Tr 0Br

On the R of the scoop are twin cracks, one with a small broadleaf, climb the cracks, move L below the block & go up to a

ledge, step L again & finish up the scoop with the crack in the back

*Out to the R of 'PL' are numerous ledges, faces & corners which can be used as access to the top or as are descent routes.*