

MONGO GILL HOLE

A light refreshing trip with our helmets.

17th June 2006

People present - Duncan Jones, Mike Skyrme, (in a light way – Rob Santus)

Weather: Hot and sunny

Cave: Cool and mixed

Midday was the meeting time and as I pulled up to Stump Cross Caverns Mike and Rob were busy sunning themselves outside looking like typical touroid types!

I wandered in with the permit, signed in, got the keys and we parked up and set about getting changed, whereupon Rob declared he suddenly wasn't joining us, what, eh, why? The answer- Rob had forgotten probably two of the most useful pieces of equipment a caver can have – I'll let the readers work out which!!

After some sympathy from myself and Mike (honest), Rob tried in Stump Cross to no avail so resigned himself to a stroll across the fell to the entrance to watch us to descend into the dark – where we had to use our lights! :)

Once at the bottom of the very short North Shaft we discarded our SRT kits and followed the description we had, which led us onwards with a walking/stooping/crawling passage known as Luckstone Level before we eventually reached a sizeable stal boss, with a few snaps here we were now into the decorated section.

Whilst this section of the cave does have an abundance of formations they are never particularly outstanding examples, but nice nonetheless and we took a few more snaps along the way.

Eventually the passage reaches a chamber, East Hade, with a small wriggle down and through a short flat-out wet section as the way on, which did involve a good soaking and was kind of refreshing in a perverse way. A few more wriggles and the going is once again mixed, with some more of the same kind of formations.

Once the main passage choked we dropped down into a mine level, clambering up at one point to see the sizeable and decorated New Cavern before continuing on past some faith'n'hope-pit-props and to the top of a rope/ladder climb which drops you into the imaginatively titled Ladder Cavern.

A traverse round a hole and some more passage and we had finally reached the bottom of Shackle Shaft, the mud-swim the description gave us wasn't really noticeable and not worth worrying about, perhaps the prolonged dry spell had made it less wallowy?? *** a chance find of a small article in a back issue of Descent, #118, p15 - "Members of Burnley CC in cooperation with CNCC cleared a number of bucketfuls of mud/gunge making entry/exit more pleasant." So that explains why it didn't seem so bad!! ***

We did not have the tackle with us to do the through trip and as a result it wasn't rigged so from here we headed out at a respectable speed, eventually reaching North Shaft about 35minutes after leaving Shackle. A short climb and brief SRT (hardly worth kitting up for!) and we were out in the hot stuff again.

If you haven't done it before then go do it, it's a NC1 classic, a bit muddy in parts and a reasonable amount of crawling but plenty of good caving and formations to be had.

A fitting end came to the day when a rather strange thing occurred after getting changed, we opted for a cup of tea in the Stump Cross cafe instead of the usual pint of beer.. Perhaps the heat had gone to our heads and made us 'light'-headed?



Duncan Jones

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