



Hold up Mental - Verdon (F)

One of the top newer-generation Verdon routes

This most recently bolted route is in no way inferior to the top first-generation routes on the l'Escalès cliff: extreme exposure, perfect rock quality, fast approach with abseiling to reach the start of the route. In addition "Hold up Mental" offers further advantages of a relatively young route: almost virgin, non-slippery rock, and perfectly placed bolts with distances that appeal to today's generation of climbers. The neighboring, earlier-generation route "L'Age de Raison", which is only a few tens of meters away and was first ascended from below in 1991/1994 by P. Berhaut and companions, provides an extra thrill. Thanks to the north-west orientation and the frequent cool breezes both routes are ideal in the warm summer months.

Hold up Mental	J.-M. Paris (2001↓)
ED, 7b(6b+), S1-2	160 clm (-30 vam)
NW, 620 a s.l.	
	overall impression ★★★★★
	climbing ratio 78%
	variety ●●
	scenery ●●●
	exposure ●●●
	rock quality ●●●
	steepness
	fun factor

After a short descent of 10-15 minutes from the parking lot you reach the rappel point. Already during the 5 times abseiling to the belay of P1 you feel the anxiety arise facing this blank, almost unstructured wall. In addition, the start of the route is above a gigantic cave and about 100 meters above the Verdon river which leaves only one way to regain horizontal ground: upwards.

Already P1, though rated only 6b/6b+, should not be underestimated because of the widely spaced, but never maliciously placed bolts. A very technical slab section is at the end of the left-traverse in P2, before climbing becomes substantially easier along a flake and up to the belay. The crux pitch P3 in a vast gray wall looks almost unclimbable from below, as good handholds cannot be seen from this perspective. Once started, however, one finds relatively good, easy to read rock structures with hand and footholds in the right places. And also the steepness is less than expected, so that with good stamina one has a good chance for an on sight ascent. P4, P5 and P6 are as good as P3, but somewhat easier. For the last three pitches one can combine either P5 with P6 to a 50 m long and homogeneous 6b+/6c pitch, or P6 can be combined with P7 what requires a little less stamina.

Overall, "Hold up Mental" is an exceptional route with the rare opportunity to go into the two-dimensionality.

Approach: Parking "Belvédère du Maugué" on the Route des Crêtes, direction la Maline, 4 km from La Palud.

Start of the route: 5x abseiling (50m-rope) over the route.

Guidebook and further information: "Verdon – 51 ans & 510 voies", a selection of good routes by S.Adlinger, O.Dobel Ober, P.Faudou, 2015. "100 plus belles du Verdon" www.topo-grandesvoies-verdon.fr, a subjective selection of routes with topos. Opinions and more pictures of the route by repeaters in [camptocamp.org](http://www.camptocamp.org) <http://www.camptocamp.org/routes/169971/fr/verdon-limbut-hold-up-mental>



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Multi-pitch climbing routes in the Alps



P6 + P7: 6c + 5b
55m when P6 is combined with P7.
P6 is similar to P5; even P7 has excellent rock.

P5: 6b+
shorter and easier than P4 and P3, but of similar style.

P4: 7a
30m, perhaps the most beautiful pitch. Again perfect Verdon rock and extremely exposed, but not quite as technical as P3.

P3: 7b
30m, technical climbing in perfect and vertical rock that requires a lot of stamina.

P2: 7a+
short, with a very difficult technical traverse.

P1: 6b+
30m, difficult for the beginning, some bolts are far apart, though correctly placed.



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Multi-pitch climbing routes in the Alps



Climbers in the traverse of the exposed P2.



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In the difficult traverse of P2.



The grand crux pitch P3.



Once again steep and more small holds in P4.



At the end of the already easier P5.