

Norsk Grotteblad nr 1, 1977

Råggejavre-raige

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is situated at UTM coordinates WR 529 305 on sheet 2230 IV, at altitudes of 630 and 115 m. Total length is approx. 1,6 km and depth 575 m. It lies on the south side of Hellemofjorden where the fjord bends eastwards just inside Musken. Råggejavre, a lake in the north slopes of Muskenfjellet, has an underground outlet, and the stream is finally joined in RJR which has the main upper entrance in a small Valley below the lake. At the fjord, this stream has a submarine resurgence.

It is possible to go as far as Hellandsberg by car, taking off from the E6 towards Drag midway between Bodø, and Narvik towns, Nordland. The local ferry goes 5 days a week from Hellandsberg to Musken, where boat transport can be arranged to Seglneset. Although the ascent to the cave is very steep, this is the easiest means of access.

The section on p. 11 should give an impression of the system. RJR is the deepest cave in northern Europe, and the second deepest through trip in the world. The lower entrance is very difficult to locate, being at a shelf in a vertical cliff above the fjord.

History

The work by Steinar Foslie, a geologist who surveyed the area in late 50es, mentioning underground streams with tremendous drops from sink to sea, was quoted by the French professor Jean Corbel in his "les Karsts", and later read by David Heap of the KCC, who went there with a school-boy party in 1968, accompanied by Ulv. They were halted 40 m down Storstupet (The Big Pitch) due to lack of tackle, after Ulv had found the traverse which is now the standard way down.

Next year a 12 man strong KCC party was back, and Storstupet was bottomed at 138 m by James Wilcock and Geoff Yeadon, with Edward Ackland on the winch. RJR was then explored and surveyed to its known extent.

No one has done the through trip again before us, but the Craven PG visited the Valley in -71 to complete the exploration and survey of Bumperholet, and Orpheus CC went down as far as Storstupet in -75.

- Some British students, probably unexperienced cavers, made a descent of the entrance series in June -76, resulting in a fall that alarmed the people in Musken for a few hours. This clearly shows how serious the task of exploring RJR should be taken.