

Rock Climbing

Xaysomboune

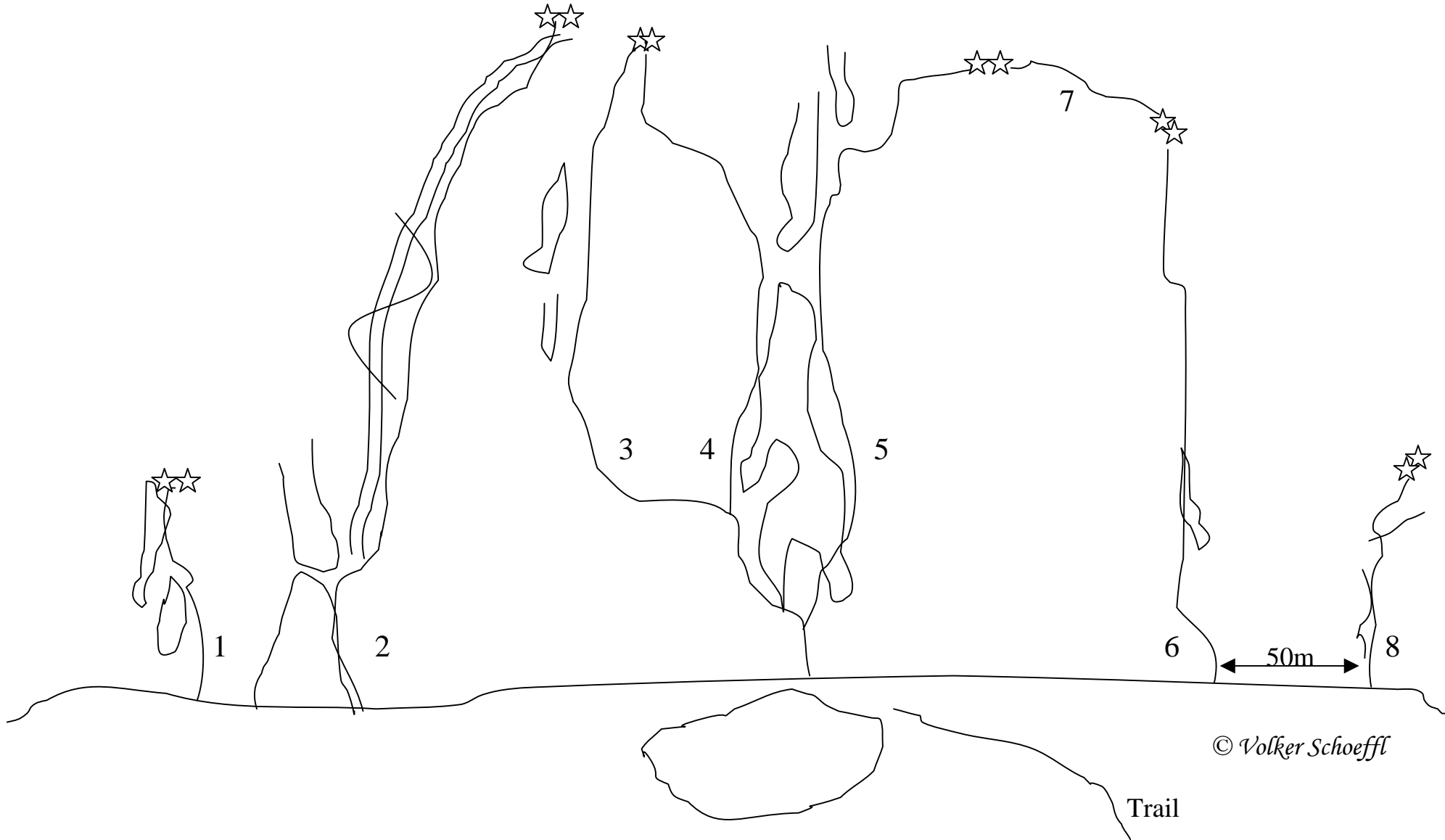
Laos

General Information

Xaysomboune Special Zone is not yet a province, but still halfway a military area. As this area used to be the main stronghold of the US troops in the Vietnam War and later on of the remaining Hmong resistance it is still occasionally a troublesome area. Therefore it remains in the official status of a special zone, nevertheless it will probably become a real province in one or two years. For „Farang“ – tourists to go there a special permit is mandatory, currently Wildside-Green Discovery Laos is the only travel company which can get you the permit and also get you there. After a very very long time we were the first tourists who ever stayed in the center town of the special zone, Xaysomboune. The road to get there leaves from the main road up north to Luang Phrabang (Rd-13) right after the Nam Num lake in the small town Tha Heua, some 20 km before you get to Vang Vieng. It is another 100 km on a bumpy dirt road, which takes about 2 hours on a offroad bike, 2-3 on a jeep or car and maybe 6 hours on the local bus. The road passes along some smaller villages, there is enough supply for food and gas. Xaysomboun town has 2 little guesthouses and also homestays available. Currently you still need to register with the local tourism authority, a very nice woman, fluent in French and English and the local police. They provided us with 2 (armed) police guys for our protection, free of charge. Nevertheless even if this might all seems to be a bit off a hassle it is definitely worth it. The rock there is absolutely brilliant, totally clean and of the same quality as the best places in Phra Nang and Railey! Temperatures are quite low and climbing in the sun is no problem. The variety of food is basic lao, there are few restaurants, nevertheless none with an english menu. But being away from the beaten tourist trails, discovering the real Laos and having a first rate climbing area will keep you happy all times. The climbing area, with much more potential for the future, is on Houa Xang (Elephant head mountain) just north of town. The local tourist authorities will show you the trail, it is about 20 min uphill walking.

Volker Schöffl, March 2005

Pha Houa Xang



Pha Houa Xang

1. *Vertigo 6c+* *Julian Körner, Februar 2005*
2. *Dr. Mathilda* *Frank Einwag, Februar 2005*
3. *Xaysomboune 8a* *Volker Schoeffl, Februar 2005*
4. *Hoi Trail 6b+* *Hoi, Volker Schoeffl, Februar 2005*
5. *Sinthese 6c* *Julian Körner, Februar 2005*
6. *Isa 7c+* *Volker Schoeffl, Februar 2005 (as a big flake broke of, Ao to the 3rd bolt)*
7. *Project* *sequel to Isa*
8. *Âme soeur, 7b+* *Isabelle Roloff, Februar 2005*