

It was one of the last nice days of Fall, the beginning of November, and 9 cavers were spilling out of their cars into Fletcher Jones's front yard. It was the largest group of cavers we had put together for a Rock... uh.. Jackson county caving trip in a long time. We knew we had one going cave – Blue Eyes. And, not to be forgotten, two weeks ago Fletcher had walked Tammy and I over to another pit that he had remembered from his hunting days.

Pam, Me, Tammy, Tim Williams, Eric Weaver, Matt Keller, Pete “Almost Good as New” Stow, Bob Yuellig, and Chris Bauer milled around trying to decide where we wanted to go. Everyone wanted to go on somebody else's trip. When we finally sorted it out, Tammy, Pete, Matt, and Chris were headed into Blue Eyes, and Pam, Bob, Tim, Eric, and I were headed out to look at new stuff.

We split up, heading uphill across the ridge, while the other group headed downhill. We waved to each other thinking “wish I was on their trip”

We soon got to the new pit that Fletcher had shown Tammy and I two weeks before.. Once again, without any hesitation, he had walked us right to an entrance. This was a similar tight pit to the Blue Eyes entrance that we originally estimated at 40 feet. Bob rigged it and I popped down. As soon as I got lower I knew this wasn't going to be the exciting find that Blue Eyes was. The pit was warm and dry – no air at all. I got off the rope and suckered...uh...invited Bob to come down as well.

The entrance room was a small pit with an unenterable crevice going off into the hillside, and a small passage headed towards the valley. Bob and I quickly scoped (scooped) it out – just a few feet to a breakdown plug in the floor, with a small passage.

We dropped a tape and found out the pit was only 27 feet deep. I guess we are going back to the ISSUs – International Standard Streba Units, which are anywhere from 3 to .5 feet per ISSU. They were named after Jeff Streba who couldn't estimate pit depth if he fell down it. Our excuse was Tammy and I couldn't see the bottom.

Tim came down right after Bob. Poor sucker, he came all the way from England, for all that glorious Kentucky caving he heard about and the best we could do was a blind 27 foot pit that was pretty much already filled up with Bob and I. We stretched the tape, and I sketched the pit quickly.

When we were done there, we headed off to Bobs Little Pit. This was a Pit Complex that Bob had found on a ridgewalk last winter (see the story I wrote – can't remember the title – had something to do with old fuckers going ridgewalking). He, Tammy and I checked it a few weeks later and found a fair amount of passage, but nothing going. Bob wanted to survey it for a map.

After screwing around in the woods following a malicious GPS, we found it. While rigging and deciding to split into two survey teams, we found we had 3 sets of instruments, but only one tape. Eric said no problem, as he had his Disto with him.

Pam and I went down the pit which we had estimated at 70 feet. Guess it really was 70 ISSUs as it taped at 53 feet. We started the survey at the drop

Bob, Eric, and Bob came down behind us and leapfrogged out 10 stations. I heard a lot of conversation. Eric had left the disto on the surface. I was in favor of cutting the one tape we had in half (it was Bobs tape after all) but for some reason Bob didn't much like that idea. We made Eric climb the pit to get the disto while we made fun of him. After he came back down and scrounged batteries that group was ready to go

The difference between the two pits is immediate. This one was wet, cool and moving air. We get chilled as we surveyed. We saw quite a few bats perching high in crevices and decided once we were done with the survey we wouldn't need to come back in winter. We quickly mopped up all the leads and headed out

Once on the survey we headed back down into the walk-in entrance (that connects to the pit only through a high window). Pam and Tim stayed on the surface discussing Politics, while Bob, Eric and I tried to get each other to jump down the pit we had previously rigged. No dice. We sat on the top and sketched from there.

We pulled the ropes and headed back to the cars. Walking back that way we passed close to the entrance to Blue Eyes. I whistled, and sure enough the other group was coming out. They were muddy torn and bitchy. We were tired but happy, having spent most the day outside in the good weather. I think we won that one.....

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