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OUCC - CUSS Joint Mendip trip @ BEC

Saturday

St Cuthberts!! Nick A. Rory R. Rosa C. Becca M.

Awesome trip led by Estelle and a quiet man named "Mike" - no idea who he is.
Formations are fucking awesome and the trip was enjoyable with typical Mendip obstacles - like eastwater if God actually put the love & effort in...
Planning a return trip soooon!!!
Nick xo

Really good trip! A bit of a challenge which is great, need to work on upper body strength/climbing... Formations were worth the effort - so many were still pristine and the size of them were mindblowing! We reached the Cow pools before heading back & still had enough energy for a little detour on the way back to the entrance. Super enjoyable trip & will be reading up on where to visit next time!
Becca :) xxx

St Cuthberts was so good I went there on Sunday too! Some BEC people had a spare space on their trip. Pretty cool but best on the Saturday

: Swildon's hole - Karim A., Rory R.

Second trip to Swildons for both myself & Rory. Explored much of the upper series before making our way downstream to Sump 1. Thankfully the cave was fairly wet & the sump was fully sumped. Went through the sump then immediately went back through it again to head to the surface. Shivering from the cold all the way from the Sump to the surface wasn't pleasant but a challenge is always fun - plus we made it out just fine so can't complain. Great & memorable trip, also was my first sump ever!!!
- Karim

WALES WEEKEND WITH NUCC 01/02/19-03/02/19

Rebecca Miller, Nick Adams, Rosa Clemente, Karim Akaka, Thomas Leung, Reuben Harding, Elena Di Lavore, Linh Chi Nguyen

Becca's First Trip without Nick!

OFD2 → Judge / Trident → Shatter pillar

Becca, Elena, James, Demi, Gus, Natalie

B: First time leading on my own – really fun + great freshers!

Demi First ever time to caving, everything is new to me! – like this experience and thanks for everyone's help. ^^

James Gorgeous Cave, my favourite caving trip so far! :)

Anonymous Golden experience and really enjoy the caving with all you guys!

First caving trip and amazing! Not cold and nice formations. Becca awesome leader :)

Nick & Karim with Jacob & David (of NUCC)

NORTHERN LIGHTS

We got to NL at a pretty moderate pace, arriving @ Midnight with quite a rush. Formations enjoyed by all, then a big drink @ shattered pillar's drinking spot & on aside to see more formations nearby. Karim was very tired so we abandoned our plan to exit via Cwm Dwr, instead leaving via OFD II

Nick.

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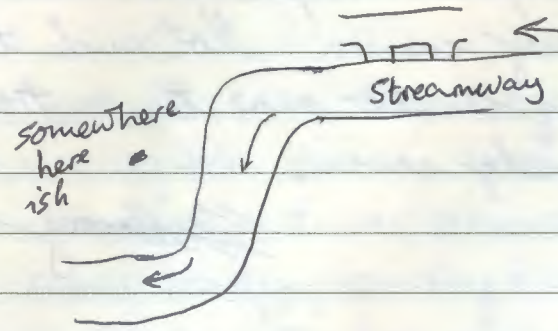
OFDI → Cwm Dwr Rosa with Laura, Ryan, Alex, Ben, and Louisa of NUCC

We went on a route finding trip, no-one quite knew the route from OFDI to Cwm Dwr, but we had a compass and a shiny dominated survey so we went there anyway. The fun started on the way down when in many places the best way to get towards the cave was sliding in the snow. Then we got a surprise when we got to the step - despite the snow, the water levels were normal, fairly low if anything. We made fast progress in the stream, then got lost straight after the wobbly rock. We found a very squeezy route through the boulder choke that Ben didn't appreciate. It was also nowhere near the correct route. We had fun on the letterbox and lots of faff belaying each other on the direct pitch. Then we did a great deal of routefinding trying to get into Cwm Dwr. Thanks to Laura we got through! Cwm Dwr has some beautiful formations. Crettking out seemed to be going OK until Ben got to the boiler shaped pipe at the entrance. Apparently it's not meant for people with really long legs. After ~40min we started to regret our decision to just wait until everyone was out of the cave to go back to the warm hut. Luckily Jacob came out eager to use his microtraxion and we hauled Ben up enough for him to get out. A great trip despite the last bit. Thanks NUCC!

Top to OFDIII / Smith's Armoury. Reuben Harding, Thomas Leung

- Had to dig out top entrance from the snow. Beautiful walk up.
- Some routefinding issues between Poached Egg and the Crevasse.
  - Went up Creek Alley to Boulder Chamber.
- Regaining the route after the detour, everything went smoothly.
- The traverses and climbs are exposed, but manageable
- Saw three blind white trout in the OFD3 streamway
- Got to Smith's Armoury.
- On the way back, went looking for Calcite Cascade and associated

passages. We eventually found it, but it requires SRT gear.
in situ SRT rope.



probably easiest to find by looking for these holes at about knee – body height and tracking back down the streamway for a few tens of metres.

- Exit uneventful.
- Streamway low, but evidence of recent surging (foam on roof etc.) OFD3
- On a personal note, I'm glad to finally get to Smith's Armoury, since it has been a target since my first caving weekend

OFD (TOP) → Smith's Armoury. (OFD III)
Thomas Leung, Reuben Harding.

Second time doing this trip, quite pleased I remembered most of the route finding, except missing a junction and got into Creek Alley (found out when we were back SUCC). Traverses seems a bit better/easier compared to the last time I did it, but the streamway was still freezingly cold !! Saw three cave fishes along the first bit of the streamway. Tried to get to "Crystal Canal" but apparently it required SRT, but still glad we found ~~the~~ how to get there. Another time then. All in all, had a good trip.

Thomas

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03/02/2019 OFD TOP Photo trip Thomas, Nick, Becca.

A rather low turn up for this photo trip, but did have some good photos with my fancy camera. Not much to say, just wonder around Big Chamber near the entrance, the white ~~Arch~~ Arch, and speedy caves.

~~Thomas~~

Yorkshire weekend 15/02/19 - 17/02/19

Thomas Leung, Rory Rose, Reuben Harding, Greg Horvath, Franziska Lechleitner, Rosa Clements

Flood entrance ROSA, FRANK, GREG

After a long hike (we were washed!) ~~in~~ on a busy trail, we started our downward journey. I was quite nervy, not having done SRT in over a years, but Rosa's pro-rigging and Greg's help made sure I got to the bottom without problems. The last pit turned out longer than it would have needed to be, and unfortunately we got a cold shower as well that we would otherwise have avoided. But the following trip to the big waterfall chamber made it all worth it! Going back up was fine too, a bit scarier in parts. We got out when it was already dark, which goes to show how your perception of time shifts underground. Definitely a really nice trip with great companions! FRANK

Quaking Pot → Gormanghast. 2019 Feb 16th (Sat)
Thomas KM Leung, Reuben Harding, Rory Rose 15 hours bounce

We were at the Quaking Entrance at 1240 → 1220, I think. RTH, and the call out was set on 17th Feb, Sun, at 1400. Knowing exactly where to go and how to rig, we were at the bottom of the third pitch an hour later. No problem with the crawling and traversing, we abseil the 4th pitch, down the sky dive, and got to the crux. This is where we stopped back in Sept 2018, and Reuben wasn't be able to pass the crux at that time. This time, I passed the crux by crawling at the stream level, while Reuben followed, and he had no problem! Rory was behind Reuben, and went via the crawl traverse above stream level. We went all lying in the thin stream and shared the same thought - could we be able to pass the crux on the way out? Just because Reuben have never tried

* The "Black Book of Misery" is a very good reference!

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to exit the crux, and there was no guarantee he could do it. But that will be a question for later, so we carried on. After the crux, with a tackle bag each, I found it quite strenuous to progress along Explorers Prerogative, especially the crawl traverse closer to the 5th pitch. Anyway, we got to the head of the 5th pitch which supposed to be a hand line climb. I rigged it, not quite happy with it as a handline climb, no space to put on SRT kit, so used my cow's tails as a belt and attached it to my stop. Not very comfortable, but I could abseil down the 5m pitch, while Reuben and Rory free climb it. Below the 5th pitch, it is not that difficult to get to Gormanghast. The W bend was roomy but quite wet. Rory did something stupid tried to get into the bends. The Fly crawl Aseend was a bit slippery, but ok to free climb up. The prtch leading down to Bridge hall was very loose, and I kicked quite a lot of rocks down. There was no thread under a boulder to belay the rope at the top of the 10th pitch, so it took us a while looking for the thread and eventually belay on the boulder directly. At the Fault climb, the rope was not quite long enough to reach the floor, so we faff a bit to re-rig. It was meant to be a free climbable 5m chimney, but I would rather conserve energy and SRT. It took us around 6 hours to get to bottom (Gormanghast). We explored the muddy and bouldery had chamber for a bit, ate some trail mix, and took some celebratory photos, then made our way out. We were pretty all right at this moment, but already a bit cold and damp. I couldn't remember much on the way out, but it involved a lot of moving ropes from one tackle bag to another, just to make the weight even. Rory and Reuben had a bit of issue at the two climb up between the 5th and 6th pitch, and need to stand on me to get up. There was also a long wait for me at the Crux. The original plan was to let Rory to go ahead, and he could stand on me to enter the Crux, while I could show Reuben how to do the Crux at stream level behind me. Instead, Reuben was behind Rory, and I stayed at the back. This should not be a problem, however, Rory did not regonise the Crux, and kept pushing along

It was quite a lot.

stream level! I kept hearing him yelling and shouting, not until I regonised the turn before the Crux and let him know. So he back out the stream level, and with a little help from Reuben behind him, Rory finally out of the Crux fine. One problem solved and now comes another. Reuben was trying the squeeze out of the Crux at stream level, but he will need advice from me. Being struck behind them, sitting in an alcove above the stream for an hour, I couldn't get to Reuben, but can only rely on my limited memory of the Crux to give advice. Reuben cannot pass the squeeze, and had to backtrack and tried the upper route, after lying in the thin stream for 15-20 minutes. I could see him shivering, and he had two muscle cramp already. After a lot of suffering, pushing, standing on my head and shoulders, yelling, he was finally out of the Crux. I felt guilty to say that Crux was not an issue to me. I passed the Crux even before I noticed and Reuben told me I have done it. It was a less than 5 mins job! Well, may be I am just built for thigh squeeze. After the Crux, we made our way to the bottom of the 3rd pitch slowly. Reuben and Rory were very helpful and stayed behind derigging while I get out of the cave, since I will be cold without any changing clothes outside the cave, and the walk down the hill will be freezing. I was out at 0300, ?. 7th, and ran down the hill, start the engine, and get changed in the MPV. Reuben and Rory were out at 0340, and we drove to YSS, arrived around 0530 in the morning.

bad cramp and shivering RTH

→ agree

SRT kit On / Off

Entrance → Bottom of 2nd On
Bottom of 2nd → Top of 3rd Off
Top of 3rd → Bottom of 4th On
Bottom of 4th → Top of 6th Off
Top of 6th → Bottom of 7th On
Bottom of 7th → Top of FLY Crawl Pitch Off
Top of FLY Crawl Pitch → Last (Gormanghast) On

- There are no in-stu ropes.
- Every pitch is bolted with IC Resin Anchor, no hanger required.
- Glasses is OK for Quaking
- A scout trip to the Crux before bottom it is highly recommended.
- Do the 4th pitch, NOT the by-pass.

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Quaking weekend (because it was the Yorkshire weekend, but who really cares about anything else?)

It was cold and tiring. I had whole body cramps by the end of it, and probably hypothermia (mild).
Probably close to my physical limits, but very worthwhile.
Pleased to make it past the crux. (in both directions!)
Gormenghast is boring.

I would like to go back at some point to do

1. A return trip to Gormenghast via 8th & 9th pitches rather than fly Crawl, and
2. a separate (?) trip just to the Crux and back to investigate the different permutations. i.e. over the top on the way in / stream bypass on the way out. I think that, fundamentally I can do the squeeze & I get the technique down, but best to do it when still energetic and warm.

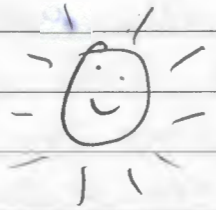
-Reuben

19th April 2019

BEC, MENDIP

Rebecca Miller, Jon Cheung & Nick Adams

We set off with the intention of doing the short round trip in Swildons Hole - ended up going a bit past sump one (I have no context of quite how far we went!). It was a very enjoyable trip for me - getting to know Swildon's better & my first time through a sump! It was quite cold - who would've thought!? Before we turned back, Nick & I went for a muddy scramble & a slide down the fixed rope at the landing. As Jon was very cold at this point, we ousted him from the cave post haste. - into glorious sunshine!



Rebecca

BEC Mendip. 21st April 2019

Nick A. Jon C & Rebecca M.

Morning to teach Becca how to rig for a ladder belay - initial twitter goal of the weekend was SRT rigging but enthusiasm is low in the Easter sun!

Yesterday we went to the silty beach of Brean + the military base on the nearby hill.

Today's plan is everyone's first trip to Waterwheel - ladder style.

... Things didn't go to plan

It's Easter Sunday so no access to the charterhouse key for waterwheel via the usual routes. Opted for rigging training in the blistering heat @ the wessex and then Becca rigged the first leg of Hunter's Hole - 30m rope did not suffice for the