

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.

SCANTY LARDOS POT

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Anyone who fancies an etymological tick-list should visit the caves of Penyghent Gill. Amongst these delights Scanty Lardos Pot is well worth a visit. The cave is best enjoyed when there is no active stream. If the stream is running, the entrance sequence and first pitch can be sporting. Care should be observed when the stream is running as additional rainfall further up the fell will make the entrance sequence impassible.

Parking: Drive up the hill from Halton Gill towards Stainforth. Pass over the cattle grid at the top of the hill and park respectfully on the track/hard standing immediately on the left.

How to find: Grid Reference SD 87765 74892

The well-appointed, constructed entrance can be found immediately over the road in the stream bed.

Tackle/Rigging: A rigging topo can be found on the CNCC website.

Navigation:

The entrance shaft was created to stabilise the surface stream bed which is largely stream fill over a heavily jointed limestone bed.

Climbing down, a short crawl forward under a drystone wall and a step down enables a right turn into the enlarged Lardos Rift. **Great care should be observed here as sections of the shored streambed above are unstable and could collapse.** Take care not to dislodge any stones onto companions below you.

The first two anchors for the next climb are immediately on your right at the end of Lardos Rift. At the bottom, Monsoon Chamber, as its name suggests, isn't a place to hang around when the stream above is running. In drier conditions take some time to check out the fine decorations here.

Staying on the same rope, the anchors to rig the approach to Misery Pitch can be found in the roof of the chamber. From there, a short thrutch into Santa's Chimney leads you the head of the pitch; the anchors can be found in the roof. Part way down, a flake should be used for a deviation. In wet conditions, little is visible until you step out of the spray at the bottom of the pitch; You should consider carefully whether to descend by visualising heading under the chamber you have just come from.

From the bottom of Misery Pitch, downstream walking-size passage gives way to a right turn and hands and knees crawling leads to a short rift. Exploring the joint development that follows is great fun. As the right and left turns switch places, so Ann Summer's Passage similarly alternates between hands and knee wet crawls, and well decorated easy-going walking passage.

A final left turn leads to the beginning of an anchored traverse down a cascade to the head of Joe's Pitch. Avoid heading straight down; this is entertaining and wet. Instead go immediately [downstream] left onto a ledge where you'll find a traverse anchor and then a Y-hang in the roof. A slot below avoids most of the spray in the chamber beneath.

In the chamber at the bottom of the pitch, avoid following the stream. Instead, climb up out of the chamber and follow the rift above the stream to a point where a left turn leads you to the start of the Third Pitch. The first anchor for the traverse can be found straight ahead and heading round the corner with care the Y-hang is accessed.

As you descend, Cloud Chamber above offers fine views and is well decorated. The pitch lands on a raised floor and a short climb down and stoop under a block gains access to a chamber where the water disappears with promise into the impressive boulder choke ahead (The Office). This is the the end of the trip. Keep clear of the choke to avoid incident. Any in-situ ropes here should be avoided.

Back on the surface, having enjoyed the views down Littondale as you change, a trip isn't complete without light refreshment which can be found just down the road at The Falcon Inn, Arncliffe.

