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Middlehope old mine (upper adit)

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Entrance not far from road, identified with a post sticking upright and two to three timbers bridging the stream emerging from the mine. Before I commence I would like to point out due to reading various articles about this mine we had decided to use gas testing equipment for both flammable and none flammable toxic gasses. Drop down into the tunnel into deep water aprox waist height, on the left hand side not far from entrance a birds nest (probably a duck of some sort) can be seen on a upper side passage.

Continue along straight passage for almost 300yds the water gradually becoming shallower as you progress until you reach an unstable looking cavernous area with the stream running along middle of it. (Gas test)

Continue along twisted passage with props and timbers resembling an assault coarse some laid down flat and some upright and a lot at various angles you have to clamber over or go under these obstacles, this goes on for some time until you reach what looks like a Y junction (but the passage to the right is very short) just ahead of this there is what looks like an old bread bin on a shelf on the left, the water so far is normal stream depth. From here the passage gets a bit easier but various sections with deeper water and various roof falls to clamber over you also pass a rail cross section stacked on the right and what looks like a short shaft on the right. Continue along until you come to 3 steel arches with a roof fall at the immediate end of arches. (Gas test)

This roof fall can be negotiated on the left or right hand side, keeping to the right you squeeze up it and part way up turn round on your back to make this move much easier to overcome. Continue along this pile of rocks and rubble for a short distance until you drop back down to the water passage. The water here is very deep (chest deep) but the passageway here looks more stable than previous this deep water goes on for about 80yds until you clamber out on another roof fall continue along for a short distance passing some car wheels and tyres then back down into the water. From here the deep water becomes more shallow and the rock changes for the better with really good solid rock, you pass a hopper on the left with a ladder attached to a platform above. With worked green fluorspar all around the stope, (Gas test) I would like to point out that here the flood level is up on the roof so in bad weather these passages completely fill. Continue for about 50yds until you come to a wider section with a short passage on the left. Here there is a pile of metal mining equipment packed like a rack on the left. The main passage angles to the right where there are two air receivers in the water. This area is a well worked green fluorspar vein stopping up on the right. There are hundreds of pneumatic pick marks. The air here is good and a smoke test shown a slight air flow.

Continuing over the stope or along the passageway you will come to a partially worked area with green fluorspar all around but to go on any further could bring you into an area of bad air so it is not advisable to continue from here inby (although a dig has been started)

The Fluorspar from this mine turns blue but unlike Rogerly does not ever return to the shinny green when in situe in the mine. After a few days there is a hint of green but that is all. It is worth noting that the vein in this part of Middlehope appears to be the Sedling vein going straight to Burtree Pasture mine, I do believe the passage is connected (but flooded)

Overall a very challenging trip very hard walking with underwater obstacles for most of the route the roof looks extremely unstable from the end of the straight entrance right up to the drop down into the deep water. I would describe it as the most dangerous mine I have ever been in. Even though I have
done this five times I never feel safe until I have reached the straight entrance passageway. Because of the dangers I would grade it as extreme.

I would like to point out that ventilation in a mine can change with the weather, barometric and atmospheric pressures and mine moisture content and temperature can all play their part so the readings I have done on this trip can vary. Previously the air at the end is normally bad so I think something must have opened up somewhere to create the better air flow. (Possibly a blocked air shaft has been partially unblocked with all the extreme rain we have all had)