

Peterson Pot

'Best foot forward'

Saturday 20th June 2009

Weather: - Warm but cloudy

Members present: - Pete Dale, Daniel Jackson and Alex Ritchie

The plan was to do Strangle pot or Broken finger pot but as is with the BRCC things never happen, so I asked Dan and he suggested doing Peterson pot. Last time I visited Peterson we only got a few meters into Roly Poly passage so this time we had to complete the trip!

Arriving at Inglesport at 930 I was surprised to see that Alex was waiting and also being briefed by Dave Ramsby on the trip ahead of him. Dave assured me that I would fit, and from the previous week's tale of him struggling in Brown hill, I was more confident about fitting. We were told that the tightest bit was just before you get into the first Aven chamber, which was 6ft from where we got last time.

So with me, Dan and Alex filled with food we set off to Leck fell and parked up on the deserted car park (Closed season has its benefits) we then got changed in the cold as usual for Leck. Once the srt kits were packed in a tackle bag, we trudged across the hill to the entrance. To say the entrance shake hole was overgrown is an understatement to say the least but with Alex sent in through the foliage to see if it was still rigged and to ascertain as to whether it was free climbable or not. Alex's voice came echoing back to us saying it was not free climbable so in Dan went to see for himself. A few moments later 'Rope free' was heard and I made my way down to join him. Easily climbable even if Alex tries killing you in the process! Dan then crawled through the remains of the dead sheep and climbed the 2nd pitch as well, I followed and I even think Alex climbed it too! Once at the bottom Dan wriggled through the slot and proceeded downstream until I halted him and pointed the way on for him. For some reason he didn't seem too impressed by Roly Poly for some reason...?

With Dan leading the way I wriggled in behind him and Alex behind me, we put Alex at the back since he was smallest and could get out if we became stuck. A short sideways crawl followed by a right bend and then a left, right wriggle gets you too the bit that stopped me last time. Dan was in front and he said to lie on your right side with your right arm forward and your left arm back. This worked well but was a little tricky since there was no way to move myself forward, I scatted about with my feet until I found some purchase and pushed, a quick roll onto my back and I was through and into the Aven chamber.

With us all sat in the chamber we looked at the way on and to be honest it was by no means small so off Dan went with me and Alex close behind. After only a few feet an inlet on the left is met and you could climb down to the stream here if you so desired (I think Alex did in search of easier ways!) the passage carried on and the sideways fashion being more of a hands and knees crawl now. From the expletives and nervous laughter coming from Dan it would seem the first bend had been reached, by the time I had got to the corner Dan was round and with me freeing the tackle bag he carried on. To get round the first bend lie on your left hand side and then wriggle round the corner while rolling onto your back and bending your knees up into the roof. With that passed easily enough I crawled forward to free the tackle bag once again and upon setting Dan free he made his way round the next two bends. The next two bends are together forming the usual 'S' bend the first is a left bend and once your body is round you roll again onto your back and then onto your left hand side for the next bend your legs just follow without to much fuss. Not too far ahead there is another 'S' bend which was a lot easier and can nearly be

crawled round on hands and knees. The passage then enlarges a bit too where you could almost turn around if you wanted to. Dan then stated he had reached the 2.5m sky dive and all to soon he said I could proceed. Reaching the climb you realise that a 2.5m drop is more like 7m (Alex is gonna love this I thought!) luckily there is a rope and a sling to use so with my right arm locked into the sling I crawled out over nothingness until my legs were free. I then held onto the sling with one hand and climbed down to the ledge. Alex's turn now so we got comfy and ready for the show to begin. Alex's head appeared at the top of the climb and by the look on his face he was not happy, he then said he was going to turn around and come out feet first! So he shuffled back out of sight and then a moment later a foot popped out followed by his head?? How the hell? Anyway it would appear he could not turn around and was trying to slide his legs through the rift succeeding with one but getting the other stuck in the rift behind him and while trying to free it the welly on his forward facing leg came off and plummeted to the bottom somewhere out of sight.

Now Alex was somewhat concerned by this point since his leg was stuck, me and Dan could not help in anyway apart from the occasion unhelpful advice. So we sat back and composed ourselves. Eventually he sorted his legs out and then climbed down the way we did. Why he couldn't do it that way in the first place we will never know it is Alex after all! With us all out of Roly Poly we climbed the third pitch with no worries and then Dan retrieved Alex's welly and left it in the chamber before the 4th pitch. He then made his way across the traverse and into the connecting crawl to Pippikin.

A few muddy crawls later and we had reached the first pitch down soon followed by the big pitch into 'Hall of the Mountain King' we paid our respects to She'man and headed for Mistral, back on the surface, after a pleasant 3hr trip.

Well Peterson Pot is quiet a good trip and should be done if you have a few hours spare on afternoon, it is not tight and the only hard bit is 20ft into Roly Poly so if you get passed that it's plain sailing all the way to Pip. I think next time I go it has to be to the bottom of Peterson and out Peterson so I can tick it off my list for good!

Pete Dale

Footnote:

Advice for anyone approaching the 2.5m skydive: remove any bulky tackle sacks bound to your ankle before trying to climb out. Your body hanging over a 5m drop with your foot above your head, firmly tied to a completely wedged tacklesack is a very compromising and shit scary position to find yourself in. Luckily I could hold myself up by the sling long enough with one arm to unclip the bag with the other.

Dan Jackson