

## COUNTY POT and WRETCHED RABBIT

Moister than a damp thing.

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Date : 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2011

Present : Rick Pinches, Mike Skyrme, Chris Kelly, John Gardner, Tom and Ryan

Weather : Wet before followed by dry and cloudy.

Having driven up in appalling conditions I half expected the trip to be called off or moved to Mistral. However, the sun was briefly out in Ingleton. I met up with Chris, Mike and John in Inglesport. Ryan and Tom, 2 novices who had contacted Mike through the website, showed up then disappeared off to Bernies to be kitted out in lovely cerise (read pink) oversuits and knackered kneepads. The intention was still County so we headed up to BPF where it was dry but cloudy. The dry streambed by County entrance was in full flow which didn't bode well. After making short work of the entrance series down to the Broadway we first went upstream to have a look at an aven then headed into Showerbath passage which was definitely more bath than shower, then headed into the Trident Series via Battle of Britain chamber. A dampener was soon put on this as when we reached Splashdown Chamber (I think it is called) there was an unbelievable amount of water coming down blocking the low crawl out of the chamber and onward progression. A quick decision was reached that this was wetter than any of us had seen it before so we headed out to try to reach the main drain via Wretched Rabbit instead.

Mike and myself headed in first while John and Chris guided Tom and Ryan down the entrance climbs which have lovely thick new ropes on them. Last time I did it there was a really tatty bit of rope on the final drop and a wobbly aluminium ladder on the 2nd drop. There was some trepidation about having to climb back up these from both novices and myself. Especially as it turned out Ryan had been out on the lash the previous night arriving home at 6am!

Steady progress was made as far as the greasy traverse where some coaxing was needed. John suggested that the usual route to Eureka junction would be flooded so we climbed up out of the usual way on, into Four Ways Chamber then popping out onto a boulder slope higher up in Stop Pot. The waters of the Main Drain which were flowing very strongly were tested and found to be difficult if not impossible to cross!!

We headed upstream at a higher level to Holbeck Junction and onto Gypsum Caverns where we had a short rest, including Ryan virtually flaking out.

The way out took a circular route out of Gypsum Caverns and then reversed the route in. The traverse proving just as annoying as on the way in to some. The climbs up the entrance were passed easily enough with little assistance needed. Having watched Mike fly up the climbs I realised that there must be a knack to it as he made it look simple so I hauled myself up too. A lifeline was provided for Tom and Ryan although from where I was it looked like that was more to give moral support than to physically drag them out.

The usual Whoop visit was foregone as some of us had things to do in the evening but nevertheless a good day out for 6 of us.

*Rick Pinches*