

The long way out

Trip: Bye George to Peterson

People Present: Alex Ritchie & Rob Santus

Weather: Overcast, with rain threatening and as usual on Leck Fell Windy & Chilly

Date: Sunday 16th of August 2009

Difficulty: Grade 5 (Graded) **Rated** Grade 5.

All Timings except the entrance time are based on my camera's date time stamps...

Throughout the week I was trying to drum up interest in a trip somewhere, I as usual batted suggestions about, however no one else going for these trips. Eventually I suggested something that seemed to generate a bit of interest at least in Rob. Of course this "Bye Gorge Pot". It was Pete who suggested coming out Peterson. That sounded like a good trip so the challenge was on!

Anyway we met up on a most dank Uninspiring morning in Inglesport. After a quick brekkie for me we headed out in Robs "Mobile Changing room" onto Leck Fell to trot about finding the entrance. After searching the wrong bit of the field, we eventually did find the correct shake hole where we were met by an Uninspiring plastic tube with a stepladder at the bottom. We made the agreement for me to carry the tackle through Bye George and Rob to have it tied to his foot to come out of Peterson.

11:00 am

Once in about 5 minutes of crawling leads to a rigged little pitch known as the "Tuck Shop" (all pitches on this trip have fixed rope at the moment). The pitch was only a little. Down that safely, we took our kits off for the long slog ahead.

I set off in front and started crawling and squeezing past various obstacles in the passage. We thought that soon we would reach the infamous Back Breaker Squeeze. But just as the passage seemed to close down it would widen out again around the next corner. This happened so often so that at almost every bend in the passage Rob was saying this looks like the back breaker squeeze. We seemed to cover so much distance and still had not reached it. Eventually we actually reach it.

Rob had a look at it, then I had a look at it and thought hmm maybe there is a reason this is called back breaker squeeze so I did it facing the wrong wall i.e. lying on my left hand side round a left hand corner. It did also seem to me that it would be a lot harder facing the other way. My back was more then up to the task and I got through this little obstacle with no issues. Rob also had no issues doing it the correct way either.

12:00 Lunch time

More passage and Squeezes and a duck followed until we hit the long drawn out Curtain Squeeze were I made Rob stay in the cold water so I could take pictures of him (That's normally my job). More pictures were taken in the delicate straw chamber just beyond this point.





After some easy going and more roomy passages reached Grand Cascade pitch. It looked and sounded very wet however upon descending we saw that the rope was well diverted away from the water meaning a dry decent. Rob went down first and then it was my turn. I reached the second deviation, which is a good 4 feet away from where the rope wants to lead you. I did not know that the bottom of the rope actually was tied off, water was making communication impossible. If I knew this was it would have saved me the effort of performing some nice aerobatics to swing my self across to get to the deviation, not to mention the energy to hold my self there.

Anyway with that bottomed the Canal was next, which was enjoyed by both of us as we both managed to stay dry by traversing it. We didn't stay dry for long, going down the cascades as there was good flow of water going down them, good fun though.

Reaching the Hall of the Mountain king we were at a point where we could chicken out and go out Mistral. We didn't, motivated by the fact that Pete probably didn't expect us to do it so I (I don't know about Rob) wanted to prove him wrong. So up the pitch into Peterson we went, after of course Rob had convinced me the anchors were sound.

We passed the next two pitches without incident, except us both getting our kit tangled on the traverse over the 4th pitch in Peterson.

After the third pitch we hit the next obstacle, which is the climb up into Roly-Poly. The climb is indeed far bigger then 2 and a half meters as suggested in NTFH. It was at least twice my height, looking at the climb now I am puzzled at how the hell I got the nerve to sky dive that on a trip earlier in the year.

Roly-Poly crawl and the climb up seemed to take allot out of me, allot more then my last visit going the opposite direction. Probably due to the fact on that trip I had not just done one grade 5 cave to get there. The sheer effort that is involved in shoving/un-jamming a tackle sack along tied to Robs foot while holding yourself up on your arms to stop your self becoming a permanent fixture in the Rift was tiring to say the least. We got to the end of this nasty rifty bit of Roly-Poly after about 20 minutes, which is a good time. We had well deserved breather at this point. We pressed on through what I think is easier section, but everyone else reckons is the hardest bit of passage that leads to the bottom of the second pitch.

3:00pm

Rob free climbed the second pitch. I free climbed most of it too but I found my strength had been sapped by today's adventure. I got up on my second attempt using a combination of my hand jammer and climbing. I did have to re-attach the rope near the top, good job I had already firmly wedged my self in. With that over all that was left was to do quick crawl over some dead sheep bones *crunch* and to go up the first pitch where Rob was ready with the camera.



Very good trip and I certainly feel it. Its always a good trip if you can barely walk/drive after it, though Rob seemed to be barely aching at all except from the walk to the Van.

Exit time 3:20pm



Alex Ritchie

A [Black Rose Caving Club trip report](#).