

# WRETCHED RABBIT

## Wrestling the Wrabbit

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25th August 2007

People present - Pete Dale, Paul Jenkinson, Alex Ritchie

Weather: - Dry, warm and hazy sunshine

Earlier in the week Alex had expressed an interest in caving the following Saturday so since I had nowt better to do I decided to take him on a training trip, also after having watched the ultimate climbing program on the Beeb my brother also wanted to come along (only if there is climbing to do!) so now all I had to do was find a location.

Saturday morning arrived and after picking Paul up we made our way to the rendezvous at J33, Alex was already there pacing up and down the road and nearly getting flattened by yours truly when he failed to notice me! We packed all the kit and then buckled up for a white knuckle ride to Inglesport for an Inglesport light. Arriving safely in Ingleton (phew!) we trudged down to get the light and after a brief chat with Dave we set off to BPF.

Arriving at the farm (No one there) and after kissing the ground we got quickly changed and headed off over the moor to Ease Gill. The walk over was made a lot easier due to the fact of how dry it was, the mud pools were now just dust and it was almost a pleasure to walk across. 20mins later we found ourselves making our way down the valley and over the fence to County Pot and after showing Paul various entrances we reached our goal.

I entered first followed by Paul and Alex, reaching the first climb I clipped Paul into the rope and he descended I then followed and had a look at the traverse over the third climb. We all made it to the bottom of the Big rift without any problems and arrived at the start of Spiral Staircase passage (A shortcut to the upper reaches of Ease Gill). Paul entered first followed by me then Alex, it starts as a short, hands and knees crawl and then enlarges to a stoop for a few meters to a junction. Now the first time I came this way Dunc was leading so not knowing the route that well was a problem and the fact there was no water to aid me didn't help either but luckily it is fairly straight forward and no mistakes were made. Upon reaching the rope climb Alex took the lead while I helped Paul down out of the previous passage. "Ahhhhh!" you guessed it Alex had fallen off the rope but he said he was fine and only his pride was dented. He then started to panic as according to him there was no way on from the bottom of the rope and the thought of having to climb back up it was not appealing to him at all. Telling him to look closer saw him find the obvious hole to go through and we were off again. Now the next bit of route finding is difficult when there is water but on a day like this when we hadn't seen any water since the surface was especially hard, when I came with Dunc we took the dry oxbows but today they were all dry, but after a scout around the correct way was located. Reaching the main stream I was surprised to see that was dry as a bone as well! A lot easier to walk along compared to last times thigh wetting experience. Quick progress was made to the climb up out of the stream into 'The White Way' and then a short distance later we had reached the climb up into the Assembly hall.

Paul climbed the rope first followed by me as I would have to drag Alex's carcass up, after a bit of faffing we were all up and onto the next climb which I have named 'Cavers way' it's a good 10ft chimney with good holds and an interesting top which requires lots of upper body strength. I made the climb first, then Paul flew up it and then we had to somehow get Alex up! I told him what to do but sadly there is nothing to stop my words from going straight through so he did it his own way and as you would have thought he was stuck, at one point he seemed to be climbing away from the opening above him very strange, anyway after a sharp tug he was up and we were all reunited ready for the traverse over to Easter grotto. The traverse is easy enough plenty of foot and hand holds to wedge yourself against, Paul wasn't too sure to begin with but a few words of

encouragement and he was over it took a little more persuasion to get Alex over, phew! Many ooohs and ahhs were gasped as we made our way through the now muddy grotto (must have looked amazing all them years ago!) and through a few narrow bits to pop up into a chamber with a muddy slope that looked like the way on. It's been many years since I was last here and only having done it once finding the way was proving awkward. Me and Paul looked up the muddy passage only to find that it was a dig, Alex climbed the boulders to find a blank wall, I thought it was strange as I remembered a flat out crawl to a short drop into Gypsum caverns. With no way on to be found we retraced our steps back down out of the chamber only to find a hole in the floor to a flat out crawl!!

Along the crawl we went, Paul seemed to enjoy his first proper squeeze and by the sounds coming from the back Alex was too. Reaching the end of the crawl I was faced with the climb down which didn't look bad but was made more difficult by the slippery mud all over everything, locating a couple of hand holds on the left side I squirmed my way around to attack it feet first and lowered myself over the edge. I was down, (easy as it looks) Paul was next and I told him how I did it and down he came, just Alex to go so I told him the same instructions and thud he just fell off and landed on me! We then headed through the caverns following the well trodden route. After a few minutes we heard voices and met another group who was doing a trip from pool sink to Wretched Rabbit. I told them to go and have a look at Easter grotto as it wasn't that far. We then carried on along the passage. A few climbs and crawls later we heard voices again, strange to meet so many people I thought to myself, as it turned out it was the same group we had met before meaning that we had circumnavigated gypsum caverns...DOH!

Finding the correct way on, we soon made our way down to Holbeck junction, easily recognised by the large boulder guarding the stream way. Having showed the others our point of entry we climbed back out of the stream way and took the high level route to Stop pot. Reaching stop pot we climbed up to the ladder as we were going to go and have a look at Cornes cavern but, after a vote it was decided to head out.

My choice of exit was to go through four ways chamber and down into Wretched Rabbit passage, this we did and having made swift work of it, we were soon at the rope climbs up the big rift. Paul climbed first and was soon gone I then followed with Alex dawdling behind. Once I had got to the top of the rift climbs Paul had already reached the top! Alex was struggling on the rope climbs since he still doesn't trust anything not fastened to the ground by nature. Having dragged his corpse up a climb or two we were at the top and up on having a quick wash off in the stream, Alex and Paul both fell in!

A good trip for Paul and Alex with some valuable skills learnt.

*Pete Dale*

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