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HEY, ON VA À BLEAU ? - BOULDERING NEAR PARIS

On the weekend of 14–15 October 2017, we had perfect weather conditions for two days of bouldering in the forest of Fontainebleau near Paris. Although many AACZ members had expressed interest in the weekend, in the end only three adventurous AACZ Huttli (Noémie Frezel, Romain Jacob and Seth Griffiths) embarked for the snail-eaters' country. For those who may not know, the forest of Fontainebleau is one of the most renowned places for bouldering, both within France and worldwide. Huge sandstone boulders offer climbing challenges for everyone, from grade 2 climbs to nightmarish grade 9 climbs. There are many sectors in Fontainebleau, sometimes several hours hiking from each other. However, Fontainebleau offers boulders only.

After a night at Noémie's parents, we drove to Fontainebleau forest, an hour's drive from Paris. Following the advice of some Parisian friends, we went to Cuvier and Isatis, two sectors with a reasonable approach time and boulders in the 5-6 grade range. Being one of the best-known places for bouldering in France, the area was quite populated, but since Fontainebleau is huge, that was not so much of a problem. As a proof that Fontainebleau is the place to be, Seth met mountaineering buddies from Canada. Later, at the campsite, a big group was proudly putting up a "6a plus" sign – a bunch of climbers from Winterthur, slightly surprised when we greeted them with "Hoi zäme!".

Noémie Frezel and Romain Jacob

Noemie and Seth (photo Romain Jacob)

