

# ALL ABOUT SRT

## References (Books and DVDs available from the KUCC library)

- 1) "The Complete Caving Manual" Andy Sparrow, Crowood Press, May 1997, ISBN 1-86126-022-9
- 2) "Alpine Caving Techniques, A Complete Guide to Safe and Efficient Caving" Georges Marbach and Bernard Tourte, Speleo Projects, 2002, ISBN 3-908495-10-5]
- 3) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Single\\_Rope\\_Technique](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Single_Rope_Technique)
- 4) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knot>
- 5) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_knots](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_knots)

## Legal Disclaimer

*Caving is dangerous and involves the risk of serious injury or death. A commitment to safe caving practices, a thorough understanding of the equipment is used, and mastery of the techniques involved can greatly reduce, but will never eliminate, the risks inherent in the sport. It is the caver's responsibility to understand these risks and obtain qualified instruction from experienced cavers before entering the cave. As the editor of this SRT guideline I accept no responsibility for damage or injury resulting from use of the techniques or equipment described in 'All About SRT'.*

## Description/point/why learn?

The single rope technique (SRT) is a set of methods used to descend and ascend vertical ropes. SRT is used in caving, potholing, rock climbing, rope rescue, roped access for building maintenance and by arborists for tree climbing. The term was coined by Bruce Bedford as editor of Descent Magazine<sup>3</sup>.

## SRT Kit

- ✓ KUCC currently owns 10 SRT kits (each worth £170 new). With all the bits of kit flying around during training sessions it is a nightmare to keep all the bits in the right bag. Please remember to put it back in the correct bag. The reason for this is because personal protection equipment (PPE) needs replacing every 5 years; that's the law. We know how old each kit is as it is logged in our kit inventory.

### *What are the bits called again?*

Footloop  
Self-locking descender (Petzl stop)  
Karabiner  
Breaking karabiner or snap gate  
Hand jammer  
Chest jammer (Croll)



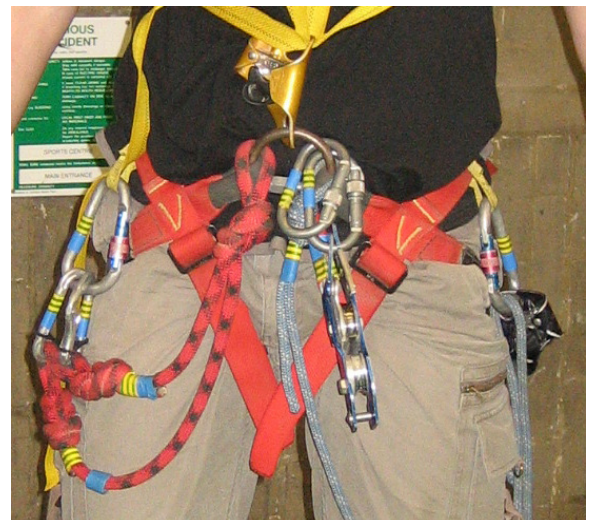
SRT kit bag  
Chest tape  
D-maillon  
Equipment karabiner  
Cowstails  
Petzl Harness

### *Putting a kit on: as modelled by Tom*



In some kind of order of putting it on...

1. Harness (size adjusted to fit on hip bones) and D-maillon
2. Cowstails (either right or left hand side – personal preference and comes with practice)
3. Footloop on opposite side to cowstails
4. Chest jammer (the golden one, the right way in)
5. Screw up the maillon turn it round
6. Chest tape (depending in the kit bag it is yellow, black or green)
7. Clip your descender in using the karabiner and the breaking karabiner (or snap gate karabiner) to the right of the descender.
8. Clip the cowstails into the yellow loop of the harness
9. Using the equipment karabiner, clip in the footloop and jammer (purple)



### !!! What to watch out for !!!

**1** Flap on back of harness – If it's not in, it could come undone if the stitching rips.



**2** Doubling back on leg loops – very important, just like you would wearing a caving belt.



**3** Screwing up karabiners and maillons – oh yes, I've seen someone SRT with the D-maillon open!!

**4** Close chest and hand jammers – whilst caving they could break and then how do you get up??



**5** Have you got all the bits you need? Yep, someone tried going caving without a hand jammer once. Imagine being at the bottom of a pitch with no hand jammer...

### IMPORTANT: Footloop and cowstails, the correct lengths for me!

Having your own kit is great for many reasons. It fits! But if it's dirty after a weekend's caving, then you have to clean your own. If you don't it will rust in the bag, trust me, mine has. To clean it's best to use a bucket or bath with warm water and a brush. Let it air dry and then coat all the metal work with 3 in 1 oil from B&Q.



**Footloop** – the loop length is important because if it's too short, you won't be going up a 40m pitch very quickly. If it's too long you will struggle immensely when changing from your jammers to your descender mid-rope.

**Cowstails** – As long as you can reach them when you are hanging on them, I personally don't think they're a problem. I made my 2<sup>nd</sup> pair longer so I can reach further when I'm rigging.



## Taking an SRT kit off

Well it's common sense and it makes it easier for the next person so why not do this every time. When you own your own, no one will care...

Finding a kit packed in a bag like this isn't good

- Undo the leg loops of the harness
- Close the jammers
- Take specific care to screw up the D-maillon

(very important because the metal bends and if left open, eventually they won't do up anymore)



## Bits and pieces...

KUCC kit metal work and ropes are labelled with red and yellow electrical tape. Other colours refer to the SRT kit bag the kit may belong in, i.e. brown in the case below.



?? Which one is correct ??



## Modifications to personal kits:

Notice my footloop?  
It's long, so I can use it as a 3<sup>rd</sup> cowstail (useful when rigging)

The rope between my jammer and D-maillon is different too. It's dynamic rope, whereas the loop is static – see 'ropes' section to understand the difference.



Elliott has a different harness and different hand jammer (some KUCC SRT kits have those too).

He also has his breaking karabiner in a different place.

Also, can you spot what has gone wrong with his D-maillon? Not so good.

# Rigging guides (also known as topo guides)

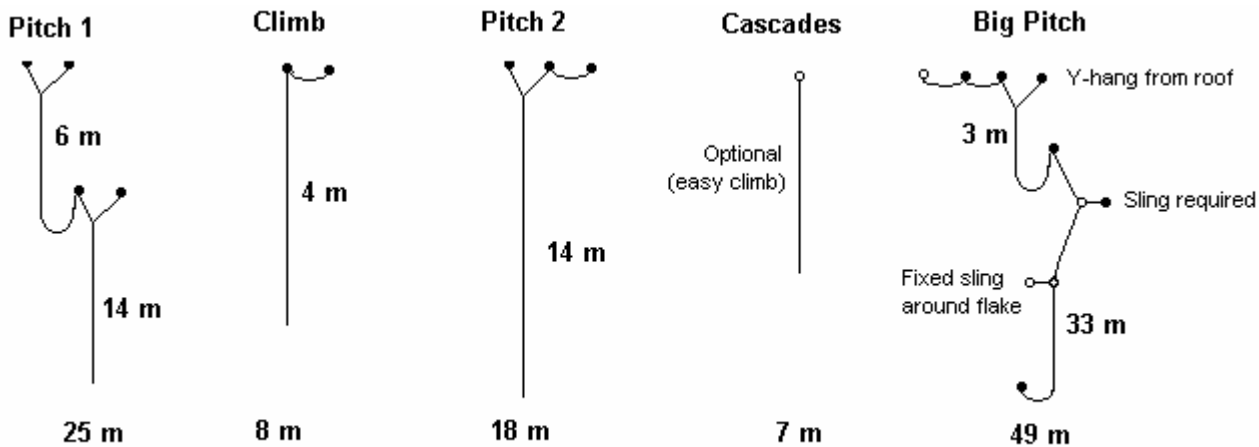
## KUCC library

(All guides took some time and effort to locate, are therefore precious. Please treat them with love & care.)

- 1) CNCC Northern Rigging Guides 1, 2 and 3
- 2) "SRT Rigging Guide" Dave Elliot and Dick Lawson
- 3) "Northern Caves, Volume 1, Wharfedale & the North-East" D. Brook *et al*, 1988
- 4) "Northern Caves, Volume 2, The Three Peaks" A. Brook *et al*, 1991
- 5) "Northern Caves, Volume 3, The Three Counties System and North West" D. Brook *et al*, 1994
- 6) "Caves of the Peak District" Dave Gill *et al*, 1991
- 7) CCPC Derbyshire Peak District Rigging Guide

## Examples of common rigging tops of the same cave entrance of Gaping Gill, Ingleborough, Yorkshire Dales

### FLOOD ENTRANCE *via* WADES



Note: All pitches are amply equipped with permanent hangers

Figure 1: <http://www.braemoor.co.uk/cavingtrip/directory.shtml>

### Things to note

Both guides are similar in that they show:

the pitch lengths

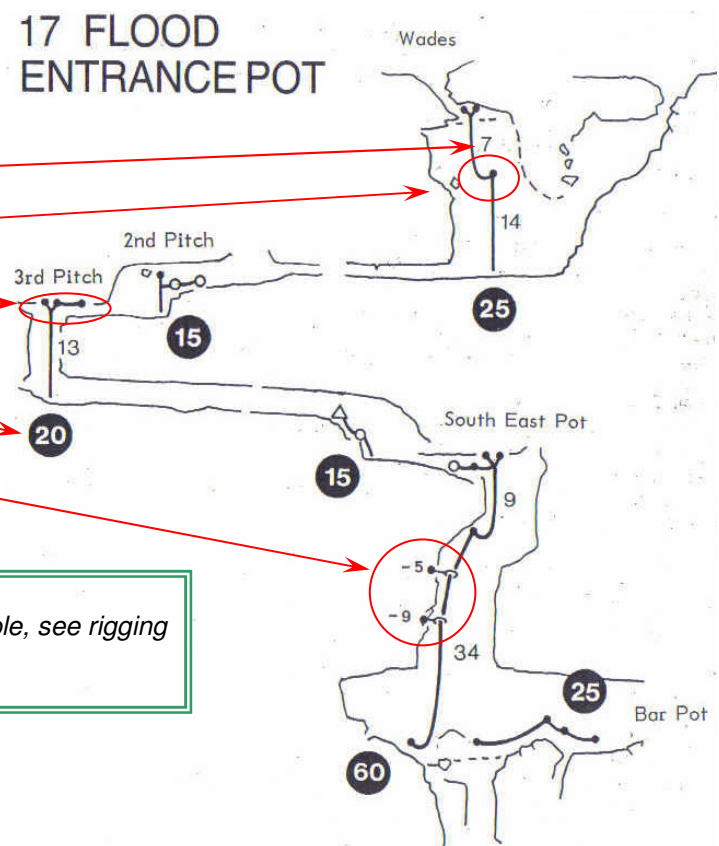
re-belays

numbers of anchor points

total rope length

deviations

### 17 FLOOD ENTRANCE POT



✓ It is also advised to read descriptions where available, see rigging guides or internet for more information.

Figure 2: SRT rigging guide by Dave Elliot and Dick Lawson