

## Hell's Bells

Mt. Pope, Ft St James, BC

9 (or more) pitches, 5.10b

FA: B Zdaniwski, P Austen, A Rode, D Brown, H Kubert, 1994

Description as of June 2019

Rack: gear to 3" (a #4 Camalot is useful on the first pitch but you could probably do without it). We took doubles to #1 Camalot and a single #2-4, which was more than enough. Extendable draws and some extra slings for threads. Long cordalette useful for tree belays. We used a 70m rope to ensure we could link pitches if needed. Helmets!

Route is described as 9p which we believe is the most efficient way to climb it. Could be pitched out further to 10-12p if you wanted. PITCH LENGTHS NOTED ARE ROUGH APPROXIMATIONS ONLY. Communication can be tricky with some long pitches and very often being out of sight of your partner, it was also quite windy when we climbed it which increased this challenge. Due to this factor and the existence of some longer exposed traversing sections with minimal pro, it is recommended that both leader and follower are solid and comfortable with this grade and level of exposure. That being said this is a pretty awesome and varied adventure climb that we recommend to capable parties!

### Approach:

Follow the climbers access trail off Stones Bay Road. When the trail starts to come close to the base of the rock face (Ratt Rock) look for a distinct right facing, left leaning offwidth/chimney. The trail passes very close to it and this is P1.

P1: "Munge Crawl" 5.8, 25m, gear to 4". Start easily up the chimney, and then grovel, crawl, and hump your way up the left leaning offwidth above. Belay from bolts on ledge above at the base of 4th class.

P2: 5.10b, 40m, pin, 3 bolts, and a couple threads/cams.

Scramble up approximately 25m of 4th class terrain to a thread anchor at the base of a steep pocketed wall. Climb up and clip a pin, then continue past a couple of bolts making a couple of tricky moves on sharp pocket features (5.10) before the difficulties ease for the remainder of the pitch. Belay in large cave from one bolt and thin-hand sized cams in a crack. This pitch could be split into 2 if you wanted to bring your partner up to the base of the 5.10 section after the 4th class but we climbed it as 1 pitch.

P3: 5.9, 25m, 1 pin, 4 bolts and a couple possible gear placements.

Climb directly up and right out of the cave on pockets, clipping a pin and then a bolt. Make a tricky traverse right past 2 more bolts (5.9) and make a mantle to the right after 3rd bolt. Head up and left past 1 more bolt and continue up to a rap anchor at the base of an arching right-facing corner.

P4: 60m, 5.6, 1 bolt, 1pin, couple pieces of gear and a thread.

Climb up the corner a short distance from the belay and then cut left up a chossy crack (watch for loose blocks!) to a stance on the right side of a slab below the headwall. There is a rap hanger station here. Clip the station and quest out left across the exposed slab traversing all the way around the base of the headwall with few protection opportunities until you can climb onto a large ledge and continue to a good tree belay. This could obviously be broken up and climbed in 2p as well, and it should be noted that the mid-pitch station on this pitch seems like it might be the last opportunity for a relatively easy retreat from the route. Awesome pitch.

Note: It is also possible to climb the corner that starts this pitch directly up to its end right to the base of the headwall (instead of breaking left at the chossy crack) and take a high traverse left along the base of headwall and down climb to the intermediate station to continue this pitch (we did accidentally!) but this creates an especially spicy situation for the follower.

P5: 5.3, 25m, gear to 3"

Move the belay approximately 40m to the left along the ledge (easy walk) to another tree at the base of a slabby dihedral/chimney feature identified by a medium sized tree in it a few meters up. Make your way up this dihedral and belay at another large tree at the base of a left leaning ramp which you will see some bolts on.

P6: 5.10-, 40m, 7 bolts, pin, some gear

Climb carefully up the ramp past 3 spaced out bolts (5.7) to a ledge. Head up and right to slabby moves above. There are 2 bolts to protect against the ledge fall while getting established in the section above but these will probably want to be back cleaned to prevent rope drag. Make tricky face/slab moves past 3 bolts (9+/10-) to the base of a steep pocketed hand crack feature. Fire this section (10-) past a pin (natural pro also available) and finish up a small right facing corner feature to belay on bolts. Another awesome pitch.

P7: 5.8, 25m, 1 bolt, 1 pin, thread, gear

Traverse a short ramp off the belay and get into a crack where the ramp steepens. Clip a pin, and then a bolt a little higher. Make some tricky moves pulling up and right of the bolt and continue following the ramp past a couple more small bulges to a bolted belay.

P8: 5.8, 40m, gear to 2"

Traverse right from the belay to the end of the ramp. Mantle to a small ledge and enter a short hand crack above. Climb up this crack to its end and begin a long, sparsely protected traverse to the right on fairly easy terrain. A small juniper tree growing out of the ledge near its end must be negotiated. Pull around a small right-facing corner feature to some decent gear and continue up airy face climbing to the base of a dihedral/ chimney. Belay from a pin backed up by a couple cams.

P9: 5.3, 30m, gear to 3"

Climb the broken chimney feature, being careful of loose rock. Belay from a tree at the top.

Descent: walk off by hiking up and to the right around the top of the amphitheater. Pick up a faint trail that roughly continues to skirt around the backside of the formation for about 20 minutes. Eventually look for the trail to drop down an open forested draw. The trail seems to get better as you lose elevation. Continue to follow down and to the right, eventually joining back up with the climbers access trail. Total descent time 1 hour.

