



The Hochkönig sibling of "Zauberberg" on the French Paroi de Gramusset

This beautiful route is one of the finest in Austria, perhaps it is even the Miss Austria. Highlights such as routes in the Verdon Canyon come to mind, or the "Zauberberg" (Magic Mountain) at Paroi de Gramusset in the French Aravis area (not far away from Chamonix). Both masterpieces, here by Hans Zlöbl, there by Michel Piola, are routes in the very best limestone with similar difficulties, similar character and about the same age. They are rather short, but because the stress factor is

high, one does not really mind. Most of the time the climbing is varied and complex, thus quite difficult to climb on sight. The view downward while watching the second climbing is breathtaking and unforgettable, without ledges that would destroy this exposed environment.

After a rather long approach the route starts with the crux pitch. After a warm-up of only 10 m the wall becomes steep and you reach the complicated, well-protected crux section after the 6th bolt with pumped forearms. The short and easy P2 could be added to P1 (then a total of 50 m). Looking up from the second belay, you'll feel like being in a big wall, almost like climbing at the Swiss Wendenstoecke. P3 requires excellent foot technique in a slightly inclined and very rough wall with tiny foot- and handholds. Not too hot temperatures and a harder shoe rubber might help. P4 starts with an ascending, fortunately good-natured traverse to the right with a run-out to the first bolt. After a difficult passage a crack with large holds leads to the next belay. At the end of P5 there is a new bolt placed higher than the original bolt which allows to climb the final left traverse much more easily than originally. Also at the beginning of P6 an additional bolt was placed which now eases the former run-out to the first bolt which was hard to clip. P7 (50 m) is spacious with crack and face climbing. A run-out between bolts in the upper part of the pitch can be protected with a #2 Friend. At the end of P7 one can quickly return to the rucksack depot by abseiling (4 x 45 m). The alternative is to climb another 2 pitches to the summit and walk down eastward via the normal route in about 20 minutes.

The "Opera Vertical" dries very fast after rain. Other routes at Torsäule than can be recommended are "Zeit zum Atmen", "Walking to the Sky" and "Der wahre Kletterwahnsinn". Worth mentioning is the excellent guidebook "Best of extrem" by R.Norcen and R.Kühberger with more Hochkönig routes and, as a contrast to that, the outdated and even incorrect topo in www.bergsteigen.at.

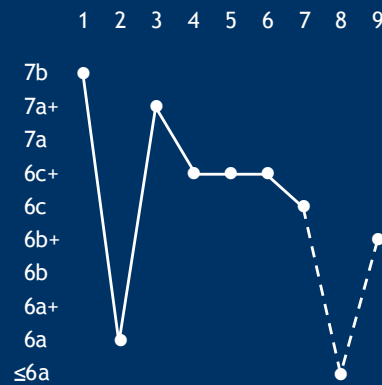
Approach: Park at Arthurhaus (1500 m o.s.l.) above Mühlbach am Hochkönig. From there via the Hochkönig trail in about 1:45 hrs to Torsäule. Accommodation possibilities at Mitterfeldalm (about 20 minutes from the parking).

Start of the route: Just before the trail leads past a large boulder with a 5000 m mark walk right up to the base of the wall. The belay bolt is on a ledge that you reach by scrambling up a short passage.

Guidebook: Best of extrem | Volume 1, Roland Norcen and Rudolf Kühberger, Panico Alpinverlag 2006

Opera Vertical
ED+, 7b(6c+), S2
S, 2350 m a.s.l.

H.Zlöbl, S.Meissl,
S.Steinbacher (1995†)
200(+80) clm (850 vam)



overall impression ★★★★★

climbing ratio	55%
variety	●●
scenery	●●●
exposure	●●●
rock quality	●●●
steepness	
fun factor	



Opera Vertical on Torsäule (AT)

Multi-pitch climbing routes in the Alps



P7: 6b+, b7

Crack at the beginning, then left into slabs. Take a #2 Friend for the layback flake.

P6: 6c+, b6

Additional new bolt after the belay.

SP5: 6c+, b7

Run-out to b1 (6a). Difficult between b2 and b4. Before the belay there is a new bolt placed a little higher to ease the hard left traverse.

P4: 6c+, b6

Easy start of the right traverse, then difficulty at the second bolt. With big holds to the belay.

P3: 7a+, b6

Tiny hand- and footholds after the second bolt.

P2: 6a, b3

P1: 7b, b9

Start on a ledge. Difficulties begin after the layback. Steep face with small handholds where the complicated crux is in the upper third of the pitch.



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P3 with tiny hand- and footholds.



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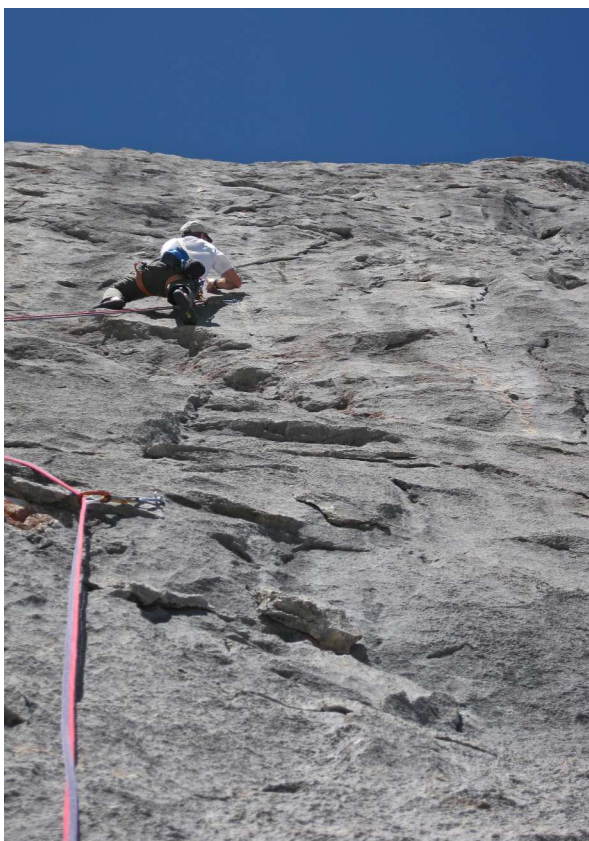
Multi-pitch climbing routes in the Alps



The magnificent P1 as seen from the bottom.



After the right traverse in P4.



The difficult section in P5.



P5 as seen from the belay.