

Fluffy Goat Butt-Face * S-5.11c, 21 pitches, 605m**

FA: Tyler Kirkland and Mark Carlson March 2016-July 2016

FFA: Tyler Kirkland and Mark Carlson June 20, 2017

This is an excellent modern addition to Bow Valley climbing. An alpine sport route with extensive fixed protection on this big wall historically known for stout serious traditional climbing. This newest route tackles the face right of the Goat Buttress route with a south easterly aspect. It actually starts up an obscure and likely unrepeated route, established by Peter Gatzsch and Andy Genereux back in 2001, called "Gatzsch Your Goat" for pitches 1 and 2 and again for about two thirds of pitch 7, which was only realized after the drilling began. **Fluffy Goat Butt-Face** was established ground up over the course of a few months, starting early in the season owing to a particularly dry, warm spring. Originally climbed at 5.10/A0, the route was then cleaned, refined on top roped. Later freed at "hard 5.9!" (a reference to the Peter Gatzsch school of grading). The result of all this hard work is a well bolted, multi-pitch adventure with overall rock quality that is better than most single pitch sport climbs in the Bow Valley. Keep in mind that it is still the Canadian Rockies, solid holds can become loose in time and there are a couple of ledges that still hold rubble. Highly recommend a helmet be worn by all members. There are some easier pitches but overall the climbing is technical, sustained, and fairly steep. Some upper pitches are quite sustained with wild exposure. Cruxes are often quite puzzling and technical in nature where the path of least resistance is seldom direct or obvious.

Gear: A single 60 meter rope, 12 quick draws, 6 shoulder length slings and 2 anchor slings is all you need if pitching it out. On our ascent we had a 70m rope and twenty-five draws (eight that were shoulder length extendable) which allowed us to link some pitches completing the route in 16 pitches. (We linked 1-2, 3-4, 8-9, 15-16, 17-18, 21-&the 4th class at the top, this allows one climber to experience all the hard crux pitches on lead and maybe save a bit of time.) Tough finger pads will also help! The route has a long season coming into shape on average years by May and is often good until late September/ early October. It's in the sun from just after sunrise until about 3:30 PM. Parties can expect to take anywhere between 9-13 hours on ascent depending on your ability and time needed to solve the puzzling pitches and your overall skills as a limestone ninja. The descent is straight down the route via 30 meter rappels which takes 2-3 hours. **Caution Note:** Double rope rappels are not recommended on most of the route due to the number of non-plumb rappels and prickly stone. Your ropes will likely get stuck. With the hike in and out taking around 3 hours, a single day, car to car trip would likely be in the 14-19 hour range for the average party. Be prepared its a really big day! Bring head lamps, a couple of layers up the route as things (sun and weather) can change quickly on this massive face. "Peter Gatzsch and I did the route in 16 hours door to door in Calgary. We both kind of knew where we were going and still got lost! For a couple of old guys we gave it everything we had, not much energy left in the tank at the end of our day." There is a pleasant bivi-site just uphill of the start of the route that keeps things more casual if used. The site is good for about 4-5 people but no spot is large enough for a tent. Water can be available in the creek on the way in but is not guaranteed to be running the entire summer.

Where to Park;

From the east, take highway 1 west to the 1X Seebee/Exshaw turn off, going north on the 1X. At the 1X/1A junction, go left (West) on the 1A towards the town of Exshaw. Park in the parking lot across the highway (south side) from the Class III landfill, 4 km from the 1A/1X junction. If Coming from the west, take the 1A east from Canmore for 17km to parking.

Approach;

1.5-2 hours

From the parking lot cross north over the highway and walk towards the dump entrance, stepping over a road gate when the dump is closed. (**Note:** the dump site expanded a couple years ago this description reflects these changes.) Look to the right to find a trail that follows outside the fence of the dump property along its east side. Follow this trail as it turns to the west (left) still alongside the fence line (approximately another 5-10 minutes) until the fence line turns left (south). Stay with the fence heading south for about 200m then take a good trail heading right (west). The trail will move away from the landfill fence and you will come to a large Y junction in a couple minutes. The left branch goes directly to the Kid Goat climbing area, **take the right fork**. This trail more or less parallels the Goat massif while heading in a generally northward direction. After about 30-40 minutes from the parking lot, the trail crosses the edge of a small open meadow with a small dirt wash and a stand of poplars. There is a view of Goat Buttruss and Yamnuska across the meadow. Leave this main trail and follow the left edge of the meadow finding a smaller trail at the north-west corner of the meadow (**Note:** We didn't find this on the way in but used this trail on the way out. It saves about 15 minutes). In about another 15-20 minutes along this smaller trail, which generally heads north/east (aiming for the Yam/Goat col while gaining some height), you will come to the creek bed that drains the bowl left of Goat Buttruss. Hike up the creek bed heading north/west. After about 200 meters or more (flagging and a garden gnome marks a trail on the right (north) bank of the creek. From here the faint climbers trail heads up and right in a switchback up a grass slope. Winding left at the top of the slope you will encounter a sandy slope with small cliffs at its top. Traverse the slope, cross a small side creek and continue paralleling the creek bed. In another 150m enter the creek bed. About 300m up creek, generally staying on the right side, the creek bed narrows with cliffs on the left side and fallen trees barring the creek bed. Leave the creek here hiking steeply up a mossy hill to the right. The trail enters a slight forested gully and goes up the gully about 100m before side hilling up and right. Side hill horizontally another 60m before crossing the gully again back left. Contour left around a shallow ridge. Traverse up and left across semi open slopes into a drainage coming down from the Goat wall. Enter the drainage/creek and cross 15m upstream, climbing up out of the creek on a boulder and tree root. Hike up and then left to gain an open rib. Follow the open rib up through a small rock band onto a broad forested shoulder. Follow the left side of the shoulder uphill 150m, then cut left around the shoulder into another drainage/creek bed. Scramble down steeply into the creek and cross the creek 5m downstream. This is the last water on the approach and is only 10 minutes from the wall. Small trickles are often found downstream. Hike up and left coming to the shoulder above the main creek bed, following a couple switchbacks to open talus below the wall. There is one final junction just below the wall. For the route, head down and left along the base of the cliff towards the main drainage below the buttruss, finding the start of the route 60m from the junction in a huge left facing corner/gully (photo below). Following the cliff up and right will take you to the bivi site in about 100m. Mark wrote as of June 2017 there was a lot of flagging tape and various markers along the trail to assist with navigation. As of July 2019 the flagging is intermittent with some old and faded and some new. The trail from the creek was better marked. The lower trail from the meadow was not marked with flagging so we missed it on the way in but found it on the way out. I marked (etched) a sandstone boulder on the east bank of the creek with an arrow to help find this great little trail on the west side of the drainage on the way out (Andy Genereux).

The climbing;

P1: 5.6, 8 bolts 30m.

Start up the large gully moving onto the face on the left side passing two bolts to a ledge. A third bolt, which is hard to see from below, is up and left above the ledge. Step up left of the third bolt and climb a shallow right facing corner leading to stepped ledges and belay to the right.*Good to link with P2.

P2: 5.7, 7 bolts, 30m.

Trend leftward and climb up on increasingly solid rock.

4th class belay move 20m.

Scamper up slab and scree slope above the belay to ring-bolts a few meters to the right at the base of the climbing on the low angle face above.

P3: 5.0, 3 bolts, 30m.

Climb the perfect compact rock above to reach the belay at the base of a shallow gully on the left.*Good to link with P4.

P4: 5.6, 6 bolts, 25m.

Follow the broad, shallow gully up and left past two bolts before exiting the gully on the right up initially fractured slab to the belay at the base of the steep wall.

P5: 5.11a, 18 bolts, 35m.

The pleasant warm up is over. This pitch is sustained throughout with the puzzle moves beginning as soon as you clip the first bolt. Moving past the second bolt on the left will give a good start to the cryptic dance above. Watch out for rope drag by using some long slings on some of the bolts under bulges.

P6: 5.10b, 14 bolts, 35m.

Follow the right trending ramp above the belay for two bolts before traversing right across a ledge. Climb the steep crack with good feet up the side of a giant leaning flake making an airy 5.9 move on jugs onto a ledge. Traverse right across the ledge staying as low as possible with your hands in the wide horizontal crack and your feet on low suspect looking holds(10-) making a final stemming move into the cave with the belay hidden below the roof on the left.* *Pitch 4 belay of Gatzsch your Goat*

P7: 5.10b, 16 bolts, 40m.

Make a steep move out right from the belay cave into the chimney. Continue up the stepped chimney with wide stemming moves, exiting left when a notch between the chimney is visible above. Follow a ramp up and left to a 5.10- move pulling around a shallow right facing corner with the belay up left around a bulge.

P8: 5.10b, 11 bolts, 30m.

Carefully move up and left over lesser quality rock to better steep, prickly rock above, weaving around as necessary to find the best holds.

P9: 5.10c/d, 12 bolts 30m.

Slither down and left from the belay around an outside corner into a large right facing corner. Steep moves up the corner (10-) through a notch to gain a ledge and another few meters in a corner to another ledge. Climb up and right from this ledge to a few steep bulges (crux) below the belay. There is a sinker jug under the right side of the final bulge which is very useful but its hard to see.

P10: 5.11b/c, 12 bolts, 20m.

Delicately traverse left from the belay towards a right facing corner. Close to the corner climb straight up, lay-backing on tiny crimps with small feet to a two finger crimp left hand and gaston pinch right hand. Luckily a jug is a grunt away. There are still some harder moves getting to the belay so be sure to take advantage of the rest stance!

P11: 5.10c, 14 bolts, 30m.

Climb up the right side of the corner moving leftwards at the fifth bolt up excellent compact rock. Another sustained pitch with fun movement and great exposure! The pitch ends on a nice ledge with the belay up to the left.

P12: 5.11a/b, 10 bolts, 20m.

Cross the ledge over to the right facing corner. Tricky moves lead up the corner to a good rest below the roof and crux sequence big throw to a couple burly moves. A few meters above the roof is the "golf ball ledge" and belay.

P13: 5.10b/c, 8 bolt, 15m.

Climb up on the left side of the belay towards a chimney above. Climb the outside edge of the chimney avoiding stepping right to the hanging-belay until it is at head height and can be clipped from the chimney.

P14: 5.11a, 15 bolts, 30m.

Continue up the right edge of the chimney as it peters out into the roof above. Follow the bottom of the roof to the right before making a series of burly moves over the bulge on the right edge of the roof. Look for a good jug up and right from a good crimp and pinch just over the roof. Suspect looking but firm flakes await on a small ledge above the bulge. A final bolt and short wall above to gain a great down slopping belay ledge.

P15: 5.10b/c, 12 bolts, 25m.

Climb up and right over blocks to where a few tricky moves lead to a crack. A few jams and lay-backs are followed by a blocky roof below a short chimney.

P16: 5.10a, 10 bolts, 18m.

Carefully mount the choss tower at the top of the chimney, finding good, solid holds out right as you leap off the tower into the corner above. Follow the corner up to a small ledge where a delightfully slabby wall is climbed on the right side up a small arête to a belay ledge. *Good to link with P17

P17: 5.9, 8 bolts, 12m.

Continue up the corner left of the belay. Climb the corner generally on the left until it is time to carefully move right to gain the ledge, finding the belay on the far right.

P18: 5.10a, 14 bolts, 30m.

Step right across the gap staying as low as possible at first. Traverse right a few meters before following excellent featured rock up to an amazing layback flake. Follow the flake to a large ledge.

P19: 5.10c, 11 bolts, 30m.

Climb above the belay avoiding loose rock, traversing right after a couple bolts (manage rope drag with slings!). Climb past a shallow dihedral and up its right side pulling a steep move left around an outside corner on large jugs to a small belay above.

P20: 5.11c, 14 bolts, 30m.

Move up above the belay stepping left at the second bolt. Don't get sucked into the ugly corner right of the bolts! Finesse up on side pulls and crimps through progressively harder moves, finding the path of least resistance to the left of the bolt line, to the first crux (11c) between the 5th and 6th bolts. Above is a rest which should be milked before entering the second crux. Follow thin, sharp crimps to a right hand open hand pinch below the roof. Clip from the pinch and get ready for a pump sequence pulling the roof on more razor sharp crimps (11c), eventually slapping out to a flaky pinch once above the roof. But wait, it's not over yet! A few side pulls up flakes lead to a dubious looking undercling. Move off the undercling up and right to a deep jug/hole. A second jug/hole to a key hand jam leads to lower angled rock and a delicate step right onto the belay ledge.

P21: 5.8, 8 bolts, 20m.

Easy but somewhat loose climbing up the left side of the shallow dihedral to a small loose bulge before the belay.

4th class summit scamper 20m.

Scamper up from the left side of the belay, crossing a small scree gully finding a final set of ring bolts up and right on a nice flat spot to enjoy the top!

Descent;

All rappels are 30m or less (linking pitch 16 and 17 is 30m) and down the way you came up except from the top of pitch 7. Rappel down and slightly climber's right to find a ring bolt anchor at the lip of the massive roof. Another rappel from here gets you to another ring bolt anchor down and climber's right of the pitch 5 belay.

Note;

There are alternate pitches 6,7,13 and 14. These alternate pitches were the original line of ascent but it was decided that the route as described above makes for the nicest line and the alternate pitches are not described. **Keeping to the right** at any bolt junctions on the route is the way to go.