

# MARBLE STEPS POT

Scrattng..

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Date : 8<sup>th</sup> June 2013

Present : Mike Skyrme, Don Miller, Chris Kelly

Weather : warm and sunny.

Chris K, Don and I had a scrat around some of the more obscure nooks and crannies of the upper series.

Chris and I descending via Sidewinder, Don opted for the Wet Route and met up with us at the top of the main pitch with tales of rope buckets and other digging paraphernalia (of which DR confirmed as his - along with an interesting hypothesis).

First scrat of the day was across the traverse and up the fixed rope into the passage above the lower main chamber. This led via a tightish (with SRT kit on) sideways crawl to a small chamber with very soft sand (could be diggable??). After removing SRT kit, the way on was a step up into another low tube which had been heavily blasted to a corner. Beyond the corner was another tight sideways shuffle for 8 feet or so to another corner and a possible route for a super skinny (or after chemical persuasion) into a larger tube. Reversing out was fun especially as Chris had to grab my feel and pull to assist extraction LOL.

Back in the main chamber we decided to head into the Lost Inlet series to try and identify where Daz of . . . No Show, reckoned he heard us last time. Don offered to head out and check along the gully whilst Chris and I, armed with a whistle, headed up to the area where DR had indicated as the most likely place any potential connection would be made. After a while we began to hear Don moving about in the gully but unfortunately, he failed to hear the whistle. Chris was then dispatched to the surface with requests for some rock tapping, giving Don the chance to come and have a look around. Again, it was possible to hear Chris moving about but he could not hear the whistle either. However, rock tapping came through loud and clear and Chris was confident that the clearest indication suggested that we were well up the gully and on the opposite side to Lamb Pot.

With Don having seen what he wanted, we both headed back and met Chris derigging the lower section of the main pitch. From here we ascended the in situ rope for a look up there. Chris climbed into the rift but returned with tales of tightness (confirmed by DR) whilst I dived into the crawl heading right with Don following behind.

After some flat out crawling and squeezing I realised that SRT kit would be better off off. Unfortunately, this was made all the more difficult with only one hand free to unbuckle everything. Finally free I pressed forward and turned to see to what I thought was an enlargement only to find that in reality it was of similar proportions to that already experienced LOL. With no idea where this crawl was heading, or if there would be somewhere (apparently there is – DR) to turn around, I became concerned about having to reverse back out without being able to see where my feet were. Fortunately, Don could still see me and was able to guide me back as well as dragging my SRT kit back to the pitch head, unfortunately, minus my hand jammer, which I even crawled over in my eagerness to get out of the crawl. Fortuitously, I only had to crawl back a little way to retrieve it.

From here, we made our exit into a beautifully warm and sunny afternoon having passed a remarkable 4.5ish hours poking about.

*Mike Skyrme*

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