

KING POT

A right royal classic.

Date: 21st April 2007

People present: Duncan Jones, Pete Dale, Rob Santus

Weather: Dry

Cave: Quiet and crawly

I had for quite some time wanted to do this East Kingsdale classic, time and various other factors were never on my side, but an open day in April was pencilled in as a possible date!

After our quick change and walk to the farm trying to find the farmer to ask for permission we soon started on the upwards trudge, the first part is ok but once past this there is a short sharp field, although incline field may be a better word for it.. Is this hideous walk the reason why most things on East Kingsdale are grade 5?? Once on slightly flatter terrain we headed in roughly the



right direction and rather surprisingly we found the shakehole containing King Pot quite easily. We kitted up and clambered down, not bothering with the rope on the sloping climb as it wasn't too bad, this quickly deposits you at the head of the rather pleasant first pitch.

So far so good, but King Pot doesn't give up its secrets easily and crawling was the word of the day. After a short crawl we reached a traverse which is not as bad as we thought it might have been and is quickly over with but, as ever, the way on is a crawl, this time a side-ways one which pops you out in a chamber with a small hole in the floor, the start of the second pitch. A short drop reaches the pitch proper and once down it was soon into a crawl again..



This crawl is slightly longer but does finally relent before the crawl-traverse starts and for those that have been in Peterson Pot, it is similar to but not as bad or as long as that traverse - although it does have boot and bag grabbing properties, whilst not too bad on the way in can be a nuisance when slightly tired on the way out! At the end an interesting manoeuvre awaits you, it involves a wriggle from the crawl-traverse to a standing position whereupon you go round the corner and step out over a ~4m drop and shuffle along the wall until you get back on solid

ground. From here a short passage leads to the impressive Queensway, lofty in places and sometimes bouldery, a welcome relief from the crawling. Eventually the passage lowers and a wetter section follows (the guide book description wasn't what we found, although we had a reasonable dry spell before our trip) and a short length of crawling (yes, crawling again) soon enlarges before reaching Emma's pitch. I took a quick and worthy detour forwards to examine some pretties before heading down the pitch.

At the bottom of Emma's pitch a rather pleasant walking passage (shock) leads you deeper into the pot before it ends at a boulder choke and a climb up followed by two interesting climbs down that lead you into the rather large, rather unexpected sizeable cavity that is King Henry Hall. In this chamber is Bloodaxe Pitch, which drops you into continuing big passage, not what we expected of this place. At the bottom is the next pitch of Victoria, in a narrow rift, which soon expands into Kakemono Hall, another impressive section of passage, what, oh come on this is



silly, we're in East Kingsdale, it's not meant to be big! Oh, hang on yes my mistake, another crawl, which eventually led us to what is in my opinion the best pitch in the pot - Elizabeth.

From here Jane's pitch, which is really an awkward muddy climb up and then down, is quickly reached and Rob had disappeared by this point leaving me and Pete on a catch up game through the muddy crawl, into slightly bigger going before another seemingly endless crawl that eventually dumps you in the East Kingsdale Master Cave..

Ahh, bliss, the EKMC is worth a visit, even if it is only short. We visited the downstream sump and then headed upstream to the more impressive sump with a fine curtain decorating it, even without the curtain it looked an inviting sump, it's not often you can say that!

We decided not to bother visiting the bitter end (Grasshopper Series etc) as it didn't seem worthy and we had a long way to head out. The long crawl began and our exit proved straightforward, although our downside proved to be a misunderstanding over the spanner (possibly still lurking around the top of Elizabeth right now- we used naturals to rig this so didn't realise our error until Victoria pitch and nobody seemed keen to go back to Elizabeth to retrieve the spanner!!) and the resulting abandonment of a number of hangers, but we all got to the bottom and back out in one piece which is what matters at the end of the day.

We had an enjoyable 7.5hours caving in this East Kingsdale Classic. Highlights would include the very fine pitch of Elizabeth and the East Kingsdale Main Drain which turned out to be a nice section of streamway with an impressive upstream sump (makes a change for a sump to look inviting!)

The number of crawls was, well, too many to count, but these were interspersed with some rather surprising large sections of passage. All in all a very fine days caving and certainly recommended to all those that like a change from dangling on string and want plenty of variety in their caving trip.

Duncan Jones



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