

A Climbers Guide to

Sail Rock

By

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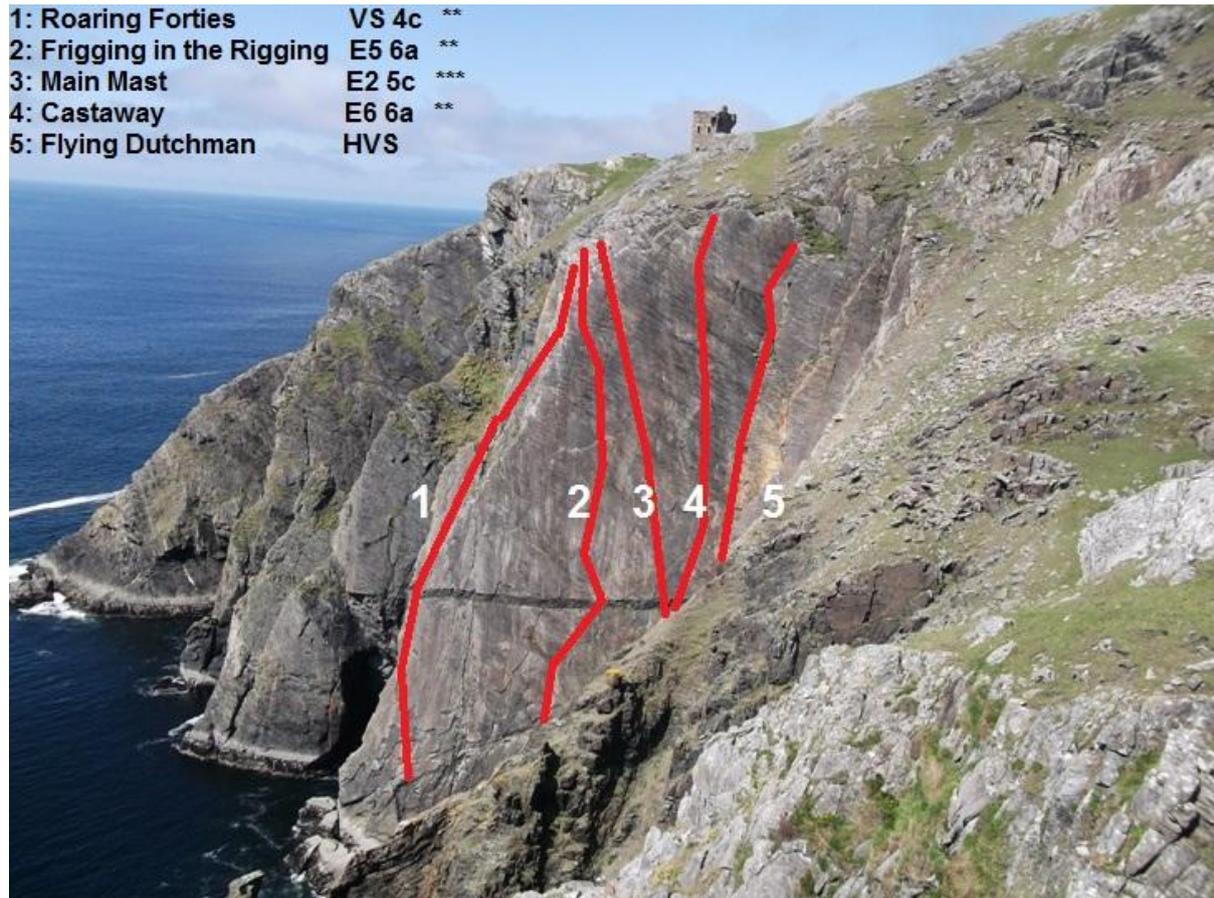
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Sail Rock

Directions: Follow the signs posts for Slieve League view point from Killybegs through Carrick and Teelin villages to the road end car park for Slieve League. On foot now, walk the 2KM until you are looking over to the solitary watchtower. Descend towards the sea down a deepening gully, keeping the tower on your right. This will take you to a view point looking across at Sail Rock.

Descent to the base is by abseil either down the face or down the ridge across the zawn from Sail Rock main face.

Map ref: G558750



Roaring Forties VS 4c 87m **

Start: This route takes the left edge of Sail Rock. The original line started up a crack to the right of the arete to reach the basalt dyke about 6m from the edge.

Pitch 1: 4c 28m. From the lowest point of the basin follow the edge to a belay level with the basalt dyke.

Pitch 2: 4b 18m. Climb open grooves on the left of the edge to another platform.

Pitch 3: 4c 35m. Climb for 10m to a stance and continue up a crack to the top or break out right and finish on solid weathered rock to the top of the wall.

D. Scott, R. Gillies April 67

Frigging in the Rigging E5 6a 80m **

This climbs the superb slab midway between Roaring Forties and Main Mast. Start at the base of a long, straight crack directly above the apex of the blowhole.

Pitch 1: 5c 45m. Climb the first half of the crack and then follow another crack rightwards to the black band. Above the band follow sloping holds to a good nut placement and make a delicate move left to

a thin crack which is followed to a grey area of rock. Step down rightwards to a small thread and make a difficult move up to gain a flake on the right. Layback boldly up the flake to an awkward mantel shelf at its top. Step right and make a thin move up on grey rock to gain good holds on the left which lead to a record flake. Belay at a thin crack at the top of this flake (two No. 1 friends).

Pitch 2: 6a 25m. Climb the crack with difficulty (No.2 friend) to where it closes. Step precariously left to single finger slots and sloping footholds at a blind crack. Tiptoe up this (poor R.P's) to slight relief at a minute overlap of grey rock, on the left. Step right into the wider continuation of the crack which is easier but still serious for another 5m. Near the top of the crack branch out rightwards, following a superb zig-zag crack which ends near the top. Reach up for enormous jugs which lead to the top, just left of the finish of Main Mast.

T. Ryan, K. MacDonald Aug 92

Westway To The World E5 6a 70m

This route connects a series of subtle features between Main Mast and Friggin In The Rigg and is based on a peg of unknown origin at about 2/3 height which was used as a belay (in conjunction with abseil rope).

Pitch 1: 6b Start just right of the blow hole and climb easily rightwards to a break in the basalt dyke with a crack above which runs out. Climb the slabby wall above to reach a vague but conspicuous diagonal red/orange rounded overlap/wave. Use handholds in the overlap/bulge and traverse diagonally leftwards with feet on slab below to reach big crystal pockets (small/medium cams). Get feet in pockets and move rightwards to thin crack and wire placement (not obvious). Climb back left on face holds to reach bottom of short flake. Up this to hands-off ledge on left. Arrange cluster of microwires above ledge and make difficult face moves (crux) up wall to reach a flake/crack which leads to a small niche where the peg is. Belay; peg and abseil rope.

Pitch 2: 5b The first half of this pitch is unprotected. Climb the thin flake above the belay to where it ends. Traverse left across the wall to reach a hidden crack. Follow the crack, which gets easier with height, to the top. Finish just left of Main Mast.

P. Nolan, A. Long (alt.) May 2004

Main Mast E2 5c 69m ***

Start: In the basin at the centre of the wall. The route takes the thin crack line right up the middle of the wall.

Pitch 1: 15m From the shallow scoop ascend the broken cracks and slabs to the basalt dyke.

Pitch 2: From the dyke follow the crack up steeply and diagonally left. Bridge up between flakes to a small stance.

Pitch 3: The crack gradually narrows and steepens, but the line of the crack is followed to the top.

D. Scott, R. Shaw, D. Nicol 08/67

European Bob E4 5c 80m

This route follows a more or less direct line from just above the basalt dyke on Main Mast to the peg belay on Castaway. This is in effect a new direct first pitch to Castaway and finishes by the 2nd (crux) pitch of that route. From about 4m above the black band on Main Mast follow a thin crack rightwards through a small notched overlap. Continue on face holds when the crack runs out (many micro-wires). Thin moves gain a diagonal flake which is followed leftwards to large holds and the left side of an arching overlap (crucial F2 in crystal pocket down on L). With feet on large holds make thin moves up the left side of the overlap to reach sloping ramps leading to the peg belay on Castaway.

P. Nolan, J. Walls August 2003

Note: pegs cannot be reached from belay ledge. They are in good condition but in shallow placements. Pegs were extended on approach abseil to be easily clippable and the belay was backed up with the abseil rope.

Finish via the top pitch of Castaway

Castaway E6 6a 80m **

This takes the slab and thin crack right of Main Mast. The main pitch offers sustained climbing through areas of soft rock with 'hopefully adequate protection'.

Pitch 1: 4c, 15m As for Main Mast up to the dyke.

Pitch 2: 25m From the dyke follow the broken fault up rightwards to gain huge flakes just left of the corner bounding the right end of the slab. A long reach about 15m out gains the top of a prominent flake (crux). Protection is just below in the corner to the right. A rising traverse leftwards deposits one at a two-peg belay just below a thin crack.

Pitch 3: 6a, 40m The Big Pitch. Simple route-finding draws one up the thin crack (friend 1.5 many small wires) to a shallow slot/runnel 10m from the top. A few thin moves past an overlap rewards you with good wire placements, and go on up left to better holds. Continue direct for 4m until one can move rightwards to a crack, where you place small friends and finish up the crack.

D. O'Sullivan, J. Dugdale Aug 91

Flying Dutchman HVS 105m

Start: 15m right of Main Mast.

Pitch 1: 16m Up corner to dyke. Traverse left to Main Mast belay

Pitch 2: 36m Move back into corner and break out right and follow parallel groove to bottom of block.

Pitch 3: 21m Move left onto orange wall. Up wall until level with top of block. Move left round grassy corner into groove. Follow this to good stance.

Pitch 4: 28m Climb overhanging crack with difficulty to the top

M. Curran, P. Blake June 67

Hulk VS 4c 100m

Start: This route follows a line in the right-hand corner of the basin. It is rather loose and vegetated.

Pitch 1: 30m From the traverse line across the top of the basin, traverse up to the right over the steep overhanging and curving strata to a belay in another scoop.

Pitch 2: 30m Climb easily to a stance where the strata becomes much steeper. Climb a thin crack to a stance high up on the right-hand corner.

Pitch 3: 40m Climb up to the right for 10m. Step left over grass and rock to the top.

D. Nicol, P. Webster, D. Scott 1967