

ROWTEN POT

Caves and pot..

8th July 2006

People present - Duncan Jones, Mike Skyrme

After a week of bouncing the task of choosing a venue between us, I decided that I would like to do Rowten Pot. I needed some SRT to help me forget the horrors of November Hole the previous week!!!

We met in Bernie's (Inglesport café being packed!) for a brew and eats before heading up into Kingsdale only to find the best parking places already full.

Once changed and ropes sorted and packed accordingly we set off up the slope of West Kingsdale to Turbary Rd and the massive entrance shaft of Rowten Pot.

Here we located a suitable stream to soak the ropes in before dumping the bags and going in search of Rowten Cave. Once located, we walked upstream until we emerged back onto the surface. We then headed back to our original entry point and proceeded down stream along a beautifully sculpted passage. At one stage, things narrowed down but a short flat out bit to our right led us into a continuation of the main passage.

Dunc (in his eagerness) shot past the inlet of Jingling Cave only to have me shout him back before I set off into Jingling for a quick recce. Dunc was soon behind me and we made our way as far as a skylight in the roof before turning back. On re-entering Rowten Cave we followed the passage down to its resurgence into Rowten Pot.

Play time over with, it was on to the main task of the day!

With Duncan rigging, we were quickly down the entrance shaft and onto the ledge overlooking the main shaft. I waited at this point as Dunc continued the rigging down and into a tight little rift running under the ledge. Once at the hang point for the main pitch Dunc shouted for me to come down. As I scrambled into the rift I saw Duncan disappear. The "rope free" shout seemed ages coming as I jammed myself into the rift at the hang point. Once received it was my turn! The tightness of the rift soon disappeared as the walls opened out into a massive chasm with flowstone running down the length of the far wall – most impressive!

Once down, Dunc continued to rig the next pitch. As I dropped down this pitch I noticed the rope disappearing into a cross rift. As I approached the corner, I became aware of the technical nature of this part of the pot (technical for me anyway!!!) with two rebelay in quick succession on opposite walls followed by a diagonal descent to another before finally dropping down and pulling myself onto a ledge.

From the ledge, a traverse down to the head of the final pitch was made before descending to the bottom.

Once at the bottom I offered to derig before wandering off to look at the sumps whilst Dunc began his ascent.

Derigging the final pitch and traverse was easy but I became a little unstuck at the "flyover". The krab had tightened at the first rebelay but after a brief struggle I managed to get the damn thing open and release the rope. This left me hanging between my long cowstail and the rope which was trying to pull me across the rift. Try as I might I couldn't release my cowstail from the bolt hanger. In the end I reconnected the rebelay, tied a loop in the rope to stand in and hence release the cowstail. Once free I prusiked up a short distance before performing a somewhat "hairy" traverse between the walls of the rift until I could reach down to unclip the krab again. Once over this obstacle, derigging continued in text book fashion!!!

I elected Dunc to derig the big pitch and after a quick drink and bar of chocolate, I gleefully ascended the main shaft and made my way along the rift and up onto the ledge to await a photo opportunity.

After a couple of shots of Dunc emerging from the rift I offered to derig the entrance. Once on the surface and a bit of a breather later, we headed off the fell for a quick change before retiring to “The Wheatsheaf”, Ingleton for a refreshing drink – hic!!!



Mike Skyrme

A Black Rose Caving Club trip report.