

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.

HARDRAWKIN POT

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A short but interesting and often overlooked SRT trip. This is an active stream cave, and in wet conditions the entrance passage sumps and the pitches become miserable or impassable. Reasonably low to average water conditions are required.

Parking:

Park on the road a few hundred metres north east of the Hill Inn at Chapel-le-Dale. There is a small parking space for 3-4 cars immediately next to the start of the path up Ingleborough (on the right if heading away from the Hill Inn), and a larger parking area another 100m further across the road.

How to find:

Grid reference: SD 7449 7677

Follow the main marked footpath up Ingleborough for 900m. On the way, pass a gate/stile with signpost for Great Douk, but continue ahead to the next wall. Pass through the gate and turn left, following the wall up onto the limestone pavement. The wall turns to the south and then the entrance is found at a fenced shakehole, bisected by the wall. Water flows out of High Douk Holes and into the entrance of Hardrawkin Pot.

Rigging:

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

Navigation:

A stile over the fence on the south side of the shakehole leads to a small climb down to the streamway. SRT kit can be worn from the entrance.

A second, short but greasy climb down in the small open pot (handline optional), lands onto a cobble floor which the stream has sunk underneath. Re-join the stream where a short crawl passes a small arch of rock which may sump in high water. The quite well decorated passage becomes easy-going for 200m following the stream with a few corners and formations.

Once the first pitch is met the cave changes from horizontal to vertical. A traverse leads out to anchors for a Y-hang, which is positioned far out over the pitch head to avoid the waterfall down which the pitch drops. Flakes allow the rope to be deviated away from the water at least twice, but in wet conditions the spray is everywhere.

At the bottom of the pitch the stream flows off to one side. Follow the water as it tumbles down a series of cascades, immediately followed by the second pitch. The second pitch rope should be belayed at the top of the cascades to protect the approach to the second pitch.

A simple but damp, 13m pitch drops to the sloping chamber below. At the base of the chamber is a deep sump pool and the end for the non-diver (divers may continue through three sumps; 135m, 45m and 3m respectively, then a 12m pitch, 200m of 'dry' cave, another 12m pitch and some rift climbs may be tackled before the true terminal sump is reached).

