



LEAD

40 MINUTES FROM

VILLE

PYRAMID ARETE

Marc Shapiro

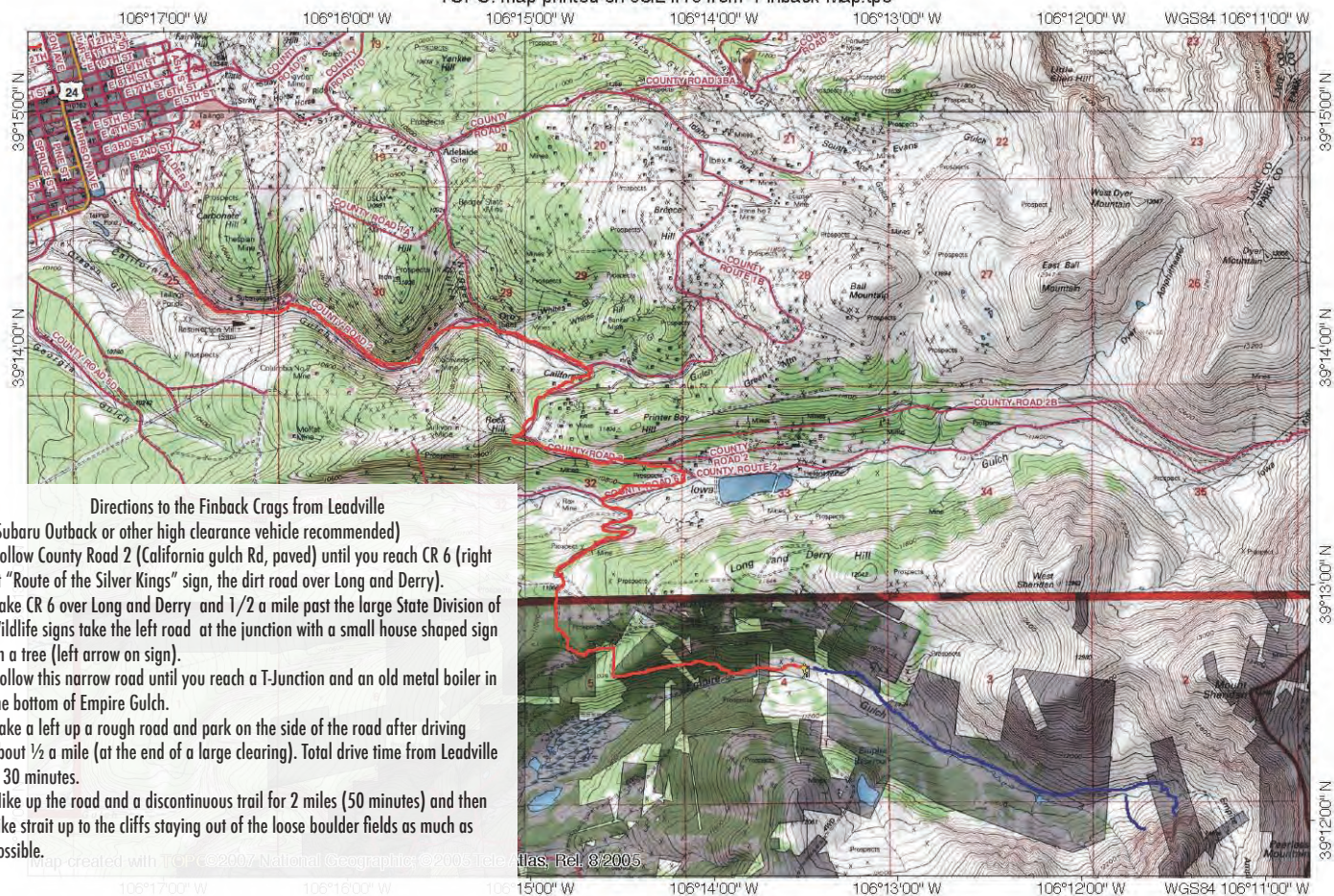
Justin Talbot

FINBACK CRAGS

Situated at 12,000' on the north side of Finback Knob in the Mosquito Range these cliffs offer a good escape from the mid summer heat of Leadville. The cliffs on Finback are up to 250' high and have a great alpine crag feel, perched above a stream and waterfall in the valley below. Routes here have been established over the last few summers and care has been taken to make high quality anchors and judicious bolt placements. While few of the routes feel like sport climbs most can be reasonably protected; at least a little loose rock exists on all climbs.

The classic routes of the area are Carnivore Crack [12a], Pyramid Arete [10d], and Finback [11b]. Finback can be climbed in three short pitches with a 60m rope and 10 draws making it a fun afternoon outing from town.

TOPO! map printed on 08/24/10 from "Finback Map.tpo"



Directions to the Finback Crags from Leadville

(Subaru Outback or other high clearance vehicle recommended)

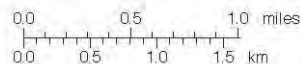
-Follow County Road 2 (California gulch Rd, paved) until you reach CR 6 (right at "Route of the Silver Kings" sign, the dirt road over Long and Derry).

-Take CR 6 over Long and Derry and 1/2 mile past the large State Division of Wildlife signs take the left road at the junction with a small house shaped sign on a tree (left arrow on sign).

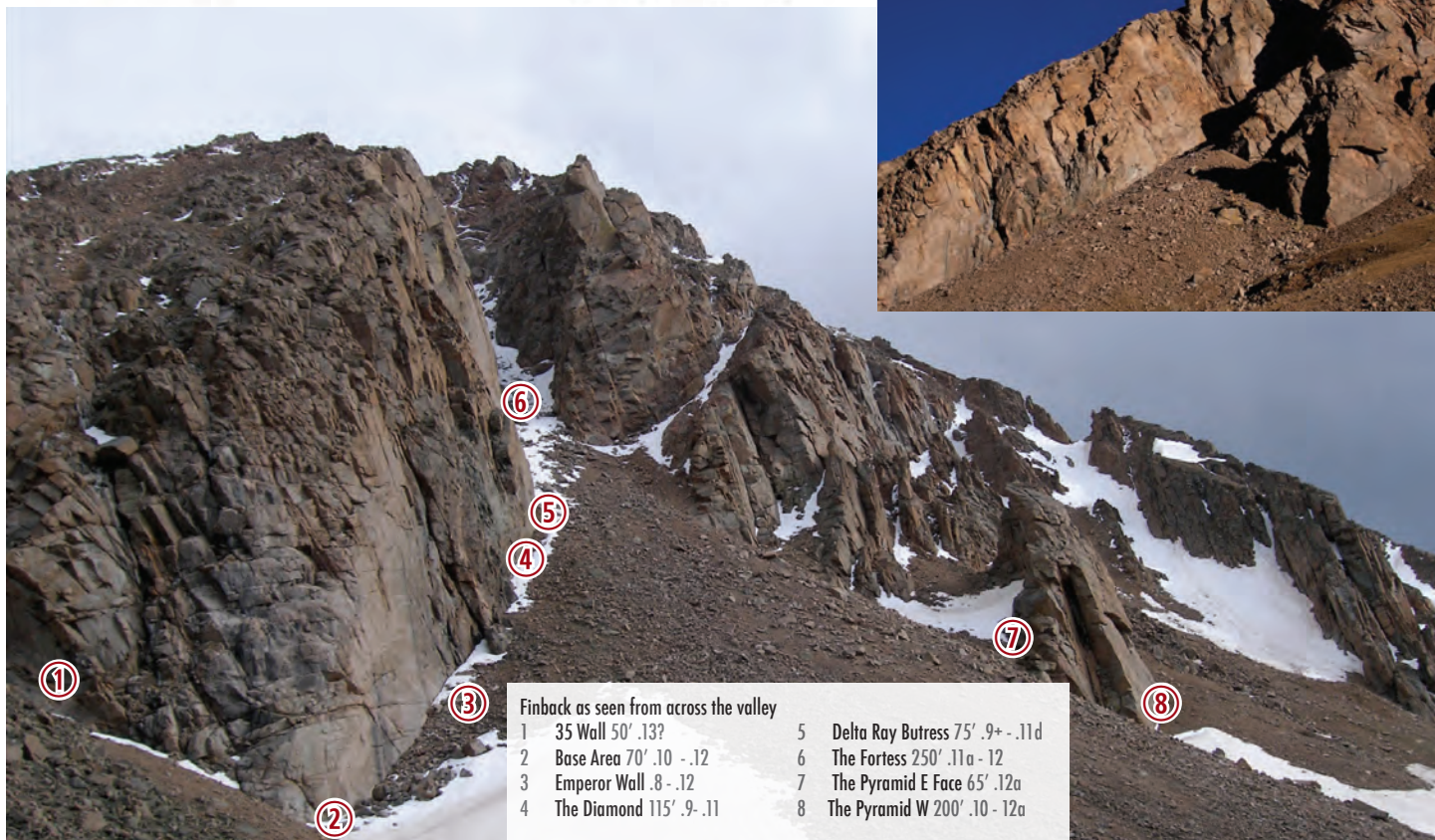
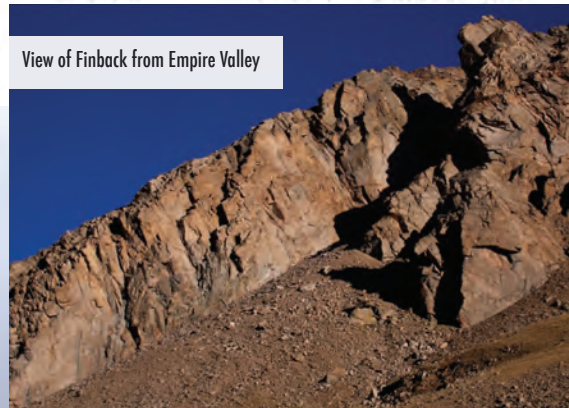
-Follow this narrow road until you reach a T-Junction and an old metal boiler in the bottom of Empire Gulch.

-Take a left up a rough road and park on the side of the road after driving about 1/2 mile (at the end of a large clearing). Total drive time from Leadville is 30 minutes.

-Hike up the road and a discontinuous trail for 2 miles (50 minutes) and then hike straight up to the cliffs staying out of the loose boulder fields as much as possible.



View of Finback from Empire Valley



Finback as seen from across the valley

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 35 Wall 50' .13? | 5 Delta Ray Butress 75' .9+ .11d |
| 2 Base Area 70' .10 - .12 | 6 The Fortress 250' .11a - .12 |
| 3 Emperor Wall .8 - .12 | 7 The Pyramid E Face 65' .12a |
| 4 The Diamond 115' .9 - .11 | 8 The Pyramid W 200' .10 - .12a |

**PAY DIRT**

Justin Tallbot

📷 Dave Clark-Barol

PYRAMID WEST FACE

The first major formation that you come to as you walk up Empire Valley. The two routes here are fun and for the most part low angle so you can recover if you find yourself gasping for air.

1 Pyramid Arete ★★☆☆ .10d 190' FA J & C Talbot 2009

P1 .10d 90' Starts with a lightning bolt offwidth to a stance followed by face and arete climbing (or follow the left angling flaring crack).

P2 .9 100' Trends up and right following the obvious crack. Make 2 rappels down Carnivore Crack with one 60m rope

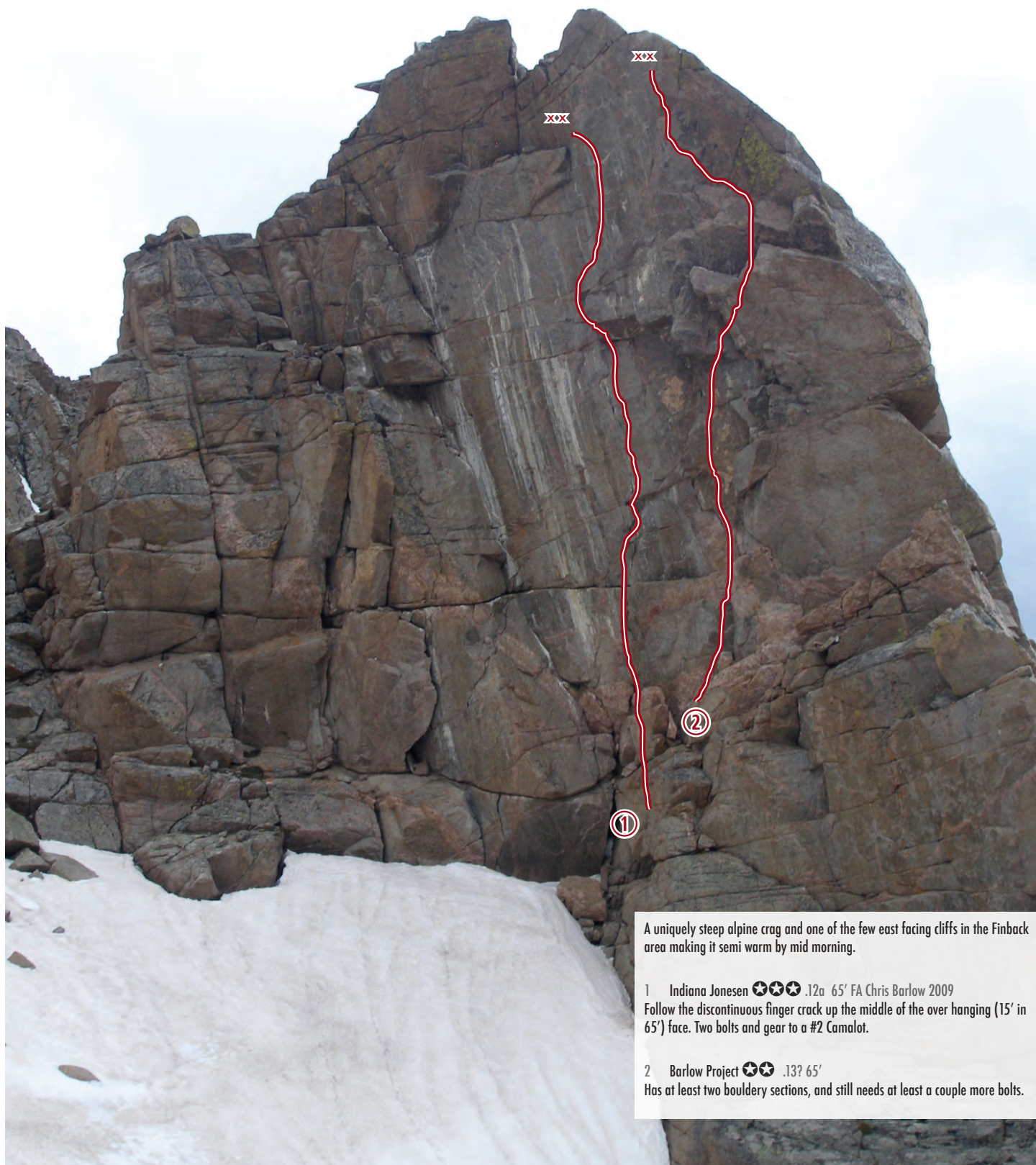
2 Carnivore Crack ★★☆☆ .12a 185' FA J Talbot 2009

P1 .9+ 85' A fun finger crack takes gear to 2.5 inches. Multiple .5 Camalots are useful.

P2 .12a 100' Pulling the roof is the crux and well protected with small and medium cams. Climbing to the anchor after the roof is much easier.



PYRAMID EAST FACE



A uniquely steep alpine crag and one of the few east facing cliffs in the Finback area making it semi warm by mid morning.

1 Indiana Jonesen ★★☆☆ .12a 65' FA Chris Barlow 2009
Follow the discontinuous finger crack up the middle of the over hanging (15' in 65') face. Two bolts and gear to a #2 Camelot.

2 Barlow Project ★★☆☆ .13? 65'
Has at least two bouldery sections, and still needs at least a couple more bolts.

**Finback**

Jack Fields



Justin Talbot

35 WALL & BASE AREA

These two areas have climbs that are near the base of the main ridge of Finback Knob making them good options for a quick visit.

1 Unclimbed ★★☆☆.13? 60'

As you can see from this side view, this potential route is super steep but looks to have reasonably good holds.

2 Krack ★★☆☆.9 40' FA Kay Sherwood, Dave Clark-Barol 2012

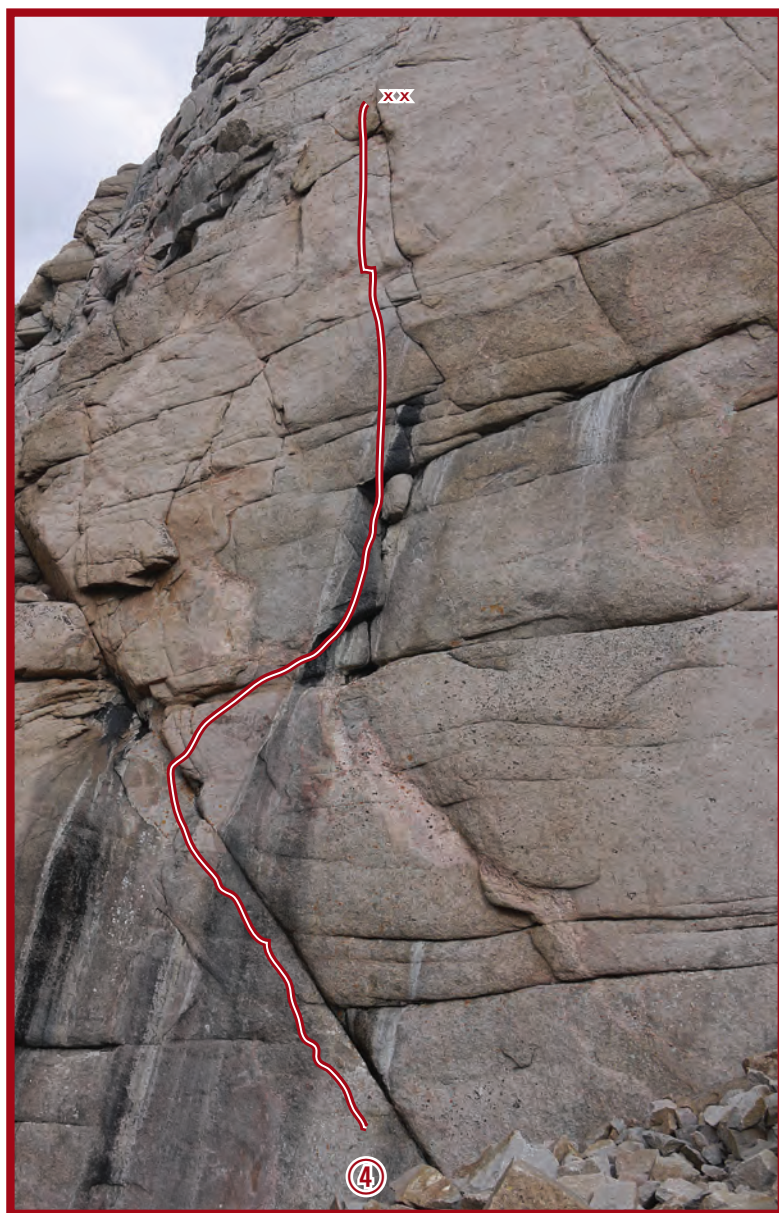
A short route that can be easily set up to top rope by scrambling around on ledges to the left.

3 Draw Bridge ★★☆☆.10d 50' FA J Talbot 2011

Like the climb to the left, this is a good route to top rope.

4 Fire Danger ★★☆☆.11d 80' FA J Talbot, Peter Dodge 2012

Start up the left leaning groove past a bolt and a hard move. Continue up to horizontals and a left leaning finger crack. Pumpy laybacking brings you to the anchor. Two bolts and gear to 3 inches.



EMPEROR WALL

This cliff is just a few minutes further than the Pyramid and if you approach directly from the waterfall you can minimize the amount of loose rock you have to walk on. At least a few new lines and variations are still waiting to be climbed. Rappel Finback with a 60m rope for all routes.

1 Emperor Wall Project ★★☆☆ .13? 190' FA P1 J Talbot 2012

P1 .12 90' Thin, balancy and sometime powerful climbing characterize this pitch. The first 50' to a no hands rest is about .11a (intermediate anchor here). The next 40' is .12aish and a 15' traverse right ends in a hard move to left facing flakes. Bolts.

P2 .13? 100' Start up the shallow left facing corner then traverse up and left to a 60' flared crack to the top. Still licheny and unclimbed.

2 Finback ★★☆☆ .11b 215' FA R Lewis, J Talbot 2010

Ten draws are needed for this fun bolt protected route that can be broken into three short pitches. Good coffee table sized belay ledges, rap with one rope.

P1 .10b Nice climbing out an arch to a corner.

P2 .10d Pumpy climbing on good edges.

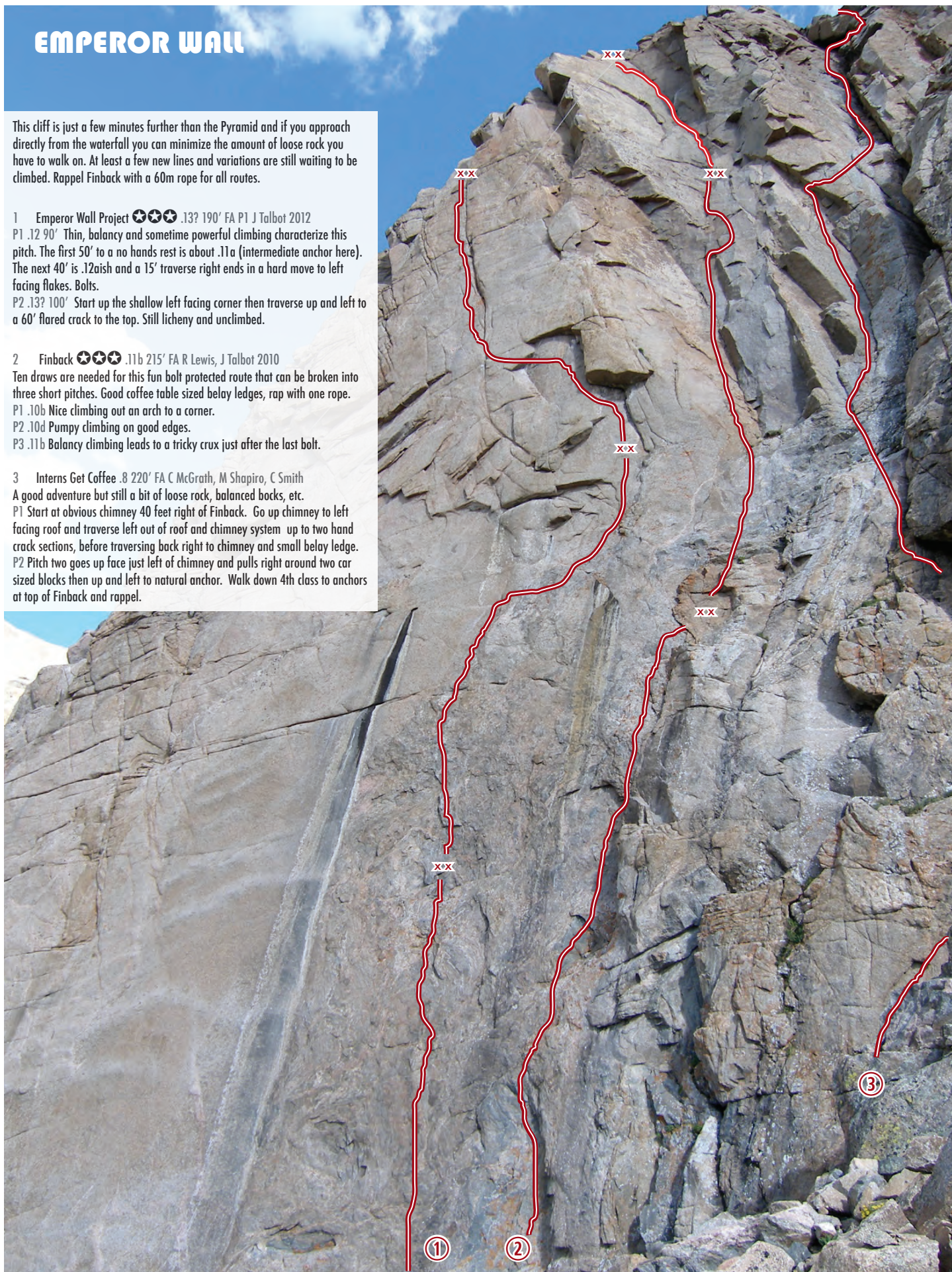
P3 .11b Balancy climbing leads to a tricky crux just after the last bolt.

3 Interns Get Coffee .8 220' FA C McGrath, M Shapiro, C Smith

A good adventure but still a bit of loose rock, balanced backs, etc.

P1 Start at obvious chimney 40 feet right of Finback. Go up chimney to left facing roof and traverse left out of roof and chimney system up to two hand crack sections, before traversing back right to chimney and small belay ledge.

P2 Pitch two goes up face just left of chimney and pulls right around two car sized blocks then up and left to natural anchor. Walk down 4th class to anchors at top of Finback and rappel.

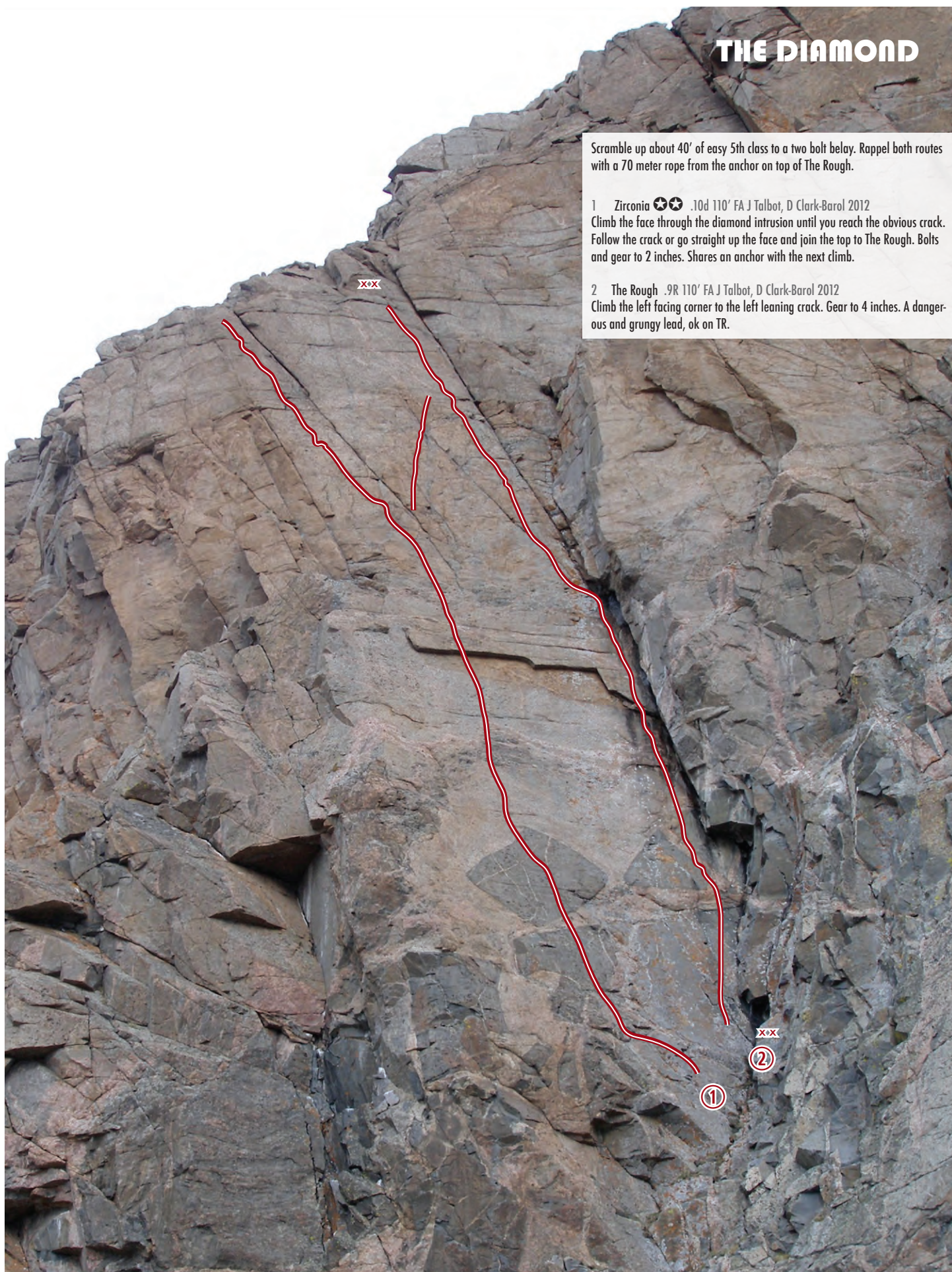


THE DIAMOND

Scramble up about 40' of easy 5th class to a two bolt belay. Rappel both routes with a 70 meter rope from the anchor on top of The Rough.

1 Zirconia ★★ .10d 110' FA J Talbot, D Clark-Barol 2012
Climb the face through the diamond intrusion until you reach the obvious crack. Follow the crack or go straight up the face and join the top to The Rough. Bolts and gear to 2 inches. Shares an anchor with the next climb.

2 The Rough .9R 110' FA J Talbot, D Clark-Barol 2012
Climb the left facing corner to the left leaning crack. Gear to 4 inches. A dangerous and grungy lead, ok on TR.



DELTA RAY BUTTRESS

A nice little buttress only a few minutes walk uphill from the Emperor Wall. If you are not feeling up to leading Delta Ray you can climb the Indirect and do it on top rope.

1 Delta Ray ★★ .11d 70' FA J Talbot 2009

This route starts with hard moves off the deck past three bolts followed by a fun .9+ finger crack. Bring an assortment of finger sized gear.

2 Delta Ray Indirect ★★ .9+ 80' FA M Shapiro and C McGrath 2010

A fun 5.8 start avoids the crux of Delta Ray.



THE FORTRESS

A ten minute hike up the gully from the Emperor Wall and perched at 12,600' is this often chilly butress. Both of these routes are worth climbing and are reasonably protected by bolts and gear up to a #2 Camalot.

1 Pay Dirt ★★☆☆ .12 245' FA J Talbot, D Clark-Barol 2012

P1 .12 90' Super fun! Layback and faceclimb seams to a ledge. Have a good rest then cast off onto the face and enjoy progressively more tricky face climbing until you reach the left angling crack for the last 30' of the pitch.

P2 .11 40' Climb up the groove for about ten feet then traverse right at a bolt and follow the crack on the face to the next belay.

Alternate P2 .8 40' The obvious groove and crack system provides an easier but less enjoyable variation to the previous option.

P3 .10PG13 115' Climb the finger and hand crack directly above the belay. From a small ledge about 40' from the top traverse out around the arete and follow it to the anchor.

2 Fools Gold ★★☆☆ .11a 230' FA J Talbot, D Clark-Barol 2011

P1 .11a 115' A long and interesting pitch involving hard low-angle face moves to start, a steep face climbing crux where the flake disappears for 10' and fun and strenuous layback moves on an exposed flake. The last third of the pitch is a little loose but not that hard. A 70 meter will just make it with rope stretch if you decide to lower off from the anchor at the end of the pitch.

P2 .8 115' Climb the obvious corner. Traverse right around the upper of the two roofs. Rappel with one rope down Pay Dirt.

