

LANCASTER HOLE

A rock-ing trip

27th October 2007

People present - Mike Skyrme, Chris Scaife

Weather: Foggy and damp. Clearer on exit.

Rather than the lengthy slog over the fell to County, I posted an alternative of Lancaster Hole main drain. The weather up until Friday evening being perfect for a visit to the main stream.

Saturday dawned foggy and damp and the drive to Ingleton made more interesting by the many students hitchhiking enroute in their attempt to return to Bath University in the quickest time.

I met up with Chris in Inglesport café for a bite to eat before setting off for Bull Pot Farm. Plenty of vehicles at the farm indicated that this could be a busy day. However, once kitted up and at the board, we were the first ones to sign in.

Rigging the entrance with two ropes we were soon down and off to chasm pitch. As we passed the showerbath we realised how dry the system was as there was absolutely nothing issuing from the usual spout.

Chasm was rigged properly this time, utilising the final rebelay which gave a rub free descent into the master cave. As this was Chris's first journey into the main drain (apparently the last time he had the opportunity – he chose to have a kip rather than descend!) we ditched SRT gear and headed downstream to the sump where some pictures were taken of him swimming, before heading upstream. Plenty of pictures were taken of the “punchbowl” before we pressed onward to Stake Pot. Picking our way through the boulder slope we emerged on the other side to be greeted with some fine formations and lots more beautifully sculpted stream passage.

Unable to find a route through the boulder collapse at Oxbow Corner and Chris's desire to visit Colonnade Chamber, we began the return journey taking more pictures as we went.

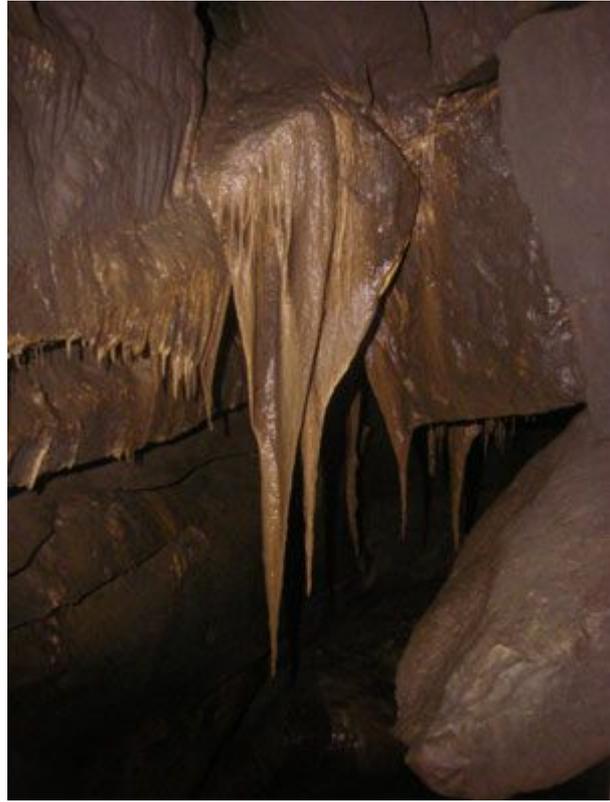
Deciding to take a high level route over the collapse at Stake Pot proved entertaining as, on the descent, I grabbed a “nice” sized block which suddenly decided to slide. Various expletives were screamed, as I braced myself between two massive boulders as the block fell, glancing off my left leg as I hastily and somehow managed to curl my right leg somewhere up near my arse to prevent it from being squigged. The smell of the shattered rock was terrific as I (aided by shock and adrenaline) slid down the remainder to the slope to a laughing Chris. After a brief spell of hyperventilation and laughter, we were on our way back to the pitch.

Chris elected to derig so I made my way up. After a bit of faffing at the awkward deviation (which on reflection could be replaced by another Y hang), I was soon sat at the pitch head waiting for Chris, who appeared to have a similar encounter with the deviation.

Once up and packed, we set off for Colonnade Chamber. I lost my footing exiting Kath's Way and dropped a tackle bag on Chris's head (Sorry!). Once in Bridge Hall, SRT kits were removed again for the climb up to the Colonnades. More pictures were taken for Chris before we made our return, kitted up and headed for the entrance to join the queue of folk waiting to exit.

Five sets of rope made the ascent awkward, especially as they were rigged over ours and with Y hangs just inside where rebelays would have sufficed made the exit like climbing through spaghetti.

Mike Skyrme



Photos – Mike Skyrme

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