

Diving in Steinugleflåget, Norway, 16-20.8.2010.

We have been cave diving and dry caving in Norway, but combining these we have seen quite insane. Norwegians seems to do it all the time so we decided have that experience too. Steinugleflåget seems nice place as it is close to Plura camp. Starting on the very same day we got the acceptance was not too well planned. Telling friends... getting Mikko, Jarno, Antti and Pasi to help carry some gear all the way down. Morten and Audun took some gear out while visiting us after the second dive. Most of the time we struggled just two of us together... thinking just one meter forward as the big picture seemed to be too big.

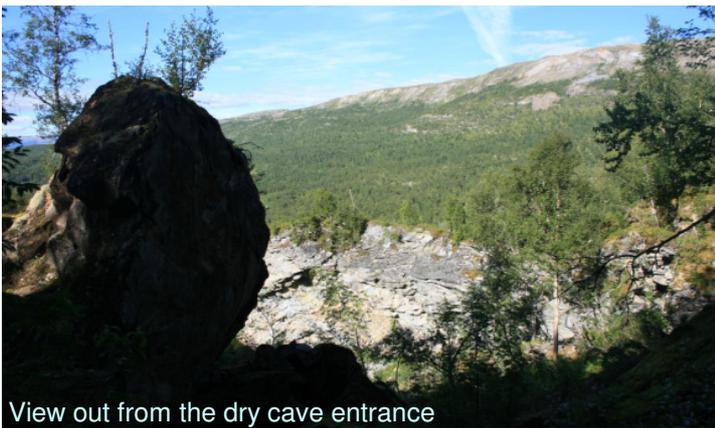
Taking gear to Steinugleflåget takes some time. Not long but steep slopes reach the opening to the dry cave and then 100m lower is the diving place. Tight first 30 meters and then over big stones in a huge hall. Might be possible to build up a rope line for gear. Good rope helps and secures climbing in the steepest section. A chain of sherpas would be an efficient way to move gear in many places. Took two days to get gear down and two days to get them out. Two rebreathers, 5 bailout stages and all personal equipment for two divers. Diving on day 2 and 3. Carrying on days 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Day 4 was painful as the muscles were in fire.

Close the water the system levels and there is sand on the rocks everywhere... also in the sealing. First pool is biggest and some lines starts from there. Next one is small but it is possible to enter two directions between rocks with small gear. No idea if it ends within 10m or not. Water close the end of the dry tunnel seems shallow with no tunnels. We are no experts in caving or climbing but loose stones and scares of dropping stones in them is scary. We did not feel safe above water. When diving one does not need to touch so many stones that might fall down. Perhaps team of two is too small in dry caving.

We dived most big areas accessible from the first place. Old and new lines goes more or less parallel. Tunnel starting to the left has first sandy bottom and turns right to rocky area, it ends to wide angled space going down to 70m depth. Keeping left makes longer turn right via big chamber. Other areas were mostly above 20m depth. Tunnel to the right is quite straight and gets smaller and shallower at the end. On the left side of the right tunnel there is parallel tunnel without line going around 100m and getting low but wide then. On the sides of tunnels there are some side tunnels but we did not notice any more big routes. Would take some time to check all the corners. Old lines were in many places 20cm inside the sandy floor. No use following those as some silt gets up with the line if taken up.

Big size of most areas was surprising after struggling in dry cave to get gear down there. Some areas had soft fine sandy bottom but lots of rocky places also. Scallops in many areas.

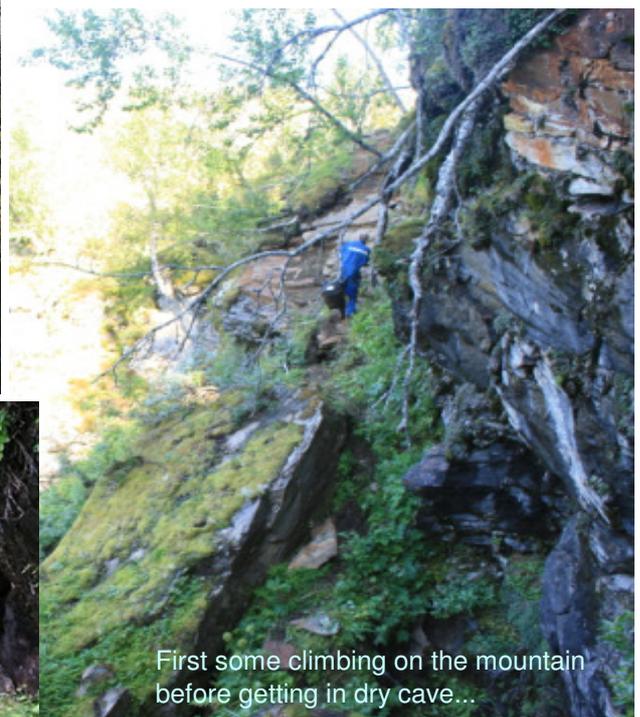
Diving was easy... getting gear on avoiding silting took some time. Lots of sand, tends to make gear sandy. Some creatures crawling in the sand... we left rebreathers tightly closed overnight. Air temperature inside the mountain was +3°C. Water was warm, +6°C.



View out from the dry cave entrance



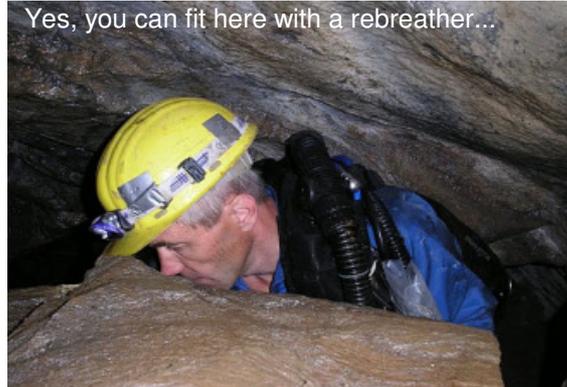
Dry cave starts here



First some climbing on the mountain before getting in dry cave...



We taped plastic around some items to avoid getting sand everywhere.



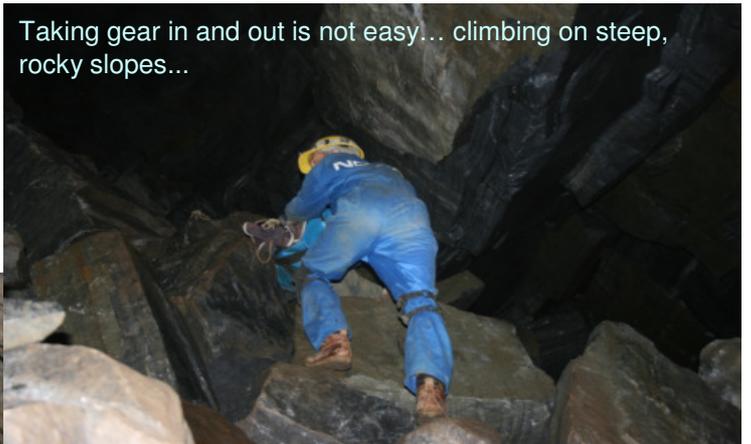
Yes, you can fit here with a rebreather...



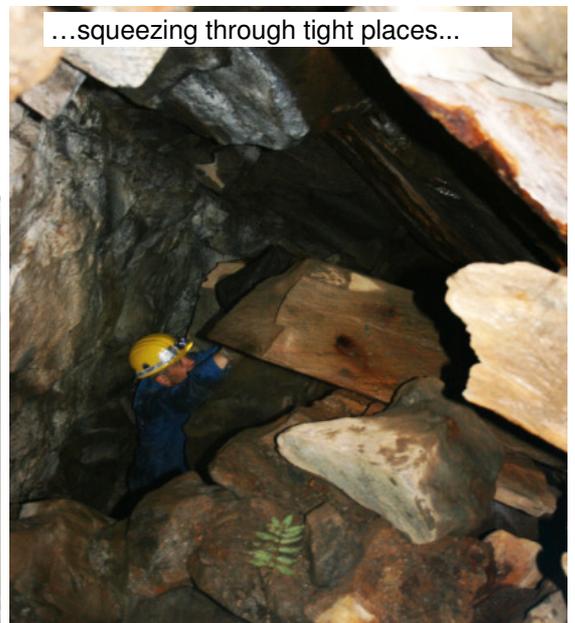
Good climbing rope was a big help (thanks Markus).



We also used ropes to lift the cargo



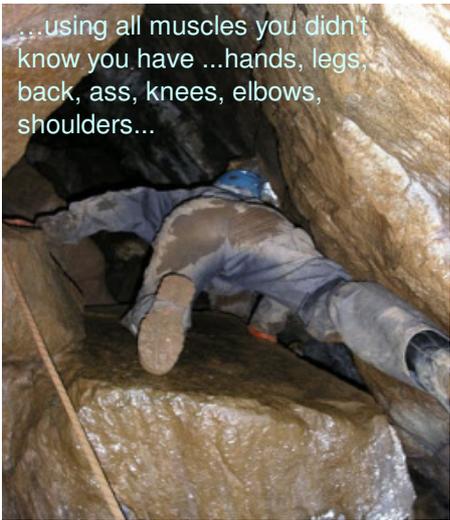
Taking gear in and out is not easy... climbing on steep, rocky slopes...



...squeezing through tight places...



...crawling in small places.....



...using all muscles you didn't know you have ...hands, legs, back, ass, knees, elbows, shoulders...



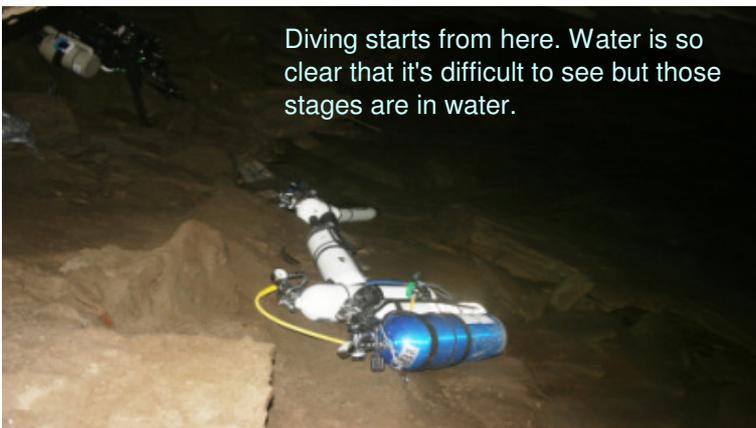
At the camp by the water inside a mountain



Second pool



Better to close everything, don't want those small creatures crawling inside rebreather lungs.



Diving starts from here. Water is so clear that it's difficult to see but those stages are in water.



Sherpas (Mikko, Jarno, Antti and Pasi)



Our camp in Plura

After hard day it's nice to relax and wash the dirt away in tent-Sauna!

Sauna is also the place to have most important discussions during cave diver's meeting in Plura on week 33.

- Jukka & Taija -

- it is easier to move around in a cave, when there is water in it -

Steinugleflåget.

Entrance of the dry cave is at the side of a huge collapse.

