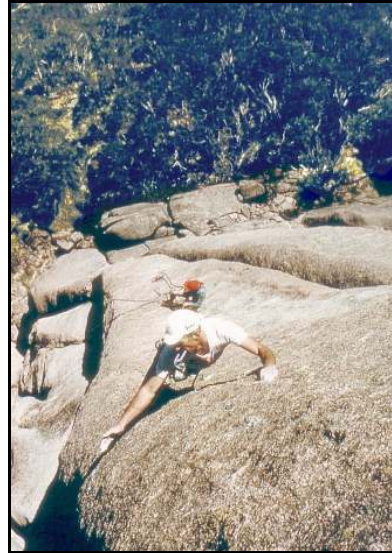




Climbing Review: Slabs, Adored and Explored! by Glenn

Few climbing experiences compare with the pure delight of gingerly padding your way up two or three rope lengths of sweeping slabs in spectacular locations. So, having mastered the shorter local classics of the You Yangs, Black Hill and Tenneriffe, intrepid slab enthusiasts will be eager to explore the vast majestic slabs further north, with their graceful, clean and adequately protected lines, generally following water streaks, faint seams or scoops. The largest and most popular granite slab areas are The Hump at Mt Buffalo Vic and the Central and Northern Slabs of Booroomba Rocks in the ACT.

Many routes established before the bolting craze rely entirely on flexible camming devices and fine wires as the mainstay of both protection and belays. The standard is 4 cam units for the deeper cracks, though 3 cam devices are preferred for placements in shallow seams, pockets and horizontal breaks as these are approximately 40% narrower, providing increased confidence. No.3 cam units tend not to walk in cracks.



Substance Abuse, 24, Mt Buffalo

Small wires can at times be a little tricky to place in seams and cracks of a highly crystalline nature (particularly when new), and it is therefore strongly recommended that climbers practise their placements thoroughly before launching up any of the local test pieces. Slab aficionados really are the masters of securing a placement in the most unlikely weakness.

Guidebooks generally indicate any potential seriousness in the lack of protection, and more importantly the crucial piece or pieces to protect the runout sections. When in doubt, back up everything!

Highly recommended routes:

Mt Arapiles: *Brolga* 16

Booroomba Rocks: *Balance* 18,
Equilibrium 17

Black Hill: *Milawa* 17, *Echidna* 19,
Rough Diamond 18, *Just In Passing* 19,
Astradyne 20

Tenneriffe: *White Hart* 18, *Nothing Left* 23, *Finger Lichen Good* 19

Mt Buffalo: *Peroxide Blond* 20, *The Icing On The Cake* 22, *Dr. Worm* 23, *They Might Be Giants* 24