

# DICCAN POT

(Changed from FOUL Pot on the day)

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Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2010

Present: Pete Dale, Alex Ritchie & Rob Santus

Weather: Snow, then blizzard and very cold

Trip time: 3 ½ hours

We headed up to Fountains Fell via the CRO in Clapham to retrieve Chris's SRT kit to take on FOUL Pot. The roads looked ok until we got over the hill near Neals Ing. As we approached the parking area, we realised that we couldn't even park and anyway, snow was forecast making it an even easier decision to leave. Unfortunately for me, I was facing towards Dale Head and couldn't turn around, not helped with my van being rear-wheel drive. I had to drive on for 2 miles to turn around, and even then it was a struggle.



We finally met up with Alex again and decided to take a little jaunt in Diccan Pot. En route, we made a call to Dave Ramsay who very kindly gave us the rigging requirements. Selside was also a white-out, but seemed a lot easier to park and escape even with the snow on the way.

We met a couple of twins who said they were off to Washfold; Pete laughed. Once changed, with me donning my neo-fleece, and being mocked by my companion, we trudged off through the snow up to Diccan. There was no path visible and it was fairly cold although probably not quite as cold as the infamous Jean Pot trip in 2007.

It was decided that I would rig the first pitches, Pete the second and the last was a toss up (Alex wasn't in the reckoning). Down we went, this time finding the necessary deviation even in the slightly drier conditions. Rope free shouted and down came Pete and Alex. Pete made amends for the 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch antics last time we were here and we were soon at the last pitch.





Pete said I would enjoy rigging, so off I went with a vague description from him. Diccan is full of anchors; there's Ps and spits everywhere and I think you could rig differently on 5 consecutive trips. I descended the main hang to find another 3 p anchors 10 metres below. I decided to put a re-belay in for speed on the return and to get nearer to the required deviations. However, this made the pendulum much more awkward as you have less rope to swing on, so I scabbled along the wall like spiderman and rigged it. But there follows very soon after another one, which is also a bitch to rig. All the while, Pete and Alex were wailing with laughter, going woohoo and weeeey as I tried to swing to the damn thing. Coupled with that there was an audience with a chap taking photos from the bottom. It was good fun! Once down, the guy (John Forder) asked if I minded him taking photos - I said no

and he said he will send us some photos, which should be good. Many thanks to John for allowing us to use the above photo in this report.

We all hastily descended and equally hastily ascended due to the bollock freezing temperatures notorious in Diccan and made good progress to the surface with Pete and I de-rigging (no time for hanging about in this one). We surfaced to find the blizzard that was forecast and so headed back after a couple of photos. On the way back we met 3 people walking up to go caving (in a blizzard !) dressed in oversuits, old work boots and holding a ladder and some old fishing rope. It was all a bit bizarre.

We quickly changed and made an attempt to leave, but my van was going nowhere. I also noticed that the Washfold group were long gone making us wonder how far they actually got (no laughing Pete). They'd be the ones laughing now though watching my wheels spinning with no sign of moving. In came the hero of the hour.....you guessed it.....Alex! With rope attached to each vehicle, Alex's little car dragged out my van (although Pete was driving it). We were free to go to the pub. Not so fast mate, as the snow was so bad that it took between me and Pete 5 attempts to get my van up the hill past the Station Inn. We got back to Ingleton by the skin of our teeth and then went straight home to prevent further incident with the weather.

The moral is, even when you've conquered Diccan, it always comes and bites you at some point!

*Rob Santus*

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