

MARBLE STEPS POT

Adam gets Henry'd

11th January 2003

People present - Pete Dale, Adam Cooper, Duncan Jones

Weather: Dry with icy patches

Cave: Dry no water at all and very warm.

It was a very cold and icy day when we arrived at Masongill, we decided that it would be better if we drove up to nearer the entrance so I hopped into Adams landy and off we went leaving Dunc to walk! Unfortunately we got stuck halfway up so I got out and directed Adam around the obstacle by which time Dunc had caught up so we all got in and carried on up to the style. There was already a landy parked there so we turned round and parked up behind it. Adam and me then got changed as Dunc had wussed out again as usual. We sorted the gear out then walked over to the entrance, on the way Dunc and me pointed out the other caves in the area to Adam.

Arriving at the entrance we found it to be already rigged by someone else but we rigged it anyhow. Duncan took some photos of us at the top of the first pitch and some of Adam going down, then he went off across the fell camera in hand.

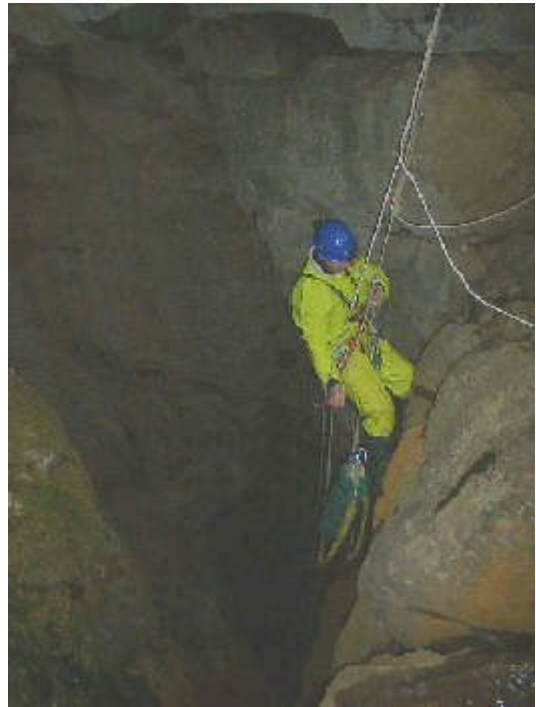
Once I was at the bottom of the first pitch I waited for Adam and then I showed him the 2nd pitch bypass, which is in the northwest rift. At the bottom of the main chamber we continued along the passage avoiding the narrow floor rift in favor of larger bits for Adam. At the end of the traverse I rigged the rope and abbed down to the start of the 240ft rift, as Adam was just about to descend I set off along the rift to rig the next pitch. I had just reached the traverse over pillar hole when I heard a loud bang and a scream! I dropped the tackle bag and raced back to Adam to see what had happened. Upon reaching him I found him still on the rope shaking with fright! Apparently a big henry had fallen from the roof and whizzed past him with millimetres to spare!!

With that excitement over with we both set off along the rift to Stink pot. Stink pot rigged I abbed down to find the group in front of us pondering on which was the right way to go, while they did that I waited for Adam to come down, and waited, and waited, and waited. "Adam what the f**k you doing up there?" I shouted up to him. "I can't get through" he replied. Oh well Pete to the rescue I thought and I prussiked back up to see what the problem was. At the top I wriggled onto a ledge and unclipped off the rope and told him to get on with it! Sure enough he was too fat to get through so with me talking him through it and with gravity on our side we eventually sorted it. By the time we had done that the others had found the way on so we followed asking if we could use their ropes to save getting spaghetti!

At the bottom of the 90ft pitch I asked them their names and what club they were in they replied saying that they were in the Pegasus caving club based in Derbyshire but they hardly ever go caving so that's why they were on their own today. Hmmmm?? I told Adam in secret that we would work on them and get them in the club, Adam agreed.

We shuffled down to the head of the last pitch to find Simon and Rupert struggling to rig it so I offered to do it for them. All at the bottom we climbed the last 6m and had a look at the sump and then made our way out. Adam said that he would derig so I set off up the 90 and waited at the top for Adam to arrive. Once at the top he proceeded to entertain me with different ways to get stuck when exiting a pitch head! Finally he made it, we then had one last obstacle to get past 'the top of Stink pot' I got through with no problems then Adam popped through just as easy, I was quite surprised that such a large lump of lard could get through such a tight gap. The rest of the exit went ok with no more falling Henry's luckily. At the top of the entrance pitch I found that I had lost most of the mailons but luckily we found all but 3 of them. We then made our way back to the landy and got changed. I gave Simon and Rupert our club details then we left and went home.

A good trip and finally bottomed this cave after 9 years!



Pete Dale
Photos: Duncan Jones

A Black Rose Caving Club trip report.