

Greg high above Loch Fleet on the second pitch of **Double Jointed** (5+)



**Scottish
Sport**

Creag Mhor Mini-Guide

While Seb goes taps-off for the first ascent of **The Crucifix** (6b+)



A supplement to 7aMax Scottish Sport 2nd Edition
by Sebastien Rider and Topher Dagg 2015

www.7amax.co.uk

Creag Mhor



57.96161 -4.076480



57.96081 -4.076941

0 5 2 0 0



5 mins



25 mins



Creag Mhor (The Mound) is a unique Scottish sport crag due to its size, which offers full-length two-pitch sport climbing. The cliff was looked at by several climbers, but due to the work required to clean it, this large crag stood its ground until Seb Rider and Gregor Callum abseiled down and decided to take on the audacious task of its development in 2015. The cleaning of gorse and earth (with some help from Simon Nadin) took over a year and proved to be as epic as the climbing that lay beneath!

The crag is an off-vertical monolith of good solid conglomerate. With its southwest aspect the crag is quick to dry and a sun trap. The views from the upper pitches over Loch Fleet, Strath Fleet, the alder woods, and Princess Cairn are stunning. The upper pitches of the crag give a unique feeling of exposure, and due to the height catch any wind often not felt at the bottom. Take up a jacket or use the breeze to escape from any midges below! At the height of the midge season it is possible to climb on the upper pitches of the crag and avoid being bitten.

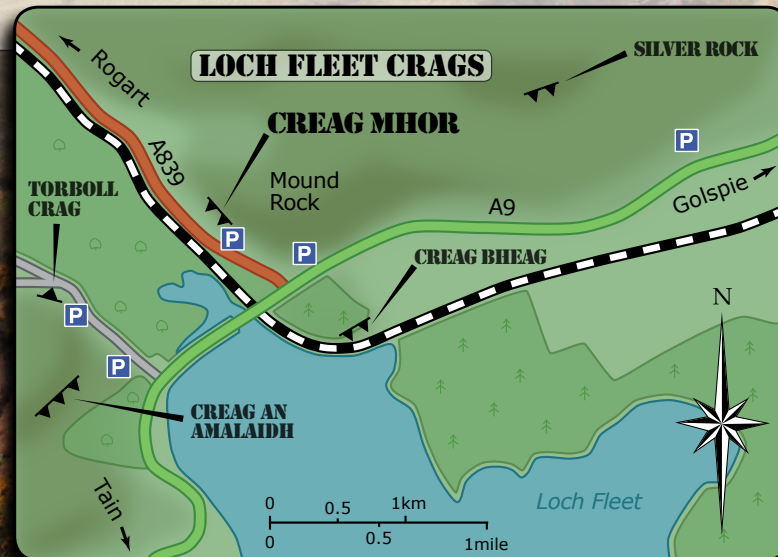


The crag is just off the A9 Inverness to Thurso road. Four miles before Golspie is the Mound bridge and junction with the A839 to Rogart/Lairg. Just under half a mile along the A839, pull into a small dirt parking area on the right hand side. Access is not required so you can park in front of the wooden gate. It is also possible to leave cars on the old road inside of the gate, but don't block in other parked vehicles! Follow the old road to where it is not cleaned, then head uphill on a path that leads up to the crag. The nearest rail station is Golspie (3 miles).

The estate have requested that **climbing is restricted to Sundays only from September to January** for estate activities. The landlord and estate have been very supportive of the climbing, so please respect this.

⚠️ 60m ropes are essential to climb here. Some of the routes on the upper pitches are very close to 30m in length. **IT IS ALSO ESSENTIAL YOU TIE KNOTS IN THE END OF YOUR ROPES!** (both for belaying and abseiling). The consequences of a short rope from the upper tier would be very serious.

⚠️ Near the end of the first pitch of the leftmost routes **1** and **2** is a large suspect block. Please avoid this, particularly at the top of **What Lies Beneath** (go right, into the corner shared with **Bushy Craic** after the last independant bolt)



NORTH HIGHLANDS

Creag Mhor



The crag is split at half height by a ledge which comfortably accommodates the (often shared) belays between pitches. Various pitch combinations are possible, but here we list the recommendations of the first-ascentionists.

Descent : Pitches on both tiers may be lowered-off as for any sport route, but please ensure that your rope is fully 60m, and tie a knot in the end! Alternatively you can top-out : walk about 300m northwest (left) along the top of the cliffs to a suitable decent path. But this is more time-consuming than two abseils.

1 What Lies Beneath $6a^*$ (52m)

P1: ($6a/24m$) Start up a shallow groove just right of the toe of the buttress, climbing up and through the overhang. Above climb the easier corner of 2 to the belay.

P2: ($4/28m$) Trend left off the belay and straight up to the lower-off

2 Bushy Craic $6a+^{**}$ (53m)

P1: ($6a+24m$) Fantastic climbing up the corner and crack system with a tricky crux through the overhang. Above easier climbing up a left facing corner leads to the belay.

P2: ($5/28m$) Head straight up and trend slightly right. Excellent climbing with continued interest leads to a slopy ledge and headwall to finish at the top of a shallow groove

The central crack system is climbable as a trad route. **Le Grand Fromage** HVS $5a^{**}$ (52m) follows Bushy Craic for the first pitch, then traverses left into zigzag cracks for pitch 2

3 The Crucifix $6b+^*$ (24m)

Good technical climbing on the lower half, high in the grade. Climb up to the overlap before getting established on the head wall. Pass the flake with difficulty to eventually mantle onto easier ground. Easy climbing then follows a rib to the belay

4 Joint Warrior $6a^{**}$ (25m)

Start in the right facing corner and pull over the bulge to easier climbing above a belay at the bottom end of the large ramp

5 Double Jointed $5+^{***}$ (53m)

A fantastic excursion the whole way, a classic!

P1: ($5+/25m$) A tricky start up the rib on the left side of the slabby wall leads to nice steady climbing above to the belay of 4

P2: ($5+/28m$) Committing moves straight out of the belay lead to an easier mid-section before tackling the exposed final bulge before the belay, savour the exposure and take in the views!

6 Prickles $6b+^{**}$ (26m)

Tricky slab climbing directly up the centre of the steep slab. Holds are not always in the centre of the bolt line. Difficulties ease mid-way and lead to the middle of the large sloping ramp. One bolt above the ledge leads right to the belay at the top of the large ramp

7 Cloudbase $6a^{**}$ (53m)

P1: ($6a/26m$) Climb easily up onto the top of the large flake/pinnacle. Step off and climb up with continued interest up the right hand side of the wall to the excellent belay ledge at the top of the ramp

P2: ($5/27m$) Climb up to the overlap. After, easier climbing leads to a slightly harder final bulge and the belay

