

(11)

7743
7744
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Shattbashing! 12/7/99 Lev. JC.

Obvious triangular shaped entrance, visible from Aris and the path down to the Trea junction, on slopes of Jullaga 200m E (Left as you go uphill) of the path to 217. 0° to Aris i.e. 180° from Aris to Cove. At top of steep grassy ridge with slight sence slope to the West.



Difficult to believe this has not been seen, wandered about district before. Walk in entrance 2m wide + 5m high. Narrows after 10m to greasy 5m climb. Choked at top. Could be Cowstick one 8/7, but seems too high up for this, if not then it shall be 49/7.

Shuttle-bus 2. 10/7/99 Lew, J.C.

Visited 717, Cross-rift cave on the way back from 417.
Snow levels looked pretty high.

2/7

13-7-99

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Dick 'n' Pip.

A leisurely start for a portering / acclimatisation trip. Quick progress was made down to 7th Heaven where the fat bastard status of one of the tackle bags first became apparent. Paradise Rift was the real test and required the combined tactics of yanking from below and stamping from above to force the reluctant bag through.

After a quick discussion and experimentation of the merits of the various types of chocolate bar we ditched the bags at the top of Gripper and headed out. Pip was so keen to practice passing Paradise Rift that she did every move twice, slipping back each time for another attempt, accompanied by a little yelp but never coaxing a harsher word than "drat" from her lips.

7th Heaven continued its campaign of destruction on my Carbide Lamp. This time attacking the generator and forcibly removing the pipe whilst I was being distracted by another part of the squeeze that insisted on a much closer inspection of my Croll.

A very successful trip whose research will prove invaluable to future generations of covers.

- (VFG) 1. Thorntons Special Fudge.
- (PFG) 2. Milk Chocolate with Smarties.
- (NFB) 3. Milk Chocolate.

(B)

"You've just put about twenty things into my mouth"
- JC (to Rick)

15/7 Goat Attack!

Ario camp got raided by goats last night (they got into the rubbish). Now they know there's food in the shelter they are likely to try the same trick again. Therefore, ~~the~~ please lock the entrance with the water containers or similar ~~at~~ if you are the last to bed/leave.
Thanks! Jo

PS ~~&~~ Latrine put in black container 8:40 am. ~~about~~ not yet added.

2/7 14-7-99 Lynn & Lev

Another efficient start and we were underground by 10:30. Lev treated me as a competent caver rather than a novice and we reached the end of the rifts in ~~in~~ a $\frac{1}{3}$ of the time that it took me last year. It was a really pleasant trip, the rifts seemed friendlier and much shorter than last year.

Pessimists is great. I am beginning to believe that 2/4 is actually a big cave and not just nasty rifts!

Lev rigged the bottom of Pessimists, Sing to the Devil and The Bells surprisingly quickly. I also got to do a little rigging when Lev missed a bolt on the traverse at the top of The Bells.

The way out started off well. Pessimists was long but not exhausting. Going through the rifts started off quite slow as I was tired but then I had an Asthma attack at the bottom of Gripper. I rested a bit while Lev went up and then followed very slowly trying not to make my breathing any worse. I was quite keen to make my way out but Lev made me rest and put on thermals for a while. This was definitely a good idea and the rest of the trip was better if a little slow. Despite this I really enjoyed the trip and got deeper than I've been before in pretty good time.

LSM

10/9

15/7/99

LSB

Took the Hilli-capping system for it's just use underground to walk on the terminal squeeze. Got Lynn & Pip to porter the gear to the entrance for me (thanks!). Found the rift between the 2nd pitch and the limit of exploration rather more spotting than I remembered, and I had to move the drill, battery, Hilli BDM, and bit of camp through separately. One hole, two black magnum caps, and a bit of hammering later I had a nice Lev-shaped hole and was able to retrieve the hammer Dave dropped last year. There followed another squeeze followed by a pitch of indeterminate depth (anywhere from 10 to 40 m!). The best lead in the Picos still lives up to its reputation!

LSB

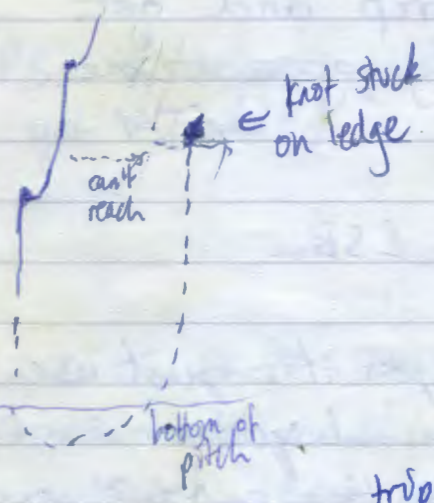
PS: We left a container at the Mentini pool.

15

"Album Pr; a pant's mine of incontinence" Lew Bishop.

2/7 14-7-99 Another Rigging Trip - JC + Hilary

Continued the pottering/rigging effort, rigging from Armageddon Ledge to pitch through the 1st false floor. The rigging went fine - we ~~had~~ ^{didn't} initially put a traverse line between the bottom of the Hundred and the pitch down to the 1st false floor, because the ^{end of the} rope got caught on a ledge as we threw it down. Luckily I had carefully picked exactly the right irritatingly inaccessible ledge to get it stuck on, so the "middle" of the ample-length rope just reached the bottom of the pitch + no further. (Having established the excessiveness of the rope length maybe undoing the knot would have been a good plan)



Later addition though - I retrieved the rope on the way back up + JC has rigged the traverse.

Having spent (intermittently) the entire trip, and the best part of the last 2 days, pestering JC to let me do some rigging, I was (reluctantly?) permitted to go down the 22m pitch that seems to have no name, between the bottom of the 100 and the 1st False Floor. I think JC might have been hoping I'd be so fucked by the time I got this far down the cave that I would abandon my foolish claim to want to rig, but no, it was not to be. (As I was absailing down the 100: "Do you still want to do some rigging?" "Yeahyeahyeah..." (pause) "Oh".)

I left JC at the top of the Pitch Through the First False Floor + began the astonishingly-not-as-long-and-tortuous-as-I-had-been-thinking-as-I-absailed-down-it process

out.

A relatively smooth + uneventful trip, all in all. We left the last 3 tackle bags to get down to JA 2 at various points: (13) ^{bottom of} Graham's Todger (14) ^{Top of} Gripper (15) ^{bottom of} F. Rebelles (I think)

Although I have to correct the ridiculously inaccurate chocolate assessment. The smartie chocolate is the absolute muth's'nuts, as long as your tongue is long enough to retrieve the goo it transforms to at the bottom of your prussik bag (and ^{you} are not too averse to blobs of soggy paper)

PS. we missed our callout, by (me) being slow on the way out. Thanks to Pip, Lynn + Lev for taking this seriously + starting a prompt & efficient rescue. Especially to Rich who met us on the path carrying loads of rescue gear, in the heat of the day.

2/7 15/7/17 - Rich & Jo "It took the piss"

I started the trip feeling very uncoordinated but we made good speed through the rifts, ~~and~~ picking one tacklebag up at the bottom of Flying Rebelles, one at the top of Gripper & a third at the bottom of Graham's Todger Pitch. It felt great to be descending the shaft series once again, & it wasn't long before we reached the first false floor, the limit of rigging. Rich & I shared the rigging, heading out at around 7pm. Reached the surface at 1:40am - lovely to be able to crawl into a warm pit instead of walking down to Aris

I enjoyed the trip, despite the excessive amount of prussiking (Rich, partway up The 100: "It takes the piss"). Paradise Rift submitted with an unusually small amount of effort which was just as well as we were pretty knackered. Great trip!

PS. The deviation on Gripper flew off & hit my nose! Jo.

PPS. DO NOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES open the blue bin bag at the bottom of Cemetery Gates (just before Guzano Grotto). I was caught short, so will add the bag to a shit BDH if no one else does so before me.

17

17-7-99. Saturday 6 a.m.

Arrived here last night after 10 hour walk from Vega reddonda, via Punta Gregoriana, FUSE, Old and new top camp and C9. No booze at the bar! (The Refugio that is) but managed to survive with four Vino Tintos and half a bottle of whiskey. Fantastic camp, shame I can't stay.

Hope camping, pushing, Surveying goes well in 2/7 and I WRITE UP THE LOG BOOK! Take care, yours to the (terminal?) Scrap,

James Hoop

16-7-99 Shaft bashing - Rich, Pip, Hilary

After legging it down to Lagos + back to pick up some rope + rigging gear, I set about a thorough festering seeth at Ario while Rich + Pip went up to 2/7 to pick up the caving gear. Our plan to meet @ 5pm on the ridge was thwarted by the minor hiccup of me not being there. I was busy upgrading the team's bolting competence from Rich's "seen it done, how hard can it be", putting in a bolt @ Ario under Lev's expert supervision (thanks Lev!). However a bit of standing on the ridge shouting was all that was needed + I made my way over to the Pip head/shoulder combination poking out of a distant shakehole.

Pip found 40/7, our target cave, shortly afterwards + we set about rigging the cave from surface natural (not even dodgy ones). At this point I noticed that everything around the entrance looked set to fall down

the shaft at an instant's notice. Pip + I had a quick rationalising discussion and decided that the victim should be the one of us whose untimely death would constitute the least loss to humanity. We sold this to Rich on the persuasive grounds that he was wearing caving gear and that after all his rigging was, as always, so good he would probably have to beat himself. This even turned out to be true, with a first class spike deviation giving a perfect hang down the 16m entrance shaft.

Rich went through the "squeeze" from the chamber at the bottom of the 1st pitch, rigged the 2nd "undescribed" 10m pitch and descended it, but it didn't go. So: 40/7 ⊗

Meanwhile I went to check out an apparently unmarked entrance in the rift just uphill from 40/7. This involved a traverse over a 2-3m deep hole (around 2m diameter) to the entrance, a smallish hole going diagonally downwards along the line of the rift. Once inside I crawled around in a small maze of boulders. There was another person-sized hole to daylight; I didn't look where this came out on the surface. The only way on led to a rift which can be free-climbed down for around 10m to a floor of gravel. In the direction doubling back under the entrance, the rift seems to continue ~~but becomes~~ and (I think) was draughtily outwards slightly, but quickly becomes impenetrably narrow. Need to return to tag the cave, assuming it isn't ^{the} existing log, + get a better description of the location.

Hills

10/9 16/7/99 Lynn & Lev

To stop Lev blowing himself up on his own I agreed to go with him down 'the best lead in the Picos'. While he went down to base to carry up underground camping equipment I was left to walk up to 2/7 on my own. It was actually a very pleasant walk and the solitude gave me the freedom to loose the T-shirt for most of the walk.

Back at Arid there was no sign of Lev, so I festered pleasantly for a while. Eventually him and JC arrived looking quite knackered after a very heavy carry. I think Lev would have been happy to abandon the planned trip down 10/9 but since I had gone to the effort of collecting my kit for him we eventually set off.

The cave was much nicer than I had expected although the Lev sized squeeze was just that. I started to go through it and then decided that actually I wasn't very happy about it so tried to get out. I appeared to be completely stuck, the viscious walls biting at my oversuit. I started to slip through so the best thing to do seemed to be to continue. Lev managed to undo my delay belt and I suddenly found myself on the wrong side of a squeeze I knew I couldn't reverse!

Between us we managed to hammer off the more offensive bits of rock until I was

happy that I could get back up through it. So now I am afraid that the cave is a little less exclusive with now only a 'Lynn sized squeeze'.

At this point time was getting on and I didn't fancy trying the next squeeze. Lev continued on and climbed down to the undescended pitch head for another look. With a session already in progress at Arico we decided to make our way out and leave the desert for another day.

Despite thinking that I was never ever going to put myself in that situation and also believing that I hated tight caves I actually enjoyed the trip and it won't take much to get me to have a look at that tantalizingly echoy pitch.

LJM

PS There is a full water container on the slope above the Martini pool that needs collecting.

↓ collected. 17/7/99. iodine added 1.50pm - HG
Next empty container in place 1.30pm (1799).