

Heptonstall Climbing Meet, September 2013

Mike, Dave, Tony and myself attended, with Dave's brother Pete meeting us there, as he is a local.

With only 2 routes featuring in my 100 Best tick list, Fairy Steps HS and Bull's Crack HVS, it meant there would be plenty of time to explore the other delights of Heptonstall. Unfortunately Fairy Steps was occupied when we arrived so my warm up route was the excellent Bulls' Crack HVS 5a, with Dave following, while Tony and Mike did the rather pumpy looking Curving Crack VS.

Dave and I then did the excellent Fairy Steps HS, with Tony and Mike coming up after.

With the 100 best routes done the fun was to begin. There are no easy rides here, this place really takes no prisoners, it's like Millstone on steroids! While Dave belayed Pete on his top rope practise of A Step into the Light Green E6 6b, I decided that The Thin Red Line E2 5b was next, I had just enough energy when I came down from that, to follow Tony and Mike on the much under rated Main Line VS.

Encouraged by climbing smoothly on practise, Pete decided the time was right to tick his first E6, which was done in good order - well done.

Tony and Mike then did the corner of Fairy Steps Direct VS while I looked for excuses why not to do Fork Lightning Crack E3 5c. Tony kindly mentioned the fact that I wasn't getting any younger and Pete handed me the vital no. 5 cam. Out of excuses and shamed into action, it was time to go. Unfortunately I did take a fall, but after recovering it was done in reasonable order with all the style a slab climber could muster!

All in all a very satisfying day, with some great routes done, I should think there are some aching bodies this morning, I for feel as if my forearms have been beaten with a meat tenderiser.

The grit season has arrived, Kinder awaits, come on it will soon be winter (but that's another story)!

Jon Shields



