

# **The Corporate Night**

## **About 400 meters long, E1-5a**

### **Mount Kalongo, Northern Region, Uganda**

*FA. E. Freudenthal, L. Hodgkinson on 30/11/2015*



The route climbs the South-East face of Mount Kalongo, starting in the largest gully, then mostly straight up following cracks systems and easier but run out slabs to the top. Overall, it has really good and fairly sustained climbing, the rock is solid and only a few passages require you to battle with vegetation. We took about 8h for the climb and 1h for the descent.

Be warned that the top slabs will be impassable if they are wet and backing off from them will be tricky/expensive. This is the description to the best of our recollection; there might some mistakes and better variations.

**Approach:** Mount Kalongo towers some 400m above the village of Kalongo, in the Northern Region of Uganda (map: <https://goo.gl/maps/4jRGh9ynD42>). The route is on South-East face of the wall. From the path in the village behind the hospital fence, spot the large gully with a very tall, straight tree with white bark sticking out of it. Simply thrash your way through the high grass and boulders until you reach the bottom of the gully. The start of the route is about 30m left of the right hand wall of the gully, where a narrow black slab widens out into some bushes.

**Pitch 1 (10m S – 4a):** Climb the delicate slab to the undercut block slightly left, with a short crack splitting it, into a bushy belay stance below a blank wall.

**Pitch 2 (30m HS – 4b):** Follow the base of the wall to the right through the brambles until you reach a leaning pillar connecting to the right edge of the gully. Climb the pillar delicately until it joins the right hand wall and follow the crack to some awkward blocks, made more awkward by trees. Round the final boulder onto a small ledge with a slingable boulder for a solid belay and a large tree coming out of the rock behind.

**Pitch 3 (20m - VDiff):** Climb up the tree behind the belay directly upwards and follow the ramp up to the left under some light vegetation. Traverse some small boulders until you reach a large clearing at the bottom of a blank black wall and the base of the white bark, tall, straight tree you can see from the town. Look out for snakes!

(Variation pitch: climb to the left of the ledge then up the pillar to the next ledge)

**Pitch 4 (30m HS – 4b):** Take the mossy chimney at the very back of the ledge and on the left side of the wall. Round the chockstone, then further up the gully climb the easy slab to a tree belay.

**Pitch 5 (40m VS – 4b):** Climb the groove to the right of the tree until you reach the precariously broken top of the pillar. Take a committing step left and traverse across the slab and into the gully. Follow the gully until the wall steepens and the route breaks to the right into a narrow passage enclosed by a flake. Traverse to the moss filled flake and climb up and over the bush to your left into a comfortable ledge with two trees for a belay.

**Pitch 6 (25m HVS - 5a):** Follow the undercut cracks up to the large tree above, then traverse to the right under the overhang to a sloping ledge with a large groove cut into it. Down-climb 1-2 meters until your feet reach the small edges below and shuffle rightwards until the edges disappear. Then reach a good crack on the right of the slab. Move easily straight up into a small groove with a belay about 6 metres below the dark, vegetated gully above.

**Pitch 7 (40m VS – 4a):** Climb the grassy black rocks to the bottom of the gully, and bridge boldly upwards to the first tree. Thrutch and squirm your way between the trees until the gully splits with a tree and an overhanging block ending the natural passage to the left. From above the tree, rock over to the right onto an exposed grey slab with a deep crack to the right. Either thrutch up the

crack or enjoy the face climbing. The large tree at the top makes for a stunning hanging belay. Enjoy the view!

**Pitch 8 (45m E1 – 5a):** Climb above the tree into a large groove with an undercut crack following the left wall. Follow this crack, then climb straight up and right into a crux section with poor holds and worse gear. Grasp for the grass in the groove to your right and breath a sigh of relief. A few metres above, follow the seam to your right (not the crack on your left) and continue up until you reach a fridge-size stuck block on your left that can be slung for a belay.

**Pitch 9 (35m HS – 4a):** Follow the crack straight above the belay upwards until it disappears. Then, pad up with no gear for a further 25 metres until you find a large grass tuft with a solid flake above it with space for a couple of cams and a disheartening belay.

**Pitch 10 (45m S – 4a):** Further unprotected climbing on rounded black rock and grass tufts ends with a secure belay point in a deep crack above grass tufts.

**Pitch 11 (20m HVS – 4c):** Continue up from the crack with good gear until you are faced with a steep black wall with a shallow crack and a small tree above it. There is gear at the bottom right under the flake. Boldly climb the crack and face edges (no gear) before slinging the tree for a welcome belay.

**Pitch 12 (50m S – 4a):** Further easy but poorly protected climbing continues zigzagging and trending leftwards up the slabs with some shallow cracks and grass tufts, to a big block on the left side of a steepening. You should belay here to make the pitch under 50m (there are no good belays above so learn from our experience!).

**Pitch 13 (100m - Diff):** Climb over the large block to a gentle slope where you can belay on one of the trees or boulders. Then, scramble up through the steep grass and trees until you reach the radio tower. Congrats. You've made it!

**Descent:** Head northwest across the summit to find the road down. You'll probably meet Bosco, the military man stationed at the summit. Say hi from us and sign his book. He might give you citrus fruit. The descent takes ~1hr.