

Malham for Beginners?

By Neil McGeachy

On the 16th and 17th May EICA:
Ratho coaches Neil McGeachy and
Neill Busby ran a trip to the sport
climbing Mecca of Malham Cove for
Scotland South British/Scottish
Junior Team members.

Photos by Martin Hopkins and
Sandy Carr

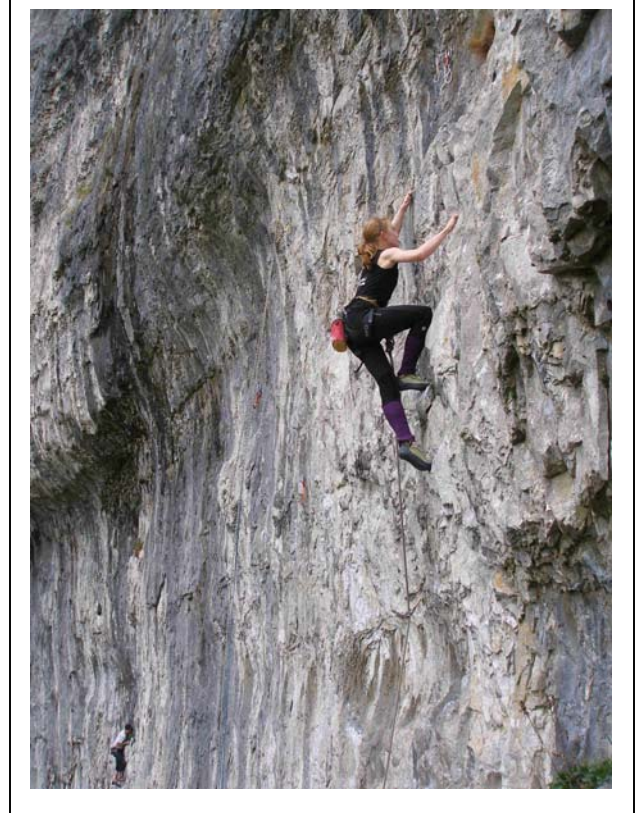


Photo right: Eleanor in action
Below: The popularity of Malham Cove
– Ross climbing in the foreground



For all of the kids, this was their first trip to a crag notorious for fiercely technical routes that are almost always hard for the grade!

Over the two days the young climbers were tested on the new challenges of climbing outdoors but soon started ticking of some of the classics the crag has to offer.

Rachel Carr made a highly impressive sport climbing debut, managing to on-sight *Begozzi and the Ledge Lizzards 6a+* as well as top roping a selection of 6c's and 7a's. Callum Forsyth also made an impressive start to his sport climbing career, by top roping a selection of classic routes from 7a – 7b.

Eleanor Hopkins was on fire as always making swift work of red-pointing *Frankenstein 7a+/7b*. Jonny Field carried on from a successful debut season to outdoor sport climbing last year, with numerous on-sights of 7a+'s & 7b's including *Yosemite Wall*, *7th Aardvark* and *Something Stupid*.

As a climber and coach, I was truly blown away by how easily the young climbers transferred their indoor climbing skills to real rock with such ease. Especially at a crag as technical as Malham Cove!

Despite the terrible weather and huge crowds at the crag, a fun and productive trip was had by all. If you have not been to Malham before, get your ass down there as it is without a doubt the best sport climbing crag in the UK! Plus it has the added advantage of staying dry in even the heaviest downpour!

