

SHARK'S FIN

This rock is a 35 meter spire of limestone. The locals don't have a name for this spire. It's been decided that it looks like a giant shark's fin so it's been named accordingly. *Shark's Fin* has the potential to be developed on all sides, but at the printing of this edition it's not yet been completed. (The rock adjacent also has lots of potential to be developed as well and a Tyrolean traverse between the two would provide quite a picture!)

Shark's Fin's future is constantly in question because of the incipient mining that feeds the urban sprawl of Phnom Penh and the refitting of the roads in the area. We hope that



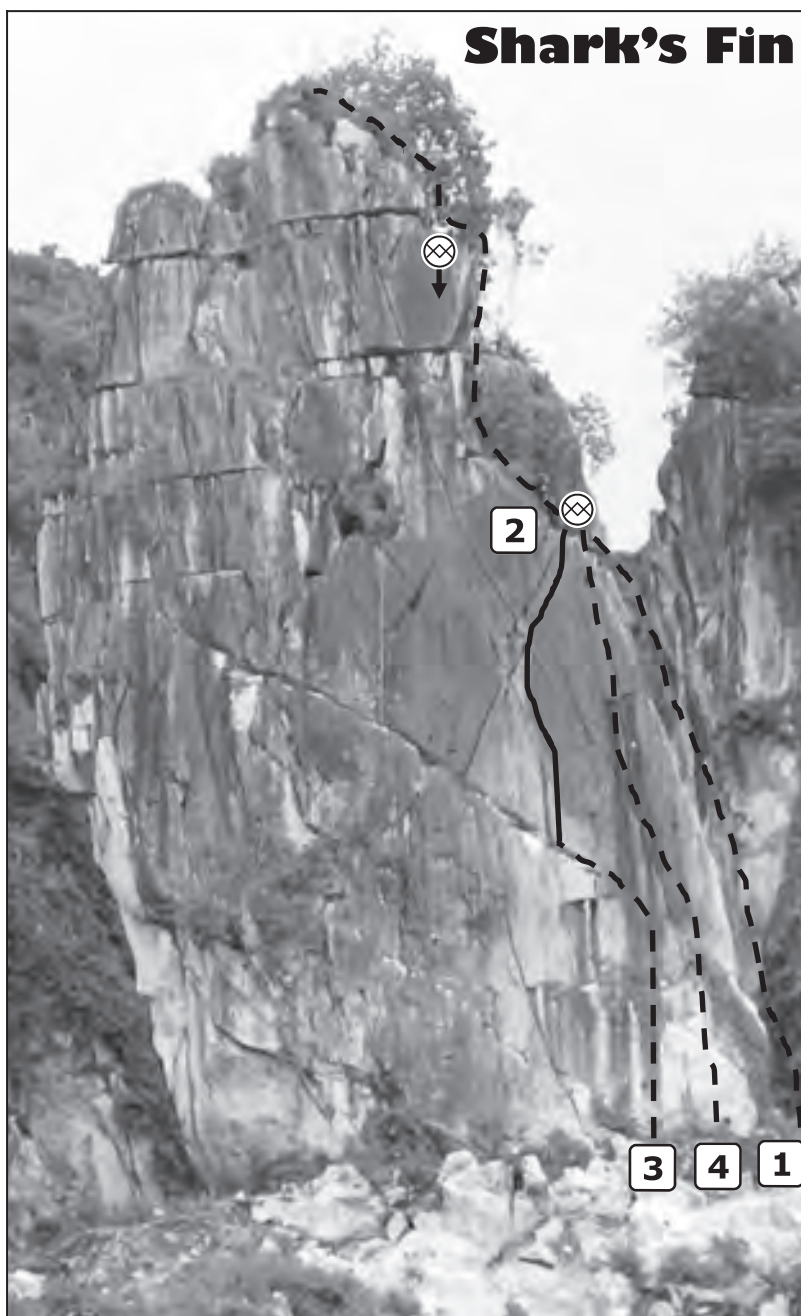
One rock at a time

the local rock quarry men will choose a different rock for their source of stone in the future. Conversations with the local population have occurred that request for the preservation of this site.

Finding the Rocks: From *Cloister Wall* or *Fish Bowl* continue north and around a buttress outcrop. The road tends to be rough and may be flooded in high water season. It is advised that this way be traveled by motorcycle or a vehicle with high ground clearance because the way is quite rough. Continue heading around the hill until you arrive at *Shark's Fin*.

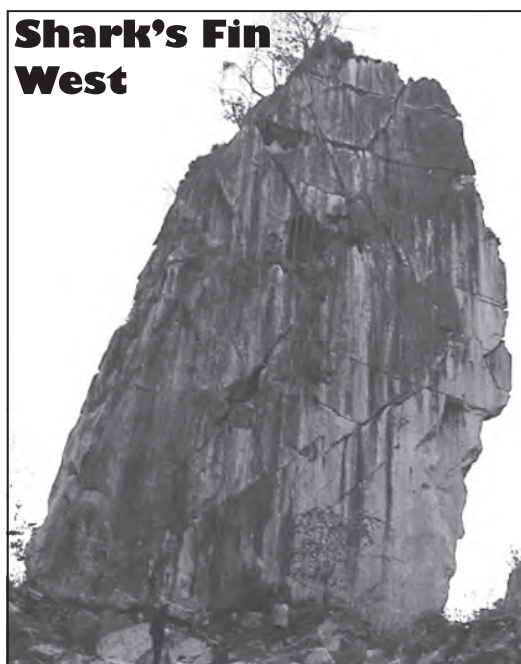
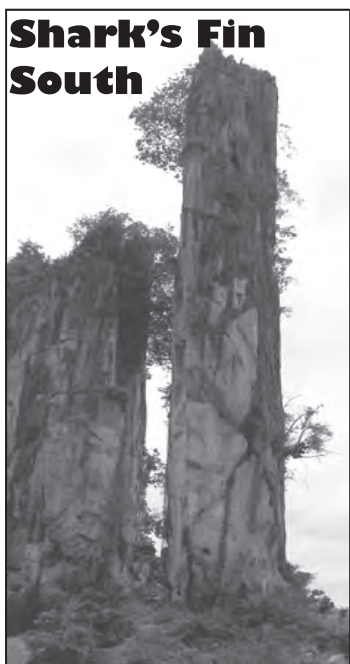
If traveling by taxi/small car, it is advised that you proceed around the mountain in a clockwise direction, (returning the way you came from the main road) keeping the hill to your right as you round the hill. Once you are around the mountain and the railroad tracks begin traveling away from the mountain, it's here the you'll need to walk from. Head around the corner and *Shark's Fin* will be visible. It's just a short walk, but bring everything you may need from your vehicle because you'll not want to walk back to get some-





thing. (Or if you have GPS: 10°34'39.56"N 104°28'28.26"E)

1. **Dorsal Fin** (5.8) Start on the north end of Shark's Fin. Continue until the tree is visible on the east face and continue to the belay station near the tree. This climb tends to be overgrown with vines so bringing a knife along is advised.
2. **Topper** (5.6) From the belay station for *Dorsal Fin*, continue left and up to the top of the rock. The rappel station is just over the edge of the east face on the second ledge down from the top.
3. **Zen X** (5.10b) A classic route not to be missed. This climb begins directly below the belay ledge and anchor for *Dorsal Fin*. Pass through the prominent 'X' formation on the face of the rock.
4. **Zen X right** (5.10c) An alternative face climb to the classic. Follow a route just to the right of the *Zen X* line and away from the cracks.





RYAN'S PINNACLE

The life span of this pinnacle is in question due to it's location within one of the largest rock quarries in the area. Access hasn't been an issue as of yet but perhaps it will be in years to come. Enjoy it while it still stands.



Finding the Pillar:

This pinnacle is visible from *Shark's Fin* (to the north) and it's situated within the large quarry visible from *Cloister Wall*. The easiest way to get there is by heading to the east and around the *Cloister/Caves/Shark's Fin* hill. Head clockwise around the hill from either *Fish Bowl* or *Cloister*. If you're already climbing at *Shark's Fin*, head directly to the pillar by way of whichever path is passable. Following the railroad tracks is by far the easiest route.

1. **Pillar Direct** (5.9) The south end of the pillar affords the most direct of routes, hence the name. Alternatives are available just about anywhere so throw up your own if you think it's worth it.

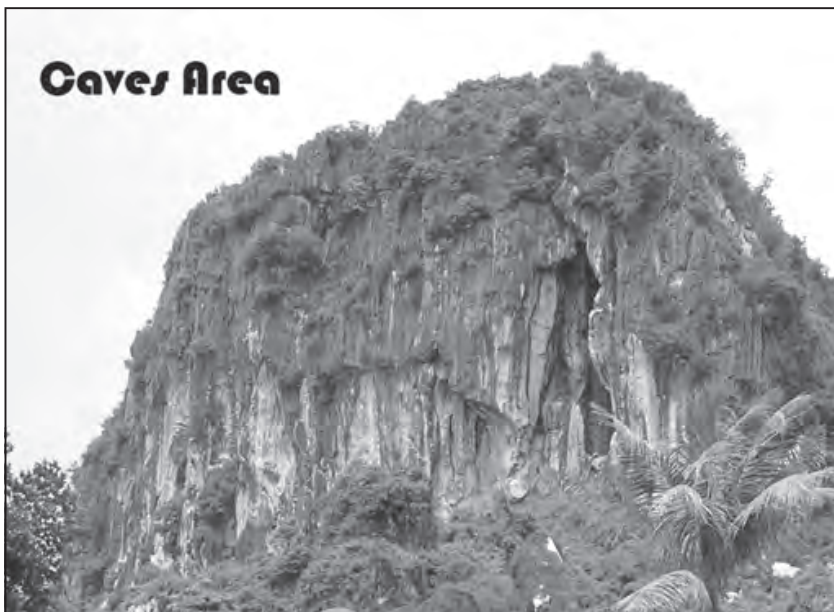
CAVES

Of the sites mentioned in this section, this is the least developed of them. Caves has a lot of potential for long sustained lead climbs but has yet to be developed thoroughly. This site's namesake comes from the large vertical caves that can be found within this rock. Another interesting thing of note is the rather large non-



Ryan Sinclair topping out on Ryan's Pinnacle





indigenous buildings that reside in a field near this crag. They stand as remnants of a set from a film that was made here in 2004. This author has yet to discover which film it is. The building is now occupied by some local villagers.

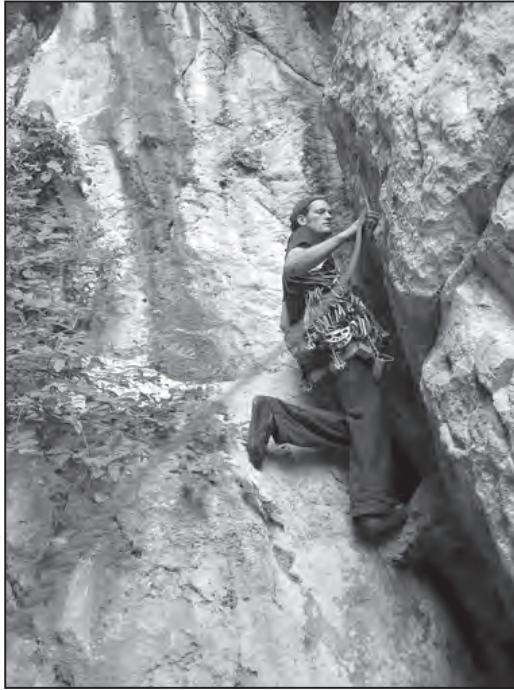
Finding the Cliffs:

It's best to refer to the map of the area in this chapter to understand how to get to this site (pg. 28). Of all the other developed sites in the area, this is the only one on the north side of the railroad tracks. Pass through a few villages and eventually head northeast toward a grouping of rather large buildings that look out of place (that's the movie set).

(Or if you have GPS: 10°35'54.61"N 104°28'37.68"E)

This area has been climbed a few times, but no routes are worth mention. Lot's of potential exists but do watch out for the wasps and bees!





Caves photo by BEN SHERIDAN

Interesting things in the area:

If you're going to be in the area for a while it's suggested that you check out some of the other highlights the area has to offer.

Bokor Hill Station is a wonderful place to retreat from the heat of the lowlands of Cambodia. This station was once a weekend retreat for the French colonials (Kep was their seaside retreat location) and as would be expected they built everything from a post office to a casino atop the hill. Other concrete structures that still remain are the royal residence of King Sihanouk, a Catholic church, a tea plantation, and various other buildings.

At just over 1,000 meters at it's highest Bokor provides cool breezes and grand vistas of the Kampot area. Flora and fauna abound and if you have the time, ask at the ranger station to go for a guided tour of the forest. Spending one night at the top



should recharge your batteries for another day of climbing in the heat or traveling onward. A guest-house/wildlife ranger station has rooms available for \$5, but bring your own food unless you enjoy noodles and beer for every meal.



Bokor Hill Station

The distance is 37km from Kampot and this author advises that you connect with one of the many taxis that make the trip daily in Kep or Kampot. But, for experienced riders, it's a moderate dirt bike ride. To get there you'll take Route #3 west from Kampot to a turnoff on the right side of the road. \$5 entrance fee at the ranger station about a kilometer up the road. Badly broken pavement all the way up the mountain. Bring warm clothes.

Rabbit Island (Koh Tunsay) is a wonderful oasis of palm trees and empty beaches. This island is about 20-40 minutes from Kep by local boat. The water is relatively clear and some snorkeling around the rocks. No coral but lots of fish. There are now some very basic guesthouse facilities on the island. Arrange a boat trip through your guesthouse in Kampot or Kep.



Rabbit Island—Koh Tunsay