

DISAPPOINTMENT POT

Be gone vile demons!

Date: 29th May 2008

People present - Pete Dale, Rob Santus, Daniel Jackson, Rick Pinches and Chris Scaife + non member; Shelley Brook

Weather: - Bright and sunny

My other half had decided that this year she would venture down Gaping Gill on the Bradford winch meet so a date was chosen and arrangements made. Meeting in Clapham we got changed and made the long hot walk up to Gaping Gill with the word that Chris would catch us up in an hour's time. The walk went by fairly easily with lots of sweat and tears. Upon reaching the winch control tent we were informed that it was a 3 hour wait to go down! We sat around on the surface for 30 minutes waiting for Chris to appear which he duly did looking a little hot and bothered. We all walked over to the entrance shake hole of Disappointment pot and kitted up.

Nine years is a long time to leave a cave but that's how long it had been since my first visit to Diss back in 1999. Me Dunc and Bruce (no longer caving) had made plans to enter and exit every entrance to GG but failed at the first hurdle well to be fair I did at the portcullis in Diss. This time however I was not going to be defeated so after Chris had a quick massage from Shelley we piled into the cave so I could slay those demons from long ago.

A short climb down at the entrance leads down a loose slope to a small climbable pitch and then the tight rifts start! Rob had said to leave our SRT kits off till the first pitch but that seemed a faff to me so I left mine on and didn't find any problems with negotiating the rifts. All too soon the rifty section ends where the way on lowers to a flat out bedding with the water (nearly a helmet off job!) for a few meters. Shuffling to the right you pop up into a crawl 6" deep in cold water leading to the portcullis. Arriving at the portcullis Rob the usual hero dived straight in and through without too much trouble I then passed him the tackle bag and my helmet. I then peered through the air space above the water to see Rob sat in a large passage. "Hmmm" I thought to myself "doesn't look as bad as last time I was here." I slowly lowered myself down into the water and carefully manoeuvring my head through and clearing a few rocks from the passage floor (to aid myself mentally) I pushed through. Success I was through and hardly wet at all. It was easy I thought smiling to myself. Once everyone was through we set off along the passage to the first pitch. Easy going with Rob in the lead we soon reached the pitch and since I was already kitted up I abed down to the next pitch and also descended that one as well, I then found a suitable place to sit, I then waited for the others to catch up.

Once regrouped again I set the lead and raced off with Rob hot on my heels (literally!) long straight rifts and hairpin bends what an amazing place! A few low crawls and tight bits but nothing serious and then more tight rift. While negotiating a section of tight rift I was crawling along and my hand slipped and pop and an excruciating pain overwhelmed my left hand. I paused as you would do and looked at my hand all seemed in the right place and the pain had died down so onward we went towards Henslers master cave. Soon the rift got narrower and we traversed out on the ledges, I spied the third pitch up a head and we made our way down to the rope. From the bottom of the rope I was in familiar ground having been this far from the bottom before. Rob and myself shot off to find the last pitch as Rob wanted to free climb it! Making sure he clipped his cowstails in I let him free climb the pitch (What a hero!) I abed down! Another short pitch and we were at the bottom we then waited for the others to rejoin us.

We set off upstream towards Bar pot passing mud Henslers on the right and then into the low crawl of new Henslers. This is where problems started for me. The pain had returned in my little finger now and crawling was difficult to say the least as others will confirm numerous versions of crawling were devised so I didn't have to use my left hand and all were useless! We soon reached the climb up out of the crawl and we then made our way to the main chamber. Rob and Chris were in front and then me, followed some way behind by Rick and Daniel. Bar pot was all quiet as was Flood entrance. I then entered the crawl to the main chamber behind Rob but soon I was trailing far behind the pain in my hand getting worse and now I was unable to move my little finger. Eventually I reached the main chamber and checked the ticket numbers coming down the winch '161' not long to wait as Shelley was no. 175.

Rob's intention was to look at Centenary way which he had brought a rope for so once we were all re-grouped I led the way up the ladder to mud hall through the pool and up the small calcite climb, then a crawl over to the left to the far side of the passage and remove a few boulders and hey presto Centenary way! I wasn't going to look since it was muddy as hell and I had already seen it a few years ago, Rick didn't fancy it either so we made our way back to the main chamber where I got myself comfy and dosed for a while.

A short while later I saw the lights of the others climbing back down from the little adventure so up I got and made my way over to see what they thought. They looked muddy so all had had a good time upon asking Daniel if he had got some good pictures he replied saying he had left his camera at the bottom of Diss! (Muppet!) Soon Shelley had bravely come down the winch where she had stood shaking with fright at the bottom! We then decided as to what to do, Shelley and Chris were exiting via the winch, Rob and Daniel were exiting out of Marilyn, Rick didn't know what to do and I was in two minds as to whether I was able to get out Marilyn pot or use the winch. Rob suggested I exit via Bar pot with Rick I ummed and ahed a bit and then decided I might as well try after all it was easy enough. So off Rob and Daniel went. I then showed Shelley around the main chamber pointing various things out gave a goodbye kiss and collecting Rick we headed for Bar pot. The crawling was bloody hard work but eventually we reached Bar pot. I ascended first and then waited at the top for puffing Billy. I thought about exiting Bar using small mammal pot but I didn't know which way it was so we stuck to the trade route. All went smoothly with only a struggle for me getting up the greasy slab since I only had the one hand. Climbing out of the entrance into the cool breeze was nice and I sat on a Clint at the top of the shake hole and enjoyed the quiet. A walker came past and informed me that Chris and Shelley were ten minutes in front of us. (Dam!) With Rick out we made our way down to Ingleborough cave to find Chris having another massage! A few minutes later Rob and Daniel appeared and we all set off back to the cars.

Well what can I say an excellent trip only spoiled by a silly slip. Demons banished to whence they came and another cave ticked off the list. A grand day out!

Pete Dale

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