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the JUNEE

RESURGENCE

> THERE'S SNOW ON THE PEAKS ABOVE AND HAIL FALLING FROM THE SKY AS THE DIVERS DRAG GEAR INTO THE ENTRANCE OF THE FLOODING RESURGENCE. THE ICY WATER HAS RISEN OVERNIGHT AS A RESULT OF HEAVY RAINS AND THREATENS TO REPEL THE GROUP FROM THE ENTRANCE. THEY MAKE HEAVY WORK OF DRAGGING SCUBA CYLINDERS AND CAVING PACKS UP THE RAPIDS AND THE STEAM RISES OFF THEIR DRY SUITS IN THE FRIGID AIR. AND ALL THIS IN THE MIDDLE OF AN AUSTRALIAN SUMMER!



The group of cave divers from the Australian mainland have come to explore the Junee Resurgence near the Mt Field National Park in southern Tasmania. There's a saying in Tassie that goes "If you don't like the weather here, wait 10 minutes!" The group have certainly experienced all four seasons in a day. Tasmania has a rich and diverse natural beauty including World Heritage Areas, inaccessible mountain ranges and stunning rainforests. It also contains several important karst areas like Mole Creek to the north, and the Junee-Florentine Karst to the south. Within these can be found Australia's deepest vertical caves and multiple high flow resurging and siphoning stream-ways. Their names are nearly as beautiful as the sites themselves... Growling Swallett, Kubla Khan, Niggly Cave and Swallowing Gullet Sump hint at the raw nature of the caves. The difficult conditions and inaccessibility

of the sites have meant they are less thoroughly explored than many of the mainland caves. Tasmania has a great tradition of dry caving but only a minority of the locals have taken an interest in diving the sumps or resurgences that have been discovered. Attempts at the flooded sections of Mole Creek caves were not made until 1974, and it was quickly apparent that only the most hardy of explorers would make breakthroughs in the cold and dirty waters.

In 1973 a dye tracing study demonstrated a link between Growling Swallett (a siphon) and Junee Resurgence some nine kilometres away, giving rise to the theoretical concept of the Junee Master Cave System. This attracted divers like Peter Stace, Ron Allum and Phil Prust to try their hand but high flow, complex passage and low visibility led to only 120 metres of underwater passage being found. Then in the early 80s



Main: Cave diver Liz Rogers stands in awe of the spectacular formations found in "For Your Eyes Only".
Right: The streamway chamber in Junee contains thousands of beautiful speleothems... delicate translucent straws, pillars and flowstones of every shape and colour.

COLD WATER IN A HOT LAND