

# COUNTY POT to WRETCHED RABBIT

A wandering trip through the system..

---

Date : 12<sup>th</sup> October 2013

Present: Laura Annison (First timer & author), Pete Brookdale (funny boy), Roz Pilling, Gulliver Brodbeck, Mark Kimberley, & Paul Kimberley.

Weather – dry, windy

Total approx Cave trip - 5hrs

Earlier in the month I contacted the Black Rose Caving group after visiting the public White Scar Caves and an earlier experience aged just 11. Pete responded and arranged an ‘apparent’ novice trip down to County Pot and out through Wretched Rabbit.

Saturday morning arrived and we met with a few of the other Black Rose Caving group at the Inglesport Café to fuel up before we headed out. Once at the site it became apparent that my wellies were ill fitting and were to prove a problem throughout the trip. However, we will go into that in more detail later! :/

On entering County Pot, Pete took the lead closely followed by me and the rest of the group. Pete of course made things look easier than they were (haha), however it wasn't too long before I had my first calamity and lodged my foot the wrong way heading down the passage which was quickly resolved by some reassurance from Pete and Mark. It wasn't long before it was time for the first 20ft wire ladder which Pete kindly persuaded me to take the lead on (Thanks Pete!). Surprisingly I think I coped well with this considering I had no prior experience. On heading down to Oxford Circus the group was led by Roz. The group then moved forward onto Razor Passage and then upstream at Platypus Junction, up Spout Hall through Upper Trident to White Line Passage where the second wire ladder was utilised by the majority of the group. We then travelled down Pierces Passage where you could hear Gulli's Buddhist Meditation echoing through the cave system! The group moved further through the passage then stopped for a quick break to refuel at Eureka Junction, where we were met by two other caving groups (students from Glasgow Uni club) we were then led by Gulli in a group song (not all joined in – poor effort Wink ) and a lie down (cosy!) Once awake, the group then moved upstream to Holbeck Junction recognised by the large boulder guarding the stream way, then up Green and Smelly to an eventful Spiral Staircase! Here it became apparent that the tighter passage proved a little too tight towards the climb up. Pete however came to my rescue by swiftly moving up through the passage which I'm still not sure how he managed to move that quick! (new nickname is now cave spidey) and balanced himself on a rock above my head (rocking at this point) and hoisted me (helped by Mark and Gulli) up onto the upper ledge. It was then moving further through the Staircase that I decided my wellies were more of a hindrance (half off/half on) to the tight sideways crawling technique and proceeded to take them off and swiftly moved on in just socks! After what seemed like forever, the group moved onto Wretched Rabbits rift led by Gulli followed by myself, helped by Paul, Pete and Gulli, closely followed by Mark & Roz. Following the long climb up the rift closer to the surface, I can say I have never felt so physically exhausted in my life till that point! However, I pushed through and crawled my way painfully to the light! Roz (crazy cave lady) decided to redo the rift with no support!! Very well done Roz!! It will be a wee while before I have the strength to be able to even attempt that rift again but someday I will indeed! Me and Pete then reflected on our trip and strolled (hobbled) back to the car.

All in all from my own experience, I can say that although I hated parts of Spiral staircase passage and rift in Wretched Rabbit, I actually had the time of my life and cant wait to be able to conquer this route without push ups or brute force! A massive thank you to all the group on this trip and for pulling together as a team. I can honestly say caving is the most exhausting sport I have been apart of and have massive respect for all cavers out there. I would like to say thank you to the Black Rose Caving group for the warm welcome into the caving community and can now say that caving is apart of my life and will remain so for a long time to come!

Valuable lessons learnt – upper body strength & proper fitting wellies are a must!

Quote of the day – ‘Follow the polished route’ & ‘I carried your corpse out of the cave!’ Both provided by Pete of course.

Thanks again guys!

*Laura Annison*

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