

To ulykker i Brattligrotta

Two accidents in Brattligrotta.

Brattligrotta is situated in Burfjell at about 800 m. a.s.l. A large part of the cave was mapped in 1986 by French caves who named it "The Rolling Stones Cave" due to plenty of loose stones and small blocks. The French stopped at a shaft (P5) leading upwards in the direction of Edvardheimgrotta. They also stopped on top of a pitch (P10) in another part of the cave. On August 17, 2003, 12 cavers (6 from Norway, 4 from Poland and 2 from England) wanted to explore these parts of the cave. Two teams were formed. Seven were to look at P5, while five were to rig P10.

Team 1 entered the cave at 15:00 hours. After 160 m a climbing pitch of 5 m (R5) must be passed. The team considered searching for a way around. Ewa wanted to look at the cliff once more. She stopped onto a heap of sand which gave way, and she landed at the bottom 5 m below. She was struck unconscious and did not reply to shouts from the cavers. One of the cavers was immediately sent out to alert the police and through them The Joint Rescue Coordination Centre - North Norway (HRS) and the National Cave Rescue Service (NGRT) in Bodø. Within a couple of minutes a team member found a way around the pitch and joined Ewa. She regained consciousness, but did not remember what had happened. She suffered pain in back and hip, but apparently no fracture. Pulse and pupils appeared normal. She could exit from the cave, accompanied by team members, but message was sent that she would need helicopter transport to hospital. Ewa came out of the cave at 16:10.

At 16:15 two cavers from Team 2 entered the cave to inform two polish cavers about the fall and that further exploration was cancelled. They were led to a pitch which turned out to be P10 (later measured to be 8 m). Marcel was at the bottom. He reported that he had fallen the whole way when a part of rock used for support had loosened. He reported a probably fracture in the right arm and pain in the pelvis and lower back. He could not sit. He was able to walk, with pain, and to use his left foot. He thought he might be able to come out of the cave without a litter, if helped.

A two-part strategy was decided upon:

- 1) Immediate alert of HRS, trying to get 6-8 cavers with equipment from NGRT and hopefully a doctor who could give pain relief.
- 2) Start of a classic cave rescue operation based on available personnel and equipment. The intention was to get Marcel so far up in the cave as possible until the Bodø resources arrived.

A lifting operation up the pitch was successful. Marcel was able to walk from the top of the pitch to the "waiting room" 5 m beyond the pitch. He arrived there at 20:31.

An air ambulance arrived from Brønnøysund at 17:29. After bringing Ewa to hospital it returned from Mo with people and equipment. The Sea King rescue helicopter arrived at 20:00 with a doctor who proceeded to the "waiting room" and gave Marcel intravenous pain relief. Marcel was motivated to go on without a litter. In the course of 1.5-2 hours he was assisted from the "waiting room" to the cave exit with considerable difficulty. Exhausted, he arrived at the exit at 23:00. The Sea King took off at 24:00.