



Juan Henriquez seconding P2 on the first attempt

## THE HAND OF GOD

**Grade:** M7 WI5, 170m

**Location:** Mount Murchison, Banff National Park AB

**Base Elevation & Aspect:** 2300m, Southwest facing

**First Ascent:** Raphael Slawinski, Juan Henriquez, December 1 2020

**ATES:** Complex (3)

*Editor's Note: I have reformatted this from Raph's blog post on his personal blog. For more info (and on the name), check it out: <https://raphaelslawinski.blogspot.com/2020/12/the-hand-of-god.html> -NB*

"This route climbs the obvious dagger a few hundred metres left of *Cosmic Messenger*. It's been suggested that it might've been climbed in the nineties by Serge Angelucci, but we didn't find any evidence of previous traffic. If it were indeed climbed back then, it'd be an impressive and futuristic ascent, before M-climbing and power drills."

### Approach

Approach as for *Cosmic Messenger*. Park in an unsigned pullout 9.5km north of Waterfowl Lakes campground opposite the drainage one south of *Murchison Falls*.

### Editor's Note

- As with *Cosmic Messenger*, this route is best done early season before snow leads to increased avalanche danger and harder travel on approach.

Cross the road, and hike eastward in the forest. Follow the drainage up to the lowest cliffband of Mount Murchison, and find the pillar of *Cosmic Messenger* at the back of the bowl. *The Hand of God* climbs the dagger on the left, sunny aspect of this cirque. 1.5-2hr from the car.

### P1: M3 WI3 25m

Scramble up an ice shield to the top and pull into some cracks above. Mantle awkwardly onto a ledge below a steep wall and traverse far left to a bolt and gear belay.

### P2: M6 25m

Drytool the right-facing corner above the belay past a fixed pin. From where the corner peters out, trend right past bolts to a 2-bolt belay below the dagger.

### P3: M7 WI5 15m

Crank over the roof above the belay using some long reaches, and swing onto the ice. Continue up the dagger to a small cave behind a free-standing pillar. This pitch is entirely bolt protected but the belay is from screws.

### P4: WI5 70m

Walk behind the pillar to the far side, then swing up it to a lower-angled ice hose to the top of the cliff. Ice screw or slung block belay.

### Rack

Cams from #0.1-1, screws. Double 70m ropes.

### Descent

Make a long double-rope rappel from a v-thread back to the top of P3, then one more to ground.

