

(7)

deduced that more safety  
was essential hence I went on.

By the way all this time  
I was scared absolutely  
shitless.

I am proscribed up blue.  
changed over to an SRT  
rope and set up rigging  
gear, SRT rope and a  
mole wrench. I couldn't get  
me another at the dinner  
bar. I rigged a couple of  
naturals on blue, and set  
it over the overhang. I  
made it out, a steep  
bouldery slope with a ledge  
at the top.

I tried to walk up, but  
couldn't pull blue through,  
as there was too much friction.  
I was desperately trying  
to reach safety and held  
back by the blue rope.

In the end I clipped blue  
into my footloop shock cord,  
and then my shock cord  
into my long cowhail. And  
~~in the~~ I managed to reach  
the ledge. I rigged the  
top with a few chocks and  
an SRT rope and ahead

down, bringing the climbing ropes down with me

That was the most frightening thing I have ever done. I suppose I'll have to come back and finish it off, as nobody else will.

Fri 2/8/85

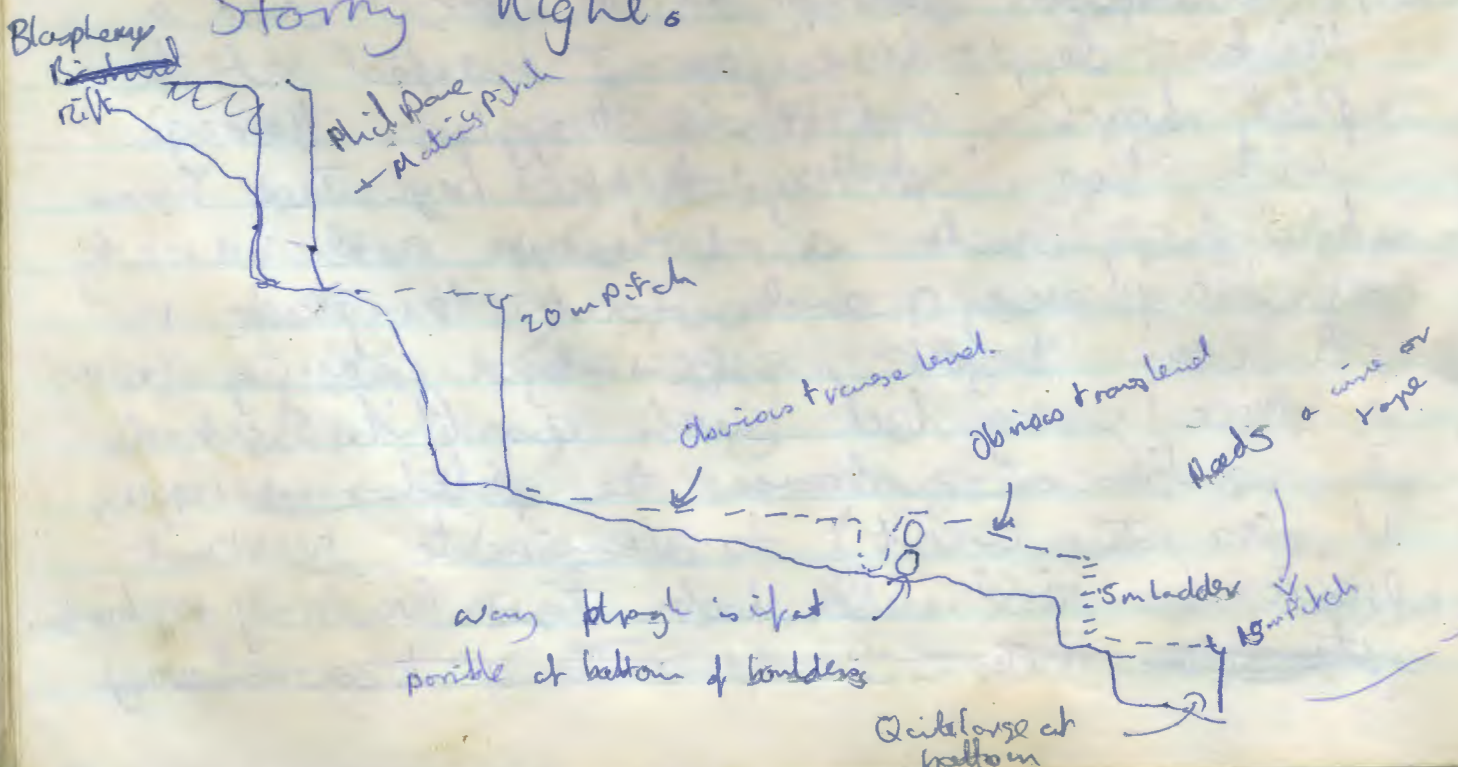
MEANWHILE - BACK AT THE RANCH - - - -

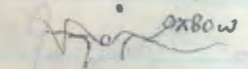
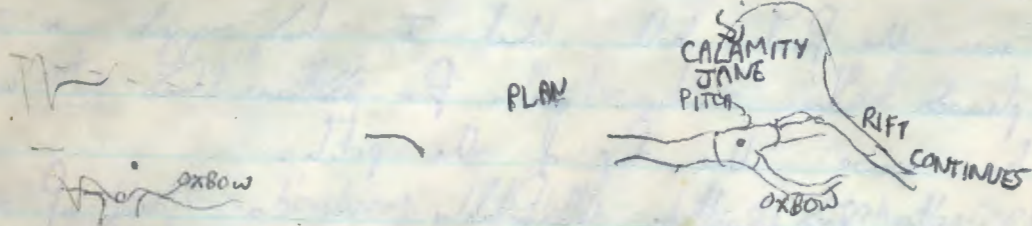
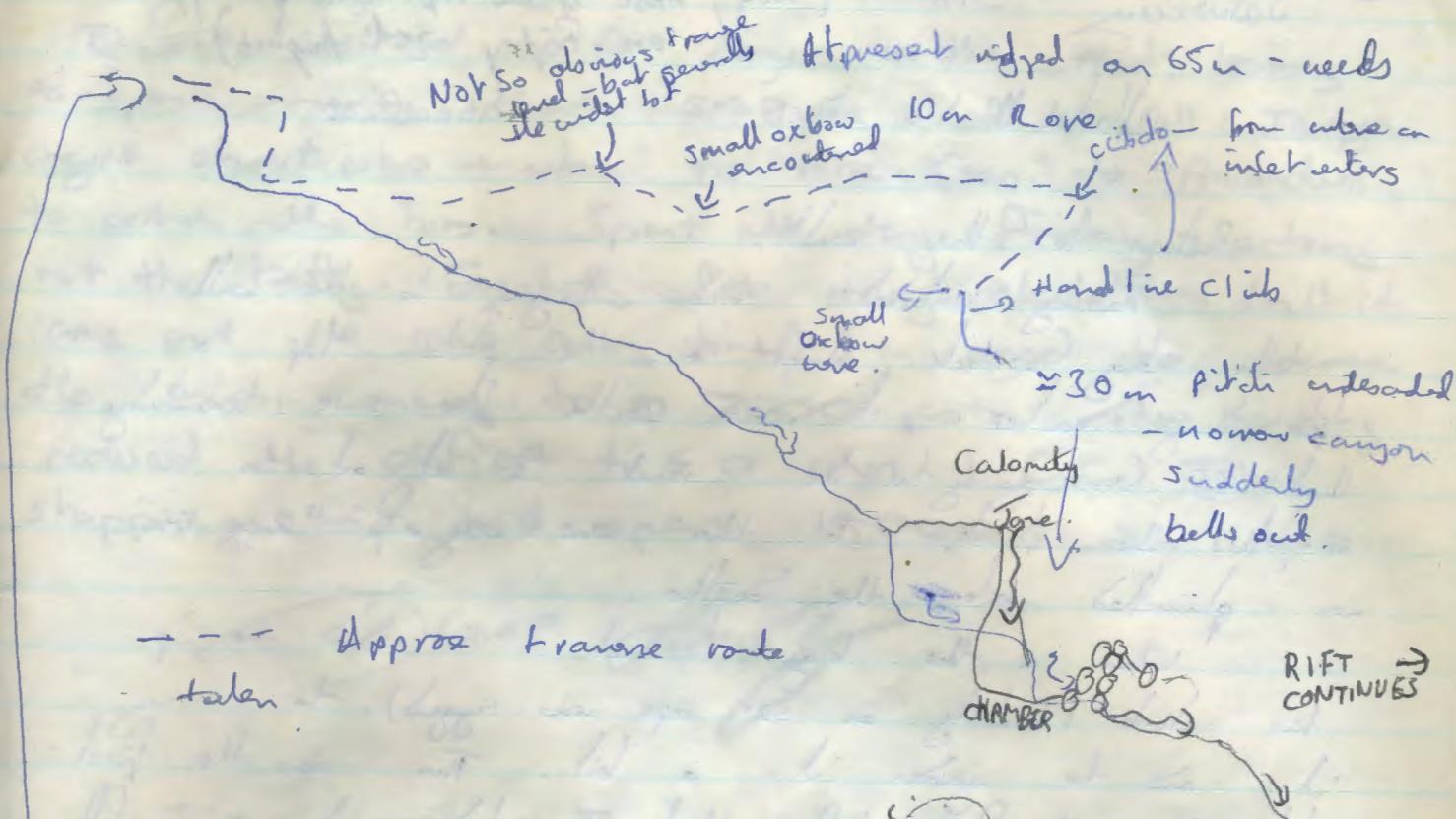
F20.

Phil Rose Phil Duncan.

The enthusiastic duo soon reached the rift which Mc(P.O) Store and Martin had pushed previously. I had been through it a couple of times before, but it was Phil's first attempt and the air turned a thick deep blue as I waited at the pitch head and Phil struggled through with his "sporting" tackle bag. I've never heard such a volume and variety of blasphemy and foul language in a cave before, especially coming from a nice young lad such as Phil. Shocked, I continued down the pitch, re rigging it as I went, to eliminate the knot previously tied. Reached the limit of exploration ~~after a from ten on, a long chassy~~

Rigged the next pitch which took us down to the stream and a classy rift with a reasonable passable high level to a ladder pitch in a Cascade pool. More rift, getting more advanced and finally ending up at a pitch head ( $\approx 20m$ ) which drops into another rift. Sloping down to back to the stream. Free climbable cascade and the stream disappears into <sup>yet</sup> another rift, this time more like Phil's blasphemy rift, no class, clean limestone but of a bastard with a tackle bag. We pushed a route along the obvious passable level then headed down towards the roaring of a distant cascade. Rigged a haul line as it widened out and decided to terminate our exploration at the head of a promising pitch. Ate, came out, great trip, clear stormy night.





75

Saturday

35

(Well, most of the trip actually happened on Friday 2nd August)

Mark II

FRED

RIDGE CAVE

Return to the wall.

Having watched Fred clinging to the wall in the big crunch whilst on the photo trip a few days earlier, I was with the sure knowledge that I was going to do that I set out to complete the climb. To the way of "Rope Free" we plummeted into the depths.

When in the big crunch Fred ordered me up his climb (luckily an SRT rope was rigged) to tie it and to gear it a bit. This was the first pitch, even the first bolt, that I had rigged so I felt quite pleased when only a few additions had to be made to secure the top of the pitch.

Then with Fred sitting comfortably on a bag of rope he set me off into the unknown wire guided with a red and a blue rope. Much to my relief I found a way up through some boulders after a traverse and popped out onto a large flat area of boulders, and to there was a pitch down the other side. We rigged a traverse line over and then rigged the new pitch but soon ran out of rope. The pitch consisted of a 4 hang down to a relay or a bolt at 10m then down to the end of the rope 30m beyond this. The shaft (maybe blocked off if it) appears to head off away from the big crunch. What a sight of Fred hanging in the air half way between exultation and frustration wondering if his epic climb will truly pay its way.

30/7/85 : F16 properly painted and redescended : still no way on around the snow Paul

Sunday Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug.

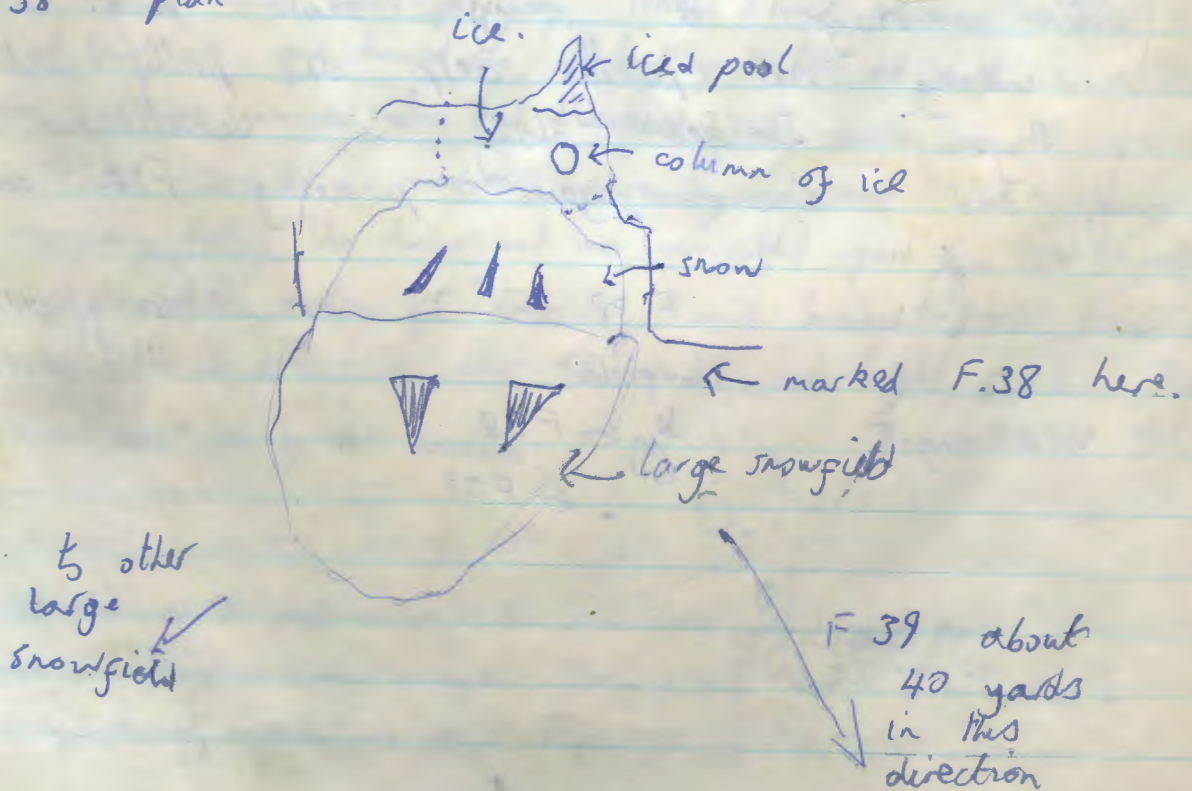
~~David~~ I walked up for Lagers in the mist, leaving at 3pm arriving about 6:30 pm. Left Ian, Bill & Teetyn argue about who & when to take Sean to Arrandara to catch the bus. Spent all day Friday working out the budget. Eventually after many calculations (till it came out the same every time) I managed to reduce the missing money to  $\approx$  7000 pots. This morning reduced the deficit to  $\approx$  0 when I found John's shopping trip had spent 19000 not 11000

Dave Hoag

Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug. : Martin x2, Paul.

Shagl - bashing + little bit of photography. Initially went off to take nice pieces of ice column I had found. This cave now numbered F38.

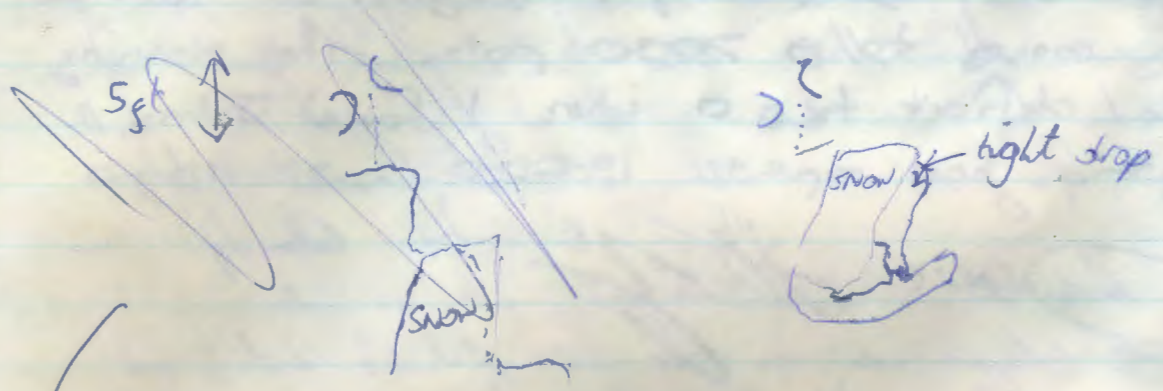
F38 plan



(77)

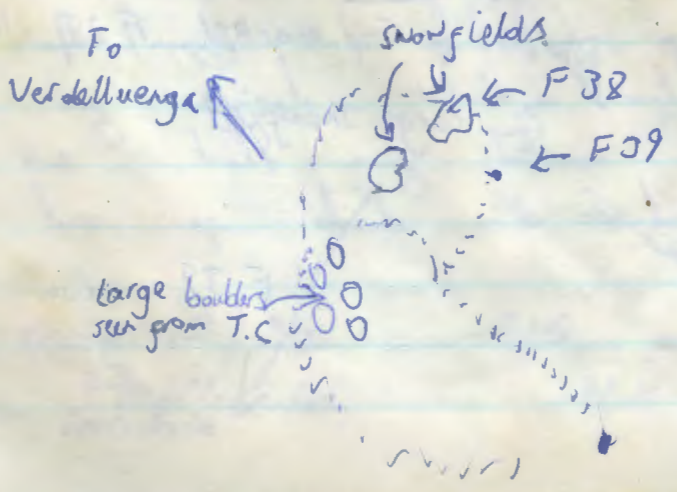
Then went over to F 39. A gap between 2 large boulder lead to 15 ft climb to snow - plug. Follow snowplug to bottom short passage to left lead to choked floor

F 39: ~~Area~~ elevation plan.



Both uninspiring and not worth a visit apart from the see column in F 38. After this we fumbled around a lot. I fell down F 17. which is still choked. Walked straight uphill hill from Top camp. Found F 5 (worth looking at properly), F 32, a large hole beneath F 32 and much higher near the ridge a huge snow plug in a winding rift. pretty deep and pretty wet. Anyway walked along to Verdelluenga and down again passing F 14 on the way.

where F 38, F 39 are: (sorry: no bearings)



Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug. — Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> Aug. Ridge Cave (Pozu del Pico del Conjurto)

Fred, Nicola, Margot & Gerhard

78

Surveying / detaching / pushing / knocking trip

Enter 2<sup>45</sup> pm and take only threetimes as long as usual (i.e. 3 hrs) to Dinosaur Beach where we stop for a fettle. Smooth descent continues down to the streamway where we take turns at tape, compass, dino, tackle passing & moaning while Nicola patiently takes notes. Somewhat serofulous. How do you hold a light left of your dino if the survey station is on a lefthand wall with just about enough width to fit your head in? Soaked ourselves (apart from Margot) on the wet pitch at the end (in a wet suit nobody would mind this sporting triddle!) which Fred tree climbed 'cos he couldn't make me understand what he was shouting down. Turned back and split since Margot was wet & tired (& so was I) and so we started the exit whilst Nicola & Fred detached the streamway to use the rope at the pitch beyond Fred's climb. So Margot & I raced up the pitches (well, not really) — they seemed to have increased in number since the ~~upward~~ descent! What a deep hole!

Stopped for peanuts & choc & fettle at Dinosaur Beach, amused ourselves replacing 'ectors we were passing on Fred Flintstone, got up Borborygmy at last and Margot got out of Nuda's Canal by standing on my shoulders, a feat which I on my own didn't succeed to repeat. So Margot went on alone & out by 5.30 am. Meanwhile I tried a dozen variations of flimflaming up but always slipped back to where I started from. Ended up celebrating ~~my birthday~~ my birthday's dawn by wrapping myself into my space blanket (which tore immediately) and trying to get half an hour's worth of sleep. Nicola & Fred became audible, then visible at long last — and showed me a dim up a little bit further back which I easily could have managed alone had I noticed it. My carbide was still working nicely but my second set of round cells was running out and I had to change to my emergency battery. The further exit was uneventful apart from Fred forgetting his prusik bag at the bottom of "Dancing..." and having to abort back on my (his old) babbin to collect it. Out 8<sup>15</sup> am-ish into bright sunshine. Pooh...  
ugh!

Could N. or F. please write up their discoveries.

Fred & Nicola detached all the stuff down to the streamway and dragged it all to the Big Cunch where we left it in a nice messy heap. Plenty of stuff there — 2 tackle bags full and a 40 m rope loosely tied. Took 70 m lightweight up Fred's climb and rigged it.



down pitch on the side - only just reaches. (Good job it was such a stretchy rope) Suspect shaft dropping into gap on the boulder choke. Will need re-rigging with a decent rope & plenty of rebelay's cos at present its got loads of terrible sub points that bang worryingly as you bounce up, swinging round & round in circles and knocking substantial amounts off the pitch walls. Good pitch though made better by the fact that Fred actually managed to be on the pushing trip which got beyond his climb which he wanted to do obviously. Well worth the time we spent. Pissed out with Fred patiently singing cheerily encouraging songs as I laboriously worked my way out. Caught up with Gerhard of the Axotott & the rest Gerhards related ...  
Mick's Canal

Time Out - Just after 7.30 on. 17 hr trip ish.

Tackle as far as I can remember - In Big Vault Chamber: 1 40m Rope  
1 5m ladder  
Couple of wire belays  
(including 2 v long ones)  
Several rope protectors  
More rope but I can't remember how long - some

All bottom of new big pitch 2 tackle bags (one tied on end of rope to make it long enough)  
Bolt kit, some rigging gear (wire belays & mono etc)  
↑ mauler's bag?

Out to a beautiful morning. Fred typically didn't show signs of weakness and instead of collapsing in the sun at Top Camp was roving off down the mountainside to Lagos.  
A good day / night.

Noddy

Sunday 4th August. John W. walked up via Aris - scorching hot day with beautiful sunset & stormy night.

Monday 5th August.

Windy all night. Woke to driving rain. Rained all day with some hail, zero visibility. Caviers departed (about 2 pm!) to get out of this horrible weather. Nothing of course achieved in the way of surface survey.

Tuesday 6th August

The horrible weather continues, with snow, driving rain and Force 7/8 winds. Zero visibility. I regret that because of this atrocious weather ("top camp is such a beautiful place" they say - all I have seen is zero visibility, driving rain on both my visits, with admittedly one nice sunset) and my personal deadline for departure I have been unable to complete my programme of surface survey at top camp. There remains to be done by somebody:

Locate accurately the following caves by compass & clin readings to two independent fixed points:

F 21

- can't find it

F 27

- don't know anything about it

F 38

} triangulated 18 & 19 Aug '48 W.

F 39

Surface survey to link the entrances of F 20 and F 30 (1/6, Ridge Cave).  
10-19 Aug 55 W.

I have made up one concentrated charge of fluorescein and left it in the base of top camp cairn - Since there is nothing to be achieved here I am going down to Aris tonight, and will be at base on the 7th, expecting Nicola & William to be down at base by 1800 on the 7th latest for transport (Meal in Cangas, followed by camp en route to Santander)

Sorry about the scribble - my hand is almost too cold to write. John

Sunday

~~Wednesday~~ 6th August Survey of F 20 Part II Paul, Dave H, William

Waked up from bus bags on a bright morning, reaching Top camp at shortly before 11 am. I had a "little" job to do orientating my cross sections in the entrance to F 20, since I had found the survey of the last trip totally impossible to draw. Thus the surveying trip set off down F 20, followed by Martin H. & his photographic team. Dave H. went on ahead while I set about drawing sketches suspended from a rope & measuring the distance from the top of changes in section, Paul steadily holding the rope while I did this.