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## JF-14 Dwarrowdelf – de-rig

**Janine McKinnon**

**2 February 2013**

**Party:** Janine McKinnon, Jane Pulford, Ric Tunney

This was a quick trip to de-rig the cave following the second, and final, dive attempt on KD sump II, two weeks previous.

As we hauled all the diving gear out on that last trip, Alan & I also partially de-rigged the cave. We removed all the ropes as far as the bottom of pitch 4, and left them tied together and piled at the bottom of that pitch. Alan also removed the rebelay on Pitch 4 as he ascended, so there was no need for the de-rig party coming later to drop that pitch.

Thus, we now needed only to go as far as the top of pitch 4 to retrieve the ropes from further down the cave, and to de-rig the first three pitches on our exit.

As we were not in any particular hurry this trip, and Jane had not been into the cave before, we decided to stay

together as we descended. Thus the last of us reached the bottom of pitch 3 not much short of an hour after the first started into the cave.

After lunch and packing, Ric started up with the 120 m rope. I followed with the remaining ropes and Jane came last, de-rigging the 55 m pitch as she went.

Ric continued up to the climbs above pitch 2, and waited to help haul packs. I waited for Jane at the top of pitch 3 to help with packing the rope.

We couldn't fit the rope for pitch 2 into our packs, so that was hauled up the cave, and out, separately.

All went smoothly and we were all back on the surface just before 2 pm. That made the total trip a bit short of 3.5 hours.

Ric and I both hauled packs of 13 kg up the cave, and our packs back to the car weighted 25 kg each, so de-rigging the cave at the same time as bringing out diving gear was never a sensible option, so it's a good thing we didn't try to do it.

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## Trials Bike Cave – Jericho

**Ken Hosking**

**3 February 2013**

**Party:** Peter Lockhart (Gas Gas Raga 250), Steve Harris (Scorpa 250), Mike Hull (Gas Gas TXT 280), Ken Hosking (Beta Evo 250) and Dougal (on four legs)

In presenting this report, I hasten to make it clear that this was not in any way an official trip, or indeed, a trip to look for or enter caves at all. It was, in fact, an unofficial practise day for some of the southern members of the Tasmanian Moto Trials Club at a farming property near Jericho. During a previous trip to the area, I had been told of the presence of 'caves' in the side of a valley near where we were riding, but on that occasion we didn't go close to that valley.

On Sunday 3 February this year, we decided to go to the cave area for the purposes of looking for likely sections to use in a forthcoming trials event to be held on the property. A 4WD track led us to an area where we could go no further on four wheels. Continuing on the bikes, we headed across to an area of heavily vegetated deep valleys and rocky cliffs, generally appearing to be of volcanic origin,

but having areas of exposed sandstone. There were several small caves in the sandstone, not qualifying as anything more than rock overhangs in reality, but there was one large cavity, as shown in the accompanying photograph\*. This appeared to be a wind-eroded overhang, measuring about 12 metres across the opening, with a distance to the back wall of about four metres. At the RHS of the opening, looking in, was a short passage that almost went as far as being in the dark zone. The carcasses of dead sheep and masses of sheep droppings everywhere did not particularly encourage exploration, although Dougal seemed to think that they had some appeal. The ceiling of the cave was interesting, however, reaching up into the sandstone about three metres to form a dome that contained complex erosion patterns.

With my having achieved a personal ambition of combining motorcycle trials with caving by riding through the cave, we rode on in search of more rock steps, logs, climbs and any other obstacles that might be used in the upcoming trials event. There is no shortage of any of these on this property.

\*See photo on page 3.

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## JF-584 Tigers Eye

**Janine McKinnon**

**6 February 2013**

**Diver:** Janine McKinnon. **Support:** Ric Tunney.

Tigers Eye pond has been known about in Tassie caving circles for many years, however it was never dived. A mainland group of cave divers happened across it a few years ago and have had several assaults on it. They have pushed exploration to the limit of human possibility, as far as any of them can determine. This January a small group (led by Grant Pearce) returned to survey the cave.

In the weeks prior to their arrival Ric & I had cleared a new track to the pond, as the old one had been obliterated

by a massive tree fall. The start of this track is marked by a small piece of tape.

The survey team have improved this access by consolidating some steps into the steep bank and hardening the area immediately above the pond, where divers enter the water. How long this will remain once the winter rains start is anyone's guess but it is good for now.

My objectives for the day were to do a simple tourist dive into a cave I have yet to visit, and afterwards, to attach a tag near the entrance. I geared up (tanks) in the water as the first step is a bit of a bugger. I then swam across the pond to the small limestone wall on the opposite side to the entry point.

Grant's group had placed a heavy duty, permanent line into the cave. This starts below surface level and near the entrance to the cave, which is at the far side of the pond, under the large fallen tree (that obliterated the track).

The entrance is not particularly tight and visibility is typical Tassie sump (about one metre, or less). The line is thick (8 mm), highly visible white with red flecks, and taught. (spoiler alert) I followed it down to 35 m, and then turned the dive.

There is a horizontal section near the entrance, and then the cave dives steeply. There is one moderately tight restriction near the top of the descent but it is easily negotiated with sidemount tanks in place.

The cave width increases after the restriction, however with only a metre of visibility I could not see the far wall and thus couldn't determine the dimensions of the passage. The line runs down the right hand wall (as you go in).

There is a lot of silt in the cave, and not just on the floor. Touching the walls or roof (which is impossible to avoid in the small bits) brings dirt and muck cascading down, reducing visibility further (often to nothing). Much of the rock is crapola too (a technical term for you non-geologists), and fell apart as I touched it.

I did manage NOT to stir everything up so much that I lost visibility totally for any extended period of time. I had spoken to Grant's group, and they had said that it was much worse when they started diving but improved after they had done a few days, with two divers in there, twice a day.

They were there at the beginning of January. This cave does not have high flow so I suspect that this build up of silt and debris only gets worse over time. Any diver coming here in future should expect this.

At 35 m I could still see the line descending, and I know the cave reaches 45 m. I was only doing a familiarisation and fun dive, and didn't want to gain a decompression obligation in 7°C water without oxygen to speed the waiting time. It wasn't like I could actually see much either, so extra depth wasn't going to gain me anything but touching the end. So I decided that was enough for me today (you can tell that I'm wondering if I should have kept going now, can't you?).

The trip out varied between half a metre and nothing for visibility, but was uneventful. Dive time: 30 minutes. Max depth: 35 m. Air consumed: 100 bar (from 2 X 7 litre tanks).

This is definitely a sidemount only cave, and the tanks shouldn't be too large either. The line is beautifully laid, well secured, and should last many a year, and through many floods, I would think.

After removing my dive gear I stayed in my drysuit to place the tag for the cave (JF-584). We have had this for a while and just needed to be prepared to get very wet in 7°C water to put it in place. The only limestone is the wall opposite the entry point for the cave, and I had to stand chest deep in water to put it in. Hence waiting until I was wearing a drysuit (yeah, a wimp, I know).

The tag is almost immediately above the entry to the cave, and the start of the fixed line. It is in solid limestone about 20 cm above the current water level. A piece of pink tape was inserted behind the tag. It is not visible from the entry point to the pond because of the large fallen tree (that obliterated the track..). It is visible from another fallen tree (it's a popular place for large fallen trees) beside the large fallen tree that ...

The light was very poor there and a view from far enough away to give perspective was not possible, and so a photo tag was not taken.

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## Other Exciting Stuff

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### More Work for Rolan

#### Alan Jackson

Growling Swallet has been marked on the 1:100k and 1:25k Tasm maps since the day dot, as has Junee Cave. In 2010 someone moved to have Growling Swallet officially deregistered as a name, a motion that was carried by the Nomenclature Board of Tasmania on 15 September 2010 (Omission Notice No. 94, Nomenclature Board). My understanding was that this was the first step in having Growling Swallet removed from the Tasm maps. Rolan denies having initiated this deregistration as a part of his 'save Growling from the masses' campaign but the story is more fun if we allege otherwise.

Last year Greg Middleton joined a surface day in the KD area and took the opportunity to play with his new Garmin GPS before taking it overseas. After the trip he emailed me the following map (Figure 1) and the accompanying text:

*I was just playing with my Garmin (trying to learn how to use it properly) when I discovered a new thing in Base Camp, called "Garmin Adventures". I thought I'd see what happened if I turned our 1 SEP walk into a "Garmin Adventure". It plotted the route onto a map. Nothing*

*strange about that, except what else was on the map! See the attached TIFF of the map it provided. I was amazed to see KD shown, and then I noticed a few others. I don't think KD is in the right place - since we went to it - but that's not the point. Where did my GPS get those cave locations? I sure as hell didn't put them in. Surely they didn't get transferred by Bluetooth from yours???? Wadda ya reckon?*

I had no idea how this cave location data had ended up in the hands of Garmin's map-making department but thought little more of it. Judging by the significantly erroneous position of many of the caves it was clearly not from a recent accurate GPS coordinate, perhaps just something gleaned from the internet by Garmin from an amateur caver who plotted caves on a map on their blog or something.

Recently Mark Euston and co visited the JF and because the usual access road was closed for bridge works I had to send them in via the other end of the Florentine Valley. As it was new to them I borrowed a wad of Bunty's hard copy 1:100 k maps to help with their navigation. They left them in the door of the hire car upon their departure and the maps haven't been seen since. I visited Service Tas to purchase replacement maps for Steve and, being a map