

What a load of Bull ... and cow

18/08/2012 – Cow pot followed by Bull Pot of the Witches

Weather: Chucking it down at start sunny intervals later on

People present: Chris Shaman and Alex Ritchie

After a bit of un-decidedness and a lot of rain, we eventually landed on cow pot direct. This was because I had never been down that route before, only ever sampling Aardvark before. Chris did not mind doing the trip again, having not done it in a while.

Chris rigged the first pitch and down we went. First was an awkward to reverse climb with quite a bit of water dribbling down it. We then made our way along some wet passage before we eventually reached the main pitch. I decided to get some practice rigging. The usual faff-age followed, where I worked out how to get to the next P anchor (under quite a bit of water at one point) to get across the traverse. I then rigged the main pitch with a new rope. Part way down, I missed a re-belay that I only noticed when I was 2 meters below it, not to matter that's what change overs are for.



Deviation and Y-hang after that went without a hitch but I really do have to learn to put just a bit more slack in the rope for these free hanging things, oh well, very fine pitch into a vast chamber... oh... oh dear ... "Doh!" the rope came out of the bag and 2 ft below me was the stopper knot, only issue was I was still a good 20ft off the floor, rollocks. Whoever told me that rope was a 50m wants a smack but its my own fault for not measuring it my self I guess (I have now since measured it to be 39 meters!). Back up and out I went, inventing new SRT methods to get past my own awkward rigging as I went, meeting Chris at the top who had been down to the Y-hang before I shouted him

to go back up.



At the entrance pitch I climbed up one of the walls following a series of climbs before getting about 30 ft up or so and finding a nice decorated crawling sized side passage, all stals were intact meaning it probably gets very few visitors. I carried on and reached a churning stream which eventually got too small for me to bother with at an aven chamber, but quite nice passage none the less that likely gets 1 visitor a decade.

We, well I convinced Chris go down Bull Pot of the Witches to see how wet it was, it was quite wet but certainly passable. We went down stream first before coming back having both visited gour before. I then came up with the bright idea of trying to find the other entrance (Hidden Pot) to Bull Pot of the Witches by heading along that flat out crawl to the right of the entrance climb. The crawl led out into a large chamber (Cavern 32).



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We then spent the next 30 minutes poking about in a boulder choke. We found a bit of passage and a short walking height stream way. But it all came to naught, my only conclusion is that the entrance to Hidden pot has indeed collapsed a long while ago.

So I learnt a few things, A) I should really practice more rigging I have only been caving almost solidly for 5 years, my SRT and other skills are now at a high standard, however my rigging is not. B) Not to take what is said about rope length at face value.

Alex Ritchie