

LARGE POT (Colossus)

A small report for a "large" cave..

Date : 9th June 2012

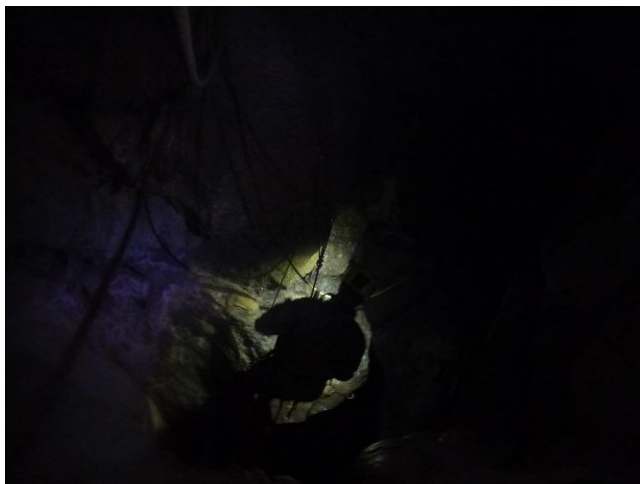
Present : Alex Ritchie, Mike Skyrme, Chris Kelly

Weather : Rubbish (mist and light rain) on the way in and same on the way out.

My grade for the trip: 4+

With three trip ideas, in various parts of the country with various people or no one, I ended up going on the BRCC trip down Large, once I confirmed that Large was indeed the destination. The fact that I was that keen meant I had obviously forgotten how gnarly the passage to Colossus was anyway...

After a straight forward descent down the pitches (No one really got stuck) we were in the passage to Colossus, though I took a quick diversion to look at the first pitch of the Red Herring Series, looked wet and cramped. Back on track, a short down and up pitch (in-situ gear) leads into the passage proper. It started off easy, consisting of a smooth mud floored crawl. Once we reached the water flowing in from an inlet it still did not get much harder. However once the water vanishes through a crack in the floor, things get interesting. The first obstacle was an awkward tube where you can either crawl through a boulder strewn tube at roof or a sideways wriggle at floor level, I choose the roof level and almost landed on Mike at the other side. This was followed immediately by a narrow slippery thrutchy rift where you can either drop down through a tight bit or try to stay up until a climb down around the corner, easier said than done as someone had obviously greased the sides. After this the passage widened a bit but it soon degenerated again, this time into muddy tubes and welly sinking canals, and thrutchy rifts once you are past calcite corner. After about 15 minutes of this we eventually popped out into roomier passage and not far on from here was Colossus.



Mike rigged it and we dropped down in "Heavy showers" before we all set off on different routes to try and find the fabled Mouse hole bypass. Unfortunately we all failed, I had found something that I thought was the bypass but it led to the duck. It seems according to NTFH I had actually followed the main route, I just did not remember all that flat out crawling last time I was there!

With no one following me, it was time to head out. Back at Colossus the deviation we had put in which seemed to not help at all as we still got soaked, proved fun for many of us, but we all

got past it without the need to cut our own cows tails or anything. The passages out blurred painfully together but it was not too long until we were back at the entrance pitches. I watched the others struggle to get up the slot at top of the 2nd. When it was my turn I realised that they were facing the wrong wall. I slithered through with ease, without even scraping my gear, the bag (attached to the d-rigged Y-hang) also helped by weighing down the rope as I believe the rope not going through the jammers was the main problem.

So hints for anyone else who plans to do this: Face the right hand wall while ascending it's much roomier, there is room to turn around at the top so you are facing the right way for the crawl, my other hint is to be the de-rigger, so the rope hangs straight down and is not trying to pull you into the tighter bit.

An entertaining 5~ hours underground and a good few bruises to boot. P.s. Red Bull rocks! After the trip I did not go home and instead decided to wash my gear by dropping Swinsto on Sunday with the YSS.



Alex Ritchie

Photos – Alex Ritchie

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