

Gooseberry 250 m, 5.8

Ken Baker and Lloyd MacKay, May 1967

Joe McKay, alt. pitch 5 and 6.

This classic route is superbly situated on the east side of Tunnel Mountain with excellent views of Mount Rundle and the Bow River Valley. The climbing is enjoyable and varied and the rock is mainly good (after so many years of traffic). The route remains unpolished perhaps because of the coarse grained texture of the rock. The climb is basically a gear route but there is a lot of fixed protection and only modest gear-placing skills are required. The unique band of chert-edged limestone on pitch 5 gives one of the best face climbing sections for its grade anywhere.

A small selection of gear is required (up to 2 in) and a single 60 m rope will suffice. Although the pitches are solid there is a lot of loose rock on the ledges and extreme caution is required when parties are below. A helmet is strongly recommended. The climb catches the early morning sun and goes into the shade at about **4.00 pm (?)**. The climb is named for a “huge gooseberry bush halfway up final chimney” which has now gone although one of its descendents still resides in the original pitch 5 chimney.

Use the *Scoop* or *Gooseberry* approach described above and continue across to the first group on large trees at a flat, worn area below two short, offset grooves. The climb starts in the lower, right-hand groove which is capped by a yellow roof. The final chimney and big upper corner are directly overhead.

1. 30 m, 5.4. Climb the easy right wall of the groove past an old ring piton and a bolt to a station at a ledge on the right.

2. 40 m, 5.6. Move up and left to gain a ramp that leads to a long, right-facing corner. Climb the corner to a large ledge on the left and a bolted station behind trees.

3. 45 m, 5.8. Starting a few metres left of the station, climb easily left and up to gain a large, left-facing corner system. Climb this, easily at first, and then make some awkward layback moves past two bolts on the left to pass a bulge (avoid the short corner and pitons on the right). Do not follow additional bolts on the left wall but continue up for a short distance and then move right and up past the base of the upper left-facing corner to a small ledge on the right wall. Climb the wall past two bolts to reach a station on the right.

3 alt. 45 m, 5.10a. Climb to the second bolt at the crux in the corner and then step left to a bolt on the face. Make a wild move up to another bolt and then go across to the base of the continuation corner, left of the upper wall on the regular pitch. Climb the corner and move across right to the 3rd *Gooseberry* station. The pitch has good climbing but is very contrived and interferes with regular route. Many local climbers think it should be removed.

4. 25 m, 5.6. Move up left over a small bulge and climb a shallow groove past two pitons. Go diagonally up left into a left-facing corner and follow it to a ledge and bolt belay. Stop here to climb the recommended pitch 5 or alternatively, continue up and make a long traverse right on easy ledges past some loose blocks (pitons) to a bolt belay at the base of a steep, left-facing corner/chimney. The corner is the route originally climbed on the first ascent and is described as pitch 5 (alt.) below.

5. 50 m, 5.8. The recommended route is to climb the sport pitch above the lower belay. After moving up and beginning the traverse right on the original route, follow the line of bolts up and right at first on excellent rock with incut chert edges. At the top of the wall, move up sloping ledges to two large ½ inch studs, the right-hand of which has a hanger. Traverse right and up to the bolt belay at the top of the big corner.

5 alt. 40 m, 5.8. Climb the corner, easily at first, past a gooseberry bush to a large ledge below the more difficult upper section. Climb this on unnervingly slick rock past a bolt higher up to a major ledge system and a bolted station on the right.

6. 30 m, 5.7. Move up diagonally left on broken ground to a groove capped by a roof. A few metres below the roof, ignore a line of bolts going left and instead move right and up past a fixed piton into a steep, right-facing corner. Sustained climbing up the corner leads to a step left at the top and a bolt belay on a good ledge below an obvious exit chimney. Alternatively, from below the roof, follow the line of bolts left past the overhang and up to a chained station on the ledge system about 5 m left of the exit chimney of *Gooseberry*. This station is now part of the route *Tonka* (see topo) and its final pitch may be climbed (5.10b).

7. 30 m, 5.7. Move left and make an awkward move up past a bolt into the base of the chimney. Climb partway up the chimney and then step out left onto an easy ramp with excellent chert edges that leads up past a piton to a chained station near the top. Alternatively, continue up the chimney to a large tree at the start of easy ground (original finish to the route).

Descent: It is possible to rappel the adjacent route *Tonka* with a single 60 m rope (see topo). However, it is quicker to walk down the hiking trail on the Banff side of the mountain and walk back along the road. The road distance is 1.25 km from the trail head to the car and takes about 15 minutes, or about 30 - 35 minutes overall.

Tonka (The Gift) 225 m, 5.10d

Joe McKay, Terry Duncan and Mike Mertens, 2008

This recent sport route parallels *Gooseberry* and manages to stay independent from it although there is ready access at several locations. The climbing is good with two very technical pitches. The lower one of these, pitch 3, has some obviously drilled holds which detracts somewhat from the route's overall character and quality. It is not an accepted practice locally to modify the rock in this way and the pitch could have been climbed free at a higher standard with the option of using one or two of the bolts for aid. Nonetheless, the climb is well worth doing with some fine, untarnished climbing and the same excellent location and views as *Gooseberry*. It currently needs a little more cleaning but the route is likely to become quite popular.

Start: At an obvious cave about 50 m up and left from *Gooseberry*.

1. 30 m, 5.9. From the right-hand side of the cave, climb a short loose wall to ledges on the right. Move up right to a left-slanting corner and climb its slabby left wall to reach a large ledge system that angles up to the right and connects with *Gooseberry* (chained station on the right).

2. 20 m, 5.10a. Climb up to a high bolt and then move up into a short corner. Climb this past bolts on the right to a ledge and continue up past 2 more bolts to a station on the right at a higher ledge.

3. 25 m, 5.10d(?). Move left to a small tree and a row of bolts going straight up. Follow the bolts with a few tricky moves to gain a small ledge (10b). Continue up past closely spaced bolts to a difficult crux section (10d) near the top below a small overlap. A few more moves lead to a chained station at a ledge.

4. 30 m, 5.10a. Move left and climb up to a high bolt. Continue up with awkward climbing higher up between a blocky edge on the left and the bolts on the right. Move right at a break below an overhang and climb an easy arête up and left to a chained station level with the fourth belay on *Gooseberry*.

5. 40 m, 5.9. Traverse left and up slightly past two bolts to small ledges below a big, left-facing corner that arches over to the left. Move up to a prominent overhang and make a difficult move up over it to reach good chert edges. Continue more easily up the corner above on great rock past a few bolts to a two-bolt station on the right at the band of slabs. There is an earlier two-bolt station on the left and a hidden rappel station ca short distance below.

6. 30 m, 5.10c/d(?). Move left and up to a high bolt in a shallow scoop (loose and run-out) and continue up to an overhang. Move left onto the face and climb steeply up and right following the lip of the overhang. Finally the holds run out and a couple of tricky slab moves lead up and right to the base of a right-facing corner. Traverse right across this and move up to a rappel station at a big block.

7. 20 m, 5.8. Traverse right on good holds to a break leading up to a short corner. Climb the corner and continue up and right on broken ground to a chained station on a big ledge, level with the last pitch on *Gooseberry*.

8. 30 m, 5.10b. Make a steep, rising traverse left past 3 bolts and then swing left and up (strenuous) to a fourth bolt. Continue more easily to a steep slab of prickly rock on the right side of a small corner (2 bolts). At the top of the corner, move left past a bolt below an overhang and make a tricky move up into an easy corner. Climb the corner to a chained station. The top is a short distance above.

Descent: The route is fixed for 30 m rappels although, as noted above, it is probably faster to walk off the back of the mountain. At present, considerable rock fall hazard exists in some sections when pulling the ropes.

