

# TITAN – PEAK CAVERN

Titantastic – a big old shafting!

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11th January 2009

Members present - Pete Dale, Rob Santus, Chris Scaife, Alex Ritchie, Daniel Jackson, Mike Skyrme, Chris Kelly, Kate Duffus and Rick Pinches

Non Members: - Dave Ramsey and Ruth McDonald

Weather: Damp, windy, warm, cold and icy



Well the time had come for Titan and with eleven of us attending it was going to be an epic trip.

We arrived at the TSG hut at 9am and met the others, we sorted the paperwork out and planned the trip. Rob and me had planned to go down Titan up Block hall through White River and down Ventilator shaft back along Colostomy Crawl and up and out of Titan (Yeah right!), Dan said he would come along as well so we left the others to walk up to the entrance while we drove up to the top. Arriving at the parking spot we positioned the cars for the best defence against the wind and got changed. All sorted we headed over to the giant mole hill that is the spoil heap from the digging of the shaft, I have say it is a big eyesore and will hopefully be tidied up better when work is finished. The first task was to open the lidded entrance up so we could rig the rope, this was no easy task but eventually I had removed the padlock and we were able to rig the rope for the pitch. By this time everyone had arrived and the descent had begun.

By the time I had got to the bottom Rob and Mike had already made their descent of Titan and now it was Alex's turn. We were all expecting screams and swearing but nothing was heard at all to say we were disappointed is an understatement! Next up was Rick and he seemed ok if a little scared, he had a bit of trouble at the re-belay but got down safely. Ruth and Dave followed with Kate, Chris and my self last in line. Dan was on the traverse at the re-belay ledge taking pictures. Once at the bottom we fettled Rob's light since it was being a bit temperamental and once it showed signs of working I set off into the boulder choke to catch the others up. Catching the others up at the short climb down in to AI Passage we had to stop to sort Rob's light again. Alex fell down the climb since he still refuses to use hand lines while everyone else got down safely. With everyone down we headed off down stream to the connection with Speedwell. For some reason I was at the back (since I new the way) and chuckled to myself as everybody walked past the passage we were supposed to climb in to. Soon we were at the ladder climbs up Stemple highway, Rob made his way up with me following and after 2 ladder climbs and a traverse or two we all gathered at the base of Coral aven. Once on the move again we clambered under Calcite aven and into the connecting crawl that leads to the bottom of Leviathan which is the last pitch down from the James Hall over engine shaft entrance. The next bit could be wet or dry depending on the weather so since it had been dry for a few weeks there was no swimming to do!

Opening the air door down into Speedwell revealed a few ladders creating an interesting climb down into the stream way, Mike, Rob and the two Chris's set off down stream while I waited for the others to climb down. Heading down stream the water was no more than knee deep until a corner was reached with a traverse line around the right hand wall, this was passed easy enough and at the end of it the water was waist deep bbbuurghhh!! The next obstacle was the bung hole and we could

hear it in the distance and as we got closer it got louder and louder! Arriving at the top of it we found it to be dry so a quick climb down only resulted in a splash or two depending who was at the top (Dan!) Mike took pictures of us climbing down the ladder and we all then congregated at the base of Block hall. Some of us were going up and whoever didn't want to was going out through Colostomy crawl. Rob set off up with Scaife following. Kate then for some reason started treating us like a party of kids by trying to organise who was going where when everyone knew where they wanted to go. (She is going to have to detach herself from the cave leader training in our club!)

So with 3 heading out along Colostomy and the other 8 going up Block hall to White river series the race was on for who could exit the quickest. Mike, Alex and Rick set off and we started the long route upwards. When I caught the others up Rob asked me which way it was, I thought it strange since you just follow the rope, he said he had been to the top but could find no way on and upon coming back down had sent Scaife up another rope to a dead end. I told Rob to go in the crawl at the top so back up he went. In the meantime Chris was still at a re-belay on the rope Rob had sent him up. Slowly rope free was shouted and we all started moving again apart from Chris who was still at the re-belay. I heard rope free and set off up while Chris was still at the re-belay! On my way up I heard Rob shout some expletives so I presume he found the way on. I made my way up shouting rope free as I passed each of the re-belays by the time I had reached the top I think Chris was still at the re-belay. Following the rope along up and into the start of the obvious passage at the top I made my way slowly along the flat out crawl to the white river series. Reaching the other end of the crawl I asked Rob how come he never saw the passage to which he muttered something and set off with Dave downstream. I told Kate and Ruth I would wait for Dan and the others while they carried on. A short while later the distinctive grunts of the hairless wonder came echoing along the passage and he was soon stood upright in the White river series oohing and ahing so the inevitable camera was taken out of storage for some pics! I left him to it and set off to catch the others up.



I soon reached Nameless pitch and traversed over the top of it on the in situ traverse line, I then caught Kate and Ruth up who for some reason were down in the stream way and not following the obvious traverse above the passage. I shouted down to them and Kate climbed up but Ruth carried on along until I told her she would get stuck in the Moose trap. I sprinted on ahead to catch Rob and Dave up who were just at the junction of the passage leading off to the Ventilator shaft pitches. Rob and Dave headed off to rig the pitches while I waited for the others to catch up. I soon heard Kate and Ruth and when they got to me we enjoyed a Titan bar! They then headed off to the pitches while I waited for the rest. I waited and waited and eventually heard voices so I backtracked and found them taking pictures still, apparently they had left Chris on the re-belay still!!

We then headed for the Ventilator pitches and were soon down the first one and after a bit of faffing were down the second third and fourth pitches. We packed the ropes back in the bags and then set off towards Peak cavern entrance. A short body sized tube with a ladder in it took us down to the crawl from the Treasury, and after a bit of confusion we set off in the right direction. Lots of wet muddy crawling in Liam's way lead to a ladder climb down then a squeeze through the old gate and into big stomping passage towards the entrance, we passed the Mucky ducks and onto Buxton water sump where we cleaned off the plentiful mud and then headed for the exit.

We signed out and then headed off on our separate ways with me Rob and Dan walking back up to de-rig the entrance rope to Titan and the others going to the TSG hut. The walk up was slippy due to the ice and a tad windy, we soon found the entrance though and sorted the rope out locked it all up

and then headed for the car or so we thought, we ended up in the wrong place but a little backtracking took us to the cars. A quick change we then dropped the key back off and headed back to Castleton to pick up the boys.

A good trip if a little slow but it's hardly surprising due to the numbers involved we all got out safely apart from Chris Scaife who is still at that re-belay!

*Pete Dale*



*Photos by : Dan Jackson and Mike Skyrme*

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