

HURLSTONE POINT BOULDERING

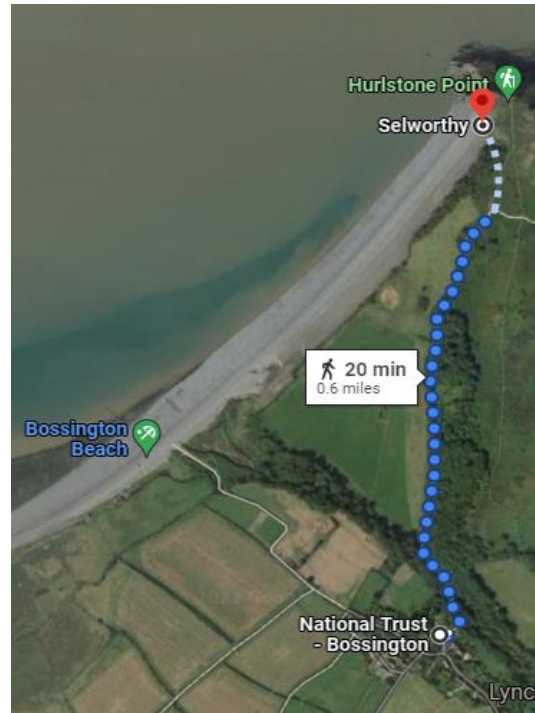
By Grant Edwards

Approach

Park at the Bossington National Trust Car Park, (£5 a day unless you're a member), situated in the coastal hamlet of Bossington just east of Porlock in Somerset. A pleasant 1.3km (20 minutes approx.) mostly flat walk with a short uphill and downhill at the end.

TA24 8HQ will get your sat nav close enough to find it.

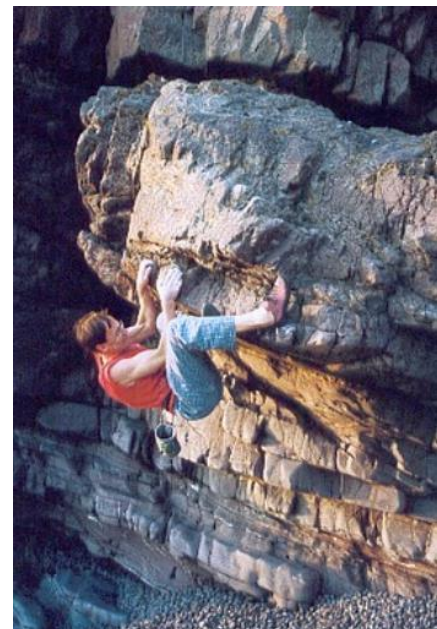
From the carpark cross the footbridge over Horner Water 30m NE to join the SW coast path that meanders N alongside the river before breaking away along the edge of the wood. Eventually you will leave the woods and head up a hill until you reach a bench and a junction in the path. The coast path turns right here, you should stay left and continue uphill for 50m until you can break off downhill to the left and head through a 'kissing gate'. This path leads you down to the beach and the crag is now clearly visible in front of you.



Introduction

Bossington and Hurlstone Point are a part of the Holnicote Estate; 9,848 acres of land gifted to the trust by Sir Richard Dyke Acland in 1944 with the wish to ensure that it could be enjoyed by everyone not just the landowner.

As with the majority of the Exmoor Coast the history of the bouldering at Hurlstone is murky, mysterious and for the most part unrecorded. That is not to say that it hasn't been used as a site for bouldering for a long time. It's unclear who did what and when but there are a couple of names that should be mentioned. The late Terry Cheek has left his understated mark and testament to his abilities with his E3 route Raindancer the lower crux of which can be 'bouldered out' above pads. In the late 90s Terry teamed up with the prolific Martin Crocker to add loads of trad and bouldering in the area. Big thanks to Martin for interpreting his own notes and sharing information. (Check out his website for more Exmoor action and information <https://www.martincrockerclimbing.com/>).



Martin Crocker playing on his roof.

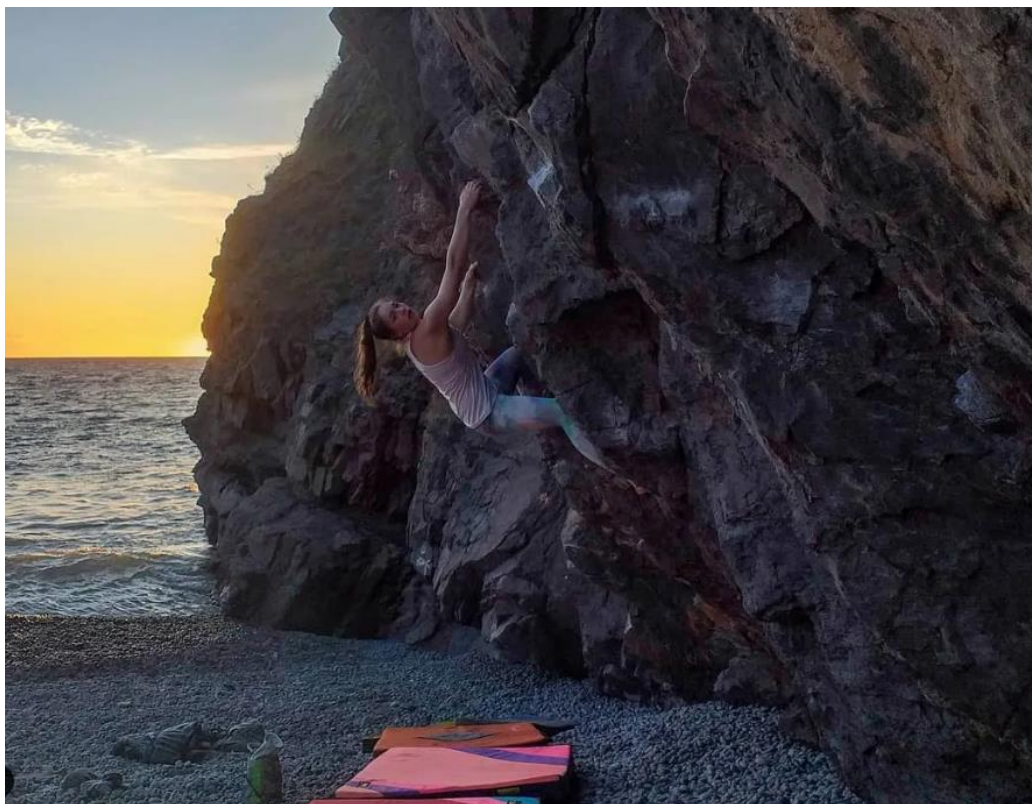
This guide covers the bouldering on the western side of Hurlstone Point at the eastern end of the very pebbly Bossington Beach. Grades given are on the Fontainebleau scale. As with much of the coast, the constantly shifting pebble level can dramatically affect the height of problems increasing or reducing height sometimes to the point of them becoming unavailable due to being buried. You should therefore take the given grades as an indication of difficulty rather than a definitive statement of difficulty!

Problems names are given to help identify problems but may not necessarily be from the first ascensionists.

The rock is Middle Devonian interbedded sandstone/conglomerate laid down 350+ million years ago. The upper beach has the distinct advantage of being unaffected by tides and is steep enough to stay dry in rain showers (it does eventually seep in heavy rain).



Terry Cheek on Rain Dancer.



Ruby Petch cruising along the Hurlstone Cowboy traverse.

5 Metre Wall

A near perfect little wall/ slab with a range of lower grade problems that get higher and more fluttery towards the seaward end. Have no fear the pebbles are surprisingly effective at absorbing impacts. A great spot to warm up for the harder steeper offerings further up the beach. The bouldering here is available for an hour or 2 around low tide.



- 1 Seaward Wall 4+ - The short seaward wall above the platform.
- 2 Left Arete *4+ - The high left arete/groove.
- 3 The High Wall *5+ - The wall right of the arete via a pocket and blind cracks/flakes near the top.
- 4 Eliminate Wall 5+ - A squeezed in version just right of the HW.
- 5 Layaways *5+ - The centre of the wall using a line of right facing layaways.
- 6 Sloper Groper 6a – Climb direct to a sweet move off the sloper shelf to a good hold. (Eliminate)
- 7 Thin Groove 4+ - The thin groove!
- 8 Corner Groove 3 – The easy corner/groove leads to the start of the route Munchkin.
- 9 Mini Prow *6a+ - Tricky start on slopers (gets harder the lower the pebbles are), up through the tiny groove above.
- 10 Bish, Bash, Bosh 6a - A quick dyno to the obvious boss and an easy finish.
- 11 Bosh, Bash, Bish 6a – Find helpful undercuts/sidepulls and move quickly to a good hold above.
- 12 Crocker's Traverse *6a+ - Start up 1 and traverse boldly rightwards (without using the top of the crag) to finish up 8 (CG). Airy and absorbing.

Martin's Roof (Low Overhang)

This feature is often buried under the pebbles but when it is released it provides some good steep climbing. Bouldering here is available for 3 to 4 hours around low tide.



13 Juggy Groove 4+ - Sit start move up big holds in the groove on the left.

14 Inbetween 6a - Sit Start avoids big holds of previous problem and moves right to finish.

15 Martin's Roof *6b - Sit start through the widest part of the roof.

16 The Crack – 6a Sit start, an inconsistent problem up the crack feature, the first move being much harder than the rest 3+ if you avoid this move.

17 Juggy Nose 5+ Start as for the traverse but move straight up the good holds in the face avoiding the holds in the crack to the left.

18 Give Me Some Lip *6b+ – Traverse R to L start on the jug down and right then follow the lip to finish up JG (13).

Rain Dancer Wall

The steep wall higher up the beach holds a classic pumpy traverse and a range of up problems, it is not affected by tide and will stay dry in the rain for a while. Boulderers tend to drop off at a suitable height but the routes continue upwards if you are so inclined. There is loads of potential for eliminates based around the listed problems.



23 Cringle Crack 5+ - The first 4m of the route.

24 Flip Flop* 6a+ - The rib/ arete – Sit Start Stick to holds on the rib until you reach jugs.

25 Of Quartz You Can* 6b – Move right from FF up to the slopy boss then make a big move right to the obvious quartz crimp to finish as for GIARI (27). (Good practice for the high traverse).

26 Shifty Pebble 6b – The groove to it's peg at somewhere around 4m depending on beach levels (start of a route).

27 Grip it and Rip It* 7a+ - Sit start, sticking to the arete, small holds, fierce and fingery. Eases as you reach the afore mentioned quartz crimp, moves up right to jugs to finish.

28 Pebble Pump 6a – The start of the route that continues up the crack/flake line.

29 A Game of 2 Halves *6b+ - From PP move right through obvious holds, use the slot around the corner to gain the groove of RD move right to finish at the block jug (circled). (More traverse practice!)

30 Leaner Machine** 6c – Uses the slot and lay away out left to gain the sloping lip. Top out boldly over the lip to reach a jug for the full tick (jump off or escape rightwards).

31 Rain Dancer* 6a – The Terry Cheek classic, up the corner and over the lip for the full tick. Escape rightwards.

32 Acid Rain* 6b – Up the side pulls/ vague arete right of RD to a tough move up to the block jug (circled) off a wide pinch. Top out using finger jamming skills for the full tick (escape rightwards).

33 Call him TC* 6b – The right arete from an undercut flake. (Holds can be friable!)



Rain Dancer Wall – The Traverses

There was a little debate and deliberation around where the traverses actually go and it is fair to say the lower version(s) can be impossible if the pebbles are high. However, it should feel fairly obvious where to go when you try them. For reference the section of the low line beneath the route Rain Dancer/ Acid Rain is not possible on the beach level shown above. Avoid using the low ledges if they are revealed.

34 Hurlstone Cowboy** 7a – The left to right traverse taking a higher line that isn't usually affected by a high beach (other than making it feel less high!) Start in the niche left of Cringle Crack, do Of Quartz You Can, then drop down through Pebble Pump and finish as for A Game of 2 Halves.

35 Youngsters Traverse** 7a - Traverse Left to Right staying low, crossing the cave on the far right at the end to reach easy ground beyond. (Use the Hurlstone Cowboy finish if the beach is too high.)

36 Oldies Traverse** 7a – Traverse Right to Left start with a 'Quarryman manoeuvre' across the cave on the far right, staying low beneath Rain Dancer and continuing low until you reach a niche and easy ground beyond Cringle Crack.

If you're not fully pumped by this point, try these variations. No grades given but obviously linking pump 7a traverses is going to feel harder than 7a, depending on whether you can find rests or not!

Youngsters into Oldies – Drop down Call Him TC at the end of Youngsters and go back via Oldies.

Oldies into Youngsters – At Cringle Crack turn back along Youngsters.

The Killer Loop – Start as for Youngsters, go up at Pebble Pump and reverse Of Quartz You Can to re-join Youngsters even more pumped than you want to be.

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