

OU Cave Club  
1984 Expedn  
Top Camp Log

Oxford  
University  
Cave Club

La Verdelluenga 1984  
Top Camp Log Book

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13<sup>th</sup> July - The setting up of  
Top Camp.

Fred, Phil, Ian, Ukey, Mike, Sean,  
Graham, Silvia, Nicola, John, Dave H,

Ian + Nicola left the mists of  
base camp a been 9 am,  
Phil + Fred at a loss been 10.15 and  
Graham Silvia Ukey Mike + Sean, Dave  
at an even loss been 1.30.

However Phil + Fred arrived at a  
glorious 2.15 whilst all the others  
struggled in at 6.30, Ian + Nicola had  
had taken a scenic tour of the  
picos + Dave + Ukey dragged such  
gorgeous nichads up the hill that  
they all but fell over with each  
step.

However the cave entrance is open,  
just, even though the snow is pretty  
high. Top camp now exists with  
a vengeance to, so onwards to the  
greater glory O.U.C.C. la Verde Lengua  
Expedition!

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14<sup>th</sup> July First Pushing Trip in  
Perdices

(a) Phil + Fred.

After having a road for a  
while at the entrance we made  
an uneventful descent to Stragey  
pitch where we caught up with Ian  
+ Nicola. Rigged easily down to the  
obelisk, which is now absolutely piss  
wet and the skated loading area for a  
natural rig (I had the only bolting  
kit). Fred got the fright of his  
life when the Obelisk collapsed with  
him being on it - he fell about  
five feet.

After this we decided no  
more could be done without bolts and  
so skated the ascent. At the base of  
the harby he made voice contact  
with Ian coming up to  
help about for about half an hour  
waiting for a bolt hit. However  
his rope was too short for him  
to reach us. Retired to the top.

~~Up~~ strays batten of strays way where we met up with Ia + Nicala, taking their tails down to the Hauler ~~was~~ where we rigged a ladder - to make it easier?!

### Route Description:-

Cross in over snow plug to top of 30' ladder pitch. At the bottom a descending passage forks - both of which lead to a reasonable sized choker (Right hand is easier). At one end of the choker (immediately under where the left fork enters + opposite the right fork), a ~~climb~~ climb through boulders leads down to a ~~climb~~ climb in two sections into a voiding of a rift. Opposite the snow plug is a short low squeeze into another 'choker' where we climb up in the widest part of the rift and then just below you is a section where it is necessary to be flat out. (Parrying tails bugs through this is recommended). Round the corner is to top of strays way pitch. This is very loose however!

To the right at the bottom is an

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impressive onion shaped passage with  
deep trench and the sand of water below.  
This is Achilles route. The main way  
on is to climb down from the  
bottom to the pitch to several  
joined boulders. Walk over these and  
reach a sharp corner is the next  
rift. Examination climb is a little further  
on (rigged with a rope but free climbable).

Doubling back on yourself at the  
bottom leads to the Howler - a tight  
squeeze at the top leads to a nice  
pitch down to a ledge. The water  
from Achilles enters here. The Traversing  
area along the trench leads to a fine  
but wet 36 m hang down to  
the wet Obelisk ledge (the Obelisk  
no longer exists - see above!!) Then - - - -

14th July

Ian and Nicola

Also the first Pushing trip!

The general idea of the trip was that Nicola and I (Ian) should push down Achilles (previously undescended) while Phil and Fred pushed down Obelisk (also undescended). This choice was the result of a coin toss at Aradars the previous night ....

Ginnet entrance was surprisingly full of snow and eventually required 2x 25' ladders and 15m of rope. (Our estimate of 5m for the pitch was obviously wrong - probably 10m without the snow.) After some faffing about we eventually got underground, at about midday. I couldn't remember the best way in, but we eventually made it to Stargeways after rather a long time for an obscure route. I rigged Stargeways on a 15m rope, and we just had time to get down before Phil + Fred overhauled us (They had 2 tacklebags each!)

We took the bolting kit for Achilles while Phil + Fred rigged the other route. Feeling daring, I freeclimbed the Achilles down a series of short (3m) wet drops to a larger unclimbable drop (10m). At this point

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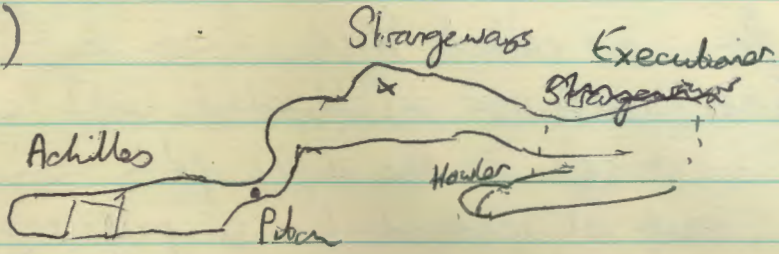
an obvious traverse led off along the rift. Following this I arrived at a large freehanging drop. There were no suitable belays at this point, so I returned to Nicola to rig the pitch from above through the rift.

We had to place 2 bolts, which was very tiring in the very hard rock. Fortunately I was also 'teaching' Nicola rigging ... so she put them in, bar a few mm.

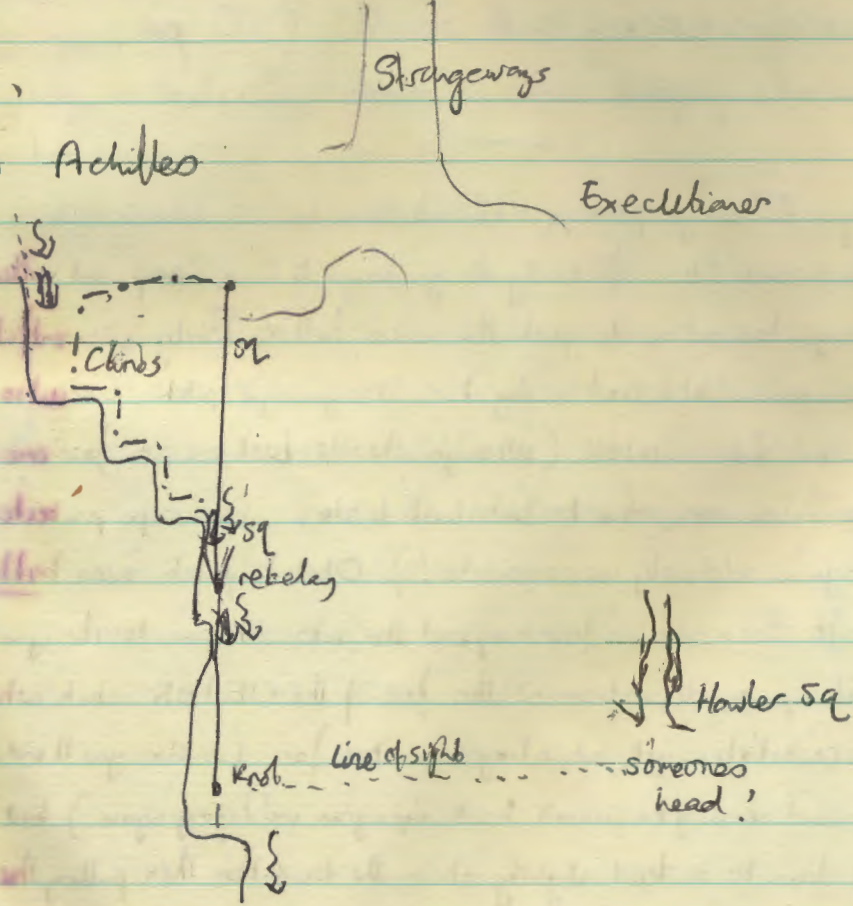
The pitch was higher than it appeared from above. I abseiled down to the traverse in the rift that I had climbed to before, continued down, rebelayed on 2 eyes, and reached ... the end of the rope (about 30 m down). A mid-air change knot pass, and I reached a web ledge, with a trickle of water running down ~~the~~ from the clints. At this point I made eye contact with Phil, who apparently was ~~on the other~~ at the top of the Hauler, below the squeeze.



# Plan (Grade 1)



# Elevation (Grade 1)



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As I'd called Nicola down to the rebelay,  
However <sup>1st</sup> # run out of rope, I <sup>30</sup> decided we'd exit. Nicola  
had a struggle in the tight pitch, so when she'd  
got out, I conned her to pull my bags up  
(I<sup>st</sup> detached) while I climbed out along my  
earlier route. We made an uneventful exit to  
a sunny evening at about 8.00 pm.

15<sup>th</sup> July: 2<sup>nd</sup> days pushing Ian and Nicola.

Fred and Phil left early to go down to Base Camp and collect gear and  
food leaving Ian and me to push the cave further. Fairly uneventful descent  
via same route as Phil + Fred on day 1: - Strageways pitch, Executioner,  
Howler and then Obelisk. (Although Howler took me a fair amount of  
time to manoeuvre due to technical hitches ----- rope protectors were  
at that stage a relatively new encounter!) Obelisk pitch was brilliant -  
superb shaft 36 m down free hang and then into unknown territory -----  
Ian rigged up a deviation at the foot of the Obelisk which when going  
down necessitates not abseiling down too far (or else you'll end up  
falling around having to prusik back up again and trying again) but rather  
abseiling down to a level slightly above the deviation then pulling the rope  
up through the Krab until the knot catches and so enabling the cave to  
pull him/herself across to the deviation which otherwise is unreachable. Then  
it's relatively easy to pass the deviation and abseil straight down Asterix

pitch ... about 15 m of fairly wet cold descent to the next level from where stons can be thrown down the next pitch for 4 seconds. Here I can put a bolt to the far ledge and a thread ready for the next lucky lot to go whizzing down what promises to be a superb shaft. The only rope long enough (pitch estimated at 80 m deep - only rough guess though) to go down was a v. stretchy lightweight one though so after rigging for the next pushes we made our way back (well, I made my way back slightly earlier due to slow prussing speed but ...!) Got out without much hassle but a fair amount of swearing on that ... Howler squeeze emerging after  $\approx 7/8$  hrs in glorious sunshine.

Next pushes should have a brilliant time ... !

16th July Sean, Phil + Mike surveying.

This was Sean + Mike's first trip in Spain and Sean's first underground S.R.T. We surveyed from the entrance to the top of Strangersways, setting up 30 survey stations on the way. Bits of the trip were slow and messy - it didn't help that the dino and compass kept steering up.

From Strangersways we went as tourists as far as the top of the Howler. Phil ~~exp~~ investigated up the streamway from Achilles. This goes up in a series of spiky cliffs at least as far as the level of the top of Strangersways. It ended in a dome

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boulder chocke at stre level and  
dripping arens above

What else happened? The <sup>only</sup> pencil fell down a  
climb threatening the remainder at the surprising  
but was recovered.

It was an 8 1/2 hour trip and good to be underground.

17th July Phil and Sean pushing.

We set off about half twelve as Ian and Fred came  
up from base. We left them to survey with Mike,  
and zoomed off in eager anticipation of coasting  
down Ian and Nicold's 80m pit. We arrived at the  
top of this without mishap despite (surprisingly!)  
no major cock-ups on my (Sean's) technical  
bypasses on the way down.

at the top of the pitch Phil and I managed  
to rig a huge thread by Phil feeding the new  
wire to me, and I was wedged in a tight  
muddy crack to get it.

Then the descent: Phil rushed down shouting  
inaudible exclamations. I followed with a couple of  
fackle bags. The pitch goes on forever! Beautiful  
smooth fluted walls, opening out on the way down  
to a large flat chamber. The rope was almost