

GROWLING HOLE

The Test!

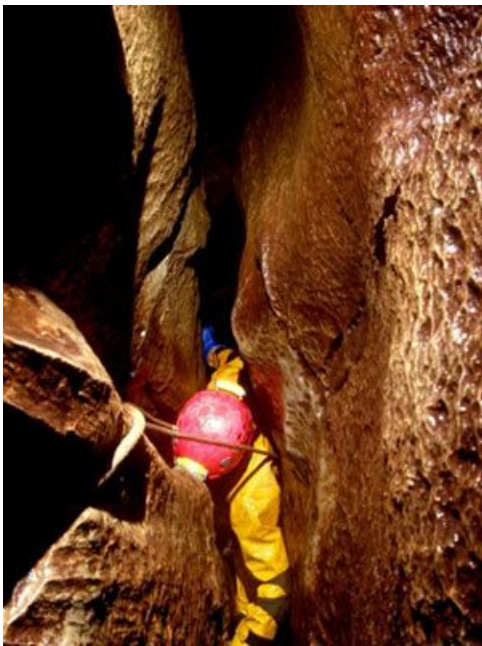
Date: 22nd November 2008

People present: Pete Dale, Rob Santus, Dan Jackson, Alex Ritchie

Weather: - Dry, Cold, very cold, extremely cold in fact

Well the planned trip was supposed to be a Large pot to Rift pot exchange but with Dan claiming he was ill earlier in the week me and Rob decided to change the trip in our favour. So after a bit of a chat we came up with the idea of either Growling Hole or Spectacle pot with Growling winning the vote.

Arriving in Ingleton at 9am we met Dan in Bernie's then I went to sort out a light in Inglesport and in doing so met Alex we all then went to Bernie's for a bite to eat. Now the best bit was that both Dan and Alex had no idea where we were going he he! After a bit of playful banter with the softies we finally told them and were surprised to have no bottlers, although Alex looked very scared! (No idea why it's only a caving trip not life or death) So with everyone sorted we headed off up to Kingsdale.



A quick cold change followed by a warm steep walk up East Kingsdale saw us soon at the ominous entrance to Growling hole, not very large to say the least. Rob entered first followed by Alex then me and Dan taking up the rear. The entrance was a short climb down into a wet crawl downstream which lowered to flat out after a few meters; soon enough the roof lifted and it became an awkward crawl with the rock jutting out on either side cold as well! All too soon the passage narrowed to a right hand sideways bend just after which an inlet was met. A few meters downstream a short 1m drop into pool chamber gave relief from the crawling. Kitted up with SRT Rob set off to rig the 2nd pitch which was a nice split pitch landing in a decent sized chamber, the water winding its way down through the rift but this was not the way on as that was a short traverse into Scimitar aven with the 3rd pitch/climb directly below in the floor. An easy climb down and wriggle through the rift at floor level opened out again into a widening of the rift with

the way on being a 5ft climb down and squeeze in the rift. Rob passed this with ease so I followed in his footsteps only to be stopped in my tracks so with some help from Dan and flailing of my one usable leg I managed to get out of the squeeze and back up into the top of the climb. I then turned round and tried it facing the other wall but it still seemed too tight for me. By this time Rob had returned to see what the problem was and with a few words of encouragement from him I was past the squeeze. Rob rigged the next pitch while I guided Dan and Alex through they both seemed to do it with ease!

The fourth pitch was an easy affair of a few meters tight at the top but if you thought about it you only had to go past the pitch head and ab down the other side of the tight bit (piece of piss). I soon caught up with Rob who was struggling with the rigging for the last pitch but upon reading the description it was soon found and off he went into the dark void below. Dan appeared and we could hear Alex struggling as usual, Dan went back to see what the problem was and when he came back

all he could make out from Alex was that he was going out (with the last pitch in sight he turned his tail and ran with no real excuse!) Rob shouted rope free and off down I went catching Rob up at a large ledge. Soon enough we where all at the bottom and Rob being defeated by the tight squeeze into a chamber headed off up with me and Dan de-rigging. With Dan getting stuck at a re-belay and me dropping the bag down a pitch we where soon at the top of the big pitch where Rob was waiting for us. We then all made our way out of the cave with no real difficulty even the squeezes where nowt on the way out, the only nasty bit was the entrance crawl and the numbing coldness of the water making the final climb up onto the moor even harder!

A great trip was had by me, Rob and Dan and no idea what happened to Alex all I know is that if Caving scares you that much why do you do it? I do it for the challenge and to make myself scared since there is not much else in this world that does any more.

Pete Dale

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