

Extension to Cullaun One

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INTRODUCTION

Cullaun one is of a series of caves draining the Western side of Poulacapple, a shale outlier to the North West of Lisdoonvarna in Co. Clare. The cave consists of a pleasant walking size streamway with a South West orientation. After almost 1km the passage diminishes to bedding crawls and short pitches. Between the 1st and 2nd pots an awkward crawl leads to a parallel streamway called 'Gaffers Gulch' which can be followed upstream for 500m and downstream for a short distance to a blockage which was the previous limit of exploration.

DESCRIPTION OF EXTENSION

The choke was passed after 10 minutes work in February 1986 into a floor level bedding plane on a major chert horizon. This quickly enlarges to a walking size streamway unfortunately partially filled with breakdown debris forcing progress mostly by crawling over or under the boulders. A side inlet on the left leads back to Gaffers Gulch close to the breakthrough point.

After 150m the passage becomes blocked by boulders but several obvious holes in the floor drop into a low streamway between 2 chert horizons 1m apart. After

25 metres this re-emerges into a larger passage, with some good formations, but quickly degenerates again into a wide bedding place. This appears to end in a mud choke but the way on is up through a slot in the roof into another bedding place. This develops into walking sized canyon before ending at another mud choke. This is passed by a crawl on the left hand side into another large canyon passage which terminates in a boulder choke. This point seems to be close to the surface and probably corresponds with one of the surface depressions. It is hoped that a new entrance might be opened here making a good through trip and allowing easy access to the terminal choke for digging.

DISCUSSION

Gaffers Gulch carries only a small misfit stream and is thought to be an older route (possibly inter glacial) for the present streamway, although it is at a lower level than the present stream. The new extension is the downstream continuation of this passage and is heading directly towards Killany Rising but with still almost one kilometre to go.

