

TRY CAVING DAY

Runscar and Scar Top

27th May 2007

People present - Rob Santus, Mike Skyrme, Abigail Skyrme (10yrs), Kristina Wood, Alex Ritchie

After a very cold night camping at Dalesbridge campsite, we arose to a dark and gloomy sky with bad weather threatening. After a bite to eat we decided the best course of action was to quickly pack up our tents and gear before the rain really came down and head to Bernie's for more coffee and tea.

Eventually we made a move to Ribblehead to meet Alex and make our small contribution to the National Try Caving Day. Mike and I in particular weren't looking forward to getting our wet gear on from the day before after our drowning in Disappointment Pot's portcullis.

Anyway we all got changed at the Station Inn, (where the owner/manager appears to be a lot more affable than the previous excuse – Many thanks for the use of your car park and facilities!!!) and then headed with much enthusiasm across the short walk to Runscar Cave. We had a quick wander through Runscar to stretch our legs and then immediately descended into Scar Top Cave. This is a good cave to take novices as it isn't too long, it has plenty of crawling and has a worthwhile end.

With Mike leading the way and me taking the rear, we went in. After 3 metres or so, there is a small passage to drop into on the left. After Mike had gone down, Abigail was next to follow, but she didn't fancy it at all and looked a bit frightened because she couldn't see where she should go and was determined to go feet first. I quickly reassured her that it was ok and went down in front of her to direct her round a tight-ish crawl with a couple of bends. After that she was happy and laughing again especially when her dad gave her some Red Indian streaks for bravery.

Progress was made fairly swiftly through the next few crawls until the next little challenge – another slot. This is a small vertical drop followed by a flat out crawl around a hairpin bend to the right. Within a couple of minutes, everyone was through without a hitch and we were on the move again.

We quickly reached the second entrance above the upstream sump that looked more stable than was suggested and following a little rest carried on. After a few more crawls, some through mud and water, we arrived (with much oohing and aahing and the odd wow thrown in) at the final chamber which is very well decorated with stalactites and is well worth a visit. Plenty of pictures were taken here before heading back.

Upon reaching the second entrance, I had a look to see how stable it was before sending Abigail, Alex and Kristina out. In the process of helping them out, I received a friendly boot to the chin from Abigail and a loving whack in the eye from my own fiancée Kristina. Boxed and bruised, I set off with Mike to go out the other way. After a team photo amongst the stunning scenery, we headed back to a very cold and draughty changing facility before retiring to the Station Inn for a well earned pint.

This trip, although short (2.5hrs) was a great success judging by the pleased looking faces of all present.

Rob Santus



Photos - Mike Skyrme

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