

## WHITE SCAR CAVE (beyond the show cave)

Has tha nowt moist???

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Date : 12<sup>th</sup> September 2009

Present : Duncan Jones, Pete Dale, Alex Ritchie, Darren Jarvis, Ron Price

Weather : lovely! Dry and warm..

This trip had been planned for a while, after the previous years attempt had been rained off. Mike was organising the trip, but unfortunately back trouble prevented him from attending leaving four of us, with potential new member Ron, who we would be meeting for the first time on the day. Perhaps it might be third time lucky, Mike??

The week leading up to the trip was, thankfully, fine and the forecast was good for the weekend so no chance of the trip being cancelled! After a gathering in Ingleton where food and drink was consumed and a few pennies spent buying caving related items (as you do) we headed to White Scar where we met up with Ron. A quick chat with the owner was had and then we slowly started getting changed.

Once ready we had the obligatory entrance photo-shot before handing over some coins and gaining entry into an easy romp along the show cave passages. A few of us had trouble at 'The Squeeze' but we all got through and continued onwards to The Battlefield Chamber (which we had to visit first before we got wet). Once we had finished with the photos and theories we headed back downstairs to the streamway.



With only marginal hesitation we waded in! And then a mixture of wading, tiptoes, swimming, wall-grabbing ensued along the full length of the lake, all good fun, and it has to be said, neoprene doesn't half make it more enjoyable. After some watery antics we arrived at Big Bertha and the choke, a varied route was followed (some of us took different and obscure routes) to the duck, yes it can be bypassed but where's the fun in that!? It's only a very short head-wetting before you're soon in airspace again. A bit more scrabbling around boulders and water brought us to open streamway again.



*The Battlefield Chamber*



*Dunc, exiting (or trying to) the Lake*

Moonmilk inlet is met on the left, we all clambered up and had a quick look, with Alex and Daz going further, whilst the rest of us retreated back to the stream and a bit of photography. After this easy strolling up the streamway was had, with occasional oohs and eeks as the depth of pools reached higher than one would like.

Once the oxbow was reached, we entered it rather than following the stream, this way a drop of a few metres is reached back to the stream, unsure of the depth nobody seemed keen, so Ron went back to investigate, followed by me. Once the depth was ascertained Pete, Alex and finally, in a rather less than graceful fashion, Daz dropped down!

At the obvious choke/inlet we started a convoluted climb up to the start of the Sleepwalker Series. Pete and Ron headed off in the direction of that, whilst the rest of us followed a high level 'fossil-phreatic' passage. Unfortunately we were stopped by a hole with a very long drop back down to the stream and with slippery sloping sides, traversing was not an option, so we retreated. All back together we headed back down the climb to the stream. Some took to the water whilst others opted for the slightly higher level ledges.



*Backlit shot in the streamway*

More delightfully pleasant streamway follows to a climb up to the very pretty Straw Chamber. Last time I was here I recalled a slippery and awkward climb up, however someone has installed a short handline, which is still slippery and a bit awkward on return but probably better than the other way! A few photos were taken and some playing around on the muddy climb was had before dampness beckoned once again.



*The fine Straw Chamber*

Another deep section is soon reached, where Alex managed to lose his welly, much to our amusement, luckily Pete managed to extract it from the depths with his foot..



*Dunc & Pete wallowing around!*

Soon after this the roof lowers and the fun begins! An enjoyable section of passage with many low sections where swimming rather than crawling is easier, a few little ducks under arches, the great glooping noises as the water sloshes around the sides of the passage and the delights of having water running down your body each time you stand up! Eventually, it seemed longer than I recall, we reached the upstream sump and with nobody fancying a free-dive (well Ron mentioned it, we must have had water in our ears or something....) we headed back meeting Daz enroute, he had been exploring some side passage somewhere..

Just before the short lake a sizeable passage on the right was looked at. This reaches a large rift with impressive mud stairs to a dig. A small hole in the other direction leads to crawling passage which eventually gets too small after a small chamber. Once this was done with all we had to do was head out.

At the Big Bertha duck, me and Alex took the bypass whilst others headed through the duck again and the usual fun and antics was had in the lake. At one point I thought Alex was sinking but he managed to sort himself out and continue onwards to the bright light at the end of the tunnel, luckily it was just a show cave light!!

The show cave section passed quickly, with tourists looking rather bemused at some rather damp individuals passing by. Once out the sun was shining and it was warm – bliss!!!!

We headed to the Wheatthief for drinks and snacks to round off a very fine days caving.

*Duncan Jones*

*Photos – Duncan Jones and Alex Ritchie*

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