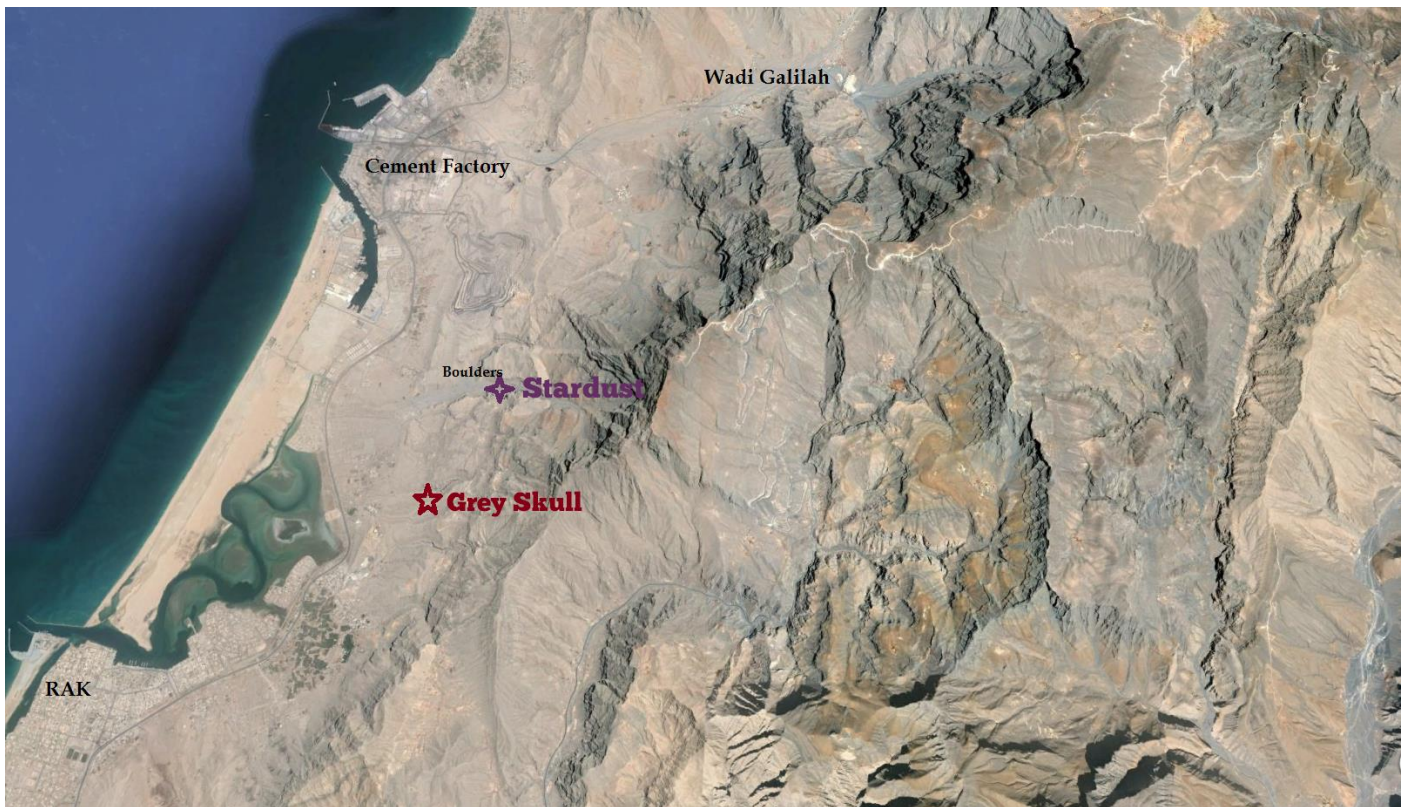


Ras Al Khaimah : Stardust and Grey Skull



Stardust : 25 deg 55' 36" North; 56 deg 04' 49" East.

The name is an obvious tribute to our big brother Ziggy who just left us orphans. (We have already processed a batch of matching routes names.)

A huge and secluded canyon, with walls up to 100m. Decent rock, left Bank in the shade most/all of the day. Would take many easy routes and some more sustained and would be a great venue for a few multipitch of all levels. The most striking feature being maybe the beauty and the tranquility of the place (except for the goats ;-). It might not be the El Dorado or the ultimate crag but the potential is significantly bigger than Le Reef's and the rock better than Tawiyan. Actually my friends Oliver and Sergio preferred it to Gray Skull.

The place might have been visited in the past, we found some chains on top of boulders at the entrance of the wadi next to it (who might deserve a little more exploration) but we did not find any traces inside the actual Stardust Canyon.

Deyab was with us and he made contact with a local who has a house between the wadi and the road. Apparently he was aware of climbing, didn't mind bolting as long as the tranquility and the cleanliness of the area was respected. If we decide to climb there, let's abide by his rule.



Some pictures



Base of the slabs



A bit steeper



The huge walls



Bouldering in a wadi nearby...

Grey Skull : 25 deg 54' 37" North; 56 deg 04' 18" East.

Grey Skull has been developed for the last 6 or 7 years in a very confidential (and conspiratory ?) way. Some routes have been bolted and records of trad ascents have been made (some mild trad lines are even denoted as "projects" !!!). A topo has been made (but not published) and is attached to this e-mail.

Giving the quality of the place and the current situation in the country, I believe the committee should take heed of the will of the huge majority of climbers in the UAE when deciding what can be bolted.

In any case, if we read the "topo" correctly, there is still some good potential and there should be possibilities to satisfy the two parties (should they be reasonable).

The walls are not as high as in Stardust but the rock is steeper and should host a fair amount of sustained quality sport routes. Deyab had left us (for a job interview) when we finally found Grey Skull and we could not get in touch with any locals. Not that we did find any around anyway. No houses stand next to the wadi (conspiracy theory ?).

