

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

Important safety information about using CNCC descriptions and rigging topos

This MUST be read and understood by anyone using a CNCC-provided cave description or rigging topo

These descriptions and rigging topos are provided by the CNCC for use by experienced cavers only in assisting with trip planning and route-finding on some of the popular sporting routes in our region. They are not exhaustive, they do not cover every passage or feature, and details may have been greatly simplified to try to keep them concise and clear.

Great efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the information. Nonetheless, there are likely to be errors and (over time) an increasing number of inaccuracies due to changes in the caves and the replacement of resin anchors. The descriptions may also contain subjective viewpoints which could be open to misinterpretation. It is entirely incumbent upon all cavers to exercise appropriate care and caution when going underground using these topos and descriptions, and to have researched the trip from several other sources. Never make any safety critical decisions based on the information in these descriptions or topos.

Pull through trips must only ever be undertaken by cavers who are confident in finding the lower route out of the cave without a description, and who understand the extra precautions demanded of such trips (e.g. carrying multiple ropes).

The rope lengths stated in the rigging topos are considered the minimum length required based on average rigging. There may be errors, or your rigging may use more rope than anticipated. Therefore, it is critical that all ropes that are deployed for use have two tightened knots in both ends, to mitigate against the risks associated with the ropes not reaching the bottom of pitches.

Difficulty ratings, or 'grades' have been omitted from these descriptions. All cavers must make their own informed judgements of whether the cave is suitable for their capabilities, backed up by thorough research into the nature of the cave from numerous sources and an understanding of the capabilities of others in your group.

Many in-site ropes and ladders are mentioned throughout the descriptions. These should only ever be considered navigational markers and not safety critical belays. The CNCC does not install or maintain any fixed aids in caves other than the resin anchors shown on the topos. Never trust your safety to a rope or ladder which is left in a cave. For resin anchors you must understand the importance of belaying your rope to multiple anchors, including full traverse ropes leading to pitches, and always performing a pre-use inspection on every anchor. If any resin anchor shows movement, or fracturing in the nearby rock, it must not be used.

Rigging must always be performed to avoid any rub points or other hazards. Rigging exactly as depicted in the rigging topos does not guarantee a rub-free descent; this must be assessed and ensured by each individual caver on each pitch in every cave.

Many caves which are susceptible to danger from flooding have been highlighted in the descriptions. However, all caves, even typically dry ones, can flood in various circumstances, and it is therefore critical that the experienced caver using these descriptions makes their own judgement based on experience, extensive research and weather forecasts. Decisions to descend any cave after or during wet weather, or when wet weather is forecast, should be made based on an informed judgement backed up by thorough research from multiple sources. The critical moto which should be adhered to is "If in doubt, stay out!"

Although warnings are provided where there are some specific known hazards, the absence of a warning does not indicate that there are no hazards. Caves can (and do) change over time. Furthermore, the CNCC does not perform routine inspections or surveys of caves to look for specific hazards (e.g. loose rocks). All cavers are strongly advised to view the webpage on the CNCC website for their chosen cave to check for any warnings that have come to our attention. Experienced cavers using these descriptions must make their own evaluations for hazards throughout the duration of their trip and act appropriately to mitigate any risks.

Neither the author of the descriptions/topos or the CNCC will accept any responsibility for any damage, injury or loss (however caused) resulting from the use, misuse or misinterpretation of information in these cave descriptions or rigging topos.

JUNIPER GULF

November 2016

Juniper Gulf requires the weather during the previous few days to have been reasonably dry and the weather on the day to be settled, as the large catchment area and the proximity of the pitches to the water would make the cave hazardous following heavy rain.

Parking:

Juniper Gulf is a long walk from the nearest road and can be approached from many locations. Parking in Crummack Dale, as shown on the map, is the closest approach at 3.5km (but is not necessarily the easiest to navigate). Other approaches include from Clapham (via Gaping Gill, 6km) or Horton in Ribblesdale (4.5km). GPS and/or compass and a map (Ordnance Survey OL2) are essential, especially as it can be difficult to find your way back from the cave in poor visibility due to it being on a flat plateau.

To approach from Crummack Dale, enter Austwick from the A65. About 250m after the Gamecock pub, turn left onto Townhead Lane. Follow this up and out of the village for 1.5km to where a 'no vehicles' sign is reached and the public road ends where a lane enters on the right. It is possible to park on the verge on the left here just before this lane on the right joins.

To approach from Horton in Ribblesdale, park either in the village car park or on the road between The Crown pub and the railway station.

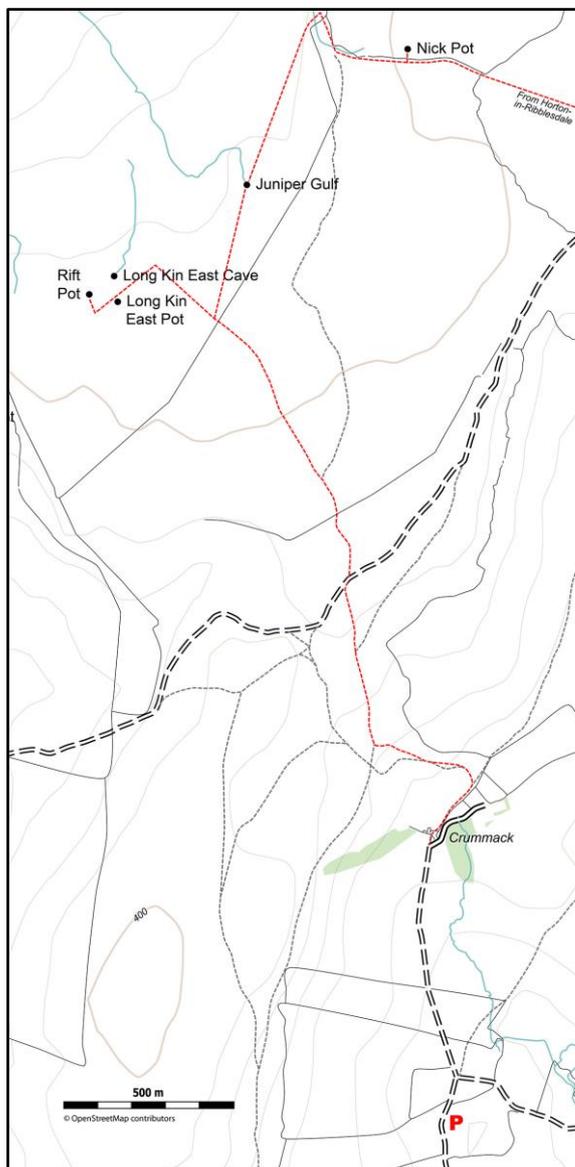
How to find:

Grid reference: SD 76577 73324

If parking at Crummack Dale follow the public footpath straight ahead (north) for about 1.5km. Where the main track bears right towards the farm, leave the track and go straight ahead through a couple of gates. Follow the right wall and about 150m after the gates bear left away from the wall to follow a steep dry valley uphill and onto the fells.

Navigation beyond this point is difficult as there are several tracks, all of which are rather vague. Go north-west towards the gate with a small sheep enclosure at SD 7646 7284. This is a useful point to navigate towards either by taking a bearing or using GPS. Through the gate, turn right and walk for 500m bearing very slightly away from the wall. You will reach an obvious stream valley coming down Ingleborough which flows into the entrance of Juniper Gulf about 150m from the wall.

If approaching from Horton in Ribblesdale, follow the footpath behind the train station for about 2km onto the fells. At a fork in the footpath, go right (probably signed to Sulber Nick and/or Ingleborough). Just over 1 km further is a crossroads. Go straight on (towards Ingleborough), crossing a wall after 500m, and then another wall 500m beyond the first. After crossing this second wall, turn left off the path and follow the left wall (which bends left), keeping approximately 200m from it at all times. After 500m a valley is reached with a stream flowing into the entrance of Juniper Gulf.



Rigging:

The rigging topo from 'Northern Caving' is available on the CNCC website (courtesy of CNCC Technical Group).

Navigation:

Scramble down a gully to the entrance pitch at the end of the hole furthest from the stream. This pitch can be rigged in a number of ways. In low water conditions it is quickest and easiest to simply continue all the way to the bottom via a rebelay just above the cascades. The cascades immediately downstream of here can be easily free-climbed in low water. However in wetter conditions when the cascades are too 'sporting', it is possible to bypass them by commencing a traverse from the rebelay in the rift above the water for several metres. This reaches a Y-hang where a short drop returns to the stream, beyond the cascades.

Downstream, the water is lost down a narrow rift. Staying high however a traverse along the rift reaches the second pitch.

From the bottom of the second pitch, again the water vanishes down a narrow trench in the floor and further traversing reaches a wide, awkward section called The Bad Step. Even with a well-rigged traverse line, this is a challenging and daunting traverse. More knee-wrecking traversing and the third pitch is reached just after a prominent right hand bend in the traverse. This is narrow at the top but soon opens out and hangs dramatically next to the main waterfall. This pitch can develop severe spray or become impassable in wet conditions. Depart this pitch onto a shelf a few metres from the bottom. Continue forward on a traverse line above the stream.

The cave quickly enlarges and the final (fourth) pitch is soon reached. This pitch is a spectacular 50m deep, 10m wide shaft. The traverse runs along the right hand ledge/wall before commencing the descent, with a rebelay just below the edge. The bottom of the pitch can become an extremely draughty place! The rope can be belayed to a flake to assist with the final climb down towards the sump.