

**27<sup>th</sup> January 1991**  
**Borrowdale Wad Mine**

Present:

D. Blundell	B Mitchell	D. Bridge	M. Mitchell
M. Dobie	M. Scott	C. Jones	A. Sibbald
P. Fleming	P. Timewell	P. Merrin	T. Tucker
A. Gourlay	A. Thomas	A. Wilson	

15 members met at the roadside at Seatoller on a cold morning hoping for an entertaining day out. The sun failed to show itself throughout but the mist cleared occasionally revealing glimpses of the snow covered tops.

Mitchell astounded the masses by setting off on one of his famous 'bee-lines' to the upper levels by walking back down Borrowdale and taking half the group with him. Poor unsuspecting fools we thought as we made our way up to the farm. Of course when we next saw Mike he was sitting, relaxed on the spoilheap outside the entrance to Gilberts Level, smiling wryly as we huffed and puffed up the spoil heap and collapsed in heaps around him. He then set off on another bee-line the moment we sat down.

On reaching the Grand Pipe it was decided (by Pete Fleming) to split into two groups, those who felt fit or were unfamiliar with the higher workings, departing higher still with Mitchell's cheery reassurance that only two short pitches would bring us down to their horizon again and only 25m of rope would be needed.

Paul, Barbara, Pete, Max, Adam, Mark and myself spent an enjoyable hour exploring the small rises and flats off the upper levels before deciding to go down. Unsure of the depth I abseiled on a single length of rope and there was only about 10 ft. of rope left at the bottom which made it impossible to use the rope doubled for a that or the next pitch which looked a similar distance. I should have known Mike's wry smile meant something as we set off with the short rope.

Returning to the Grand Pipe we explored Fairey's Stage looking for the bottom of the pitch I had seen from above then returned to daylight before Adam and I descended to Gilberts Level where the rest of the team could be heard in Dixons Pipe some 80 ft above.

The rest of the party had descended the Grand Pipe (with a rope they knew would be long enough) to the old Mans Sate with the hope of securing a large block near the bottom in Dixons Pipe. All the way through they were horrified by the rather horrendous rigging which other groups using the through trip had put in place. Bolts had been placed to maximise the rub points. Obviously this was no good for a group which included Anton so better bolts were placed using Mr Bosch's apparatus. Much hilarity ensued when the newly elected membership secretary made slow progress drilling a hole when it was noticed that he had the drill rotating backwards!

Further down Paul Witheridges effort at bolting towards an as yet unexplored passage was noted. Also at the top of the last pitch a boulder was secured and another measured up for a stemple. All went well until as the party abseiled down the, last (wet) pitch they noticed the real horror, a poised boulder as big as a sheep (and not as soft) just below the start. This must be the one they came to secure... Later many plans were formulated to deal with it.

Andy Sibbald distinguished himself a second time by abseiling back up the rope and walking backwards down the fell before reversing his car back along Borrowdale to Keswick. Election to the committee was too much for him. Those who attended the meet enjoyed a good day out except for one member who got separated from his car keys and spent a cold hour or so but that's another story...