Ario Log Book
1991

HOLA SOMOS UN
GRUPO DE
ALCORCÓN QUE HEMOS
SUBIDO A SALUDAROS Y
NO ESTABAIS
SUERTE
Y UN BESO
HASTA PRONTO
Borja, Noraís, Oscar,
Anita, Mª Ángeles, Alicia
Beatriz - Adiós

4

/

29 June 1991.

The Ario log book has finally reached Ario. It seems to be my duty to write the first words in this book too.

Notice

Same as the one at Base really -

If a person from ICONA comes round make it plain that you speak no Spanish and get them to write down whatever they want in this log book. SMILE at them. Make sure that the message reaches some one who can do something about it.

Its quite cold here really, which is why my writing is scrawly - it's not because I'm PISSED or anything interesting like that.

some tall story David

David

Later

We are now in the Refugio - I am still not pissed, I am drinking Ras Naranja

Tony and Sean are here too, and more list writing will now take place.

Saturday Tony, Sean & Dave L go caving and aim to rig Flying Rebelay two bolts will be placed - one at the bottom of the first pitch and one at the first rebelay. They may carry more gear than they need ~~This will leave Mark and Dave B at Lagos, Me and Pauline at Ario. During the day~~

~~not all~~ of those remaining Pauline & I will do a carry to the cave" while anticipating the arrival of Dave B from Lagos. Mark will stay at Lagos, but will want to carry some kit up.

On Sunday night Dave B, Pauline and I will stay at Ario, ~~Mark~~ will stay at Lagos. The caving team are expected back ~~before dark~~.

Monday

Pauline, Dave B & I go caving, aiming to rig to the end of the rifts Tony and Sean go to Lagos early and Tony and Mark or Sean go shopping.

In the evening Tony will carry up food, Mark will carry up what of his gear remains at Base. Sean will stay at Base. At Ario that night Tony, Mark and Dave L must be present, Dave B, Pauline and I will probably be present.

Tuesday

Tony, Mark & Dave L go to the end of the rjts. They will finish off rigging if this has not been done, otherwise they will porter gear [tups is preferable]

Pauline, Dave B and I will do 1 carry each to bring up any remaining food from the shop.

Pauline will stay at Base, relieving Sean.

Sean, Dave B and I will stay at Ario ready to porter to the end of the rjts on Wednesday.

Wednesday

Sean, Dave B & I porter to the end of the rjts. The remainder will do carries - there will be a shortage of rigging gear, [?] cave food and food.

Thursday

There will be a day off [this being the seventh day!]

There will be a taking stock, a tidying of wounds and possibly a shopping trip.

The unwritten rule is:

DO AS MUCH AS YOU CAN. THE PLAN ABOVE MUST BE STUCK TO IN THE ABSENCE OF EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES BUT IF YOU SEE A WAY TO IMPROVE THINGS WHILE WORKING WITHIN THIS PLAN THEN DO SO.

I know I shouldn't need to do this, but it will avoid misunderstandings and will also eliminate excuses for those who ought to know better:

not in order of importance

① If you are walking up to Ario in the evening then eat at Base before you go so you don't waste the effort involved in carrying food to Ario

② If you are alone at a camp then tidy it up before you consider festering [ie doing nothing]. Remember: washing up, litter blowing around, stuff spilling out of tents etc.

③ If you are alone at camp and are expecting the arrival of people in the evening then cook for them. If you don't know how to cook then get help and instruction NOW. This is most important at Ario - tired carers reaching camp at 3am take a very dim view of the absence of food.

④ At night - if you are alone at camp you must sleep in the big tent to protect the food. Keep your light and a store of projectiles within reach. Pre-emptive strikes can be useful. Bring all the washing up/the bin and any other odds and ends into the tent.

⑤ If it looks as if it will rain then "batten down the hatches" before hand. Picos storms can be amazingly violent. At Base make strenuous efforts to protect personal gear and keep it dry [perhaps by bringing it all into the big tent] Hammer in the pegs firmly and put rocks on them (but not on the guy ropes, which will get cut through). Consider adding extra guy ropes if the wind is very strong.

⑥ Keep the water containers full, especially at Ario. Keep water containers out of the sun* so it doesn't get warm.

⑦ Be polite to natives and, especially, to ICONA.

Be sensible, SMILE.

BE PURE, BE VIGILANT, BEHAVE.

~~Fernandez~~
David

Just because something is not on this list does give you an excuse for not doing it. If you think it will make the expedition run more smoothly then do it

* remember to keep your gear in the dark too. Sun (u-v) trashes nylon [just look at my tent]. Do not store your camping kit outside in the sun.

30 6 91 Dave L, Sean, Tony

Rigged to bottom of Flying Rebelle's. New bolts at base of 1st pitch, and bottom hang of 2nd. TOMORROW'S TRIP NOTE: a 30m is not enough rope for Paradise and F.R.'s; therefore the lift is only rigged on a ladder and probably needs a 5m rope - the necessary gear is in place.

The gear has been left in the cave at the top of Flying Rebelle's, there are two ropes of about 25m each, roughly 10 tapes and some hangers, perhaps 3 krabs, but no maillons and only one wire. There is also a bolt kit with 3 anchors but no wedges, and the drill with 2 bits (use the red one) and no battery. To recapitulate;

rope - 2 × ≈25 wire - 1

krabs ≈ 3 drill - no battery ~ should this be the other way round?

tape ≈ 10 bolt kit - no anchors

We've taken battery #1 down to Base to be recharged.

Have a nice trip!

31 June [my watch hasn't changed the date properly]

If you are doing a carry up try to find room to bring up some knackered tacklebags and some mending materials. It will help pass the time for those at Arie with nothing to do.

1 July Same day as above.

Pauline, Dave B & David rigged to the bottom of GTP.

There are 10 tapes & a crab at the bottom of GTP

There is a bag at the top of GTP: 4 tapes, 1 krab, 1 very long wire, 1 drill

Dave tried the route from Flying Rebs. to Pablo along the bottom of the lift. The route is probably easier than going over the top and down the other side.

We couldn't find any of the belays on Gripper, so it has been rigged differently for the third year in succession. There is a Gremlin there who removes all traces of last year's rigging.

Pauline did O.K. in Paradise - as well as can be expected for someone doing it for the first time. It transpired that the reason for her difficulty was that she was wearing full SRT kit and a prussik bag.

David

P.S. The snow at the bottom of the second pitch reaches to the top of Seventh Heaven. This is quite a lot of snow.

4 JULY

Dave L. & Pauline have gone shaft bashing in area 4. Back by 2000.

Dave L. & Pauline returned without reaching area 4 when seeing intruders in camp (Dave H & A.QB) They have now gone to 53/5, QB has gone back to base and I'm guarding camp.

We went to 53/5, where Dave broke a largish piece off the boulder and I broke the hammer, ending our trip. On our way back it ~~started~~ tried to rain, and the thunder rolled, so we sought shelter in an unmarked cave with a 2 parallel shafts causing ourselves quite a bit of excitement, until Dave H told us it was 55/5 and the footprints in the muddy pool were his.

P.

Sean and Q arrived at 7-58. It is now 3-06 and its still raining. We are not happy.

Point to note about the above comment - Sean and Q left Los Lagos in a rather drunken state at 12-30 a.m - 7½ hour trip!!! A new record????

Mark.

To Tony,

David buggered his knee again while relieving himself in the Quarry (?!?!) so won't

be caving tomorrow — neither will Dave Bell for some reason or other! If you have a strange desire to go caving again tomorrow, Sean has volunteered to go along with you. I will come up tomorrow to stay the night so as to be able to cave on Sunday, if desired; hopefully accompanied by a healthy David.

Mark.

5 7 91 [Tony] ① [Pauline, Dave] ② ①- rigger ② useful people

Off relatively early ie ≈ 10.00hrs, down cave by 11. Glad to be out of foul weather. Through rifts no problems. Took 2 bags [115m and 95m(?)] and Pessimist's rope, more or less all rigging gear and set off down.

Rigging Notes: i) Main hang on Pessimists is rope protected at belay, but really needs the normal two short R.P.s

ii) As Mr. Lakey points out, there should be more than one bolt at the rebelay at the bottom of Pessimists, considering how much slack is just above it.

iii) There is a small and seemingly useless deviation on the first hang of The Bells. All this does is prevent the rope rubbing when a caver goes round the edge to the rebelay which is just below.

iv) Where there is no place for a loop of rope to stand up in, ie where there is a ledge to stand up on, I have left very little slack rope and substituted a long knot

like this.

This means that one should clip into the hanger or maillon, not the loop of the knot. On the ascent it is probably easier to transfer the foot ascender first, then the chest jammer. This arrangement is generally thought safer [see recent 'caves & caving' and 'descent'] and doesn't seem to be too much hassle.

v) There is a small deviation, rigged off a natural eyehole, which I missed parking down Armageddon; all this does is keep cavers away from drips. I couldn't place it on the way up as I'd run out of gear - so next time take a krab & short tape.

I ran out of gear at the short traverse at the bottom of Armageddon, so left part of a 90-odd m rope in a tackle sack sack, a lot of tapes in my SRT bag, and a few krabs clipped to the line. Met D.E.L and P.A.R at the bottom of 'Sing to the Devil' at 17.55.

They were carrying three bags of rope, two of which contain 100m lengths. I think they took them down to the end [I can't ask them, they aren't up yet]. Two empty bags came out, drill and bolt kit left at end of rift so fairly easily accessible for work outside 2/7. Moved own carcass out of entrance ≈ 20.00 hrs to horrid weather and wet clothes, luckily Sean and 'Q' make good stews and superlative flapjack. Yum!

Additional Note There is a 95m rope and two 100m ropes down in bags, and about 30m left of the rope I was rigging off ; it takes ≈ 220m to reach the top of Just Awesome ! [and note, perhaps 20-30m of rope can be salvaged from coiled remains at top of S.T.T.D. and on Armaggeddon - enough for the 'pitch through' first false floor.] So if the next party takes around 200m of rope for 'Just Awesome' the trip after should be the first camp !

We want prizes for the most inefficient trip ever. Dave also wants hero points for (i) injuring his hand (ii) carrying 3 tacklebags from Armageddon ledge to the end and (iii) putting up with me (I was caving so badly) out at 12.30 !

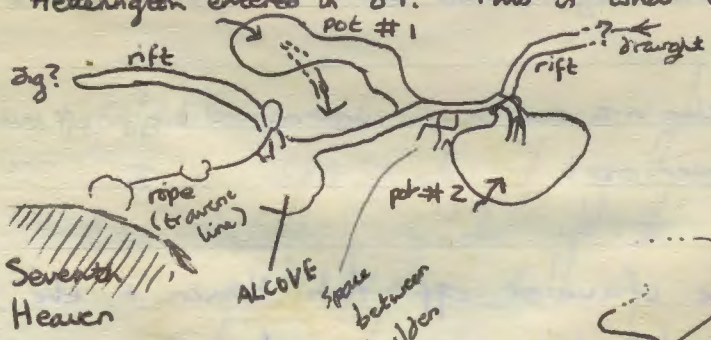
My middle initial is A by the way . P.

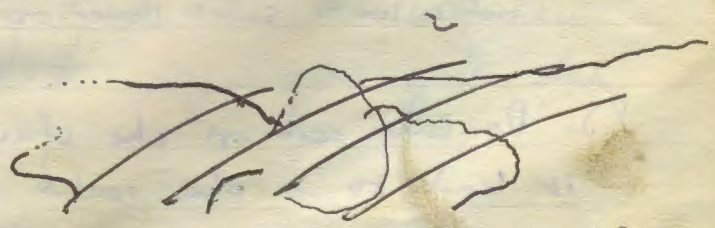
thankyou! M.D.S.

6 7 91

2/7 - Somnambulist' series Q, Tony

A pleasantly late start to allow various wet bits of gear to dry off, then down the cave by about 13.00. Q failed to suicide ing his rack and we trotted on down to Seventh Heaven. Pendulled over to what we assume is the passage which Hetherington entered in '89. This is what we found;





ignore this - its too complicated to draw

In other terms: swing over onto the ledge and clip onto the traverse line – don't lose the main rope! – and creep along the crumbly ledge until you reach the alcove. Now, face down the cave (towards Paradise) and to your sharp left there is a vaguely awkward corner into a small rift which heads back up the cave (ie parallel to Seventh Heaven) and which immediately becomes too tight. Dropping down the slot at the corner enters a larger section of the same rift; this chokes at its other end and could be dug. At the near end rocks dropped down the rift seem to fall into the main pitch once more. So this rift really does nothing and is barely worth describing.

Back in the alcove and looking down the cave once more, look down the cave and an insignificant passage will be noted at shoulder height. This quickly evolves into a typical Picos rift. Up and to the right is a hole between boulders, straight ahead the rift tightens but continues at the same level, while immediately below is an easy 10 foot climb down an enlargement in the rift. The passage bends back towards the alcove, but curves gently to the right, and is surprisingly large. After a few feet it ends at the base of a small pot with a trickle entering a few feet up the far wall. The water runs into a narrow ~~closed~~ choked rift in the floor and a rift off the left also seems to connect with Seventh Heaven.

By now ~~thoroughly~~ thoroughly pissed off but by no means undaunted, return up the climb and have a go at the continuation of the rift. This goes on about 20 feet and involves a squeeze, a corner, and another squeeze, none of which are ~~to~~ problematical. At the end is a local too tight section between flakes, and there is a noticeable draught in your face – this could easily be enlarged, and the passage can be seen to continue beyond, at a reasonable size.

Back along the rift, a slot in the floor opens unexpectedly into the base of another small pot perhaps 20 feet high, which has an unattainable black space at its apex. There is no other way out. Having re-entered the rift, the hole between boulders noted earlier is found to lead to the top of this second pot, and is indeed the black space you saw from the bottom. However, from this vantage point, other passages leading off from the top may be seen, or at least imagined, and these could be reached by a climber with a ladder (which is there) and a lifeliner (take your own).

Thats about all there is to see, so you might as well bugger off out. Remember not to lose the Seventh Heaven rope!

PS. Do take care on the traverse off 7th Heaven + the ledge it leads to – the rocks here are very loose + crumbly.

8/7/91

Michelle + Steve walk ups.

Gavin + Steve go to 53/5 + remove the rock. There are two really interlocked rocks beyond that defied attempts to shift them. Digging the lower one out might work, + a bigger crowbar might lever the upper one off the wall
A really strong cold draught. This one must go (This one will remove run)
The walk back up is a SOD.*

Dave H and Pauline go down Skull Cave. We both inserted ourselves into the 1st squeeze and wiggled about, but Dave did not dare to push himself right through it as there was only me there to pull him out. I left the chisel at the top of the pitch so Skull Cave is now more or less how we found it, except that we put a bolt in at the top of the pitch The Cave is now rigged, so Tony can go and do ~~[illegible]~~ whatever it is that Tony does in tight caves ...

(* 14/7/91 . I have now found that the walk back is a SOD only if you do it the way Gavin does. Walking back up the way you walk down is quite pleasant!)

Put outside to go camping

2 daven drums – cave munchies & dinner
2 tins mornflakes
½ tin sugar
bottle milico
3 tins fruit
foam
14 balls string
1 bog roll
plastic bags
2 sqgs paraffin
2 small sqgs meths
stoves (paraffin) + spares.
teabags
½ big bth carbide
4 alpmexes, pts & bivvy bags.

The carbide & the munchies have been left here, the rest has gone down the cave.

from base we need
Sugar
golden syrup
gas stoves & gas
carbide

So I left base @ 9.45ish + got to camp here 3 hours later. It's nice to see lots of the flowers that are usually gone by now. It was wonderful to have cool days. It was ecstasy to feel the coolness of snow next to the paths.

But best of all was seeing the view @ El Xitu. The soaring grey magnificence of the Massiva Centrale, the cloud hanging low in the gorge, the green gentle folds of Aria. Oh bliss, here again + the sun is out. I see this view very rarely but its difficult to forget it even across a year.
Camp is quite tidy here

9-7-91

Putting to end of infts:
David & AQB in 12:45, out 18:00
Sean, Pauline & Chris 13:00, out 20:00
We left 5 bags at the top of Pessimists

9/7/91
11:20 pm

I have just eaten 3 Granny Ann "straight through" hi-fibre biscuits:
Wait for the explosion!

Sze

10/7/91
10ish am. There are some spectacular lenticular clouds that look like UFOs ~~are~~ something out of Thunderbirds. Its breezy but very nice.

SGR + Michelle to 2/7., to get carry kit up & "familiarise".

Packed 18-7-91

~~cowrie~~ dinner time food
~~Some cowrie~~ all the maillons & tapes
I could find & some of the wires
brew kit for Armageddon

petzl bag

150m cowrie — yellow tall bag

carbide 1 large BDH — blue bag
sugar 1 m/f tin
syrup 1 tin

8/7/91 Rigging trip Tony – Rigging person
Dave B. } donkeys
Dave L. }

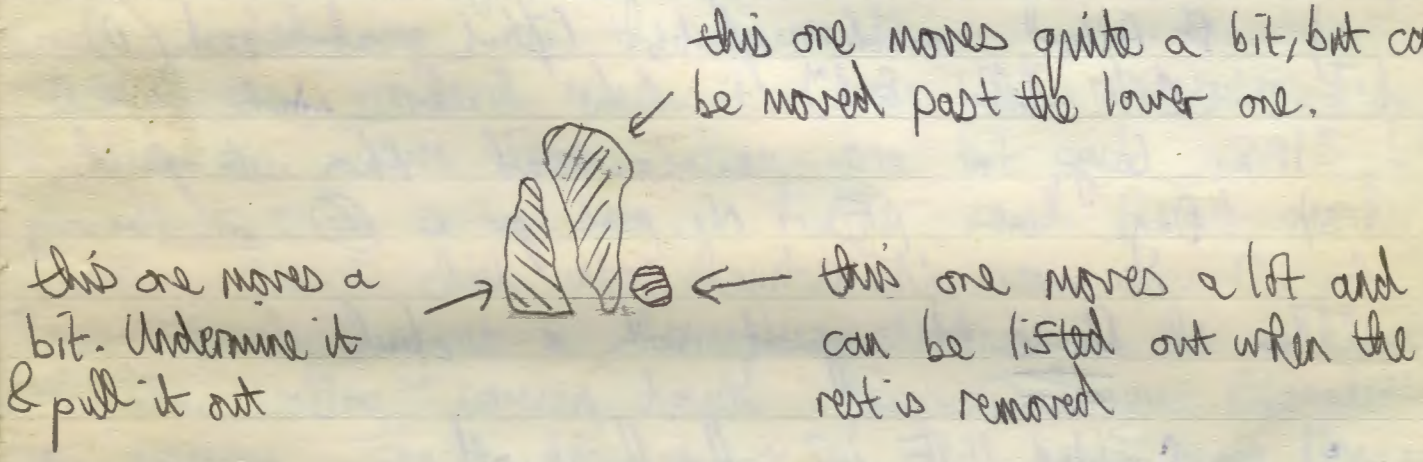
Steady trip down to top of hundred. Then the rigging started. Tony disappeared. We got cold. Two rebelays down the hundred the rope changes to brand new Edelrid 9mm constipation cure. Dave B rigged his "only moves if you feed the rope through" stop on it and thought he had rigged it wrongly; it didn't stop. So we carried on down rather faster. At the beginning of Kusaro Gravel we could hear a low rumble from the waterfall. The rigging came to a premature end at the crash pad when Dave B. dropped a tackle bag. This bag contained all the rigging gear, one nicad drill battery, and one Bosch battery drill what a plonker!
Then we came out.

Dave

Dave Lacey to Pauline: "I haven't done anything horrible to you yet today"

53/5 Gavin + Mark

Broke a bit ~~out~~ off the lowest rock. Current position:

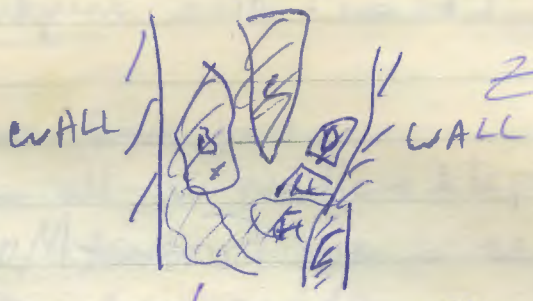


Next team should take a digging implement.
Equipment currently at the cave – one small bent crowbar, 1 the maleable crowbar, hammer, 1 pr wellies.

Pah! I don't know what this expedition is coming to. There was a time when the members of the expedition used to support El Jefe. When I were a lad, is el jefe bought some wine, we would gladly volunteer to help him/her drink it. But what happened tonight? I bought some wine and Dave and Pauline then left me to drink the ~~rest~~ lot. What's more, they took advantage of my ~~pissed~~ state to beat me at ~~cards~~ ~~whist~~. Pah!

Shame on you Gavin/El deputy sub Jefe.

53/5 Steve & Michelle



see previous page

1) Dug down rock (A), supporting rock (B). Smashed it up & took it out.
2) After much effort, lifted out rock (D) ("Michelle's rock") which was about 2x as large & 10x as awkward than it appeared
3) Dug out (F) No more go as (E) in the way

Then Dave & H. agreed with a deal

a) Smashed (E) off the wall.
b) Dug out more (F)
c) Dave smashed (B) & (C) off the wall. Eric got (B) out & dropped it on Dave's leg! (C) needs to be removed.

Until Stage (G), a small rift was visible below & a passage with shifted rocks was visible beyond the current limit.

The drought is strong! Pitch soon! (please)

⇒ Take a bolt kit, tyres & pulley system to shift rocks on E

Skull Cave, etc 11/7 Gavin

Went down to the EST. Didn't fancy it solo, so attacked it with a hammer + chisel. Did some rerigging. Found a stronger belay for the deviation on the second pitch. I'm not sure if it gives such a good hang; next party check. The first pitch needs a deviation where it goes vertical, off either a large block or a big thread. Oh yes. Missed the entrance on the way up and ended up on the summit.
After tea, wondered round above the Valle Extremero. I'd spotted one cave from Jultayu, a bit past 2915, but it was only ~2m long. Further round found another cave, 5m climb into chamber. No way on. On the way back, dug at a draughting shakehole in the middle of the valley coming down from Jultayu. Revealed a narrow shaft, dropping ~5m. Still needs more clearing but it draughts strongly.
After supper, went back to the draughting shakehole with Dave B + H. Dug down ~2m. It seems to open out a bit lower down, but the whole lot is very unstable. BEWARE! This is 64/5

Joan, Dave, Paul, Dave (Dr), Chris + El Jeffe Go to the Refugio. El Jeffe insists at point blank range that we properly assist in the drinking of Vino Tinto Montebro tonight. Being willing slaves + vassals we sally forth to bother fetch water + drink wine. Oh why are these travails visited upon us? It used to be fun drinking Vino Tinto Montebro; the challenge was on to see how resilient your taste buds had become from the gallons of anonymous vegetable stew swilled down across the weeks in years past. But now the vino is quite pleasant and the challenge gones and the sheer drudgery of a nice evening takes over, oh well, life is hard...

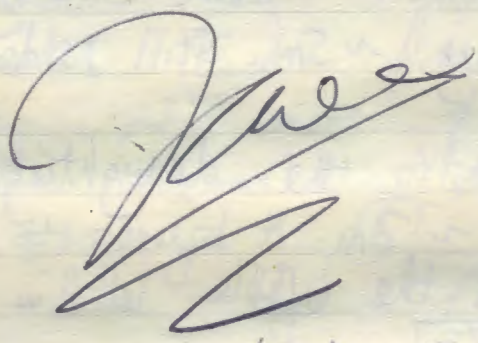
GA.

12th July 1991. I got here. TUM.
(I brought more tape to away gavin).

12th July 1991

Dave H & Dave Bell went to 53/5 - large boulder failed to be moved by rope - put in bolt which split the rock & pulled out. 3hrs of hardwork had fuck all effect. Try and take some tapes next time.

On way back got lost & and found a 45ec drop.



53/5 Tim eventually found 53/5 in the clag, and dug a bit.

12th July Skull Cave

Paul & Chris went to Skull with instructions to 'do something' about the first pitch. It needs a rebolting probably on side opposite to present hang. Unfortunately we couldn't do it 'cos the rope was barely long enough to reach the head of the 2nd pitch as it is. Next party take a longer rope ((forgot to look at exactly length) stepped over Rebecca's amassed skulls. 3 pots of Dunsdon wine kept the cobwebs going in this dry cave. Paul started hammering 'E.F.T.' or whatever its called. Chris passed through the squeeze, ending in a narrow rift above a sizeable pitch. Evidence of previous hammering (by Tony last year) was noted, and

was continued by Chris with hammer & chisel for a couple of hours. Paul enlarged eft meanwhile. The head of the pitch beyond eft was hammered until only one point squeeze (or 2) was left with minimum dimensions:

The pitch was bolted and the squeeze at the head of it was tried for size by Chris, but it obviously still needs a fair bit of hammering to become passable downwards without gear, let alone upwards with gear. Eft is now significantly larger due to Paul's battering, making the return journey from the tight rift/pitch beyond considerably easier.

Return to Aris and surging dog — it wandered up & down the valley all day. Pink massif & clouds welcomed people escaping the dog down at Los Lagos.

65/5 Previous Tim, Dave H., Dave B SIE ⊗ 1986. Rough directions, c 400m gulately towards off the Estherero valley at about 1540m. A large, well vegetated rift entrance is bolted free-hanging (there is a large natural up above as well) to a large snow plug, part a chaughi's nest. A mild rub-point should really be rebelayed if the cave is to take much activity. Down slope is a snow-cliff, and continue pitch to landing bottom. Follow plug round leads to bottom (at about -40m) where a small slot draughts (a bit), and should be easy to dig, at least initially. Further round a chimb down into a chimney leads nowhere, nor up, but before entering chimb a climb up on right might be worth looking at. Further round to left is another 2 blind chimneys, and route back up onto main snow plug. Tim surveyed his first bolt, while Dave H and Dave B watched the sunset. [See 18/7].

The Plan:

2nd camp: Dave B, Paul, Chris, Pauline
3rd camp: Tim, Steve, Michelle, Sean

today: 53/5: Dave H, Andy, ~~Chris~~, Joan
to base: Paul, Dave B
65/5: Tim, ~~[illegible]~~ Chris, then to 53/5
Skull: Sean, Pauline

13-7-91 Tony, Dave Lacey, Mark, David

The camping team returns (a day earlier than expected)

We went to the Big Ledge on the first day. Tony and me rigged the first bit of Dead or Alive.

Next day we moved camp to Primula Point. On the way Tony and I finished rigging Dead or Alive. The time we spent on this meant that there wasn't time to rig Zasadska way in the new improved Jeffe method. On the way along London Underground Dave & Mark marked the way with string, and this means it is easier to find the route. On the way Tony found a passage leading off Heathrow on the

Dave "you hold it & I'll piss the pasta in" Horsley.

Why has my write up been interrupted by a Horsleynote. Anyway, to continue,

right hand side when facing down L.U.G. In this passage there is an inlet, and at the bottom of the inlet is a hanging boulder floor in which ~~aa~~ is a draughting slot over a 3 second rattle. This passage, according to the survey, is <u>not</u> over the streamway.

We got to camp to find that 1/3 of the camping gear was all that remained from last year. The whole campsite had been washed clear of footprints, including the ledge 5m above the camping ledge. Can this have been due to flood water? A lot of the gear had vanished, but some odd things (e.g. an empty marmalade tin) remained, and surely these would have been swept away in a flood. The anchors and wedges have a film of mud on them, but are not buried. The kitchen area still has some bits of ash left on it, so doesn't seem to have been flooded.

I am confused. Where is the camping gear? Where are the footprints? What removed them?

→ well perhaps the cleaner went in after us to clear up the mess, one quick swill with a bucket + mop ....

David.

Next day we came out

P.S. Mark did very well.

Skull Cave

Sean and Pauline spent several hours hammering the eft, which is now fairly easily passable, and the pitch head, which is now accessable, but still too tight to get through. There is not much headroom in the rift while you're hammering at the pitch so a zoom might be useful. The pitch seems to be quite big and there appears to be a ledge about 10 metres down.

Sunday's plan:

To base Mark, Dave H, David, Dave L
Skull Tony, Sean
53/5 Michelle, Tim
To camp Dave B, Paul, Pauline, Chris

[illegible], SGR, [illegible], SL

12th July 1991.

Chris D, Tim G. 6S/5. Spent 2 hours digging draughting hole at base, which yielded 1m down into boulder choke. Draught good and constant, and has clearly melted snow plug behind, but the choke is a long-term project: abandoned for a day when there's nothing else left to look for (even chris' brain). This choke is at South ~~edge~~ side of rift, but a squeeze round the snow plug to the north from the touch-down leads eventually down to a small chamber, several upward chimneys (all ~~clos~~ closing down), and a small pool. We also looked at a climb beyond the dig on the north side, but it went nowhere. We also looked at the western ~~end~~ end of the rift higher up - but it went nowhere.

Uses for buttocks:

1. Sitting on while festering.
2. Grasping while shafting.
3. For piling spoil on when you are head first down a dig.

Rough details:

Approx Altitude 1515m.
080° to Cabeza Llambria
196° to Julatayu.
Depth approx 40m.

Best route, contour west from point 1525m down the Extremero valley.

—·—

S3/S 13th July 1991. Dave H, Joan A, Andy G, ~~Ray~~ returned unsuccessfully to retrieve the "2 day boulder" from the rift. Chris and Tim turned up eventually to relieve them, and with Dave H, three of us managed to "Cradle" the boulder

Actually Joan just felt sick.

with tapes, and moving it out with a 3x advantage pulley system and long crowbar. Much rejoicing followed, then Steve turned up and we all got miserable again. Not because Steve turned up you understand, but because the route beyond 2 dry boulder looked pretty grim. There seemed to be 2 possibilities. Steve dug at the mud floor, then Tim ~~hammered~~ chiselled the top right-hand ~~end~~ edge of the next wedged boulder with some success, and we all got happy again. ~~The~~ Beyond, the wind howls, ~~and~~ ~~exit~~ and a tight squeeze might eventually go over the top, where what looks like loose boulders chore the way down. ~~Exit~~ Oh yes, and Chris ~~of~~ fell off a cliff. [See 14 July]

14th July 1991

SGR guarding ~~be~~ Arno white various people got caring. My illness of the morning seems to have vanished, so I'm having totally amazing fun washing ups & cooking.

Dave B – easy on the syrup next time in the flapjack, OK? Makes life for us poor menials very difficult.

Why does all Spanish white rice end up as a great mass of starch? I have had to discard one lot as utterly inedible & am about to start on a second. (Thrills!)

Steve

14th July 1991. Tim, Michelle, Gavin S3/5

Much hammering and crowbarring destroyed the bottom section of the thing and opened a squeeze to what looks like a rift chamber, squeeze, and further chamber beyond. There is now little to stop us getting through – just some rock. Crack up-left of S3/5 entrance goes nowhere. Gavin didn't fall off a cliff. It'll go tomorrow....

And we found a hole or two just below Bird in the (or slightly East of) Estrecero valley

14 7 91 Sean, Tony. Skull.

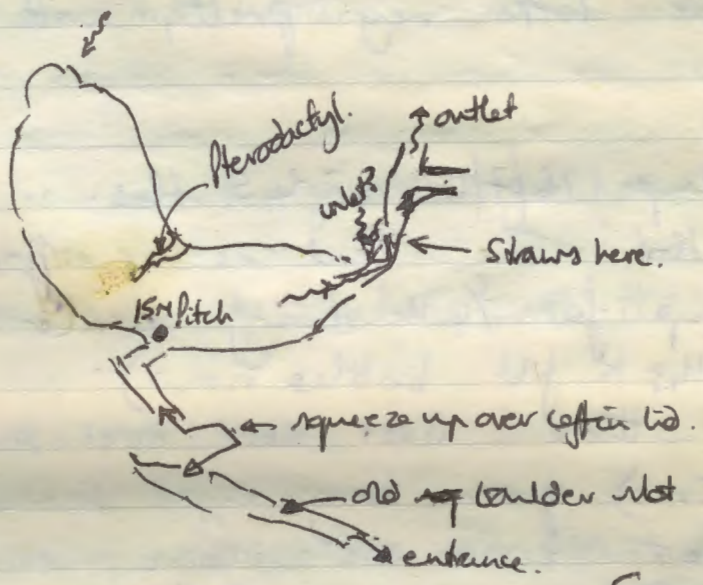
Bullshitters never prosper... the cave didn't go today, although we had a fair thrash at it. The whole thing is a lot ~~bello~~ bigger, although still not huge. We've left our gear at the entrance...

15th July 1991.

Steve, Gavin, Michelle Tim: S3/5.

Well, we gave up on the squeeze and reopened the Storage crawl, though it needed some creative tackling to pulley it out. Much jubilation followed, but the rift dropped into ~~another~~ a small chamber with an impassable rift squeeze down. We moved at the obvious squeeze ahead, but in the end the way on turned out to be up over a cellfinished flake, head up into the rift, then a three point turn feet just through the lower rift. A small alcove then leads up to a window overlooking a large chamber, with 15m pitch and deviation ~~via~~ from the pterodactyl. (which is obviously flying to its nest, a small ledge which can be reached by squeezing down below the alcove. Left in the chamber leads to an inlet requiring what looks like an easy climb. It should be looked at. But right is the outlet cutting a small rift, which then gets bigger and well decorated: yes, there

are straws in the picco! (there were, anyway). Above is a high level passage (inlet?), then to the right a decorated passage, but the small stream carries on – down. Harrered the squeezes a bit on the way out.



[See 16/7].

15-7-91 Skull Cave. Sean + Tony.

Same as yesterday, but it is getting bigger, slowly. The next trip should result in someone getting down, at least.

15/7/91 SGR

Went to recover my a Michelli's SRT kit for 2/7 that we might explore new ground in 53/5 tomorrow. Up to Pico Jultaya in 40 minutes, wonderful views of mist in the gorge, then !! HUGE SHOUT !! to let camp know I was there. Apparently I was spotted. Ridge walk to the cave then a superb walk down. Very worthwhile. Pick out clouds with mountain islands.

Do it for itself!

Ste

Tonight, after chewing of nails due to unsettle cloud line we saw one of the Picos' fabulous sunsets. Red mountains, distant island peaks in a sea of white cloud. Aaaggh! Its so damn stunning here!

PA.

P.S. Flossie looks very pretty with her new French plaits.

Ario Camp 16/7/91 1345 Hrs.
Baking Hot. The tent is ~~[illegible]~~ ffably hot after being closed up for 3/4 hr during water bottle changing trip (approx 1½ Hrs to fill bottles now).
Also those BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP (BBC censorship of expletives) green bug-eyed monster-striped flies WILL NOT LEAVE ME ALONE to get on with fixing the tent. They are a complete discomfort to the bott-end. The tent is full of them. I hope they all die – soon, if not before.

Ario Camp 16/7 15·30 Hrs.
The 2nd bottle of agua is now full. I tried shutting the tent up good + tight to lock the green-eyed monster striped bugs/flies out. It nearly worked. After about ½ hr (5 mins to Refugio, 25 carrying that daft water container back) quite a lot of the little beasties couldn't take it, they had gone. The sad thing is that it is very difficult to cool the tent (which upsets the green-eyeds even more). God knows what you lot are eating down the caves because the chocolate bics must have almost run out of the packs by now! Still there is a good breeze coming up of El Xito and an amusing flurry of clag just lipping up + over sod 4 + the Mirador. Not many walkers just yet, the next hour will tell if there will be the

usual
frightly invasion.

Observation

The green bug-eyed ms seem to favour the colour brown, I've watched them around David's green tent, and they do go for the tiny brown patches on it, so its no wonder the Big Brown Eric is getting a pasting with the little rotters.

Further Observation,

The green-eyed bug ms seem to give in + go home about 16.30/17.00 hrs.

Oh Joy. I am once again alone with the ants.

16/7/91 SOMNAMBULIST SERIES DAVE L

So much for the easy bypass to paradise. Tony's 'localised squeezes' have degenerated into a continuous 5" rift which is slightly bigger at the top. Ari how's hammering found me still not ready to force the first bit, but a dropped hammer meant a premature extension to 2/7. This enabled me to see round the right hand bend, to reveal . . . . a left hand bend 3' further on. Another hour or so's hammering and I was ready for the next bit, but ririiiiiip. A fucking great hole appeared in my oversuit with one to match in my furry. So I came out, leaving my gloves at the beginning of SS in the process

Davey

P.S. The draught is negligible and there is no echo. A thoroughly promising place.

so, clearly, its going to go!

Ms should also be surveyed

Gavin said "Goatchurch is a lot like 2/7", But then he didn't see the POINTLESS PIRANA (Piñhana).

Spanish spelling (honest Guv', would I sell you a dodgy one?)

16th July 1991. Michelle, Steve, Gavin, Tim. S3/5.

Returned in force to S3/5 to explore and survey Pterodactyl and beyond. The Coffin-lid series presented few problems for the party, and we were soon into new passage beyond the pitch. Left, (what I had yesterday thought might be the outlet) proved to be a narrow inlet (should be looked at), but the stream flowed right, under a well decorated high rift which tumbles into the next pitch - a big shaft with an inlet on the opposite wall (high up). Gavin rigged a 'Y-hang' and rebelay and descended the 15M pitch while Tim spotted animals on the far wall - this time a vicious (how the fuck do you spell it?) Piñhana lurking amongst flowstone. Tim prattled down the rift meanwhile, through a couple of sharp squeezy bits, where the trickle flows down at about 45°. Then we all abseiled down to join Gavin who had spotted an obvious 'stonking' passage leading off the pitch, but had wanted magnificently for the us to join the big push. In crocodile formation, and deep thought with ourselves, we strode the entire 4 metres into a mud filled mini-chamber, bumped into eachother, looked around for the obvious lead-on, and spotted the passage ... which led directly back the way we had come. "Pointless Piñhana" is a nice pitch, but gloom descended. Back at the pitchhead, Gavin shuffled on down the streamway which, contrary to expectations did not join at the bottom of the pitch. Much harrowing ensued - a high percentage of it entirely gratuitous (but fun) - and Gavin made progress down to

squeeze over a small drop which Tim then popped through – a good sporting move on the way out. Gavin then pushed through several tight bits, harder flaking, taking this excellent sporting ~~rift~~ water rift ~~to~~ ~~[illegible]~~ "Pathetic Shorus" to a Yorkshire-like horizontal crawl with stal annoyances making the way more interesting. Then Michelle took over and, though she claims they were merely "lovys", proceeded to smash her way through a stal squeeze. Steve and Michelle then started surveying back, whilst Gavin and Tim pushed on down the squeeze and on to a pool where the rift widened. Gavin's lights both seemed to be well fuzzed by this point so after rearranging the boulder choke ahead a little, and getting "cold feet", he let Tim ~~[illegible]~~ shuffle the boulders. Cold feet turned out literally to be that – a nasty puddle which you have to back into, lie in, and crawl back through to a slight widening. I mete beyond: a resounding echo. The stream drops into another pitch, with a large chamber up to the left (reached by a gravel that will need a traverse line). The pitch isn't apparently completely vertical, but has about 8 sec rattle. Then we headed back out. (the boulder squeeze needs great care, but I'm not sure what we can do to stabilise it), and surveyed all the way to the pond. (with a little help from "Lane and Guildford: Cave tailors to the gentry").

~~[illegible]~~ Great day, and a still going lead..

More later the others....

It was my very first real pushing trip, unlike yesterday's all dressed up & nowhere to wriggle. I impersonated a giant large tackle bags in a few tight places, just to check to see if they could get down when the cave begins going. Transparent (well almost) while drawing making Tim itch for more tape...

well perhaps Gavin's a squashy! ←

This means hammering the squeeze out from around me! It seemed a better idea than El Jefe's first one – breasts are squashy things aren't they – poke from the open space above.

Pterodactyloid Chaos. — On the way out.

El Jefe : "Steve — you stay here while we survey & you take notes"

S. [Thinks, "how the can I take notes if I can't even see the passage] — "erm — OK".

Gavin. Michelle. Pressik, Prunk; Prunk BLAST! Hits S. on shoulder with rock.

Tim Prunk —

Gavin. 'Can I borrow your ~~torch~~ torch, Tim, my lights' gone out"

M. "Sis mate".

Tim " Err, well, I left it at the bottom of the patch. PILLOCKS".

S. Scrabble Scrabble scrabble.

One light goes up.

G. 'Ready to survey?"

S. "OK. OH SHIT"

[Picks up notepad, flicks end of pencil. Pencil disappears next passage & lands at bottom of cliff]

— etc. — —

Another normal half hour in the life of ORCE

Dave - they were doing it with the goats when I came up - all shagged - Horsley.

U/G CAMPERS ↓↓↓

✳ Are there any knives & forks at the camp? ✳

Further further Observation

Lifting the front lower sides of the tent cools it + discourages the green bug-eyed ms. Hitting them with a Sigg bottle tends to lead to their taking on terminal velocity (i.e. DEAD slow). A second hit renders the beast inoperable (i.e. DEAD)

More Observation

Luna snores, but not as badly as Q.

= Tony has gone up to Skull Cave to do some hammering - not to try to pass the squeeze - and has taken his pit and karimat (and stove, and food) with the intention
* of making a bivi. Hope this offends no one. Call out tomorrow, about 10.00 ish.
* mainly he wants to see the sunset from the top without having to worry about getting = back down!

You could always get someone to mast... ate it for you and spit the juices out.

17/7/91

There are 2 vats of stew. They look quite like something from the pits vats of hell. THEY TASTE NICE (Autosuggestion) If they are nice, Sean made them. If they are like Luna's dinner, Joan made them. At any rate Joan has gone for dinner @ base

Night Night!

Joa.

10.30 pm 17/7/91

← SGR "Andy - do you want some wine?"

⇒ AQB "No thanks"

Cries of 'WOT?' 'GASP' 'WOT' etc.

5 sec. pause

AQB "Well, if it ~~offends your principles~~ goes out of character, I'll have some ..."

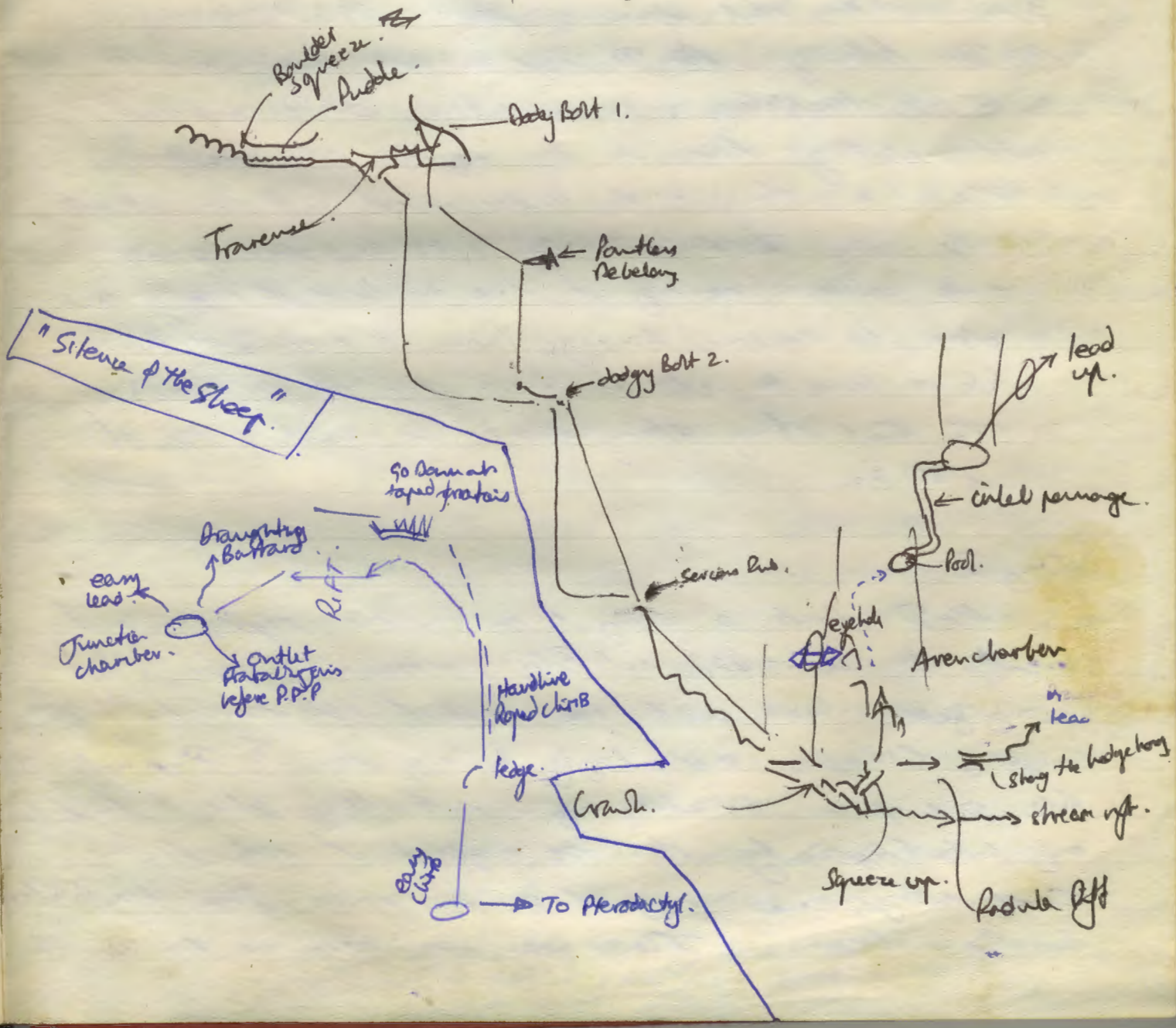
Tim "Gavins a good man to have behind you" Guilford

Tim "It was like buggering a hedgehog" Guilford.

17 July 1991. Tim, Mark, Dave H. 53/5

Apart from forgetting the measuring tape, a very fruitful trip. Taped off some of the formations, and found a less destructive route down into Pathetic Shamus without visiting pristine Pithana series and damaging the pretties (also a bit crucified). Gardened in cold feet nasty, and made it much easier and much drier, before traversing onto a large ledge and rigging the new pitch from one of Tim's dodgy bolts. 15m down to a shelvery ledge, then a further 20m down two pitches onto a gravelly floor with a crawl leading to another stream rift which is rather tight. Before the rift, a squeeze up to the left leads into a large aven chamber with block floor which leads through a parallel system (with eye hole to the main pitches) to a draughting inlet. Inlet is narrow and fun, and ends in at the bottom of the pot with a large high passage heading up. This is probably a good lead. Back at the squeeze up there is an obvious way into "Radula rift" high up, which is not so narrow, but very sharp. This continues through a vicious squeeze ("Shagging the hedgehog") then up to the left. A harness and a little determination would be worth it to follow the draught. Just before shagging the hedgehog you can drop down into the stream again, where the route requires more hammering and more determination. Bottom pitches could work on a 20m rope, will need a rebelay at the second ledge, and may need a new bolt at the first ledge (unless you find yet another of Tim's dodgy bolts) Back at Pterodactyl we finished

the climb at the far end (Tim got wobbly knees), rigged a handline, and found a very well decorated rift, which can be continued down under the tape. to a junction chamber. The 1st route doubles back down the rift, through a tight squeeze, and probably ends up joining at the choked inlet before Pothanen. The 2nd is tight and draughting, and the third is not so tight, and not so draughting (with the latter are inlets, but might be worth pushing in case they lead to parallel systems. Rerigged Pterodactyl with a 15m, and came out 9 hours later. 3 pitches, 3 draughting leads, and 3 shagged caves – a good day in the picos. oh, and I forgot about the lead of the ledge – needs checking, as does the continuation of the rift.



18th July 1991.

reply 4 pages on ---

Menage for Jenny when she arrives: ~~the~~ someone has dropped the BOD paper tin lid down 15/5 – needs fetching.... LT & W/CL.

Underground Camp 2 – 14-17/7/91

Paul Ma
Dave Bell *
Pauline Rigby
Chris Denham

Day 1

Pretty slow start – I didn't get into the cave till 3pm. We went down in pairs, B&R leading, MrD following. MrD had an epic thro' the mill with a battlebag, consequently B&R got very cold waiting for us to regroup at Heathrow. The line along London Underground is a pain, it gets in the way. Zoradzka way is as awkward as ever – we couldn't swing it due to lack of rigging gear due to someone having thrown it over Just Around (it is being to wet to hunt for at the bottom) To cut a long story short – we went to bed at 1.30 am.

Day 2 –

MrD finds a wrong turn on the ropes, and went to Drucilla, not BOD, discovering we lacked many gears. We spent the rest of the day in BOD, rigging Chagers, and trying to rig down to Pimp st. We gave up on the old rig – not being able to find any bolts. (Apparently it was rigged of rubble) Consequently we rigged a new route thro' the boulders to the stream. The gear was retrieved from Drucilla,

(i) I put in the back up on Clangers which has not been rerigged! (ii) It was my fault Chris got lost (iii) I nearly got hypothermia while Colostomy was altered, (sour grapes on my part) so I must have bin there and the lower set of lines derigged. (Mr D, brave soul, stripped off to retrieve something important looking from Drucilla. On closer examination, it turned out to be only a torn survival bag.)

Day 3

Mr B rerigged lines from Camp to BCD, (certainly a great improvement). Meanwhile, the rest of us headed off down towards Egbert. But at the bottom of Colostomy Climb the water was ~ 60 cm deeper - so was impassable. So we ended up spending the rest of the day rerigging the base of C.C. to make a rope swing across the river, a wonderful piece of engineering, all of naturals, using 2 additional tapes & 8 m of rope. Time moving on, and peoples being cold, a retreat was made from here to Camp, Mr D paving to put a belt in. A few spots could still do with Deviations added, and the rope swing needs a hand line so the rope doesn't drift out of reach, but otherwise rigging seems sound; except of course C.C. - the bottom of which has just as many nut points as before, just in different places.

* was I there? I am not mentioned at all. Oh I remember some things that happened

Day 4

Outwards bound - Again in pairs, Messrs Mr D leading. Long haul, setting off at 9.30 am, I spent an hour at Amazonian ledge waiting for Mr D to catch up, so I could relieve him of the Darren drum he was carrying. By now, I was so soddin cold, I opted for anti-hypothermia pill of action - get moving. I carried on out, surfacing at 8 pm, the remainder appearing by 10.30.

- Maybe we didn't achieve what had been hoped, we didn't reach Egbert, nor did we rerig Zaccaria way (due to lack of hangers); but certainly some useful work done. I leave it to others to add a little more spice to the story if they so wish. Rob

18 July 1991

Tony and David go down Skull Cave. Got to the Eft with no problems save me getting stuck in the previous squeeze by my Phunk bag. I undressed of all my superfluous gear [helmet, light, SRT kit?!]. I lowered myself into the Eft and spent a long time trying to slim psychologically sufficiently to fit through. I did, eventually. I met Tony on the other side; he was hanging nonchalantly on a rope dropping down a big pitch. I went back out and spent a long time trying to slim psychologically. I picked up my gear and 90m rope and started back down. I didn't make it - my psychology failed and I decided that it would be more prudent to go up than down. This took ½ hour, ½ hour for 3 feet of vertical height gained. Tony was very patient, and patiently ate a lot of food while I hammered at the spikier bits of the Eft.

We looked at another inlet then we came out. It was very cold in the cave, very hot outside.

Tony "I hope you're not going to put people off Skull Cave" Seddon.

o.k. I won't. The Eft is passable, I have passed it. However I have psychological problems with constricted passage, and it was this rather than the passage itself which hindered me. Try it, it's really fun [Happy Tony?]

David

me :

my psychological view of myself :

I'm not sure what to put here. People might get the wrong idea.

18th July 199

Dr. D. & Q go surveying.
Surface survey 12/5 → 53/5 is now complete.

Dave

19 July 1991

A word a two of advice. If you have a knackered knee that you think is better, don't walk down to S3/5 carrying all your caving gear. By the time you reach S3/5 your knee will not be better, it will be worse. If you wonder why I offer this advice the reason may lie in the fact that I am sitting at Ario with my knee wrapped in bandage...

David

Later. (16:58) Drink & David

Thunder is rolling around us, and the odd flash of lightning. The storm is about 3km away, but it is getting closer and the fist spots of rain are falling.

We have battened down the hatches and closed all watertight doors that we could find (some aren't that watertight).

We have also put all the odds and ends of clothing lying in the tent into one bag. Try looking in here if you have lost something. The result will be that your clothes will come out smelly but dry. If you want one of these but not the other then don't leave your stuff lying around...

David

53/5 GL, MC, DV 13 July

Forgot a pencil so couldn't do any surveying. Pushed the end of Shagging the Hedgehog down to the top of a 10m pitch.

53/5 GL, MC 19 July

Surveyed to bottom of the pitches. Rigged the pitch we discovered yesterday. It drops into a 8m diameter chamber with a too tight rift leading off. It seems to open out a metre further than you can get, but will need a lot of work. It may be possible to pendule into a higher level in the rift.

19th July
Dave H & Q 53/5 Surveying.

Surveyed from stal boss at bottom of pterodactyl pitch up into 'Silence of the Lambs' - From the four ways chamber surveyed down the rift as far as the 2ft straw. Hammered one of the other two ways out (the one that doesn't draught) Right squeeze led to left of passage to a junction.

Left was a 3m high 75°, hading rift, 10cm wide with a light draught, but a good echo beyond. Right was a 20cm diameter tube containing a small stream - both way too tight

Dave.

Joan says "Gavin's food was inedible – completely inedible"

Dear Gavin, This ↑ does not mean that I was ungrateful for some calories though, as I got up after 6 hrs disturbed sleep to pack + come up the hill with no breakfast. What I got at Aric was a lot of questions about why we didn't come up last night. Well I spent yesterday a.m. tidying dormitories and mending bits on tents + furry suits + washing gear and general household things while things happened to the van + people went down the hill. So I carried on fixing bits out in the humid sun and often having to chase away Vaccas because that stupid bunch of tosspot Scouts kept herding the poor, confused [illegible] infants into Big Jane almost. Then the weather [illegible] downhill to deep clag (could only just see Big J. from Force 10 which I had to clean cowshit off), plus even more cowprobs. So I battened down the hatches and checked that the chick peas were soaking well, but didn't stop to have a cuppa or anything as I could still fix bits on Big J as the rain started. Then the shoppers came back as the thunderstorm started in earnest and rain siled into camp. We thought that it was heading up to El Xuito which rather put us off, also there were very heavy skies to the South with the breeze coming up from there. So we started cooking (It took me too long to realize that the gas was slow) and had dinner just ready as Mr. Monaghan arrived @ Base. Unfortunately it was 7.30 p.m. and late to get dinner + walk up, although the heavy skies gave up + the weather stayed dry. So we stayed up late. I did because I didn't feel ontop of things + wanted some company. But I got up early to walk up only to be met with not one 'Hello' (until I asked for one + Dirk kindly obliged) but with stern questions on

why we didn't come up last night by Mr. Crossley (on his way down) who claimed there was nothing to eat @ Ario (well no veg. anyway) and with whom I did not want to debate, and by Dr. D and Dirk (who also kindly made me a coppa) which meant that I had a quiet cry to myself because of lots of things. Dr. D. tried cheering me up in the end by washing my face in Brandy (joke attempt to pour some down my gob from some distance - nice try but needs practise). And I suppose I shouldn't feel miserable now.

The moral of the story is that even people who are in the wrong might even so deserve a little sympathy and understanding. I shall try to bear this in mind myself. We all have reasons for the things we do.

Ivan

12.45

① Dave + Dirk have gone ② the water has been fetched. I'm preparing to batter hatches as there are some rather impressively bulky cloud formations building up over the back of the central massif. If the odd few spots now are a portent of that lot, we're in for a big one this afternoon. No thunder sounds yet, well they are so distant that its difficult to decide exactly what the rumbling is.

The lower clag is staying put.

13.00

Deep deep grey over the southern Central Mts Lower clag slowly rising. Wind getting up.

13.05

Its definitely thunder.

13.10

Oh shit here it comes.

13-15 Air temperature rises dramatically with no apparent change in Ario cloud depth. Humid. Wind dead, light rain. Lower clag still rising.

13·30 Situation Stable

13·45 Lower clag descends, temperature ~~[illegible]~~ drops. Slight breeze ? Bad weather receeding back to central C. Massif. Wind now up from the SE.

14·10 Lower clag gone, upper clag brightening though well spread Panic over.

14·11 The sheep move in. Panic.

15·00 Rain @ Ario.

53/5 SL, JGV 20/7/91

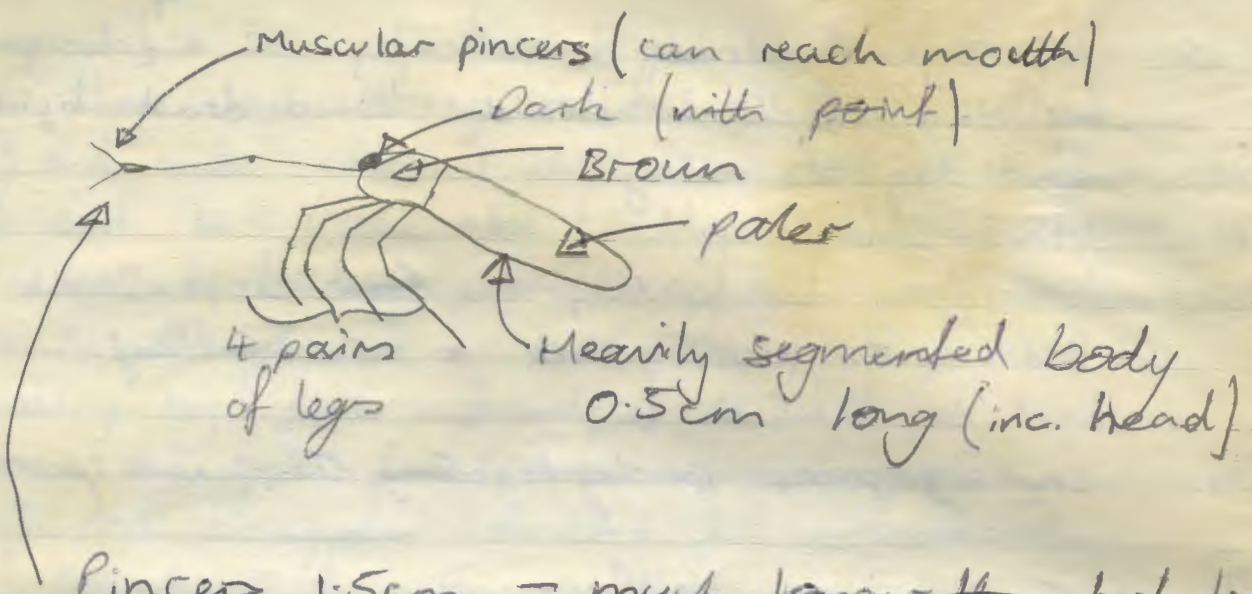
Couldn't survey 'cos the instruments were rusted up. Tried to enter the rift part way down. Unpleasantly exposed and so gave up due to lack of nerve. Tried higher up. Success. There's now a rope through the squeeze. (don't unclip). Ahead is another squeeze (probably needs ~20 mins hammering), and then the rift seems to open out.

MARK / TIM / DAVE M. 53/5 17/7/91

O.K. so this bit is a bit out of chronological order but Tim forgot to mention it so I ~~thought~~ I'd better put it in.

In the rift between 'pterodactyl' and the climb down to 'pointless pirhana' Mark found some Orange cavity creature and called Dave who got very excited and called Tim to have a look. Tim made a quick sketch and took a few notes, which occur overleaf.

NOT TO SCALE



Original drawing can be found in survey notes 'D' for 53/5. No-one knows exactly what it is (it's not an insect) but some type of termite or pseudo-scorpion has been suggested. Suggestions on a postcard please! Mark.

Cavin, Mark, Dirk. 18/7/91

Still out of order, but worth mentioning anyway.

While Cavin banged around in 'Dragging the Hedgehog' to try and make it easier, I followed the inlet on the other side of the chamber to the small chamber discovered by Tim on 17/7. An easy climb up (very loose boulders on top!!) lead into a rift. An obvious route at the same level just lead back into the original chamber at a higher level. A few obvious route leads straight up and disappears into darkness - well worth looking at but quite exposed and may require a rope. Mark

[Tim's 18th July comments reply] ---- Go get it yourself. Paranoia has set in. Jenny never goes to 15/5 without toilet paper in her pocket!
LOHHAKWCL (AAMF)

A few days ago --- 19th July.

Skull Cave Tony + Jenny.
Skull cave is brilliant and needs pushing, but the squeeze over the ~~last~~ second(?) pitch is tight, painful and horrid. We won't persuade many sane people to go pushing down there 'til the squeeze is enlarged abit.
Skull cave is 'going' ~~in~~ (potentially) in bits need looking at in at least 4 places:
i) The rift off to the right at the end of the last pitch. Through a squeeze downwards, then another slight squeeze horizontally. The rift below is drafting wonderfully, but is too tight - needs hammering
ii) ~~Before the~~ Near the head of the last pitch there is another pitch, undescended and slightly to the right. Needs looking at
iii) There is a 'big space' on the right hand wall of the second pitch which could be investigated
iv) One other pitch (or latter half of a pitch) is undescended - can't remember quite where.

Jenny

21st July. David Joan Jenny
Trip to Hye trace La Jayada to Botany Bay via 2 drips of Melt water.
Twas in the year '91 that we set out. On the great El Xnita

Crows Nest we saw a cavern vast and measureless to Man across pleasant mountain meadows + limpid pool. So did we sally forth for that great yawning maw, 'twere bigger even than the maw of Moby Dick and the mountain it was in as white as the flesh of Moby Dick. We travailed much across the seas of limestone, through treatrous southern parts where icebergs lay in wait. After some time we hove into sight and there laid (blue) waste ice before us, a great hole of hell-like proportions and within its very bowels the frozen wastes of Arctic horror, broke only by a dusting of rocks, and a young rebecca lain solid in its belly. Fearful of what monster this be we slung a line from one of its teeth and went down to its icy tongue. The monster did not wake, nor did it dribble and so we were unable to leave the precious golden cargo of fluorescein to be washed down into the bowels of the earth. So, sad but unbowed we did allow ourselves a little of the stopes and set off to traverse the mountain round 'til the usual channel hove into view. The Master navigator Jerry brought the crew safely home and celebrations were had. 'Twas said that the expedition failed though all enjoyed the trip, and brought many tails of fabulous sights and smells of the mountain flowers and herbs.

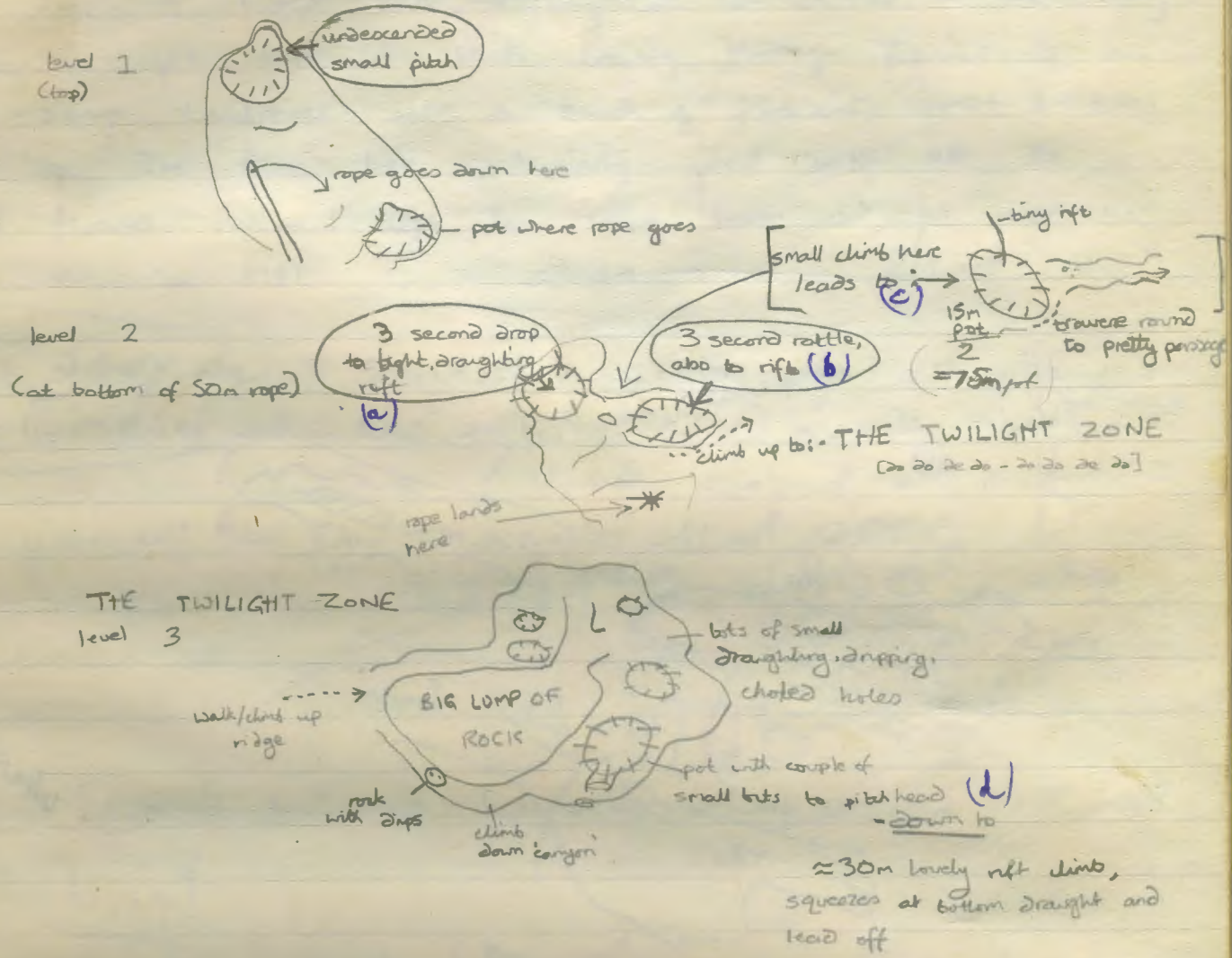
JA.

P.S. It's been decided that Gavin is cute, so I tried giving him some flowers.

Skull Cave 21st July Tony, Chris

Skull Grade 1 Survey (pardon writing, caint use thumb)

[from below tight pitch head]



An excellent trip in this really wacky cave. After popping through the tight pitch head the character of the cave changes completely, lots of little pots, climbs & passages leading off. While I went down the original pitch (a) then derigged it, Tony investigated just about all the pots & passages in the chamber, then rigged down (b). None of these went, so we rigged the pitch head (d). As shown on Tony's sketch, this is a fantastic rift, easily freeclimbable both ways. This ends on a boulder floor, with an unlikely Yorkshire style narrow stream passage heading along, off & down. Tony hammered his way through, followed the passage for 15 ft to the sound of big drips beyond a few spikes that need hammering, then had to turn round & hammer his way back out. A minor version of the cliff experience last year apparently. Fortunately all the prospections

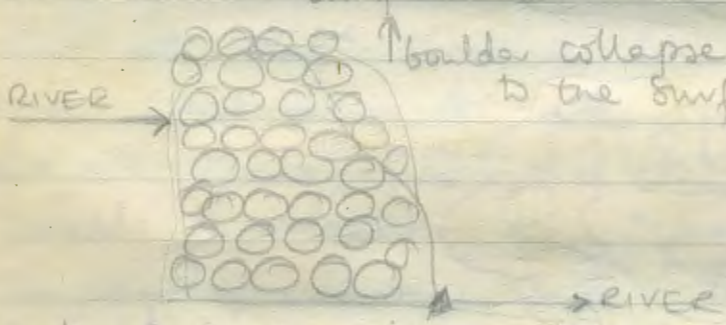
cont. →

21 July 1991

We have had a thought:

Consider a situation like Just Awesome:

Imagine y the roof collapsed because it was weak due to a fault which (a) caused the chamber and (b) reaches to the surface. Result:



Does this fit the facts observed around Egbert? where's Egbert?

David

Monday 8am.

No sign of the campers due out last night. The plan
1) David & Tony to head down gap
2) Dave & Richard to follow with emergency medical kit.
3) Rest to stand by in a state of readiness

cont..

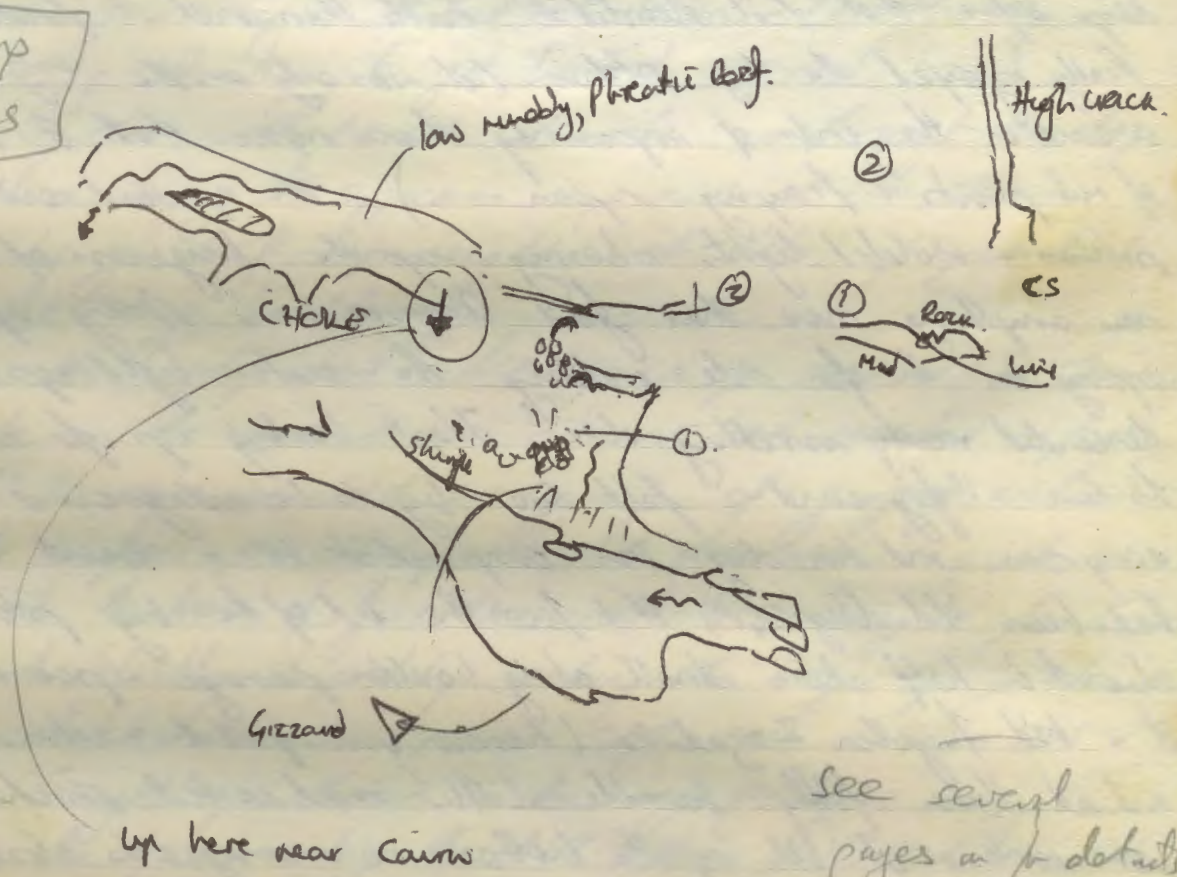
are small & easily hammered. On the way out I noticed the climb (c) leading to a 7-8 m pot, 5 m wide. We lobbed the rope down, pulled out some boulders at the bottom but found only a 4 in wide rift taking a stream (few second waterfall). Climbing across the top of the pot led to a brilliantly promising passage (with draft). This appeared not to go, but should be checked with a climb up perhaps. Neither of us had watches so we departed. The pitch head is tight.

22nd July

Ahn! 10 years after my first trip I am here again! Woke up yesterday morning in Tufnell Park, N19, arrived at Ario 12 hours later. Flying in to Oviedo is the only way to get here – it beats driving through France in an ex-Navy Landrover with a bunch of flatulent cavers & miles of rope. The Picos look particularly good with all the wild flowers out – I hope the caving turns out as good as it was in 1981.

Richard

3rd Camp Finds



See several pages on for details

22/7/91

Mark is now leaving Ario for the last time (this year anyway!). I should have gone caving today really but didn't really feel motivated so decided to go down to Lagos a day early. Hope everyone enjoys the rest of the expedition as much as I have so far, and also that 53/5 keeps going.

Mark.

Third Camping Trip Thurs 18/7 – Mon 22/7
Sean, Jim, Steve & Michelle

With all good intentions of rising early to beat the heat we eventually staggered (well I staggered) up to the cave entrance about 2 o'clock, after a quick peek through the eyehole (I think this was intended to give me so much vertigo I wouldn't even notice the pitches.)
A slow trip through the rift – many tackle bags & only three heroes to carry them (we doing the ~~the~~ twisted-ankle – pathetic-female impersonation though in my case it was my left arm I'd fallen on in 53/5 two days before that first decided to hurt then not to function properly).
Really enjoyed the big pitches (it was only on the way out bouncing around on the ends of impossibly thin ropes that I really thought of rub points & fraying nylon ...) We spread out nicely on the pitches – isolated lights showing up the bigness of it all. Can't saw anything more than just Awesome was! Sitting up out of the spray on the far side watching the water light up as Jim & Sean descended really something else. Kept looking up for stars in the London Underground – felt too big to be underground – and I suppose every man and his dog has compared it to a weird lunar landscape. Had been told (by S&R) that from the end of the big pitches to camp was about a half hour stroll along boulder passage – poor way to describe it & he'd forgotten Zazadska (however you spell it & who named it?) along and all those filthy horrible little mud coated pitches. Left arm not working at all by the bottom so managed to abseil straight into the water as S&R stood by saying "mind the rate" and other platitudes.
A long trip – devoured food and crawled into Alpinex and sleeps at around 4am for my first "night" underground.
Day 2 started at around 1pm – we planned to try to move back to 'normal time' without much success. Loved the streamway but two arms really needed for all those traverses. Derrham's ducher got a few (not comardly me) notably Steve, planning to nonchalently abseil swinging across to the rocks opposite (unlike the cowboys who inched across with jammers on ropes), who nonchalently abseiled into the water with an enormous splash, coming up spluttering that

his glove had caught in his descender - likely story. Again the best way to see the streamway is using other people's lights strung out along the traverses glitting off the water's blue. The pool near Egbert is a lovely place to picnic. The Gizard is not a lovely place - rocks suspended in mud ready to drop upon the unwary. Jim was very heroic hammering in the Gizard. Then he clambered round the right hand shore of the pond (setting up a traverse line) to find lots of muddy passages with potential. By this time, date, we decided to put off more pushing for the morrow. Endless slow traverse along Pinyerel streamway & bed at 6 am (as you can see we were doing really well trying to get back to normal time)
Day 3 someone else will have to describe as I spent the day in the dark alone trying to appease my arm. The others saved my sanity just after midnight, with tales of potential leads up amongst huge boulders.
Day 4 was another early start - leaving camp around 2:30 ish pm much less water in the cave - the stream had receded a foot or so (contrary to my wild imaginings of gurgling water creeping up to overflow pisiwanka point) and there wasn't quite so much spray at the base of Just Awsome (still enough for me to stumble around blindly desperately seeking the rope up). We more or less started out in two pairs SGR & MN & TG & SH - the latter pair caught up with us on the big pitches having fruitled around in the spray seeking the drill DB had hauled down the shaft (unlike me they probably didn't need to look for the rope). I devoured the suicide pill taped inside the helmet, at the start of the rifts (deciding I would need to use both arms). As it turned out I needed both arms and a few good shoves from behind to get through paradise and nearly chopped myself in half surmounting over the rope into the pit beyond the squeeze above seventh heaven. Emerged to a sunny Monday morning and staggered back to Arrio with the speed of a geriatric snail!

— 3rd camping trip by GCR

Comment on rigging: — Thoroughly agree — some of the rebelays were right on, impossible for someone without the strength of Samson, particularly with only one arm functioning properly! ~~mh~~

Tight rebelays in big shafts may be in principle safer if a bolt goes, but are in practice less safe as they hinder people doing changeovers with no enough (or any) slack. Tired people = slow trip = ~~tiredd~~ tiredder people = mis-judgments.

More slack please! (Loosened one 'knot' (to give ~1' more slack to the appalling tight pitch from "Spitting Death") - But this took ½ hour!

More tomorrow as I am very tired & lack sleep, two beers at the refuge = absence of brain. Good trip ~~though~~ though! I enjoyed prusiking up the ~~two~~ big shaft. If you had suggested this to me 5 years ago I would have blanched, quivered & run away. Old age = absence of fear / common sense caches.

Another ~~the~~ clear night at Arso. No rain for two weeks!

Steve

PS- Next expedition - expedition-supplied thermal socks for sleeping in would add vastly to comfort at u/g camp!

William "I prefer shagging the hedgehog" Stead

3rd Camping Trip Pushes

sorry, I started writing the pencil, but it fades, so I've gone over it in ink!

1st " " Day

We aimed to get back to camp at ~2am but got so carried away that we didn't get to bed till 6am!

The Gizzard

We thought (Tim insisted), that this uninspiring passage was Gavin's lead #1. We all went & looked at the squeeze & Tim went past it & moved enough rocks for ordinary humans to get through. The roof & walls looked like the cave equivalent of a loose stool – lots of bits stuck together with mud. Tim dangled at the end (it does draught), while we all sat and tried not to think of the roof & walls, especially the big rock stack to the roof above our head. We went out & had some food.

We sat around, wondering what to do. Eventually it was decided that as we hadn't actually seen choke Egbert, we had better go look at it to make sure it was where we thought – just round the corner.

I had previously tried to wade across the stream, with a bold cry of "For Speleology!", but when the water got up to my balls I vacillated.

Tim forward round the R.H. wall

3rd camp

and we rigged a traverse line.

"Choke Effect"

We fuddled about a bit, lots of loose small rocks. The R.H. branch of the stream vanished with a roar into a fearsome tiny slot - full in here - you've flushed down the deepest toilet in the world! Pious. This roar is almost certainly where you can hear at the end of the blizzard, so it's doubtful if digging the L. will be much cop.

The L.H. branch of the stream disappears into shingle at the throat of a tubular cavity that chokes after about 30m. Caps are visible under the RH. wall, and the stream can be heard below, so maybe shifting cobbles here could be productive.

"The New bit"

Tim spotted a possible dig near the end of the traverse line. This lead to a small chamber, with a rift leading off. Tim climbed up this & dropped down into the rift. White! clay on the floor. Tim started burbling enthusiastically & more & more distantly. Cries of "come back, you soul" were effective, and eventually all four of us were in new passage, champing at the bit as Michelle fixed her light, did her eyes, adjusted her helmet, etc. (Much exaggerated)

Then boldly we strode off into the unknown!

Unlike "pointless Pirouna" this did not end in a blank wall after 6 feet.

We were soon scrambling to overtake one another in the walking / crawling passage. It terminated after about ~~[illegible]~~ 50m in a muddy chamber, where the "stream" in the floor disappeared into a tiny hole that even Tim & Sean admitted was hopeless.

I guess this is a flood passage that filled with muddy waters in spring, and the little "stream" in the floor is the last remnant of the vanishing water.

We then looked at all the side passages. Most lead uphill into regions where the roof/mud space got too small. The mud is very diggable - possibly a tunnel could be dug forward just under the roof.

Eventually we stopped running around like demented ferrets & found we had one lead left. This lead up into a boulder-roofed chamber, with a rubble slope & a green slope. I went up the rubble slope, found lots of nasty choked holes with drips coming in. I nearly died for myself coming back down, showering Tim & Sean with rocks & scaring the wits out of all of us. Especially me.

3rd Camp.

Tim had a look at the mud slope. One way led nowhere. The other led UP!

We looked at our watches & went "home".

After a thanksgiving supper that couldn't be beat, & a sleep, we rose early at 1:30 pm, and left Michelle to guard the camp against the determined ~~[illegible]~~ cat - burglars & ravenous alligators for which the Picos is famous -

A bolt was put in at the base of the mud slope, & Tim went up, "Protected" by a rope.

After a while, Sea & I went UP, & UP, & UP -

At the top is a region of big boulders; it really does feel like the top of a ~~[illegible]~~ cliche! ~~really~~ There is NO loose crappy rocky stuff up here. We looked at various climbs up out of here. But we didn't have any more rope, & not were quite exposed.

We marked to be most promising for the next lot., went back to camp & saved Michelle from premature dementia from darkness & drips.

Then the trip out ... about which I shall say nothing as I have gone on long enough already.

Thank you for your attention.

Steve

DAMN DENSHAM'S DEVIANT DUNKER!

But it is so elegant! And it was a joint effort, anyway C.

Economical too.

22nd July. Monday. 53/5 Wilkins, Chris

A slow start to the day. After sitting around waiting to find out what happened to the campers, I carried on sitting around since no-one else felt like surveying shagging The Hedgehog. Then Wilkins walked up from Los Lagos having arrived the night before, & the two of us eventually set off down the hill at 2:40 p.m. (actually 1:00 in ground time) I really just wanted to see what the coffin lid looked like – when I had seen it before it was a ridiculous slot with a ridiculously large boulder in it, completely hopeless without weeks of hammering or so I thought. But no – a beautifully elegant down, up, over, down & squeeze along series of manoeuvres had been created by some nutter, with what must have been a tremendous sensation breaking out into the large pitch beyond. Anyway, we found the way down & started surveying at the bottom of the pitch before shagging the h, with little enthusiasm & even less speed. But we eventually achieved what we had set out to do, & almost felt like trying to do some pushing. But the only hammer was at the foot of the first pitch, so we pissed off out, just failing to walk up before dark. Munched a surprisingly edible raw chick pea and lentil salad by Sr Roberts around midnight.

Chris.

Time underground 8 hrs

This is to remind Tim to write about Steve "I will now demonstrate my fire-fighting skills" Robert's to amazing conflagratory Dixon Drums

SK

23/7

Area 14 Dave B.

Went to the Valley where I thought I might find 5/4 – 9/4. Think I probably found 2 of them, but only the choked 2 The interesting 2 remain unfound. This is partly due to none of them being marked I think.

Hmmm...

Found a ledge very, very high up on Cabeza del Verde which overlooks Valle Extremo etc.

53/5 Gavin 23/7

Enlarged Shagging the Hedgehog & the squeeze into the top of the rift, then spent time hammering the next squeeze. Eventually got through, and then down through another squeeze (now destroyed). Ahead the rift continues reasonably open. The top squeeze still needs enlarging a bit. Met Jenny and Tim on the way out. Found a small inlet entering a bit below the 2 hardest squeezes, hammered it a bit, but wasn't enthusiastic enough to enter it.

24 July William, Paul Thom

After lunch on a festerous day looked for Optimisto ~~This cave~~ in patchy mist. This cave is very hard to locate in the mist (see 1982 logs). So instead Paul found a 5m deep rift with a further 1½ second drop ¼ mile due N of Arco. By now thick mist, so contented ourselves with building cairn there. On rhs of valley looking down from Arco. I'm not sure what area it is William

Area 4 Gavin 25/7/91

Went to Llano las Cuevas. (Cross Cabeza Corv-Cabeza Julagua ridge, and follow valley down to a large bowl). Various interesting caves.

a) Large cleft in (R) wall, marked S/E 86 ⊗ 15m shaft. Worth looking at.

b) In centre of bowl, below (a), 9/4. Also marked S/E 86 ⊘. Unbottomed by OUCC

c) 100m SE (down valley) from 9/4 is 7/4, and an unnumbered shaft marked OUCC 88 ⊗

d) (Φ) in 10m diameter shakehole 40m SE of 7/4 is 5/4 (unbottomed)

e) From ridge forming bottom edge of bowl, a walk-in cave can be seen on the (R) side of the valley with smaller entrances above. Further down on the (R) is a larger entrance

a, b, d and e need looking at. Also 10/4 and 11/4 which are supposedly near by. The continuation of the valley also looks promising. According to John Wilcock, 2/7 goes under here.

5.30ish 25/7/91

Tony arrives and commences his return from a camping trip with his usual phrase "There's no particular problem or panic but ..." This time the campers coming out know that there's virtually no paraffin to speak of. So poor Paul is stuck @ the entrance to 2/7 waiting for it having come back out from the rift. There is only one person for the mercy dash to deliver paraffin + tea and its ME, explorer blob who has <u>not</u> been to 2/7 this year and who is NOT FIT. Rats, sort out container as NO SUITABLE CONTAINER @ Arro [Jam jar / bog roll / BDH]. Go immediately

to 'Go', do not pass collect £200, but run like an idiot to 2/7. Get lost on the borders, wrack memory desperately back to 1988, Get to the point of screaming bloody ~~[illegible]~~ing frustration + tears, finally decide to drop down a few feet, AT LAST spot cairns. Get into Sen, puffing like an idiot. Up to 2/7 @ 19.10 left Ario 18.30-ish. Left Pavi @ 19.45, arrived Ario @ 20.30, relieved after dreadful run down Jou La Cistra where weather was desperate, given onion soup and goodies by Richard + Gavin, bliss bliss bliss. My feet hurt like hell, but I feel like I've done my bit. A satisfying day after which I will sleep very well. thank-you.

Joan

26/7 P.S. – I couldn't sleep last night → what justice is this ?!?

4th camp 22/7 – 25/7 Those who can, do, Those who can't, write about it

Canal de Trea — Richard + Gavin

Gavin soaked up the bullshit and agreed to come. Essentially the question is – where did the ancient stream that carried 2/7 high levels – where did it resurge? Somewhere between Puerto del Rey and Culiembro at an altitude of c. 1000 – 1100 metres. Now, there is a cave marked on the map on the canal de Trea called Charobles at 1050 m: could it be the ancient exit?

Off we went to look at it. An hours walk down the terrible canal de Trea to find that Charobles isn't a cave at all – it's more like an armpit full of sheep shit. The interesting thing is that the front of the scoop (for such Charobles could well be described) has unusual sedimentary rocks + pebbles glued together by calcite, such as only seem to be found underground. Gavin and I sat on the grass and I asked 'Are we looking at the ancient 2/7 resurgence, long abandoned, long filled in?' Both of us said. no. So we trudged off up the hill again.

Richard

23rd July 1991

Tim, Jenny. S3/5.

Met Gavin on his way out after pushing S3/S's next squeeze - a nasty vertical twist. We continued through this and into what Gavin had described as "wide open right" to find another squeeze. - the last straw. Tried to go underneath to start with, but the entry is much less pleasant than it looks so I tried going over the top. Easier to harrow, this led eventually to a right hand bend, and more tight rift. Its hard going.

25th July 1991.

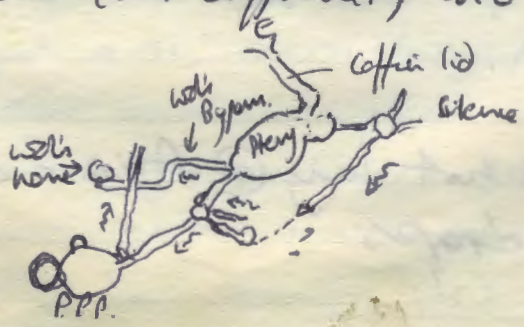
Tim, William. S3/5

A lots of little bits trip. (2)

(1) looked up the two inlets at the junction downstream from Pterodactyl. The leftmost closes down. The next is parallel to a broad chamber which has a rift over the top. This probably continues to entrance of the levels, but Tim only pushed as far as a point above the chamber needs surveying.

(2). "Wolf's home" - William found a silly little phreatic bubble chamber with a circular hole into it in showers rift just before the inlet, and on the left. Great for tourists - sort of place Dave and Joan could set up a tea stall and sell flapjacks.

(3). "Wolf's Bypass" - The inlet (see (2)) leads through a two squeezes and a constriction to a climb up (described by William as "very exposed"), a couple of chimney crawls, and you appear back in the bottom of pterodactyl. This is a more direct route (but difficult) into the bottom of showers.



(4). Attempted to climb in the shattered chamber at the base of the second pitches, but things either went somehow, or I get too scared. It may still be possible to get way over the top of Rodula right by climbing up through ~~Short legs~~ Daddy Short legs inlet and on up high in the left. This should be ~~tried~~ tried.

(5). Survey of Daddy Short legs – A testimony to William's perseverence and thoroughness: he refused to "move the survey station" to make things easier, and made Tim very ashamed. One of our survey legs was 83 cms long W.

(6). Climbed up high into the left above P.P.P. in an attempt to rig a pendulum access to the far side. Beautiful formations, with 2 20ft stalagmites high in the roof. Tim belayed to a large column, and abseiled down into the chamber, to find that the 30 m rope wasn't nearly as long as he had thought. Still it was sufficient to manage the pendule ~~a~~ over to the far side, and look briefly at the shattered inlet in the hope of finding large passage and a source for S3/5's big draught. Tim looked at the upper 2 levels, finding a couple of possible crawls on (however advised) – the best over a huge shaft loss. But I couldn't get to the lower level – which may go more easily. This really needs a rope lobbed down, ~~[illegible]~~ so that the route will be down into ~~[illegible]~~ Pontlen passages, and up the other side. This will alleviate the need to use the ~~[illegible]~~ polish phosphorescing pendule.

Shortly afterwards to discover that our pendule rope was Polish & fit only for footbops & removing boulders from squeezes.

W.

3/4/7/91

Another ~~[illegible]~~ stormy ~~[illegible]~~ day @ Ariège as the clag rises and the wind drops

Friday 26th July — Looking for Optimisto — The creation of Area 11.

Decided to take another look for Optimisto with zero success.
Did, however find a few other holes.
Define Area 11 as back end of Area 5, the other side of the ridge from Refugio.
10. Look N of Cabeza Forma - Cabeza Julagua in large bowl, which goes steep towards Cabeza Muxa. On area marked Jous de Ario

~~Caves 3/11 to 6/11 are close to path marked on coloured map which runs NW from Ario close along the bottom of a green valley. Path is parallel to Los Lagos path. 1/11 to 6/11 are in direction getting close to Ario.~~

1/11 = Optimisto = 30/5 (Not Red circle cave)
I still can't find it!

2/11 = Paul Mann's Cave (see entry of 24/July) unmarked.

3/11 Caves 3/11 to 6/11 are close to path running NW from Ario parallel to Los Lagos path below Sod 4. 3/11 is furthest from Ario.

3/11 ~~Sum~~ Bearing from Cabeza forma 156° from Cabeza Julagua 112°
Small bedding crawl at base of cliff 5' above col on lhs, 50' above green col.
Probably closed.

4/11 Cabeza Forma 164° Cabeza Julagua 106°
A most unlikely entrance. Obvious wide crawl at foot of 20' deep x 30' across green basin at foot of valley on path. 100m nearer Ario than 3/11.

5/11 ~~Obvious~~ Cza Forma 183° Cabeza Julagua 103°
Obvious shaft on rhs of path (towards Ario) at foot of valley. Marked Ø by SIE. Goes to snow plug. unmarked.

6/11 Sheep shelter at base of 6ft high cliff 10m above 5/11.

7/11 Cabeza Forma 196° Cabeza Julagua ~~123~~ 131° Pozo de Mubarki 337°
Sheep shit cave. Large feature no cairn on col overlooking steep drop to Pozo los Texos. Wall down boulder slope to foot of 40' cliff. Floor covered in sheep shit. Crawl leads off. Ugh!

8/11 Perched Boulder Cave Cabeza Julagua 126° Cabeza Forma 227° ?Cabeza de los Compañeros 300°
This is almost on top of cairned ridge running NW from Cabeza Julagua, just on the rhs (away from Ario) no cairn. (Bearing 340)
Large obvious entrance with perched boulder over top, tarpaulin in entrance & bushes growing. Faded SIE mark 84 Ø. So I didn't add an OUCC one.
Ca 5m down to another perched boulder then 5m more, floor.
Right then also bears 340. This one's a must!

William

26/7/91.

53/5 Richard + Steve After coming out of the cave (undescended owing to steatopigas on part of Rich) we, too, walked into area 4 led by Michelle. Climbed up Cabeza Verde & the next one along, & in a col between latter & Cabeza Llambrin we had a look at a shaft entrance that we now know to be 12/4. It is clear from the situation of this cave and from the description by Gavin that it requires further attention. We also were afforded rather spectacular views over the Valle Extremeno and area 10. In the middle of this, on a broken piece of ground at the head of el Requexon we could see an obvious entrance, and one which would obviously be invisible from any other place. This entrance is in a position almost to good to be true – ie just beyond Hnetro del Rey, overlying the head of the rest of 2/7. After dinner Steve & I will go and try to climb to this entrance. Maybe finding the rest of 2/7 will make up for not getting past the fucking coffin lid.

Richard

53/11 26/7/'91 Richard, Steve & William

After Supper 3 pissed doctors with 25 expeditions & 102 years between them set off down the Toca path. Right by the path was a hole 2yds on the left shortly after the Jultayu path heads off. William climbed down a it goes (7/10). So we carried on to a green field where there was a manhole (8/10). This time I didn't climb down. So we went down the corner to the cave which turned out to be a solution pocket. Fortunately Steve had a good memory & we climbed up to a huge walk-in entrance 3m x 2m which sloped down gently for 10m until it turned right. There we were stopped by lack of illumination. Resolved to return tomorrow + all the rope + bolt kit. Climbed up to top to a rabbit hole. "Throw a rock down there William" Chuck "No, make it go down the hole" Clunk. Stretched back erotically to an audience believing we were on something. Is this the big one?

William

26/7/91. Tim Shaft hunting in Arcas.

Found and marked (discretely) 14 holes, all insignificant. in and below Llano de las Cuevas. Didn't have sufficient gear to look down 9/4, or 5/4; and didn't find 10/4 or 11/4 which I think are nearer Glanllyfen. The area is very shattered, but with most things choking quickly (nothing deeper than c 10m ~~?~~ that I found), but it looks more interesting as you get lower and near to the very steep part overlooking Cwmyfelin. ~~Details~~ ~~further~~ Also carpets marked ~~the~~ 5/4 - 9/4 caves for future reference. Details of the insignificant gravels later.

27/7/91

00.00 We were all safely tucked in bed after excitement, babble, and Cocoa.

04.00 William, like the rest can't sleep due to excitement for tomorrow's caving so gets up to put the water bottle under the fuente

04.15 Joan checks the time but decides its too early to get up to do the water bottle (see 04.00)

05.35 Joan checks time but falls asleep whilst doing so

06.15 Joan gets up to do water bottle, finds it mysteriously under the fuente and climbs upwards to see the dawn. Very nice dawn too!

07.15 Joan returns, camp seems quiet.

08.15 Steve has kept down to 53/5 to get his gear. Tim is making brekky, Richard is cutting rope with William, Michelle is considering the world + her lenses, Gavin is on the mend after a hot day yesterday, Joan is wishing that it was last night so that another 6 hrs sleep could be had.

10.30 The party finally depart for 9/10

10.30 → onwards = tenter-hooks are the order of the day.

12.00 wash-up. Feel bored by oat-pan

13.45 Rescue 2/3rds water container from Refugio

62

15.05 27/7/91

Is it a plane? Is it a bird? No! It's super-calf.
Hurtling through space at nearly 6 miles an hour this nifty bovine races across the grassy slopes, down through the dips, up over the hills, away across the plains to find the new world of BIGERIC.
Here it comes, super-calf, flying like a soaring aeroplane with one fell swoop it lands in BIGERIC where shade is often found, only to find the evil cross-eyed mean-faced villain of peace EL WARBLEFLY
They face it out across the tent; Super-calf goes for his tail, El Warblefly goes for his proboscis and the fight is on. Slowly they advance until Supercalf sees the fluorescent green of El Warble fly's eyes. The searing heat is intense, 37.8°C in the shade. The watching crowd of Tulipan, Noville, and 2 packets of carrots gasp as the fight falls through. Supercalf hurls his tail high to swat El Warblefly. El warblefly turns and in a streak of yellow-bellied-ness, the kind of yellow that perfectly matches those mean glistening eyes, flies the tent. Supercalf turns and hurtles away to save the universe from such evil villains as El warblefly yet again and again.
AND/ The moral of this tale is DON'T FIX TACKLE BAGS IN THE MIDDAY HEAT, IT ADLES YOUR BRAIN.
PS. A cow did run straight through big Eric though!
JA

I THINK THAT WE SHOULD START TO STERELIZE THE WATER UP HERE. So that it doesn't reproduce?
Our water container is having a bit of a battering from dirty (i.e. dung) covered hands filling water containers directly over ours, SO DRINK HOT DRINKS, OR PRE-BOIL THE AGUA

Goodbye Ario for ? a year
boohoohoo!
Joan

9/10

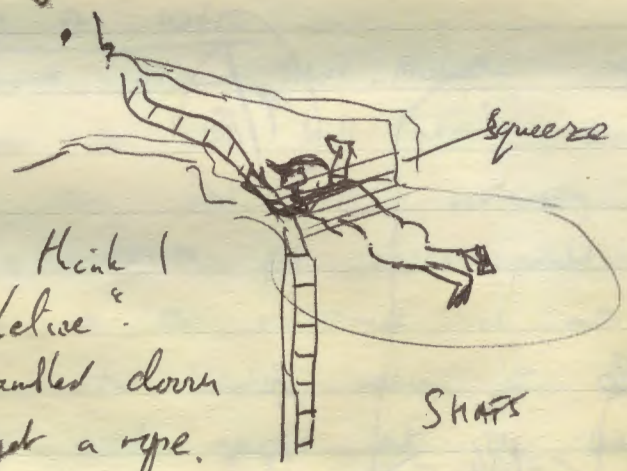
[Note - we ~~re~~ renumbered the caves so that

7/10 = one by the path
8/10 = "manhole in field"
9/10 = one top of ridge
10/10 = big promising entrance.

After futtling about in 10/10 (of which more later, no doubt), Richard & I went up to 9/10.

I threw rocks in but they were not heard in 10/10.

A ladder was put down. I attempted to squeeze in. Suddenly I found myself in a Paul Cooper situation. Large shaft behind me, only shoulders holding me in. Ladder would be a long way away.



"Richard, I think I need a lifeline".
Richard scrambled down to 10/10 to get a rope.
I lay in the squeeze listening to my heartbeat & producing the odd fart which reverberated wonderfully in the shaft behind.

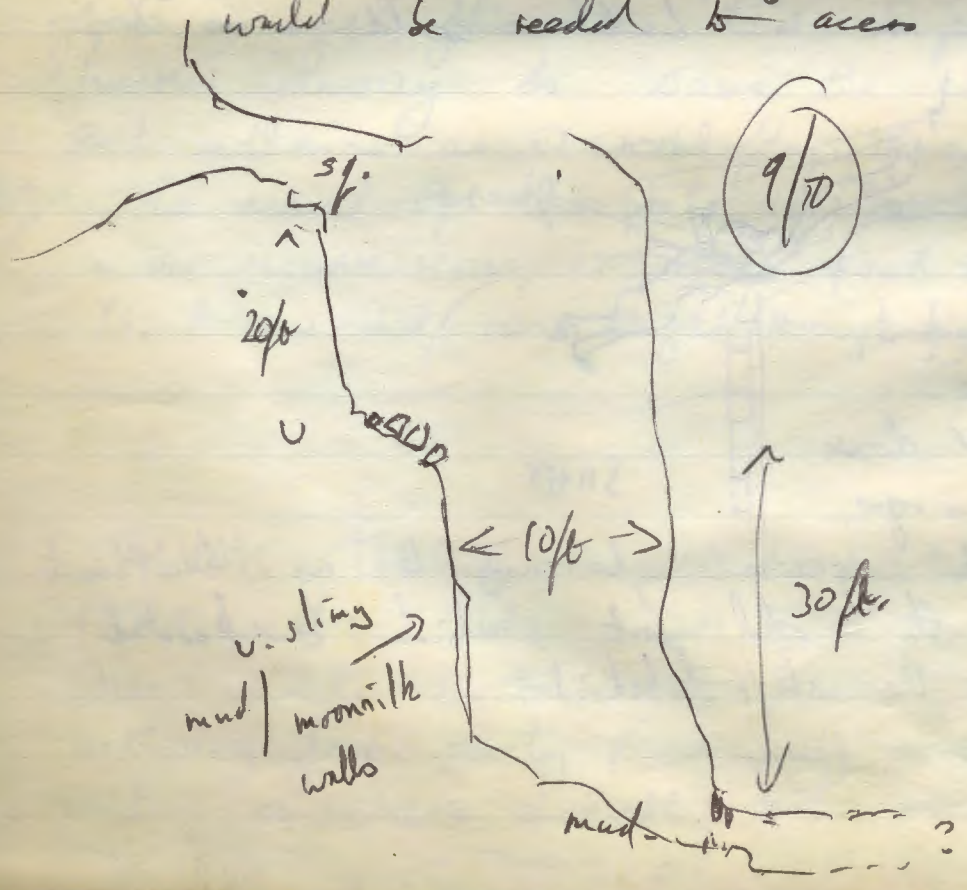
Eventually I won all to climb down.
The shaft continued! Passage at the bottom!

The eventual scheme worked out was:
- SCR descend ladder to ledge, clip at to ladder & put on SRT kit.
- ~~RG~~ SCR pulls down enough rope to ~~reach~~ reach bottom of shaft
- RG ties rope so that SCR ~~&~~ can abseil down.
- SCR goes to bottom checks it out, proceeds back to ladder, 'dekits', and is lifted back thro squeeze by RG.

RESULT: This worked but the shaft was not promising. There is a passage at the bottom, ~~Dr~~ with a rift* beyond. I couldn't quite see a way on, but I couldn't see a blockage either.

Some steel breaking & a rock removal would be needed to access it.

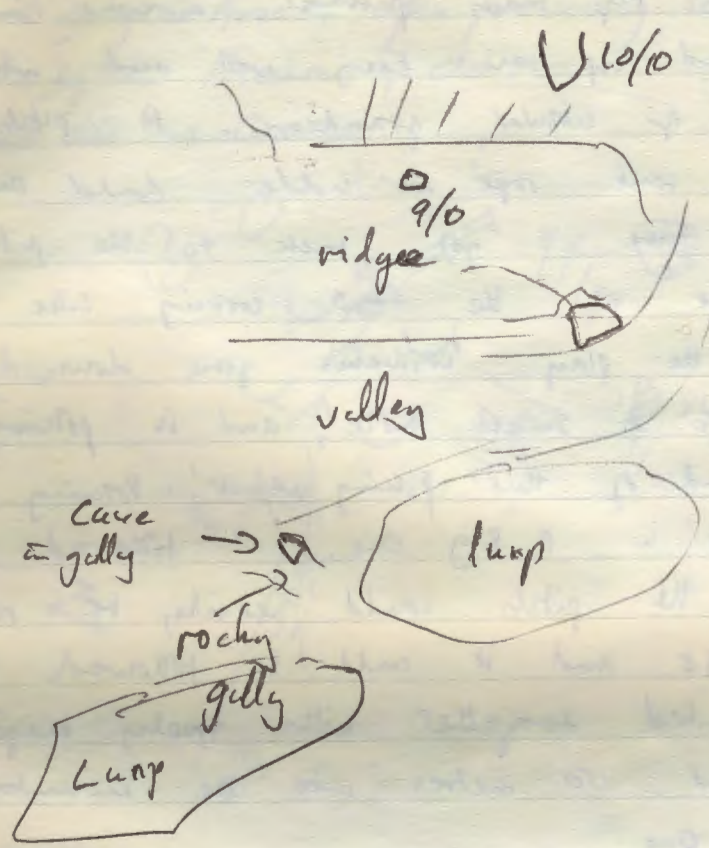
9/10



* rift is body-sized in width & ~ 3/t high.

One for Tim, I think.

On the way back, I found another cave(?), in the first descent after the ridge at 11/10



Steve

Bye Bye!

Herge's Exploration of 10/10

Tim, Richard, William, Steve, Michelle.

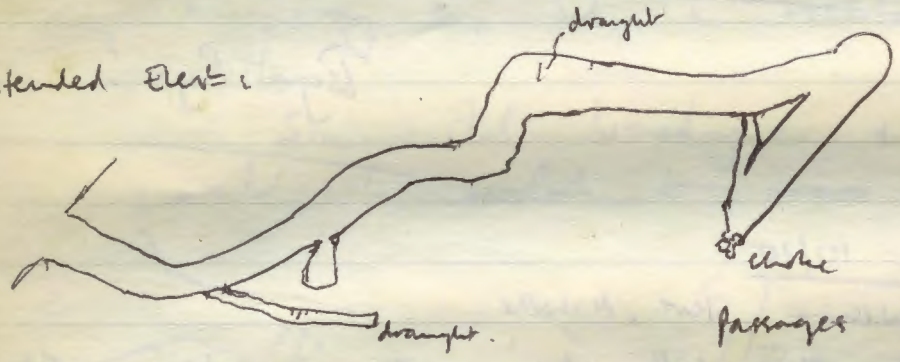
We minced down to the hill above 10/10 numbering the caves along the way but not looking at any of them — we were saving ourselves for 10/10 could it be the big one? The climb down to the entrance is not easy, and Michelle & Tim who hadn't seen it ~~[illegible]~~ before, threw off their packs and gaped at the handsome entrance. Tim was suitably impressed, Michelle suitably unimpressed. Could it be the big one?

We kitted up and in we went, down the majestic passage, round a majestic corner, up an awsome ramp and along more of the majestic passage. A small descending

heading iff was pushed by RG + WS but it choked in stall, and despite the draught there, was clearly not the Big One. Back to the big main passage, awsome in its majesty ... RG climbed up an easy wall and into a continuation passage of circular grandeur. A pitch! I went back to get some rope n ladder. Could this be a big one? By the time I got back to the pitch Michelle was sat alone at the top looking like Mrs Lincoln at the end of the play. 'William's gone down there' she said pointing to a small hole, 'and is poking about!' I didn't like the sound of this poking about'. Poking about is not what you do in A Big One. I followed William down. The bottom of the pitch could easily be reached through the little hole and it could be followed down to a pile of boulders cemented together with lovely majestic mud. The cave was finished 150 metres into the mountain. I let out a fart. A Big One.

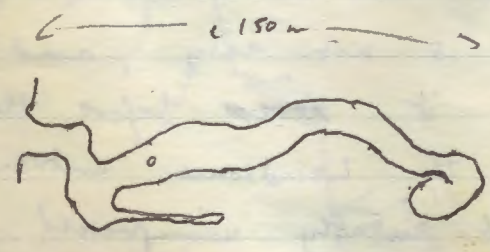
Richard.

Extended Elevt:



passages 2-4 m wide.

Plan:

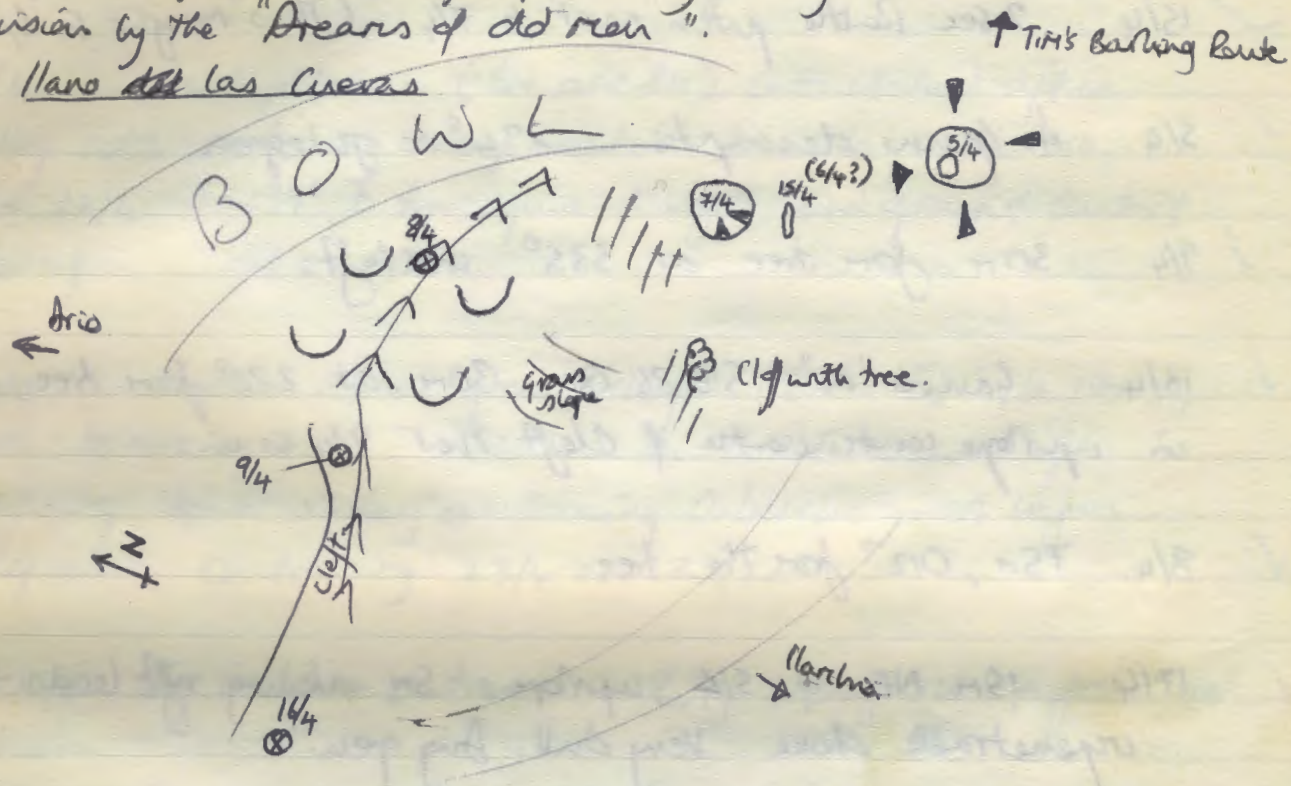


Bill + Tim surveyed it.

28th July 1991.

I (TIM) now feel able to report my series of insignificant finds of 26th July in Area 4, after previously being silenced into submission by the "Dreams of old men".

Llano ~~del~~ las Cuevas



Llano las Cuevas is a jumble of depressions down the valley directly below the ridge between Cabeza Julagua and Cabeza del Cura. It is marked by a small tree sticking out of a small cliff facing NW. Cabeza Julagua is on a bearing of c 297° from the tree, which is a good shade spot.

The following are entrances down the steepening valley (series of depressions) that faces much NE into the gorge towards Cullerielo, starting from the lowest ridge above the depression of 5/4. (except for bearings and descriptions of those in the cave.)

✓ 13/4. Insignificant partially choked cleft in cliff facing gorge (roughly NE) 30m below top of ridge at bottom of cave near 5/4. Small pit contains remains, with rattling drop under boulders. No draught.

✓ 14/4. Crawl-in entrance above 13/4, going up, at top of small ~~cliff~~ cleft in cliff. Insignificant

✓ 7/4. 295° to Cabeza Julagmen. 40m SW of the tree, and slightly up-slope (down valley).

✓ 15/4 2sec Rattle pitch next to 7/4. (This might be 6/4)

✓ 5/4. As Gamin's description: 294° to Julagmen.

✓ 9/4 30m from tree at 335°, in cleft.

✓ 16/4. Gamin "a" SIE 86 ⊗ 30m, at 288° from tree, in upslope continuation of cleft that 9/4 is in.

✓ 8/4. 75m, 012° from the tree

✓ 17/4 15m NE of 5/4, upslope. 5m sloping right leads to impenetrable chove. Very dull. Dug open.

✓ 18/4. open entrance down valley from first green depression over ridge E of 5/4, with picturesque Rock arch, leads to chove. Possible dig, but no draught. Other end of rift also choved.

✓ 19/4. Hole in rock face in N's face of depression just before the valley goes steep. Leads quickly to animal shelter. No draught. Pointless.

✓ 20/4. Rock shelter in left wall of sheltered valley N of 19/4 just below tree. Hopeless.

✓ 21/4. Short passage choves. Entrance in small rock buttress at end of valley depression before valley goes very steep. Alt c 1465m

✓ 22/4 Left entrance in shattered depression leads 10-15M past snow plug to choke. Up to right 10M to choked inlet. Depression is just before valley down goes steep. Alt. c 1435M

23/4. Dual pitches (6M and 8M) into choked rift in valley notch overlooking steep section down to Cuilierelro, 5M from 22/4. 139° to top spike of right hand group of central rama. Alt c. 1435M.

24/4. Another rearrangters shaft (8M and 10) into choke, with bottom entrance. Located in wide rock cleft running down valley overlooking Cuilierelro, just before depression containing 23/4 and 23/4.

~~26~~ 25/4 Big walk-in entrance in ⓒ of valley over lip from 5/4. chokes.

26/4. Goat shelter (with water running) 150M c SE of 5/4 high up on bank. Doesn't do anything remotely interesting

AREA 10.

7/10 53° to Caleza Llarchia
~~[illegible]~~ 214° to Jultayu (visible top)
left of Trea Path in valley ~~[illegible]~~ running down from Jultayu. Short drop into tight rift.

8/10 Access cover pot. ~~[illegible]~~ 56° to Llarchia
357° to Verde.
150M left of Trea path on green col. 3M deep pit, 2M on bottom, boulder floor, ½M hole at top. Very windy.

9/10 45° to Llarchia. 344° to verde. Near col top before drop into extremero - [See Steve's Report of Yesterday].

10/10. 44° to Llarelva
347° to Verde
c 1510m Alt.
"Contrcarte on the gypsum wall - Llarelva" (Justine's A-hole)
050° from 10/10 + 0.5° Clino.

11/10. Shaft with wedged boulder top - squeezable. In shattered wedge running towards Exterieiro.
Cabeza Llarelva 058°
Verde 003°
Alt. c. 1555m.
Ledge 2m below surface leads to 8m pitch, and further 4m boulder slope down to Chave. Climb up to right leads to choked inlet.

12/10. 15m from 8/10 - Another Access cover hole ~~with~~ covered by a large boulder. Chaves after 2m. "S" shaped rift.
Llarelva 047°
Verde 357°.
Gavin had earlier dismissed it as not even worth mentioning.

Dear expo-obsessed photographer,
The Polish death-rig pendule deserves a photo - There's a pair of 20ft stalagmites that will look brill with someone threading down past. But since its "off route", we'll be taking the pendule out very soon....
Tim.

15/5 Lament
Why is it
Oh why is it
Some people shit
Where others sit.

15/5 Lament II
I can't begin to contemplate
Why some would choose to defecate
And let their fresh ablutions land
In places where I used to stand

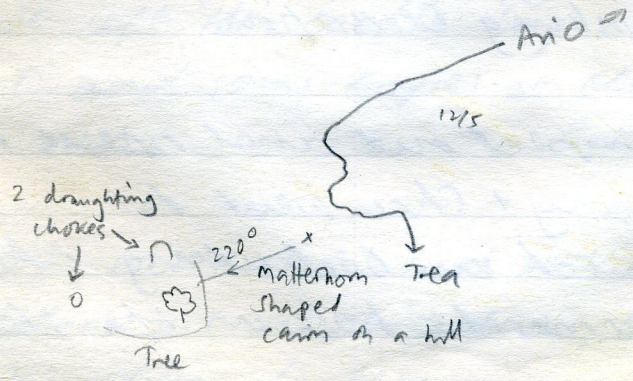
10/10 a.k.a. Cave of the Old Mens' Dream
a.k.a Cueva del Bullshit
a.k.a 2/10

Eventually managed to find the entrance and recognised it as 2/10, discovered by Iestyn in '89 and bottomed by (I think) Dirk and I last year. By the way this is certainly not the biggest entrance we've never found, nor is the passage the size of the 2/7 streamway, contrary to what I'd been told: At least we surveyed & marked it

W.

28/7
Looking for 3/10 Richard.

Armed with Iestyn's description, I climbed the green ridge up to Jultayn & there was indeed a big bowl over the otherside at about the right height. Over I went & down a v. hairy rebecco path. Iestyn's crack lay (gaped?) just where it should have & so I carefully traversed across... carefully, because any stones I dislodged hurtled down at great speed all the way to Corrobie in the canal de Trea. The crack turned out to be impenetrable with no cave at all. Was this not Iestyn's crack? The description fitted too well. Maybe he was bullshitting.
On the way back I found two profoundly draughting chokes which could well do with further attention...



Richard

Skull - Tony 29 7 91 Call out ~~8~~ 00 00 hrs next day

2/7

Paul, Dirk, Chris + Jenny go camping 25th – 28th July

Day 1 Went down to camp without any traumas, except for forgetting parafin. Paul had to go out to fetch some. We spent a couple of hours looking for the lost tackle bag. Chris abseiled down the rift at the top of the crash pad – the rope didn't reach the bottom, and he didn't find the bag.

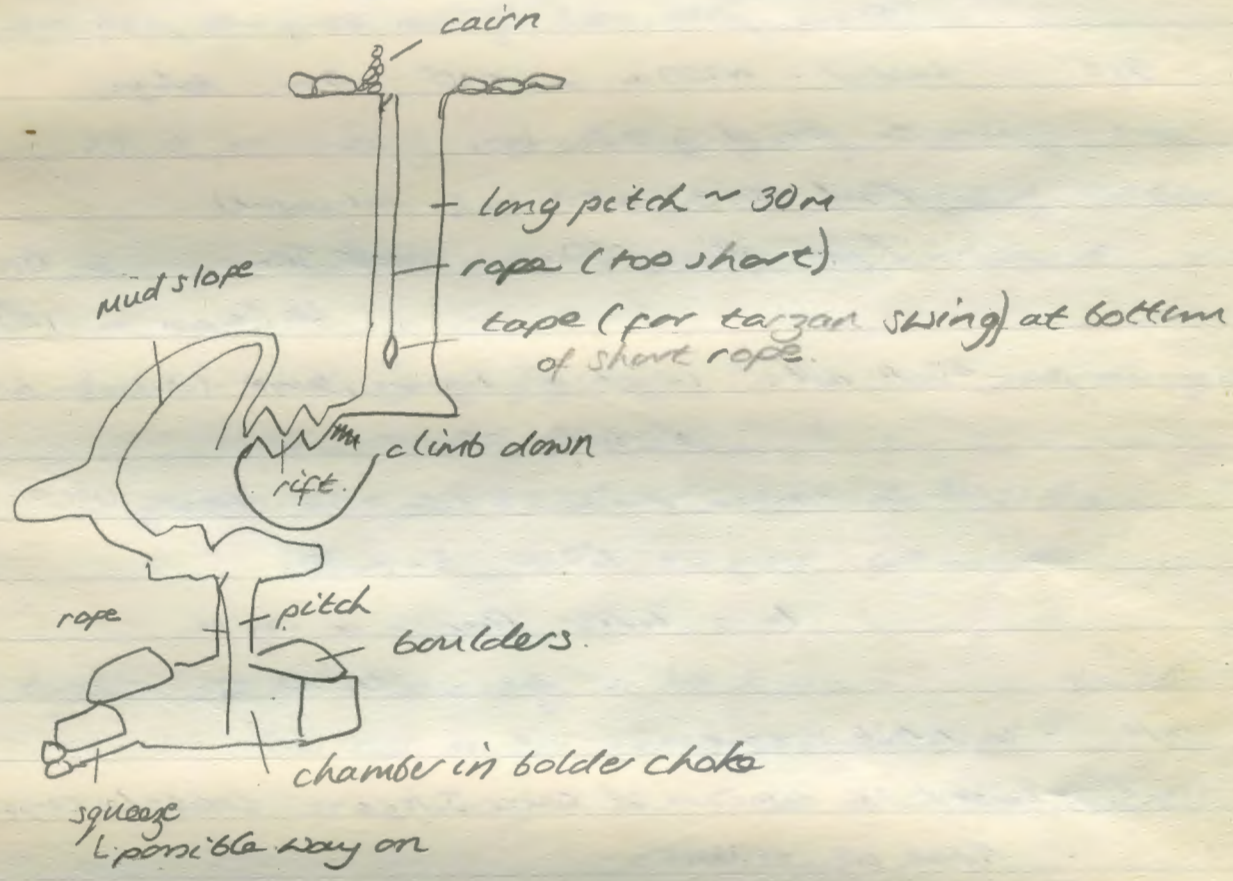
Day 2 Spent the day investigating 'Tims new bit' near Egbert. Paul + Jenny removed rocks and boulders from a dig at the far end of the muddy phreatic tube (where water can be heard – probably choke Egbert). Dirk and Chris investigated the digs, or lack of, at the top of the climbs. All to no avail; nothing amazing was discovered. On the way back to camp, Paul re-rigged the line over the stream, so its back to the original 'Denshams Dunking Deviation'.

Day 3 Paul + Dirk wimped out and spent the day in ~~bed~~ pits. Jenny + Chris went to the undescended pitch in bod along the left hand wall. (from the hole in the floor

with a short traverse line spanning it, walk left up a boulder slope until you reach a pitch with a large cairn marking its presence)

WE FOUND NEW CAVE !! Although not in a very helpful place, from the point of view of circumventing Egbert.

The new bits look like this:



We took rope off the traverses in soup dragon (the ones which were double rigged) and from a traverse line near the top of the ascent into bod from the streamway.

We left the tackle bag with spare rope, 2 bolting kits and some tapes at the 'hole in the floor' traverse in bod.

Day 4 Came out Dirk was ill and slow. Jenny had a fit in paradise, but otherwise everyone O.K. Chris, the hero, carried the tackle bag through the rifts.

29/7/91 Area 11 Paul

Explored area 11, behind & to right of refugio.
Located & explored 4 new caves, 2 to almost certain
collision, 1 with potential needing major surgery, 1
with reasonable potential with lots more work
Also had look at starts at 8/11 & 2/11
(Someone please check my compass bearings – the pencils contain metal!)

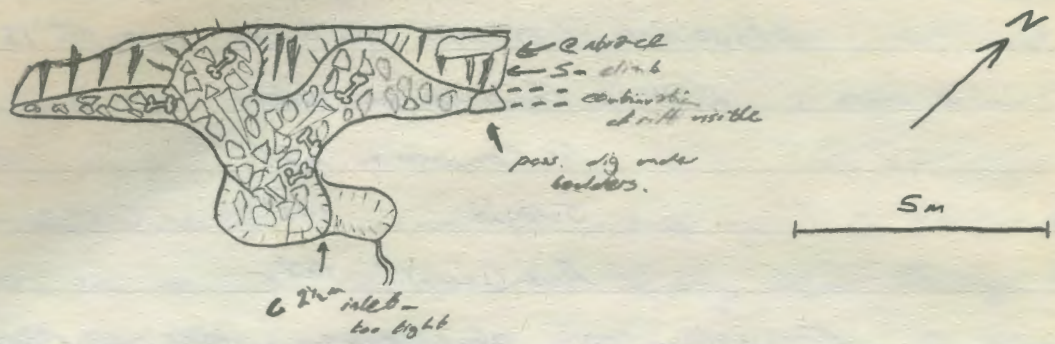
9/11 Located – ~200 m on 020° from Refugio,
on second green ridge.
Faint s.i.e. mark (wren's nest)
Approx alt 1630 m, Cerro Julogua on 085°
" Las Campanas on 140°

Description – 40 ft shaft (rigged off long wire, ladder (climb down to.), and climb
at bottom)
– entrance dimensions – 1.5m x 5m trending 030°
opening out to 3m x 10m
to a boulder floor – no way on

10/11 – 'Leg of Mutton' cave
– Located on NW side of Cerro Julogua, Cerro Las Campanas on 352°
Approx alt 1605 m
– Entrance at lower end of large obvious cleft running down across
hillside – marked OUCC 10/11

Description – Entrance 'squeeze' through boulders is followed by a 5m climb
to floor of chamber, which is boulder-y & and slopes
towards alcove. No way on from alcove, but climb up 2½ m
reveals smaller alcove to left, with inlet (too tight) beyond.
The far end of the chamber has no way on, but
underneath the entrance climb the boulders can be dug
away to reveal more beyond – need more digging & probably hammering, all seems to be combination of
surface fracture. Seems limited potential only.

10/11 - Grade 1 survey - plan



11/11 20 ft pit - hardly worth effort - very slippy, with mossy sides. possible dig at bottom into rift - but personally I'd not bother - smells like a thousand spaniards have piss'd down it.

Looked in green grassy gryke, 15m N of green path running east from Cobezo los Campanos.

Cobezo los Campanos, ~275° Apx Alt 1575m

" Forno 220° Left unmarked

12/11 Location S side of same valley as 2/11 & 11/11 Apx alt 1580m

Same height as 2/11 - clearly visible from 2/11

10m SW of green path from Cobezo los Campanos (on 298°)

Cobezo Forno on 210°

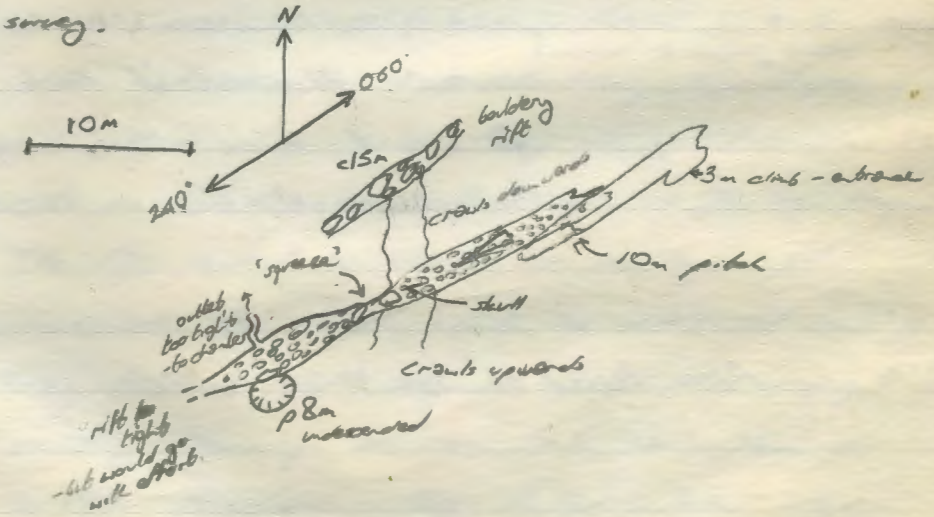
Description - Hopeful looking rift leading southwards soon gets to point where minor climbing/contortions may be needed. But doesn't look hopelessly tight - could go without much effort. Only one of these 4 caves I'd bother giving another look.

Also looked at 2/11 & 8/11 - P.T.O.

2/11 - Located to N side of valley containing 11/11 & 12/11.
at same level as 11/11, 50m from path (approx Alt 1580 m)
Cabeza Forno on 225°
" Los Campanas on 270°
" Julagua 140°
Arno (saddle) 180°
From valley, cairn above entrance visible. Marked 2/11 OUCC (Cooley)

Description - Climb down 3m in entrance cleft to head of ladder pitch (12m)
(rigged off natural & long wire, threaded above)
This leads at top of boulder rift chamber (gentle slope)
At lower (SWesterly) end, is a gentle 'squeeze' through to continuation of rifts. Before however, crawls lead off either side - upwards to left, downwards to right. These latter leading down to the top of a parallel rift that can be traversed down 15m to boulders. Space can be seen downwards beyond boulders.
Straight on through 'squeeze', the chamber continues to where it again closes down too tight.
To the right an outlet too cut down into another chamber, but this way is currently impossible, needing lowering
To the left an unexamined 8m pot remains unexamined.
- Cave trends 240°/060°

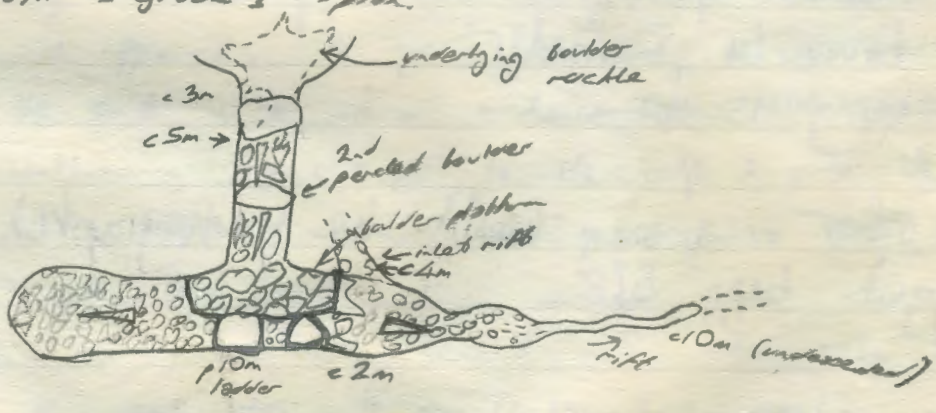
Grade 1 plan survey.



8/11 – Looking at the obvious entrance, anyone would be as optimistic as Bill, but having been down the entrance pitch, well, I have to take the role of pessimist and say - it looks hopeless!

Description - climbing down past the plastic sheet an outward 5m climb takes you down to the top of a boulder slope. Doubling back under, crawls lead off into a boulder pile. Carrying on down the slope though takes you under a perched boulder, to a ~~large~~ platform at the top of the pitches. The ~~shaft~~ here seems to consist of 2 or 3 parallel shafts, one to the right, the other(s) to the left. Rigging a ladder from a median wire around one of the perched boulders, a boulder floor can be reached. To the right there is no way on, but climbing down to the left, the base of the other shafts can be reached. A rift leads off under the entrance, this seems to be a partially boulder filled inlet, without many signs of encouragement. But on the far side of the base of these shafts a large rift leads off, very reminiscent of the section just below 'Flying Pelicans'. Several routes are possible here, but the most obvious is following the widest part of this rift up an ascending slope in cream coloured rock, up to where it meets the ceiling, where a fairly sizable climb downwards descends - this appears to be ~ 10m, may be more - there seems to be nothing here really to stop progress.

8/11 - Grade 1 - plan



53/5 Gavin 29/7

Hammered the bottom rift with little success. The top of the rift can be followed until you can nearly see round the corner. The bottom is slightly more hopeful but demands a committing move which I didn't fancy. Exited very slowly, feeling completely wiped out.

Derigging Plan

1/8 – 4/8 Penultimate camp. DJM, ADS, DRB, AGB. Bring out anything which the final camp doesn't need and which can't be left underground until next year.
4/8 Derigging camp goes down. CFW, JEV + Z.
5/8 Camp moved back to Big Ledge.
6/8 Detackle out from Big Ledge. 2 people to come down from surface to help. Aim to derig most of the way up the shaft
7/8 Team of ~5 people to finish derigging shaft and bring out all tackle bags
9/8 Derig through rifts, all available people
10/8 – 12/8 Carry gear down hill
13/8 Beach party
14/8 Drive to Santander
15/8 Ferry sacks

All other caves should be photographed, surveyed & derigged by 5/8.

66/5 Richard William Tim.

William & I went over to the 'Valley of the dry Bones' to dig one of the draughting chokes. We got only as far as tying a rope to a boulder when we both went off looking for entrances near this most-promising-of-valleys.

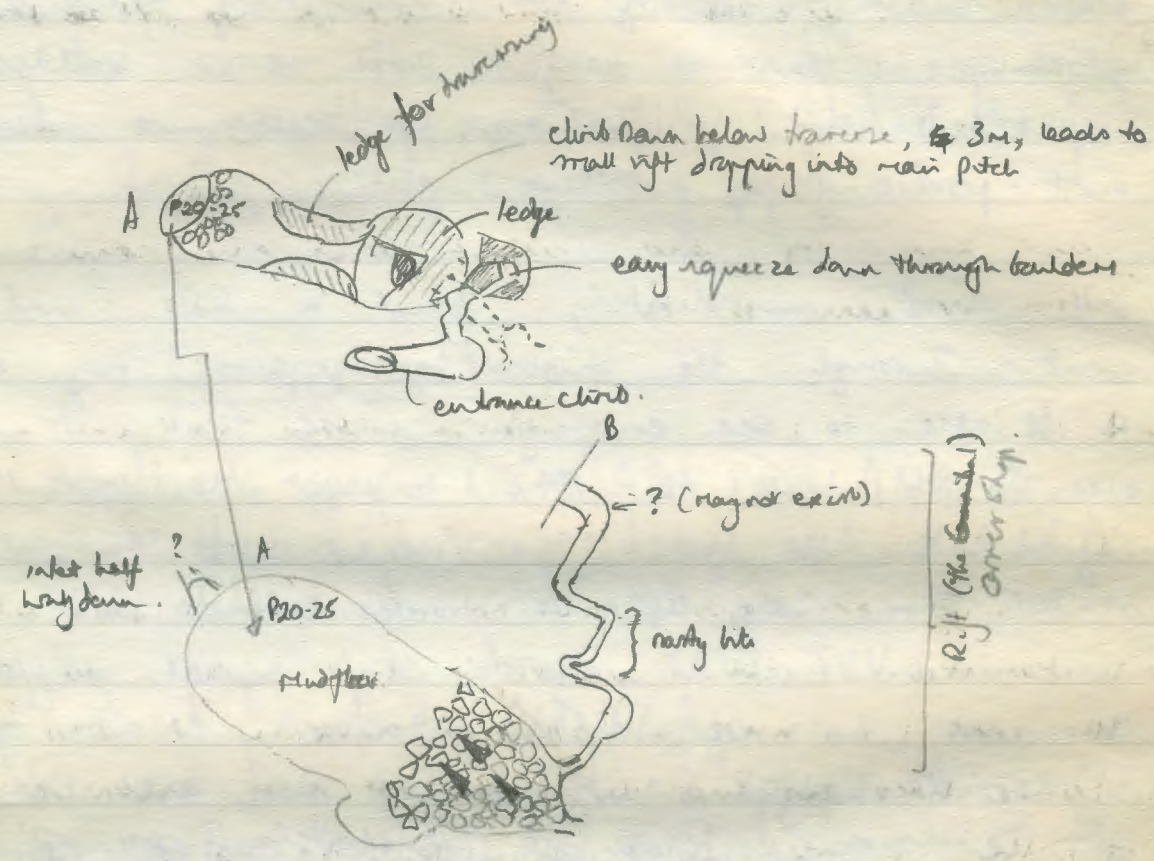
Bill almost immediately found a hole and I went through the first squeeze in my shorts to be able to see enough to see that it went. We skipped back to Ario to get the essential ingredients for a 1991 Picos push — SRT gear, hammer, crowbar, Tim. We left the trowel behind.

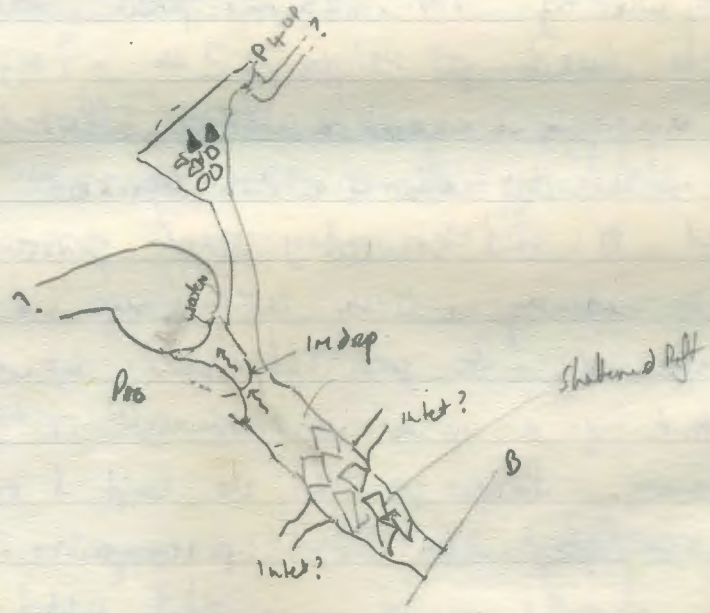
The cave has an idiotic entrance, a 1m hole at waist height which has a 7m climb down to the first squeeze, which is immediately followed by the second. Both are easy. The c.25 m pitch is rigged on a Y and is smashing. It lands in a big chamber from which issues a tiny meandro. Tim inserted himself into this, armed with a hammer. For the next 2 hours the rift resonated to the merry sound of hammering banging farting & swearing. Much later, after a prolonged pause, Tim re-appeared. 'It goes' he said & we were content. At the end is a 10 m undescended pitch, with the passage continuing. Passages to the left & over the top were not explored but a passage to the right led Tim to a chamber with a midgit rift.
The horrible rift could be eased with hammering & chiseling if the cave were to go (subjunctive mood).
This isn't the Big One — could it be the Little One?

Richard

PTO for Grade 1 survey.

Route 66, Grade 1 Survey. 1 place





How to do the nasty bits: Head or feet first through rift, ~~with facing~~ right ~~of rift~~ of the rift, until right hand corner "Sit" with ~~feet~~ legs down rift, then move up into rift on left side, ~~facing~~ forwards. This is the crux, as either legs ~~fail to~~ fill up into rift ~~be~~ round the corner, or thighs jam in rift before (This could be remedied with a hammer). The next left-hand corner is probably best done on the way ----

David and Tony have noticed that our camp has not been written up, so:

28/7/91 — 25/7/91 : fourth camp: Tony, Dave L, Pauline, David

Day 1

David and Tony went down in fine style, followed closely by Dave and Pauline. We spent an hour and a half in J.A looking for the drill, I found a jammer dropped by Dave H from the same place as the drill, so we were looking in the right place but we didn't find anything.

Got to camp at 8.30, ate our Raven meals and went to bed.

Day 2

Rose at 7.45 am and surveyed the huge quantities of food that we had been left by the previous camp

Dave and Pauline went to colostomy climb and got very frightened by some nasty nut-points. They then went to Egbert and had a look up some climbs in Tim's Bit before going back to camp, derigging Frankenstein's Monster (The pitch from Bod to the stream) on the way.

Tony and David went to Egbert and got scared on Frankenstein's Monster and on Denham's Sinking Sensation. We rengged the letter, and I got dumped in the stream when a belay failed on the first rig. I was very cold, so I had to rig another one to prevent the onset of hypothermia. Tony did same and climbing in Tim's Bit, then I did a bit of lobbing down, having got stuck above an enormous, exposed drop. We looked at the muddy pothole in

Tim's bit, and found an apparent continuation at which we dug for a short while. That night we ate no Raven food, having decided that they were too nasty.

Day 3

Exhausted by our efforts of the previous day we rose late. Tony and David set off first and resurrected Pimpernel pitch. We went back to Tim's bit and dug some more of the choke. We recovered some rigging gear then looked at the choke up the mud slope where the stream goes right. We watched Pauline re-engineering the streamway while placing a bolt, then returned to camp. David and Pauline went to colodonny and began to rerig it. Dave dropped the bolt driver into the stream, and was so high up that he was able to utter four rude words before it hit the water. Pauline put a bolt in, to replace the natural she had knocked off earlier. Time pressure forced them to return to camp before completing the re-rig, but they managed to retrieve the driver from the stream using an open maillon as a fish hook.

We ate no Raven food. I washed all my overall and caving kit.

Day 4

We rose at an ungodly hour. We ate no Manflakes. Having packed the previous night we were away early and out in daylight.

David

--- Right-hand wide down (though I've started out a vital column to make it easier), so do a "roll" in the rift ~~with~~ before the corner. The following bits of rift are less difficult, and can either be done in the roof, or by dropping down into the bottom at more point. TJH

30th July, Reporting trip of 22nd July 1991.

William + Tim, 53/5. In search of the draught...

William reran the pohth pendule to place Cotts on the far side, and we rigged the 100m Rope down and up. We then swung down into the Cotton hole, and found... another tight rift. Tim went round the first corner, but decided against the rest because it wasn't draughting. We then barriered at a vital squeeze (or two) higher up after finding a climb up through the crystal boulder chaos. This route doesn't draught either, but its not finished - over a vital bar, into a crystal alcove, then through a vital squeeze down into a drop down to another alcove where the tight route between calcite and sloping roof of the (wall) of the rift continues horizontally. We then looked at the climb up. Its a bit sloppy, but lots of good holds on the left, and there is natural for protection. Comes out over the top of PPP, and leads to a muddy landing or, via a more exposed but simple climb, to the "Cement garden" - a good chamber, well decorated, overlooking the 20ft stalagtites in PPP roof, with a calcite-then-mud slope up into a roof passage. This ends in a pool, and a further climb up with a possible lead to the right which I didn't look at.

84

"We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time" [Little Gidding]

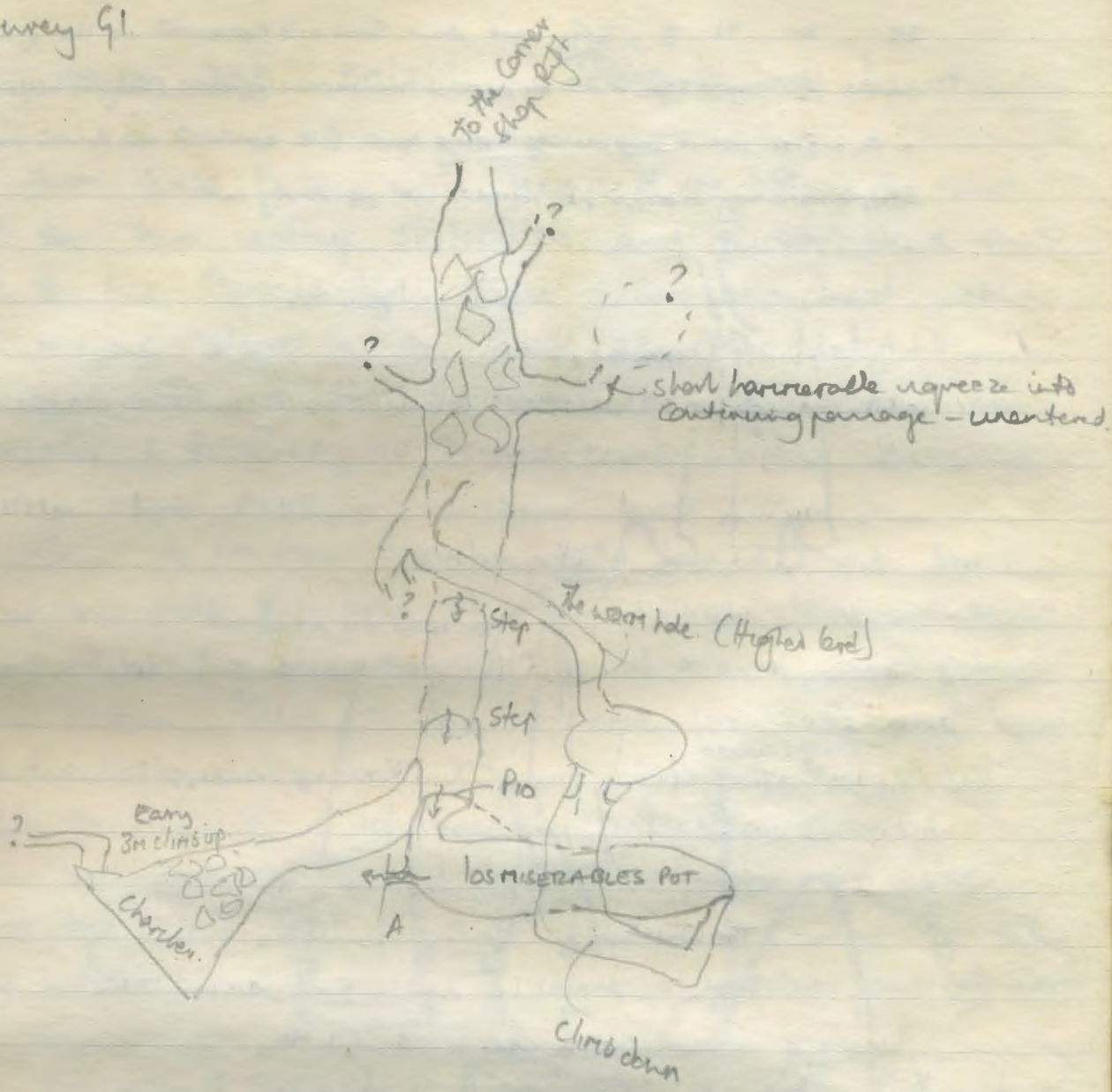
30th July 1991.

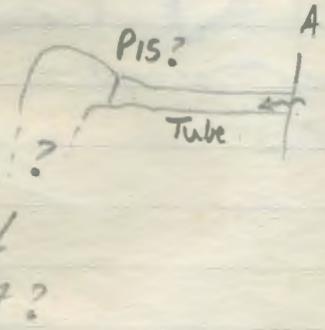
Tim + Jenny. 66/5

Forgot or dropped almost everything at one point or another, but eventually got through the rift ["The Corner Shop"] and Jenny rigged and descended the second pot "Les Miserables" - 8-10m into a small pool. This pot can also be entered from the other end (it's a rift pot) via a climb down and final pitch which you get to via the worm hole - a route over the top. Leading off Les Miserables is a smooth cleft-shaped tube which continues (not tight, no harness, honest) to a drop down then the next pitch .... The rock is good for bolting, but I thought it should be done by someone ~~with more~~ who wouldn't leave yet more dodgy bolts. So, it still goes ..... Everything needed for pushing (Maillons, Anchors, hangers, wedges, Driver, 30m rope), except the hammer (which is at the mouth of the Corner Shop, is at the sharp end.

Further back is a maze of leads

updated survey G1

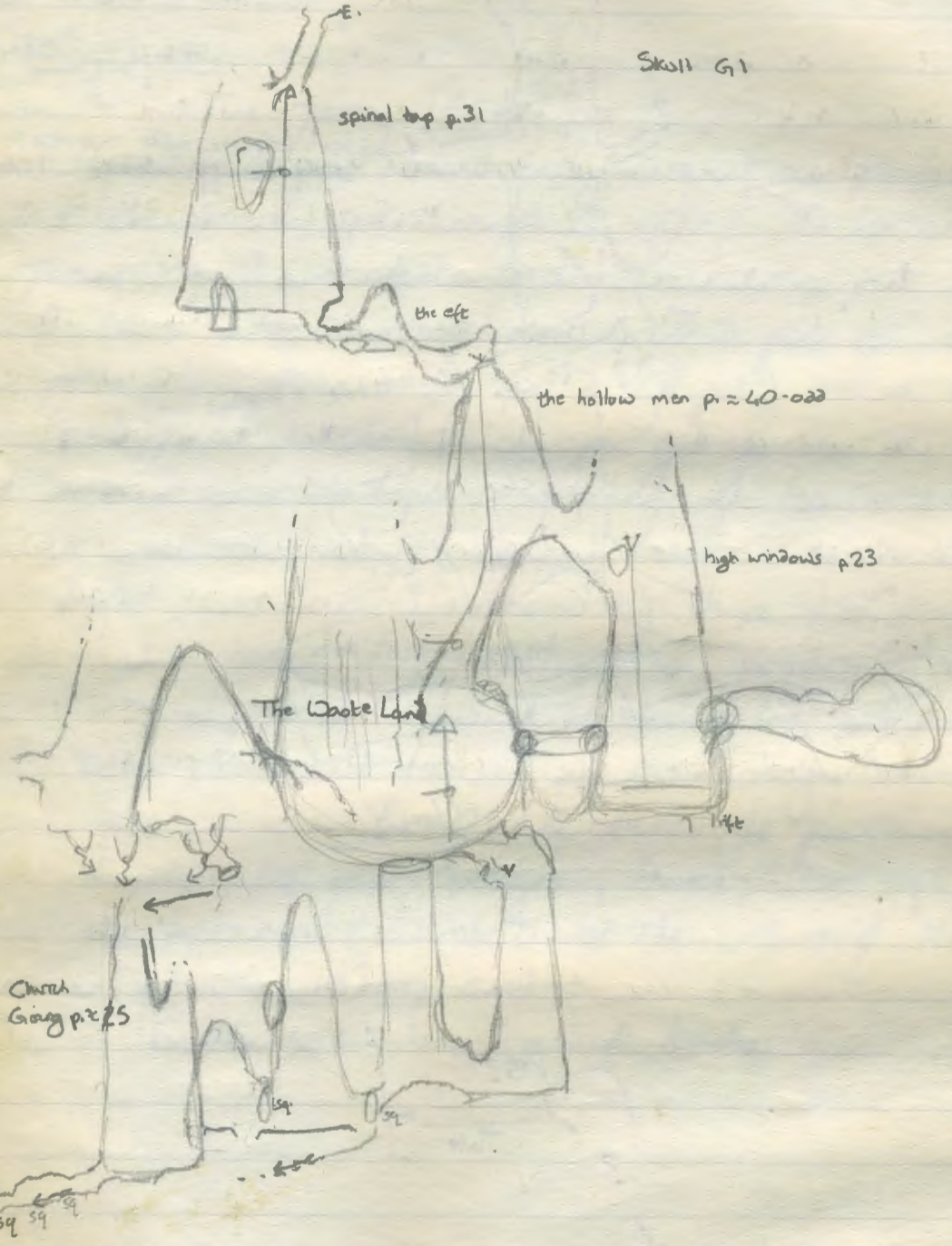




See you all in October ....

Jim

29 7 91. Tony went down Skull and hammered at the end. Passed a couple of squeezes, ended at another hammerable squeeze [only a little too small] a few feet from a large, echoey, dripping space. Felt committed and backed out. Headed out, Dropped remaining undropped pit, connects with pit already found.



Photography down 53/5 30/7/91 Dave B, William, David

We went down quite late, and headed for bottom of cave. Stopped at the two toothy stalactites and photographed our way back to the Pterodactyl. Some fun was had with non-functioning slave units. Back at Pterodactyl I fell a few feet when a foothold disintegrated under me. Unfortuneately I suffered no permanent harm save a bruise to my upper arm.
We then went to 'Pointless Piranha' and found that the hammer for the bolt kit was missing. William lead up the chimb that Tim did free on 28/7/91. I followed Dave got cold at the bottom. There is now a rope the whole way up the chimb as explored by Tim. It is well belayed to cement garden, but is **not** suitable for prussiking - a jammer for protection should suffice. The way on mentioned by Tim remains unvisited, but at least the route to it is safe. [although the very top belay up the very last flowstone slope out of cement garden is not 100% reliable.]
We left, on the way I stopped to photograph a long straw, but William 'Smasher' stead broke it before it could be recorded for posterity. Took some pictures of the Pterodactyl and then exited the cave.

David

31/7/91 A Recipe:

Caver Stew

first catch your caver
Remove gear, reserving prussik bag and SRT kit
Wash thoroughly, taking particular care with ears
Seal into Inglesport bag & leave for three weeks, to obtain a gamey flavour.
Stuff with Raven food and the unidentified fluffy things from the bottom of the prussik bag.
Truss with SRT kit
Roast on Spit, or Hilti if spit not available, basting frequently with mud.
Serve, with pineapple ring in mouth, garnished with wellington boots.

David.

Could this recipe be anything to do with the fact that we are stuck here with no food.

Message for Gavin from Dave Lacey:
"If I am back at Base before midday of the day before the detackling camp, then I will go on the detackling camp". If he isn't then he won't.

David

31 July '91 66/5 "Sima 66" William & Tony

Neither of us felt like going caving today, but after a lot of faffing about finally managed to get our collective arses into gear. Walked over in sunshine (though cold wind) & showed Tony the valley of dry bones. I insisted on Tony wearing a helmet as large areas of the cave are loose.

And on down the pitch & through the rift. This proved not to be as bad as we thought - if you can get round the first bend ~~getting~~ going in, you've cracked it. I found I could turn over before bringing my legs out of the rift narrow rift at the bottom. Reached sizeable unstable passage with side-Bags passages going off in all directions & some water. Descended Los Miserables to a cold, drippy chamber with a Yorkshire-style rift leading off. (i.e. straight & smooth). This leads to a virtually unriggable pitch - head - minimal space & a good 20m drop. Spent more than an hour putting in a rather indifferent bolt in the only spot where I could get any swing at all on the hammer while Tony froze in the rift, then handed over to him. His solution was original - a request for me to bring some chock-stones from 1" = ; [illegible] chamber. Finally managed a Y hang off two chock-stones + ~~a rather~~ a deviation ~~where~~ about 20 feet down to give a fine 20m pitch with a surprisingly OK take-off. The stones rock, though when you get off the pitch. At the foot of the pitch is an amazing leading rift heading down at an angle of 60-70°, all free-climbable with care. There's a small ripping square near the bottom which could be hammered. Don't ask me how long it is, but a very ~~very~~ rough guestimate is a 30m descent, i.e. the cave around 100m deep. At the bottom, the rift turns left & goes horizontal ~~& tight~~ ~~& [illegible]~~ into a gravel, while the water disappears to ½" wide crack. The passage seems to continue, but anything could happen.

Out, finding the rift much easier than going in. Time ~~wandering~~ wandering round ca. 7 hr.

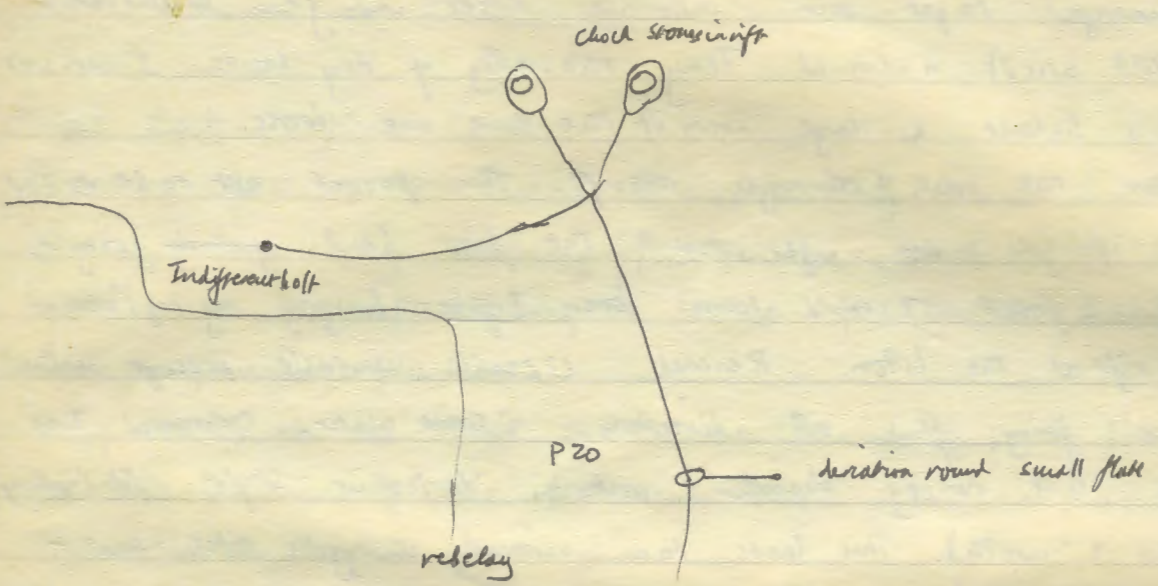
Notes

a) Rigging gear all at the foot of Los Miserables, except for the hammer which has been left at the start of corner-shop rift. Consists of:

Lots of Spits (>10)	No maillons (well maybe one) or Krabs
3 wedges	1 long wire belay
Some petzl twist hangers (? about 4)	No tape
Drive	

90

b) Too much trust is being placed in the chock stones. At the moment, the rig is like this:



In the short term, a bolt needs placing ~~below the~~ ~~co~~ where the pitch widens out below the take-off. In the longer term, staples should replace the chock-stones. The rebelay would then become a deviation.

c

~~[illegible] of [illegible] of 160ft~~

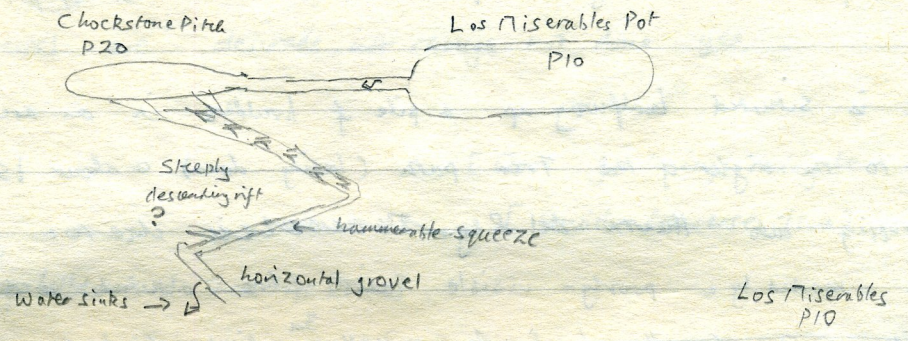
c) The rigged route down Los Miserables & beyond is following very young & narrow small passage. There may well be a better route over the top; the other leads want a good looking over, though being so close to the surface they make be choked with boulders. ~~The rigged route has~~ The rigged route has also pass. the valley of Dry Bones. If an entrance would be found from ~~d) The rigged route seems to have bypassed the valley~~ there, it would bypass the rift.

d) I've now found a club knot to put on the first pitch. The one on the chockstone pitch is mine

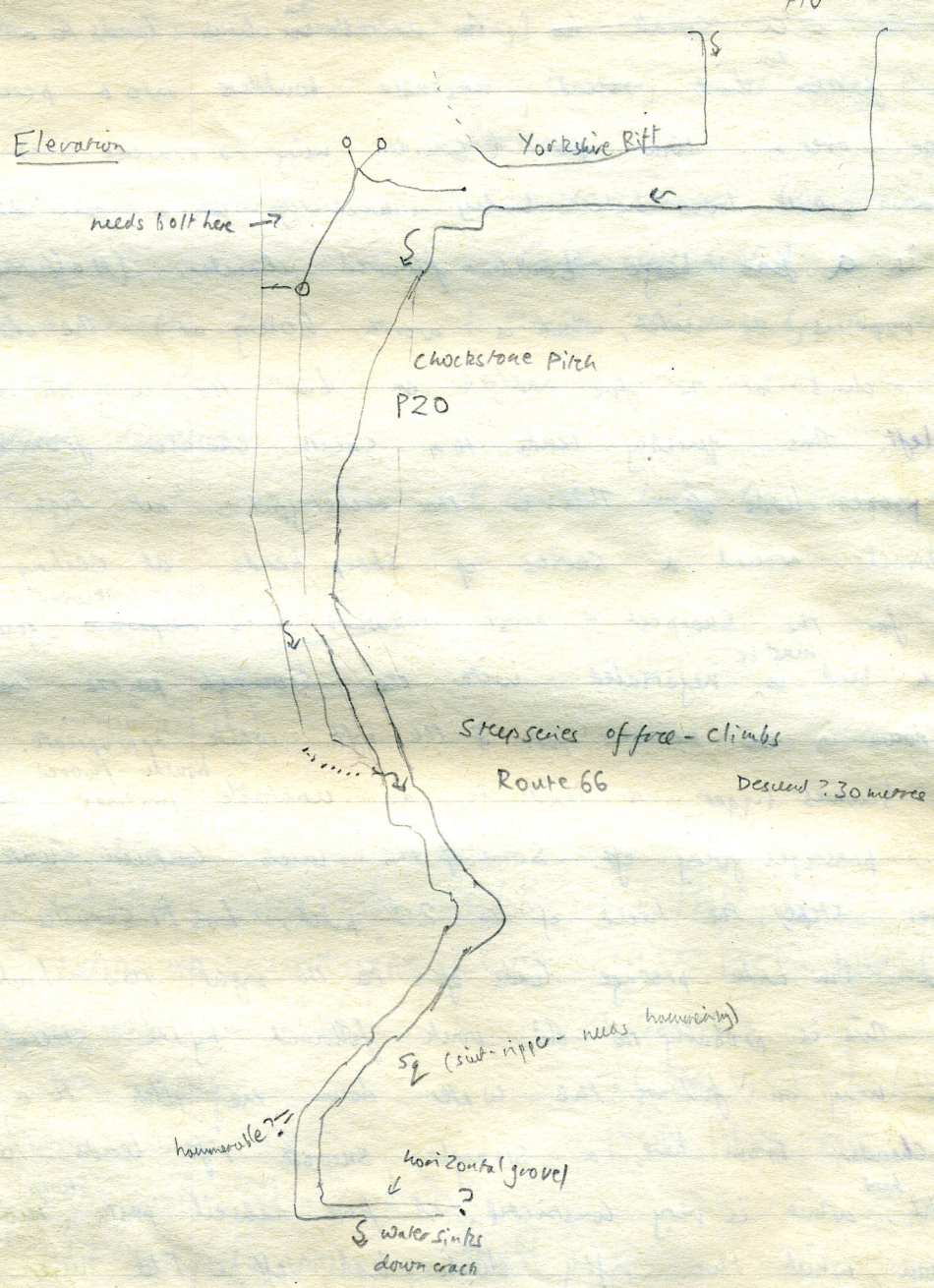
William

Continuation of Stream survey of 66/5 (see Tim's notes for bit above Los Miserables)

Plan



Elevation



1/Pay 66/5 "Sima 66" Description

Entrance co-ords:

Plans on trips of 28, 30 & 31 July. write-ups cover entrance to limit of push

The entrance is situated halfway up a pile of boulders in an area of Shakeholes about 40m to the right of the Trea path (looking down) & about 150m before the Trea path starts dropping into Huerta del Rey ~~The entrance is~~ close to a yellow-painted stone. The entrance is marked by a poorly-visible cairn + has a number well-inside the entrance. ~~The entrance is a small ho~~ An unstable 3m climb leads to a ~~doughnut~~ squeeze followed by a further 2m climb round unstable boulders onto a perched boulder floor. A traverse over a 10m pit (consider using a traverse line) leads to the first pitch – a small loose hole leading immediately into a fine 25 m shaft. This lands ~~in~~ a ~~fine~~ large boulder-floored chamber. (Halfway down the pitch is a rear ~~on~~ on the rope is an inlet, which is worth looking at.) The chamber has an unstable boulder ~~the~~ - climb at the far end, + ~~on~~ but the way on is a descending rift on the left. This quickly leads to a small chamber from which Corner Shop Rift proper leads off. This is the archetypal "not tight, just awkward" rift & is followed around a series of sharp bends at ceiling level. The first bend is by far the sharpest & most awkward & is ~~desperate~~ most awkward going in, but OK coming out. Each bend must be negotiated with the stomach ~~on~~ the inside of the bend, with the legs down in the narrow part of the rift where appropriate. After a few bends, the rift becomes bigger & leads to an unstable boulder-floored passage c. 2m wide with a number of passages going off. Some of the inlets contain water. Down a couple of short steps, the head of the 2nd pitch, Los Miserables is reached. At this point, a 1m wide passage leads off to the right to a boulder-floored chamber with a climb. This is probably the old route followed by the stream & worth pushing. The main way on follows the water down the pitch to a cold, drippy small boulder chamber. From here, a straight, smooth rift leads to the head of the next pitch, which is very constricted. A fine abseil past sharp marbled rock leads to a ledge, from which two rifty climbs lead off. The upper one leads down sharply at an angle of about 60° & soon rejoins the water. A series of ~~of~~ fine-climbs on sharp, marbled rock down a tube ~~bet~~ 3-5 feet in diameter leads to a reversal of direction & more climbs past a suit-ripping squeeze. A final 10m climb leads to a small ~~[illegible]~~ chamber with a horizontal gravel leading off,

where the stream sinks into a ½" wide crack. A flat-out crawl with silt on the floor appears to continue beyond this point.

Rigging notes

Things in [square brackets] are desirable, ~~not~~ though not done yet.

Entrance		[More gardening may be required]
Traverse over pit		[Consider traverse line]
1st pitch P25	Y hang bolt + natural short tape [wire] Deviation on pebble jammed in crack [don't doing]	
Corner shop Rift		[Further hammering needed at leg level just beyond first bend]
Los Miserable P10	bolt backed up on natural	[Consider traverse line to pitch head. Garden pitch head]
Chockstone Pitch P25	bolt on traverse line Y belay on chockstones natural deviation	[Replace chockstones by slings & put in bolt where pitch widens for better deviation/rebelay]
Route 66 climb down C30		[Consider ~~lining~~ lines on some of the climbs]

William

The Plan (very provisional)

2/8	Doing 53/5	SL, PMM
3/8	Survey + doing some of 66/5	SL, PMM, WJS, DV, JGV, Germans
4/8	Finish digging + surveying 66/5	WJS, PMM, DV, PAR
	Survey skull to EST	Germans
	Down to camp	SL, JGV, CFW, DEC
	Out from camp	DJM, ABS, DRB, AQB
5/8	Survey rest of skull + doing	
6/8	Doing 217 to part way up shaft	

When walking down to Lagos please try to carry a full pack. There should be plenty of rope, rigging gear, digging gear + rubbish to carry

Garry

Message to William

Please draw up the survey you did of the loit to the right at the bottom of the series of pitches in 5315, and also please do a grade 1 survey of the stuff the other side of Pyramaks
Thanks
Gavin

Trip to Torre Ceredo — Fred + Richard.

Left Los Lagos 7.00 pm & walked to Culiembro via the Moya Meor. Buried at Culiembro in the path. Next day we crossed the river on the little bridge & started the sig-sag ascent through nettles up the Canal de la Raig. This looked a real bitch & was. By lunchtime we were on a shoulder looking straight across at Aria. After lunch we continued climbing, past the absolutely huge entrance to Sima del Trave, & eventually reached the refugio at 4.00 pm. The refugio is about twice the size of big Eric, but much higher. It's supposed to sleep 24 - it would be intimate. At the refugio we met a French caver who was waiting in the clags with the rubbish bags for the helicopter to come. He looked like the member of the expedition that you would volunteer to wait in the clag for the helicopter. He told us that the French cave of the minute was also blocked by boulders.
We had done about 100 m of descent and 2,000 m of ascent & went to bed at 7.00 pm & slept for 12 hours. Next day we set off into the clag and eventually found our way to the base of the normal route up Torre

Cerredo, so we climbed it. About 10 minutes after we got down again the fog cleared so we missed the views by only ½ an hour! We descended to Cain via the Canal de Dobresengos. 300 m of ascent, 2100 m of descent. Had beers + meal in Cain then bivied on the foot of the Trea path. Started at 7.40 next day & reach Ario just before 10.00. Knackered.

HOLES NOTED FROM OTHER SIDE OF GORGE

(Numbered in order that we saw them)

View from Oston:

#1 ← round transected phreatic passage in a cliff alt c. 1150 m. Tricky climb

#2

Huge hole lurking at the head of its own little gorge, c. 15 x 10 m wide, it has a small wood in it. If anything looks like a fossil resurgence for 2/7 it is this. Alt c. 1050 m, could be climbed to.

← #3 (marked on a map) massive hole leading in the direction of Camaneña. Can have nothing to do with 2/7.

View from Macio Central

#4 – Transected phreatic passage c. 150 m above Cueva de Culiembro. Access not difficult if guided from other side.

Pto —

The two most interesting holes are number 2 hole, which could be explored from Lagos or Ario perhaps camping at Ostion, and number 4 hole which could be pushed by a dedicated party from ~~Ostion~~ Camamenia or Cain. 2 way radio/semaphore would be needed.

Richard.

Detackling 53/5 2/8

The plan was that I would go down and start detackling early and that Dick would come down and help me. In the event, Dick had an epic in the coffin lid, and injured his arm, so jacked. Replaced the 20m rope on the lined squeeze at the bottom, with a 10m rope, and then detackled back up. Hard going through Big Biscuit Rist with a tackle bag and 70m of rope. Rerigged Pyramids with a single rope for an ~~prusik~~ to abseil down a bit and then prusik up the other side type manoeuvour, and replaced the 100m rope on the climbs above with a couple of short lengths. Got all the rope to the bottom of Pyramids, derigged the pitch and started hauling up the rope — it jammed. Rerigged the pitch, abseil down, put the rope in a bag, prusiked up, started unscrewing the bolt on the rebelay and dropped my spanner. Abseil down for the 3rd time, found the spanner and finally managed to derig the pitch completely. Hauled out slowly with 2 tackle bags, prusik bag and an extra rope.

Gavin

66/5 Jenny + Gavin 3/8

Surveyed out from head of Los Miserables and detackled. Also did a surface survey tieing 66/5 and the Matterhorn into 2/7

Things to do

Survey & detackle Skull
On Tuesday 6th, 2 or 3 people should come down 2/7 to help us detackle. Bring food and carbide
Carry stuff down the hill

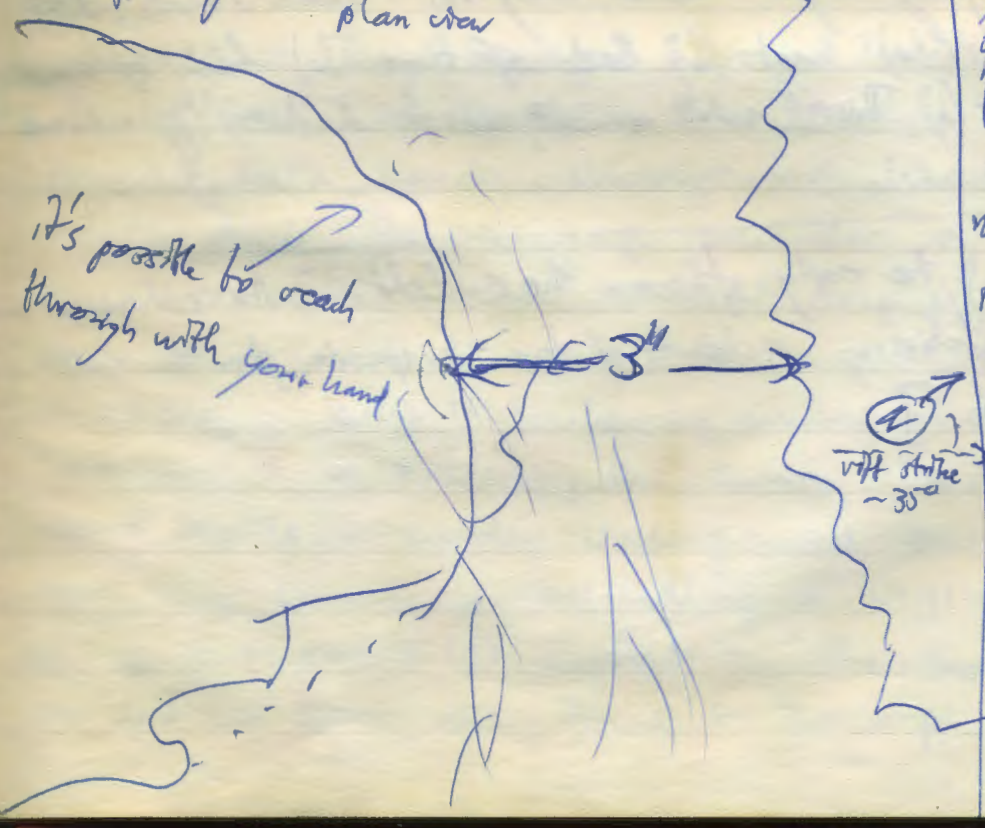
Gavin

4/8/91 Ewald & Gerhard to bash 20/7, Bernhard taking the morning shift in camp, everyone else down 2/7

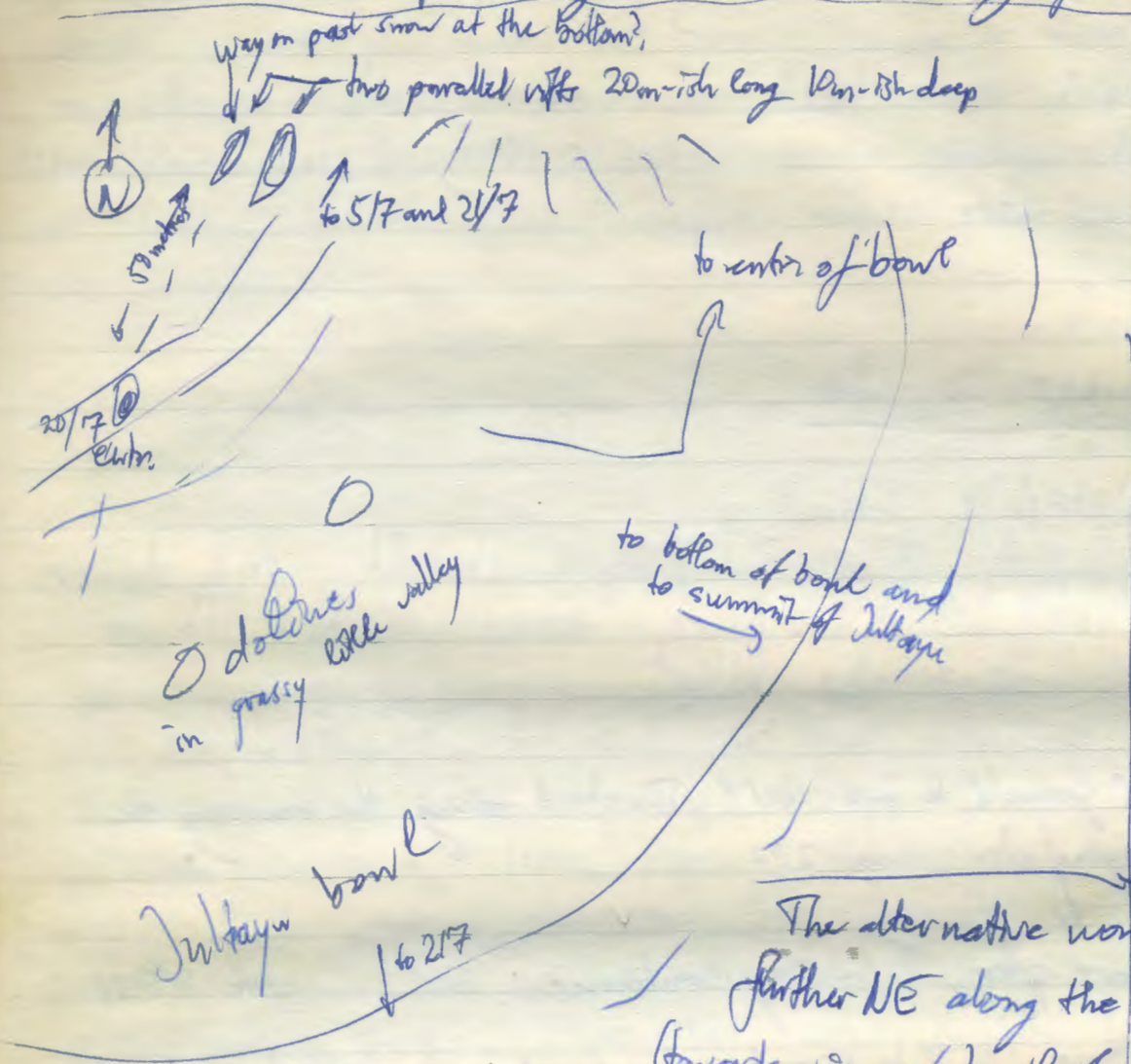
Cave 20/7 — 4 years after, & the story continues. date 4/8/91

arrive at entrance 11am in scorching heat. Nearly killed by heatstroke when putting on overcoat & harnesses. Reached bottom of P34 "Ambassadors" by 12 noon, Surprise: Pile of snow 6 metres high which hadn't been there in '87... and it makes access to the main point of interest, the floor end of the diagonal crack in the wall, virtually impossible. - Removed top 1½m of snow pile to gain some elbow room at the top of the crack where it is widest. Spent 1½ hours taking turns at chiselling & freezing alternately. Removed a couple of

The Offending Wall — To Scale 1:2



cubic inches... (the pointed chisel works rather better than the flat one as it lets the rock split along its natural cleavage planes). – Out 2^45 pm.



Requires now: – two shatterhands possessing the deontology to get up at 6^am & walk up well before the sun is high, carrying chisel & lump hammer (crowbars not much help), caving & SRT gear & warm underwear, and prefly carbide lights...

...and a tape recorder.

The alternative would be a hole further NE along the entrance fault (towards rim of bowl & Arno) which somehow had escaped Silvia's numbering – everything is '87.

Blackness past a snow-plug might lead to way on under same. Not checked out due to (a) heat (b) lack of time (c) lack of impetus a consequence of (a) & (b). This rift, as well as 21/7, was found draughting outward today.

[20/7 is beautiful when in the early afternoon the sunlight hits the entrance and wanders down the Helictrap... clouds of steam evaporate from the earth as soon as the rays hit it.]

GN
4/8/91

Warning:
If you sleep in an Expedition Alpinex you sleep with everyone who has slept in it before and everyone who they have ever slept with.
[Urs say that oucc is such that if you sleep with any one in it then you sleep with the rest of the club anyway]

4 August 1991

Sixth camp (Dave B, AQB, Tony & David)

first let it be known that ~~[illegible]~~ David's Devious Deathslide is only a deathtrap for dickheads. No one on our trip had any problems with it.

Day 1

David and Tony surveyed along "Tony's Back Passage" which leads off Heathrow. We reckon the passage runs parallel with London Underground, heading towards Marble Arch. The passage includes a horrendous, steep, mudslope with a 2m vertical drop at the bottom which is quite difficult to climb. At the end of the passage we found a choke of largish boulders, among which flows a small stream. It is probably the same stream which makes the cave pearls in London Underground because there are some very nice formations including a drying sour pool full ~~of~~ of arragonite (?) crystals - "The Secret Cactus Garden" We did not have the time or the rope to bounce the pit

under the first inlet in TBP. We also did not investigate the dark hole and short-medium rattle under the tricky mudslope. There is also a possible way on by climbing out over the top of the mudslope, but this needs pro. & bolting.
Due to an oversight on my part we arrived at camp without carbide or paraffin, so were obliged to go to bed without any hot supper. Dave & AQB arrived soon after we had gone to bed.

Day 2

David and Dave bounced and surveyed the pit round and descended by Jenny and Chris. The rigging was a little sparse even for a pushing rig - one bolt and a wobbly rock aren't really enough for a 30m free hang, but it wasn't utterly unforgivable so we left it as it was. ~~discover~~ Its discoverers did not bless ~~with~~ the shaft with a name, which is a shame because it is very nice. [Did you look at any of the holes in the walls on the Bod side of the shaft?]. We went down to the horrible muddy bit at the end and agree that there is the sound of rumbling water and a draught. I'm not sure if it is diggable though. We delackled the whole thing.

Tony & AQB went up the mud slope at the start of Egbert (where the stream turns right). Q was responsible and held the rope, while A.D.S. shacked and dangled. At one point Q started singing, it transpired that at one point he had fallen asleep and was trying to keep awake. An excavated hole part way up the climb leads back into the choke - it looks like it goes but may need digging, lack of light being a handicap at this point. The top of the choke may be safely reached from this point, with a void of uncertain size visible through a small hole overhead, and solid rock on two of three sides. The climb was left rigged as this is now an open lead (sort of), and is named 'Reach for The Skyhook'.

We all joined up and sent (interrupted by helicopter)

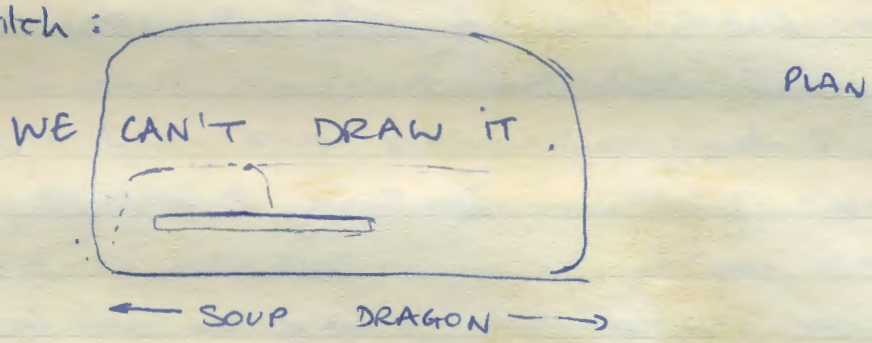
I will NEVER fly in a Spanish helicopter. The pilot must be completely out of his tree, having landed beside the water tank at the Refugio. Anyway, back to the story...

Dave dawn the pit beside the end of the traverses to Soup dragon, which are, incidentally, vastly improved by their rerig. The rigging was less substantial than that used by Chris and Jenny on a similar pit, so Dave soon returned, 'specially 'cos he hadn't got to the floor.

Day 3

Tony and Dave surveyed Tim's bit while AQB and David removed the ropes left in there.

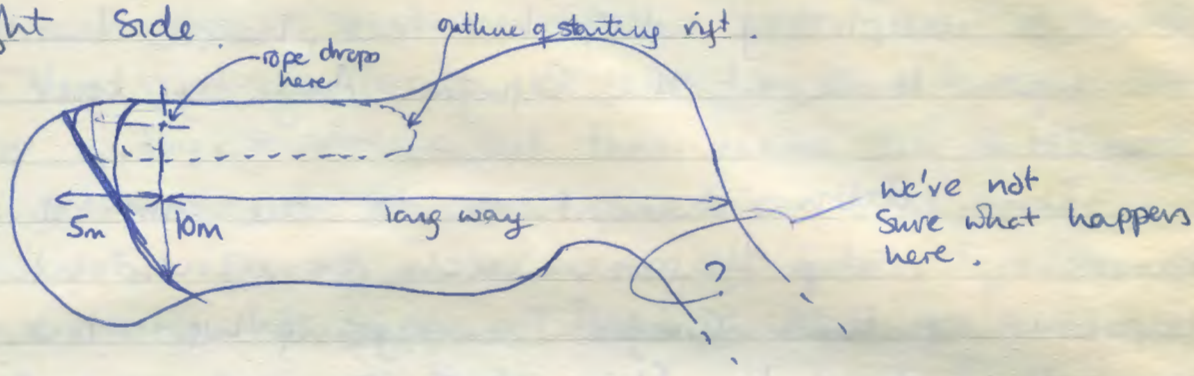
We then returned to the pit in Soup Dragon, convinced we had sufficient rope to bottom it. Tony and David began to bolt ~~it~~ properly, and Dave & AQB got so cold they returned to camp to make supper. The pit was bounced to find that the rope still did not reach the bottom, but the floor is in sight, about 50m below the top of the pitch:



Start again:

Y hang off edge of pit drops to rebelay of natural down 3m to bolt, traverse round boulder to Y hang into rift. The rift runs in the same direction as Soup Dragon. 15m down rift opens out, where a better hang could be achieved by rebelay further out of rift. The right hand wall (as seen facing Egbert) retreats away, as does the back wall which carries an inlet into a big wet ledge a bit like Armageddon. The left wall opens out, and a

continuation seems to be heading away to the front right side.



from Soup Dragon to the floor is probably 50m, but again we couldn't reach it. This is a big place. It is not the the streamway and it is worthy of further investigation with a 100m rope. We have called it "Tantalus" because we have continually failed to reach the bottom.

Day 4

We came out. There was the occasional life threatening epic for David and Tony.

A trip back in time - to - 2nd August. - An Epic Day Caving.

A planning nightmare - we had 2 objectives,
i) Debackle 53/5 ii) Survey & Debackle 66/5.

I decided 53/5 sounded to hard, so volunteered for the nice sounding 66/5 cave. Consequently Gavin chose to do 53/5, needing 1 assistant, while I felt 2 might be more useful in 66/5, so Dirk was secured to Gavin, the Rigging's with myself.

The day then revolved around this plan, with 2 further parameters, a) Gavin wanted an hour lead start,
b) the surveying tape was in 53/5.

Well Gavin went derigging as described, leaving at about 10.30. Muggins was press ganged into getting the tape, and not knowing 53/5 decided to wait for Dirk, who would be of some guiding assistance.

This meant we couldn't start our trip to 66/5 until much later. 2pm was the time arranged. - All well in theory.

When it came to the caving, as always, it wasn't so easy. I charged more rapidly than Dirk, so headed into 53/5 first. No problem until the coffin stone I had a look, thought mmm, shoved my head into the slot and gave it a go. Swing feet round, then where? - No not there - shit stuck. Ok keep calm, wriggle back up and try again. Head up, wellies round, gently does it, that's better. Left arm in slot, slide down, force it a little, that's it, past the slab. Fuck, I think this is wrong, my legs well jammed, and half my bodyweight supported by my neck. Helmet jammed, can't push head forwards, tube de plastico caught. Generator wedged in narrow rift below. Lets move my weight a little - damn - now I've wedged my prussick bag in there too.

Wriggle like buggery - well that's one leg unjammed, a start. I don't like this, I'm feeling very restricted, maybe, well shit. Panic, Claustrophobia. Wriggle more frantically - drop another inch, Now I can't even breathe - bollocks. I want to jack, right now.

But that's not possible, yet

Calm down. Right, it's not that tight in here, gently push up - yes that's better, I can breathe now. Ok. - Take a few deep breaths, cool off, move slowly. Ok so I can't, whats stopping me - best remove it, get me out of here, gently. Then worry about rescuing gear.

Brilliant plan of action, 2 minutes later I dragged back out of the slot, into cave one would describe as merely tight. Now to rescue my helmet, tube de plastico, generator, belay belt, prussick bag, rack, and my other welly, which were scattered in various parts of the squeeze.

I dressed to the thought of jacking, but then I heard Dirk behind me - 'Yes I've had an epic, that's why I'm still here!' Well, give it another go, gently, I've nothing to loose other than several hundreds of pounds worth of caving

gear, and me. And I won't let past Dirk in the entrance passage anyway. Have a good belay, take a deep breath, let goes, and remember, stay high. The odd useful piece of advice from Dirk and I was thrown to the pitch head. Well, with this comes reputation. I'll be removing SRT gear for each rift, I can't be arsed with that - it's only 10m, one elevation - lets attach straight into my belay belt - a little uncomfortable, but much quicker.

Descending, I was glad of my helmet, protecting me somewhat from the torrent of Tasmanian curses that was pouring from the rift above me. My 'rope free' did nothing to interrupt this flow, so I had a quiet potter around Dhewadayl. Then all at a sudden it went quiet. Being familiar with the ways of the Vertigan School of speleo-martial arts, where every move is accompanied by its own great vocal outburst in the ruin of normal caving, I immediately knew there was something amiss - silence being reserved for those most important and sacred of moments, when the great energies must be channelled. Indeed, I'd used the same method myself but a week earlier, in paradise squeeze. Becoming jammed, I fell silent, channelling my energies into one momentous outburst. When it came, four letters rolled into one, the explosive outburst shocking many people, but the desired effect was had, the squeeze was forced open a whole extra inch and a half.

And so I waited, fingers in ears, anticipating. A shock wave resounded, and as the dust settled, I ventured to ask about the state of play. 'I'm still stuck.' A cyclic battle ensued, but the coffin lid sector was clearly made of sterner stuff than paradise, and after many attempts, the eighth of a inch gained proved not to be enough. Dirk, who'd helped to guide me so well, admitted defeat this time, and [redacted] honourably went outside that I may have a chance to complete my quest. 'I may be some time.'

I went on solely, fearing what I might find, the reputation of this cave being such. The following 'awkward' rift was no such thing, and I had no trouble in locating the tape. It seemed to be the right thing to write a note to Gavin explaining the fate of his partner, but materials were scarce. Eventually I came on the idea of sooting a pointed pebble, and using it like a pencil to write on a sheet of permatrace. It worked, badly. I was just about able to write legibly the message 'DV Jack', I think that was about as efficient as I could be with words – it might even have been comprehendable.

The journey out was no great shakes – but I did decide to use a proper harness system this time, feeling that freeclimbing solo here might be a little silly. I soon rejoined Dink on the surface, one cave down, but still one to go...

(What else is there to do at Ario on a hot sticky afternoon, when you can't find the survey notes you planned to draw up, other than to write copiously long accounts of uninteresting short trips in such tedious detail that no-one will ever read them again. (Is that 'again' necessary, I never bother re-reading what I write, as would be quickly deduced if anyone were ever to read any piece of my prose)) (I don't want any smart-arse comments about nesting brackets in my writing. (I get enough complaints about it from my father), its my writing, I'm a free man, so I'll do what I want, so theresss????!!)))!

...So we'd planned to meet at 2 pm. We all three arrived at 2:30, so what the heck. I was kitted up first – probably because I had a head start, only wearing underpants at the time – so I headed in. 66/5 sounded a nice cave, except maybe this bannerstep rift double bend. Maybe I was misled. Three double bends, tight & frightening. I debuckled at the start of this rift – no bastard sit harness was going to snag on me! They say that

can tell a lot about a persons sensibility by the way they get into water, do they put just one toe in to test the temperature, or do they dive straight in. I don't know how this extrapolates to caving (I just wanted to lower the tone a little) but I went cautiously feet first, knowing I could always then get out without a huge deal of difficulty. Tony on the other hand goes in head first at full stretch ... but then it takes all sorts.

It was an unpleasant rift without prior knowledge, you never knew how severe the next bit might be - but having been through it you realise there is a fair deal of space, and its intimidation factor decreases markedly.

So I kitted up, descended Les Miserables, and decided the bottom was wet, cold & drippy. That way didn't look right, lets try the other end. Nothing. So it must be that way. Yorkshire rift wasn't unpleasant I must confess, but that landline at the end was good to hold on.

Ok look, a ten foot climb - hardly worth mining, looks treacherous - but I am on my own at the moment. Descender on rope, ok, tight take off, well lets through my pressed bag down, save it getting caught. A moment inspiration made me clip it on the line first - to help guide it down. I'm glad this inspiration came when it did, 15 feet down I found my bag snagged by the deviation, and a lot of that space beneath me - 45 feet to a boulder ledge, and then a bit more down a spikey small rift, that might have been unpleasant.

I clambered down route 66, getting again quickly snagged on the harmless looking squeeze past a block, and presently arrived down at the bottom of the cave.

I started the survey, and soon Dave joined me. 'Pauline found Cornerstone a bit epic, so went out.' I'd found both it & Yorkshire rift epically proportioned, but I was on the wrong side of them now.

We worked upwards, except for about 2 seconds when I worked my way back downwards when a handhold came off on route 66. I said to myself, not completely enjoying the weightless sensation "Paul, you don't really want to break a leg down here." - so I didn't.

I took my gear off between each pitch, even so Yorkshire Pudding became Toad-in-the-Hole for a few minutes as I jammed myself again. I did better here than in the coffinstone squeeze earlier - this time I managed to retain both wellies on my person. Going out, not in, proved to be a big incentive to not get caught and have to reverse here, but the biggest drive I had was from the rigging behind me. I'd arrived at the top of the pitch, and looked up to see the Y bang belayed from a chockstone - so this was Chockstone Pot - "Dave, did you notice how this pitch was rigged" - "Yes, they're good, aren't they."

'They?' - I looked at the other side of the Y bang, 'They?' - And the the bolt, below the knot - I decided to look no further, not think about it.

So no, I didn't want my epic in Yorkshire mist to take on epicly epic proportions.

In the end, we derigged Lost Boreables, having surveyed to its head, and being soft, hauled the rope through Cornstyle in stages, leaving the remaining parts of the cave to be surveyed, and one pitch to be derigged the following day by Gavin & Jenny. And I can't find their survey notes!

Pat

P.S. - I had a really good satisfying days caving.

Paul "I've got lovely ankles, the loveliest in the Cave Club" Mann

William J "No I'm not going to eat other people's cornflakes" Stead

5 August 1991

Freer and William 1st human Ascent To Ingestre's A Cave.

We walked up from Lagos and after a cup of tea, went down the Trea path to show Robert and Ewald 66/5, and to get a view of the climb. We worked out a route, but it was hard to tell how steep it was.

Back at camp we picked up our gear and walked down the ~~the~~ Canal Extremera, warning some walkers that they were not in the Canal de Trea.

We started up a steep gully, and a short way up decided that it was worth roping up. It was fairly easy, but very loose. The pitch finished at a ~~tree~~ tree providing useful shade for the 1st belay.

Once on the grass ledge the going was very easy. Apart from one short tricky bit it was very easy, walking along the ~~the~~ steep grass slope with a cliff at the bottom. But it was very hot and we didn't have much water. We ran our rope lengths, not bothering much with runners, but trying to find belays in the shade.

At last we got to a cave, which was rather a disappointing hole in the cliff. I went for a sleep in the shade. William fretted that we weren't in the A cave at all and

tried to rouse me who took round the next corner. Eventually we did. There were some tricky moves round the corner to the cave itself, which didn't go either. It is about 50m long, sloping downwards with the ceiling getting steadily lower and eventually meeting the floor. There is no draught.

We set off back down, abing off the tree on the last pitch, and returned to Aiso tired sunburnt and very thirsty.

Fred

P.S. I've added the word human because the caves were full of rebecco stuff.

Many thanks to Gerhard for the loan of a rope. Alpine Climbing have been taken down to Los Lagos.

6 August 1991

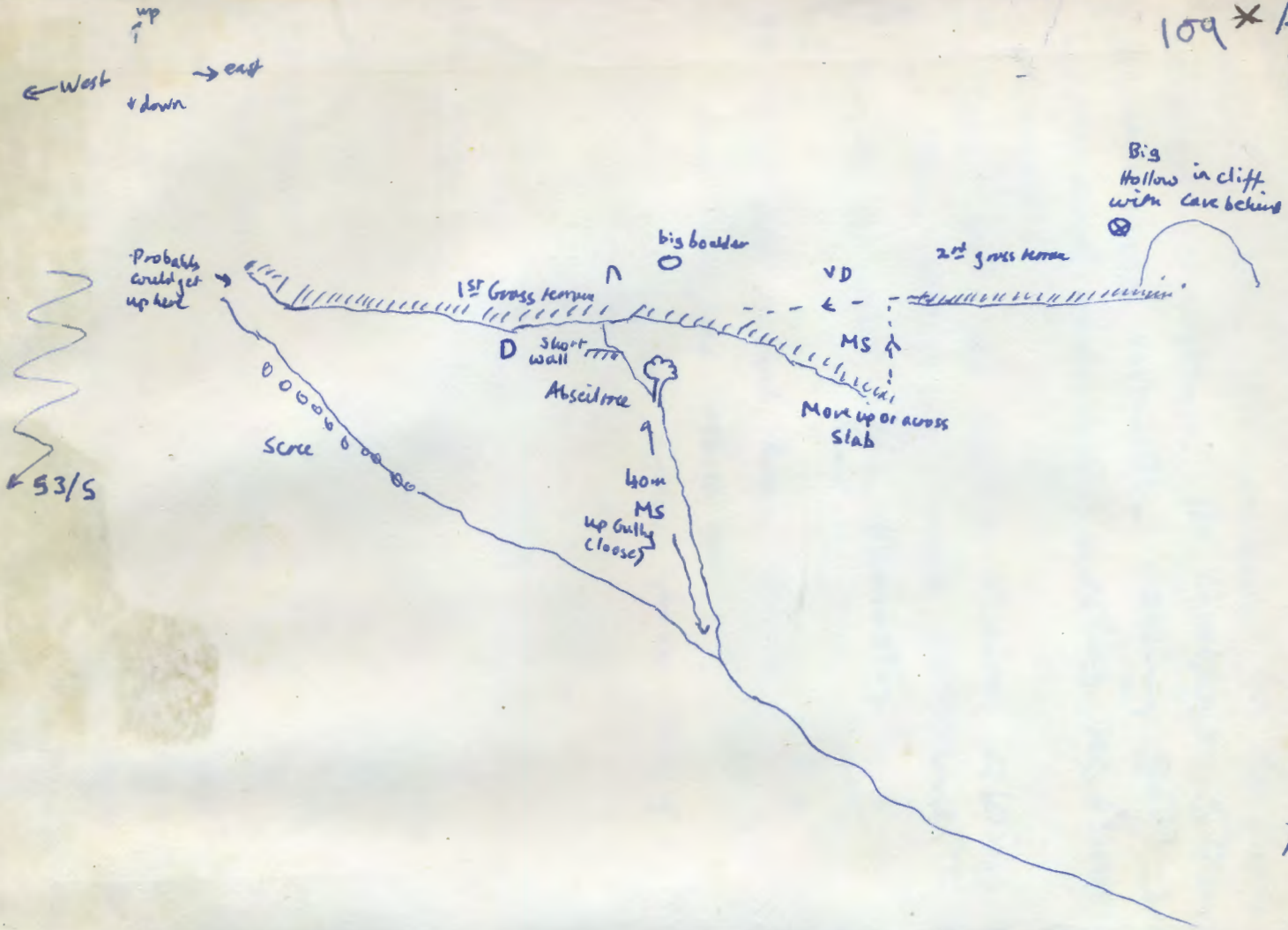
I have been considering the question of whether we should rig in to 2/7 next year. The best answer would seem to be a compromise.

The theory runs as follows:

Rigging in to 2/7 can be done quickly and efficiently by quite a small team. It is also good practice for novices to learn SRT and tacklebag handling. What tends to waste time is camping, because this ties up people for a long time due to the time they spend moving through the cave as well as the time they spend recovering afterwards and the resources needed to get the camp set up.

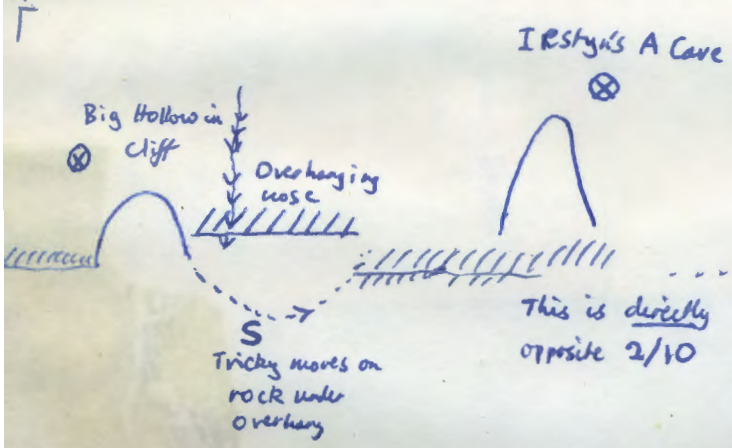
So why not rig in to 2/7 as normal. When the cave is rigged to the bottom of the shafts all further interest in it can cease, and effort be concentrated on shaft bashing and pushing new

109 * A



2

A



View of cliff of Cabeza Llambria looking N (as seen from [redacted] El Requexon) by WJS

7 Aug Shows route taken by Fred & William to Iestyn's A Cave (which doesn't go) ////// are sloping grass terraces & are walking (+ lifeline!). Climbing bits are marked VD - - - + English climbing grade. Wear walking boots for a good grip on the sloping grass.

Are these in Area 4, or do we ~~[illegible]~~ use Greek letters ~~[illegible]~~ for vertical areas?

L

A'

110

pen ran out

lower entrances. 2/7 would still be open for pushing from the surface for an upstream continuation or as far in as people wanted to go.

– If, half way through expedition, there was no cave that was dropping conclusively and rapidly into the 2/7 streamway beyond egbert then camping trips could be instituted to continue the search for a way in from within 2/7.

– If a cave reached the 2/7 streamway then 2/7 could be detackled in its entirety. The fact that it was already rigged means that it would be quick and simple and that a hard team could collect the substantial amount of gear left beyond primula point on a mega-trip from the surface.

– If a cave looked as if it might go into 2/7, but there was insufficient rope, then 2/7 would be detackled from the top down → fine for first pitch but gets tricky after that.

The scheme suggested above seems to combine successfully the two different requirements of both a short bashing with pushing 2/7. Those who do not want to set foot near 2/7 wouldn't have to, since it can be rigged by a small team. Those who want to push 2/7 can do so on mammoth trips from the surface.

David

6/8/91 Burnhard, Gerhard "Make Your Own Cave"

Valley of Dried Bones, or

Very { Old / Oddly } Draughting Boulders

After two quick recce walks yesterday, set out 10am armed with 1 shovel, 2 ludey crowbars, a bit of string, geologist's compass and good humour to try to unbottle some of the corked-up draughting djinns. After quick glance at the lowest few holes (and the most obvious ones) Bernhard spotted a promising one and suggested, in Germany, the 'working name' – M.Y.O.C.. Entrance was a little rift on due E-W strike 2m (easy climb) deep to cobbles pebbles & earth floor. It's now more than 3m deep (after 3½ hours solid digging – moral: a tadelbag would have been less apt to keep snagging than my rucksack whilst hauling up 4 dozen loads of rock) and at the bottom you can stick both legs into a descending rift just wide enough for this until you hit a boulder slightly wider. It seems possible to outdig this by going deeper yet, but this would mean shifting again 2-3 times the amount of stuff already cleared.

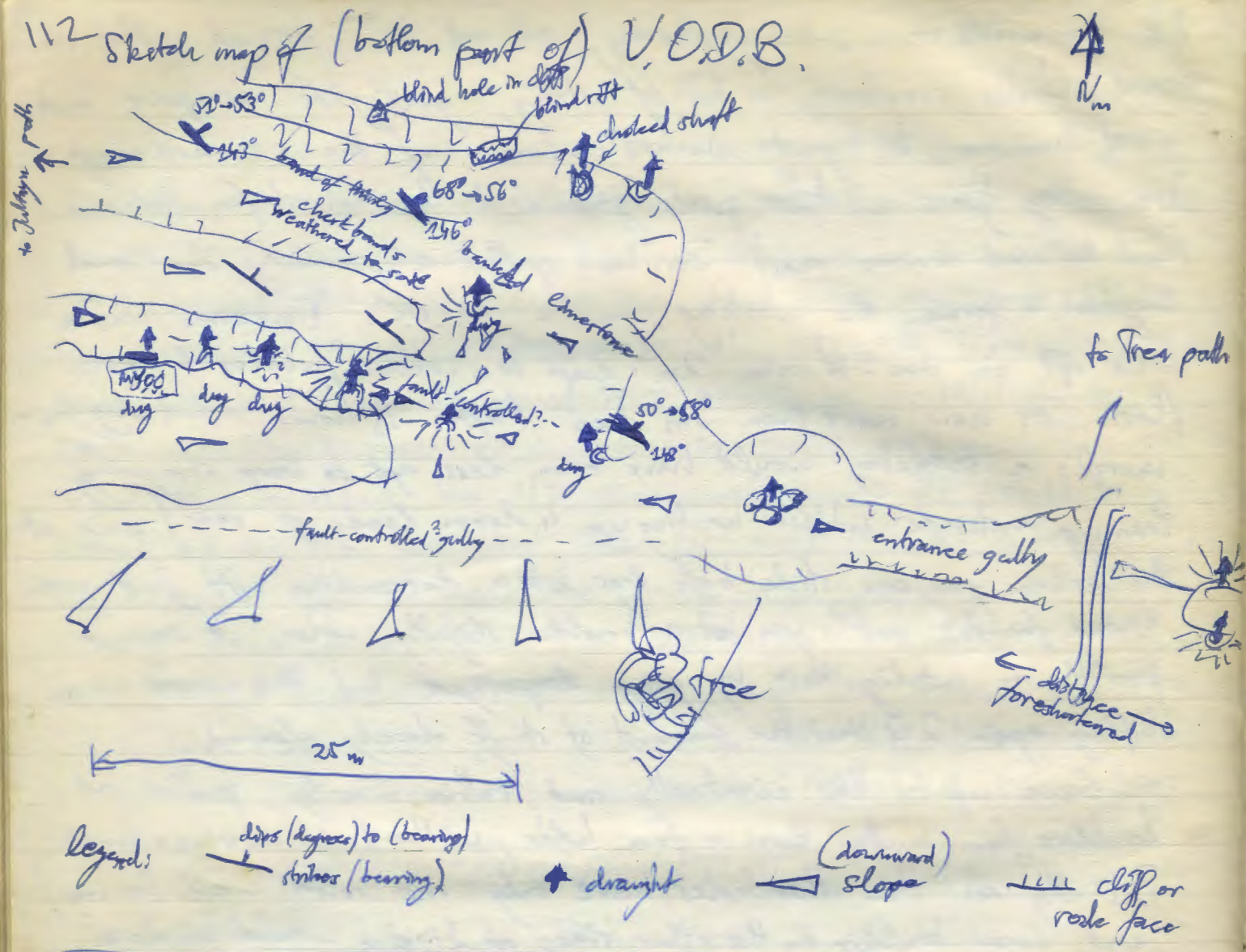
Gave up on this eventually and, rather messily, pulled out boulders from another three or four holes, without achieving much. Basically all the other holes have only one solid wall (or roof) and loose boulders on the other side, so digging would involve either enlarging the shakeholes preposterously or shoring them up, neither of which seems feasible. – Leaving the valley through the gully at the bottom (E) and and descending ~50m further in its continuation, one encounters a 3m high 2m wide hump which still has draughting holes on either side, suffering from the same problem.

M.Y.O.C. x-section looking due W:

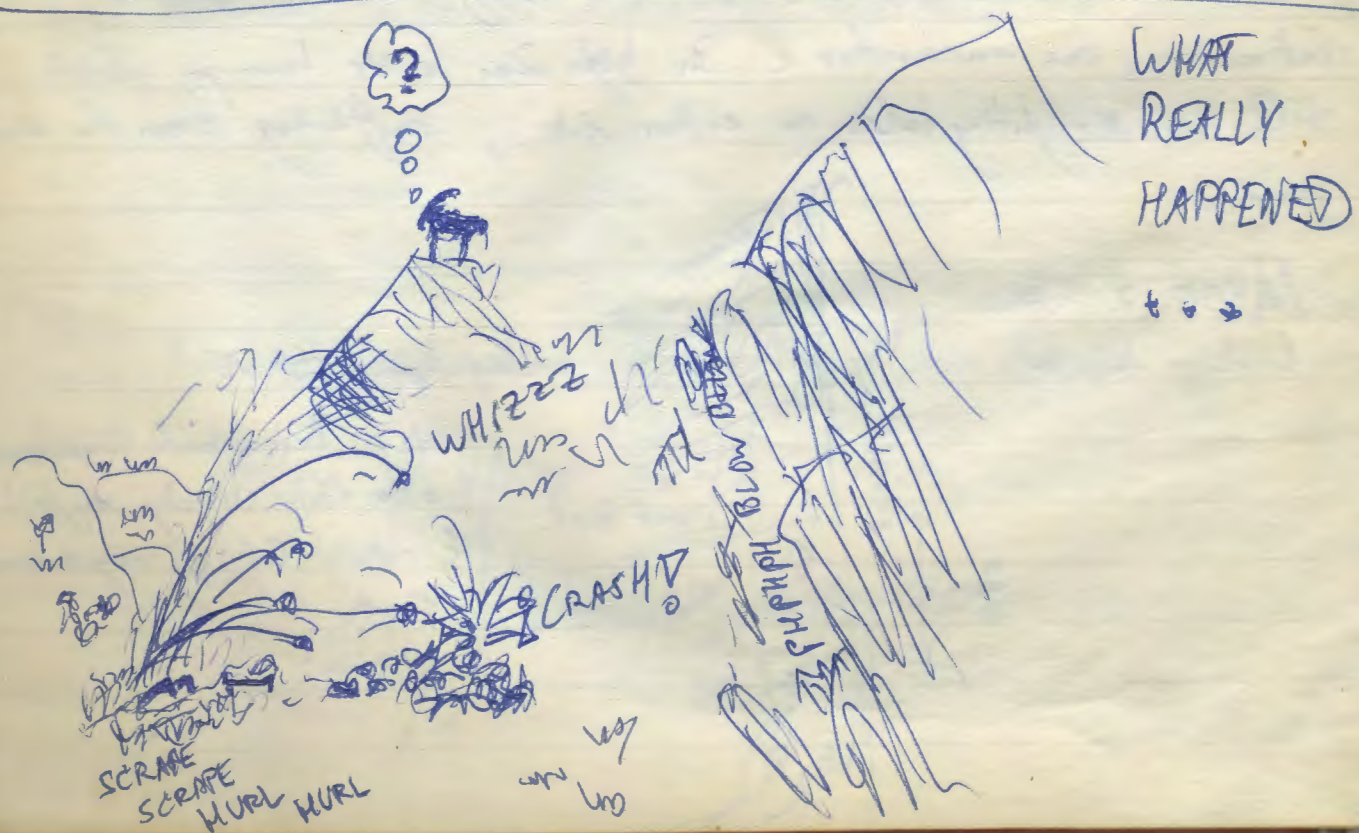
bedding dips ~50° NE

rock is Barcaliente limestone (i.e. the dark streaky stuff) & contains lots of crystalline fragments

112 Sketch map of (bottom part of) V.O.D.B.



Spotted ~7 specimen of the blue alpine GENTIANA (but I'm not drawing them into the map).



Things to be carried down:

empty gas cylinder
rubbish

Things NOT to be carried down just yet:

- One decent length (65m) of caving rope for shaft bashing, and a couple of 20-25m lengths (we've already reached the point where I've got to lend my personal rope!)
- One bolting kit + bolts
- rigging gear (in sensible selection and quantity)

Things to be brought up:

one more full gas cylinder
tulipán
oil (for cooking)
milk (UHT)
apples
más peanut butter
canned tomatoes
general veg except peppers...
eggs = huevos
primula
empty rubbish bags
más nocilla ...
lemon juice
bread.

Things not to be brought up:

más stale bread

- One of the things that the '87 Expedition learned but which unfortunately has been forgotten:
  — When writing up exploits in area 7 (or 8), put the year with the date. Don't head your write-up with a line like "22/7 : 24/7"!

- 10/9 seems to have been used twice now ("Paul's & Harry's Hole", between La Jijada (2/9) & The Wiggly (now 13/9), was marked 10/9 in '87, but the shaft bashing kit seems to describe another cave by this number.

G.

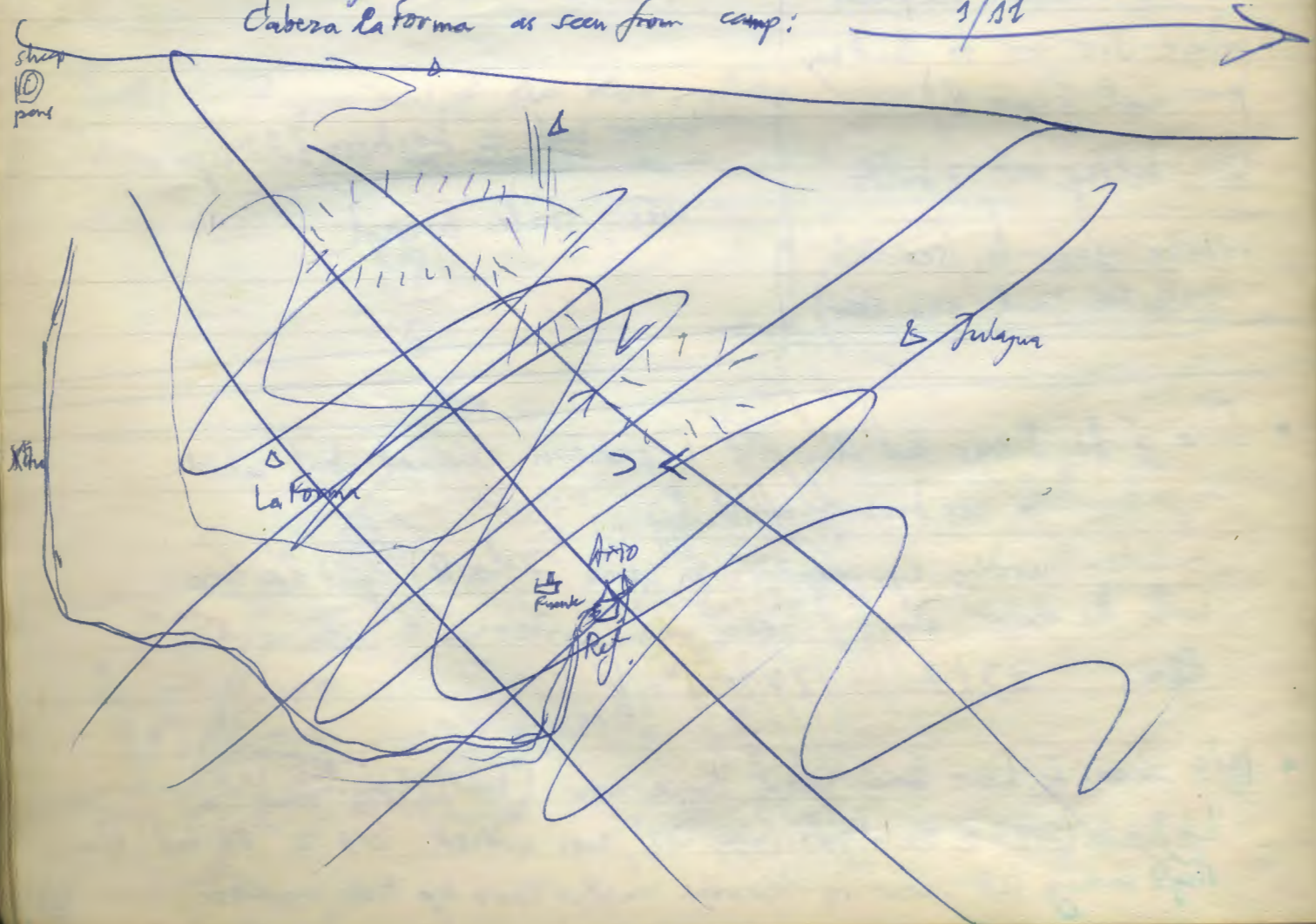
Note to those at Ario on 7/8/91
Consider seriously the possibility of walking to Las Bobbias to fill both containers with water. The spring here is being a bit feeble.

Am considering, G. — [Have now done so, 7/8/91 morning.]

Dave "Now, let's see, everybody has had 200g Pasta per head ..." M.
Paul, tasting his first bite of Expedition Aubergine Stew:
"Is this stuff new on expedition?!" Mann

Paul, 5 minutes & one plate later,
"Can I have some more of this aubergine stuff?" Mann

7/8/91 William, Gerhard & located Pozu Optimistu 30/5, on far side of Cabeza la Forma as seen from camp: 1/11



Entrance is halfway up fracture-controlled gully ~80m long on strike 020°, in a fairly even northward-facing slope. Bottom of gully is shakehole 20m long by 5m wide with path running up through it. Above this is open (20m) entr. shaft ~6m long 3m wide with inscription on the upper side (not on the walls) of a boulder on the western brink. A rock bridge separates this from another shaft 4m long by 1m wide nearly blocked by a tree; then (still climbing along the gully) a small shakehole gives rise to a very shallow grassy band between bouldery brinks. Top of ridge is 60m uphill from entrance shaft.

~~magnetic bearings:~~

from entrance

→ Julagua 092°/±8°

→ Lloroses 051°/(±4°) [??]

→ hump 1 (see sketch) 037°/±2°

→ hump 2 : 359°/±0°

from top of ridge above entr.

→ entr. 047°

→ Jultayu 159°

→ P^ca Jorcada 223°

→ Julagua 090°

→ hump 1 : 039°

~~Calibration~~

~~from Julagua (4th order station)~~

~~→ Jultayu 182°~~

~~→ P^ca Jorcada 234°~~

~~ignore these~~

(±2° generally)

~~[use grid ref's of Julagua, Jultayu, P^ca Jorcada, Lloroses to work out coord's independent of magnetic north]~~

~~[I'll do this myself soon but all my copies of the coord' lists are down at Base.]~~

SEE ~~[illegible]~~ OVER →

ify.

NB Optimistu ought to have been numbered 31/5 not 30/5 for '82.
The '80-vintage 30/5 is in fact a few yards behind the kitchen tent!

7/8/91

As a result of a general clearing-up masterminded by WJS & commented on by Dirk, Dave L & Gerhard, we now have the new game of "which caver will next bang his or her head against the "suspended vegetation" (D.K.)?"

Previous High Score: D.L. (2), G.N. (1), W.J.S. (1), Pauline (1)

Blas has been asking for the usual deal of trozos de cuerda / bits & ends of worn rope) for himself y los pastores. Don't take candidate bits down to Base too quickly.

7/8/91 WJS & Gerhard – quick foray to area 11 again until stopped by thunderstorm. 4/11 descended on ladder without oversuit or lifeline by WJS & found choked at bottom level. Looks like choked former shaft but pebbles thrown in don't go any distance.

William "We'd better go back soon, it might start to rain" said so to the accompaniment of the first heavy drops..

→ cont'd from previous page: with compass properly calibrated,
P. Optimistu sits at Grid Ref ↓ ↱ (and is lower than Xitu: alt 1637m at inscription by '88 triangulation)

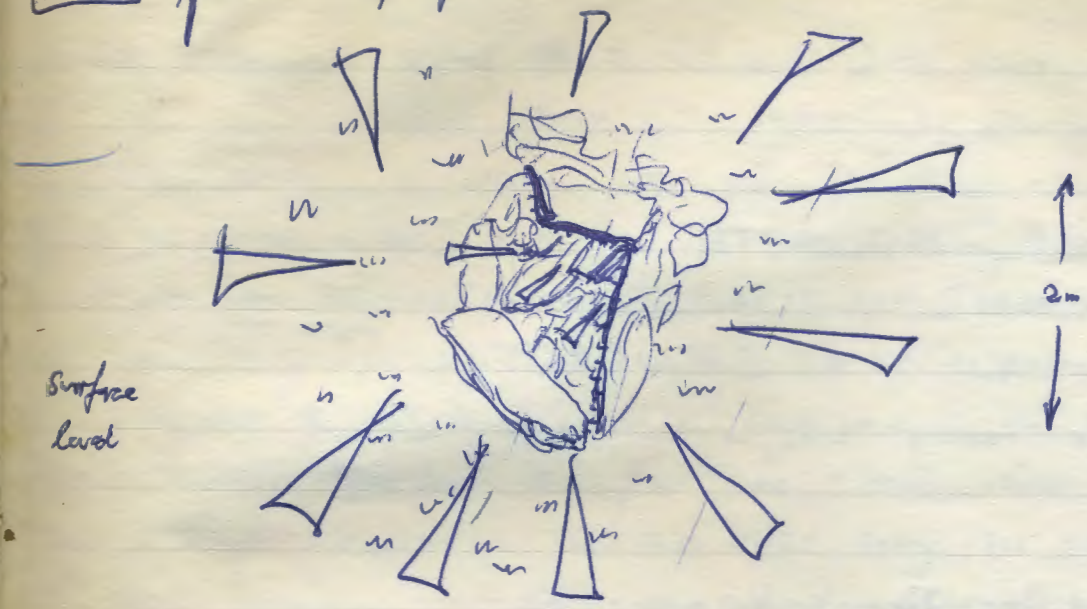
E 03330 N 89940 A 1590m [±20m]

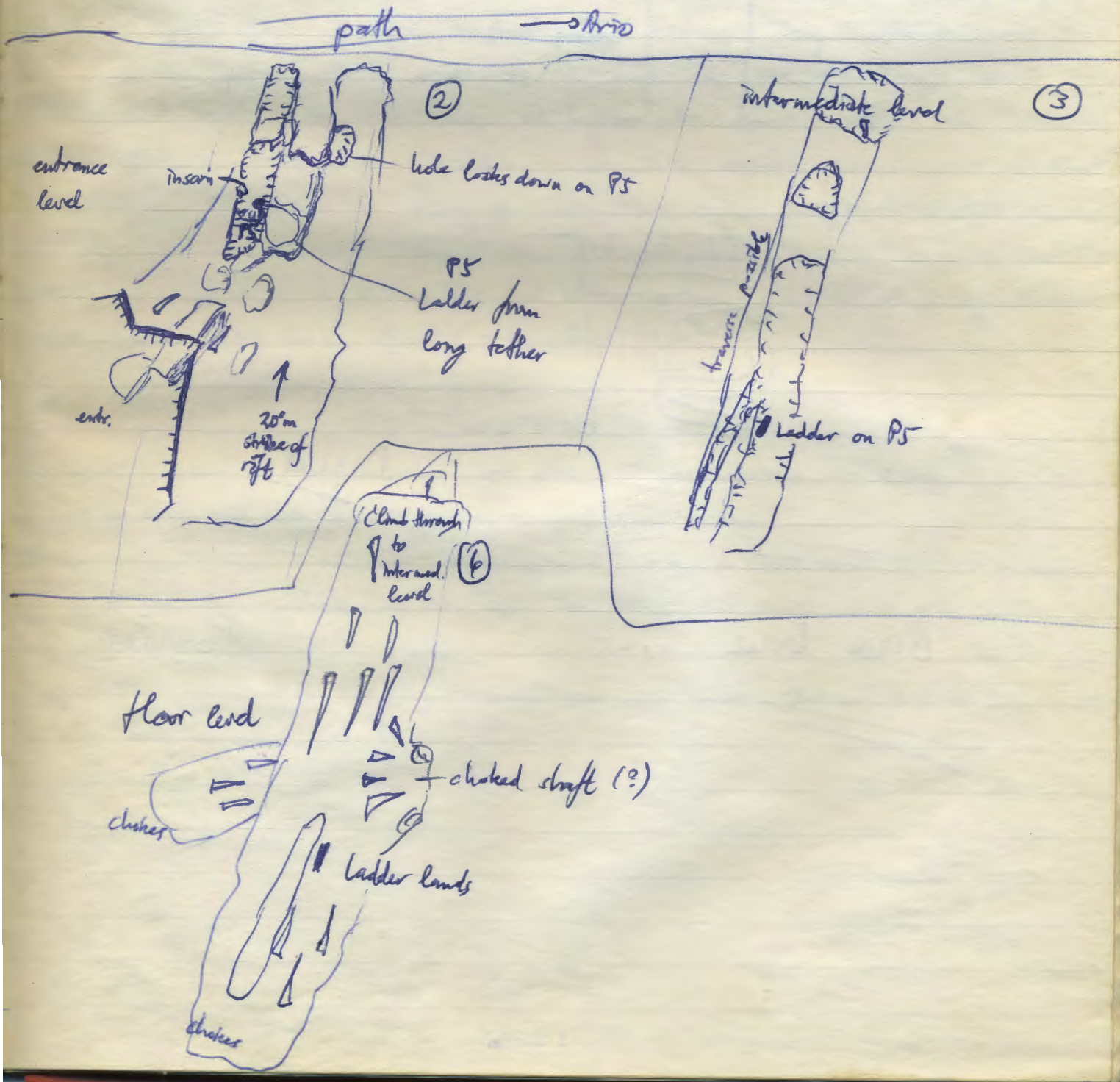
and the vantage point on the ridge SW of it at

E 43295 N 89900 A ~1620m [±20m]
[±10m]

G.N. 8/8/91

9/11 ⊗ pl^n split plan Grade-1 117 ① 7/8/91





118

7.8.91

① Tony, Bernhard, David & Uno went & took some piccies in Skull Cave.

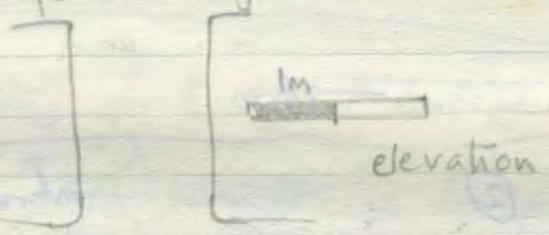
② ALLRIGHT YOU MAGGOTY LOT, WHO HID THE USED CONDOM UNDERNEATH TWO GREENIES IN MY GENERATOR ?

Who put their carry bras in amongst my clothes?

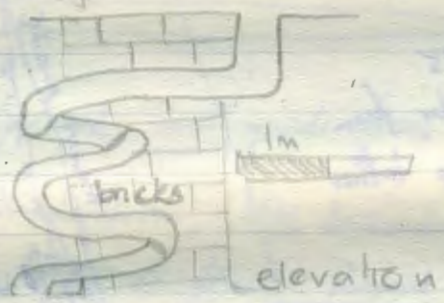
W.

Skull Cave

The Eff before Tony's hammering:



After hammering:



David

Baa baa ...

Pauline.

Thursday 8 August Tony, Jenny, William, Urs & Dave Lacey

Skull Cave – Detackling & Surveying?

This morning the weather was cold, after raining all yesterday evening, so we got up late. Tony was keen, I managed to kick-start myself into going, Urs wrestled with her conscience & Jenny & Dave Lacey had their arms twisted. The scheme was that Tony, Jenny & I should survey & Urs & Dave detackle. I had a rough time getting down the Eff. on my prussik hag (maybe on some stal & I couldn't see how to free it one-handed. Went down the first pitch – 40m climb over rubs. ~~The reason~~ when I thought I'd seen the last of the OUCC Henry Moss School of rigging. We duly started surveying, when Dave came down the pitch. He started sorting out the spaghetti at the bottom of the pitch (a 90m rope was used) After an hour's faffing about, we'd just about surveyed the final pitch, declining Tony's offer to survey the rift at the bottom. At this point a rock went past me from Tony's direction. This turned out to be the climb. Oh bugger, abseil down & look for climb, which was located. After one more leg, the climb proved to be hopelessly fogged, so we abandoned the survey & concentrated on derigging. Well, what is there to say? Prussiked up last pitch with the 90m rope strung out beneath me. The eff proved to be a little less horrible going out. Out at ca 8 pm. Urs felt worse for wear. Walked up Jubilee & saw cloud. Tony has a sybaritic taste in caves.

William

P.S. Skull is really a very sweet place and well worth a visit. Everyone should go there and push it and survey it. William [honest]

PPS Dave Monaghan says that it is important to get to know all of the 2/7 system. He also has nightmares of the Eff. If Skull Cave should prove to be part of the 2/7 system...

If 1b66/5 is 10, 2/7 is 12/5 is 10 xitu, this makes Skull Cave take the place of 3/5. How appropriate.

~~I have read~~ (here the atomic bomb dropped)

THUE equation: $F(X,Y) = \sum_0^n a_k X^k Y^{n-k}$ $\quad a_0 = 1$, $a_k \in \mathbb{Z}$

$$F(X,Y) = m \in \mathbb{Z}$$

solutions $(x,y) \in \mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{Z}$

$F(X,1) = 0$ has ≥ 3 distinct roots in ①

ξ, ξ', ξ'' three of these

$$F(X,Y) = \mathrm{Norm}(X - \xi Y)$$

$$0 = \underbrace{(X - \xi Y)}_{\text{alg. int. of norm } m}\underbrace{(\xi' - \xi'')}_{\text{alg. int.}} + (X - \xi' Y)(\xi'' - \xi) + (X - \xi'' Y)(\xi - \xi')$$

$$0 = u_1 a_1 + u_2 a_2 + u_3 a_3$$

$$\mathbb{Z}[\xi, \xi', \xi''][m^{-1}, \frac{1}{(\xi - \xi')(\xi - \xi'')(\xi' - \xi'')}]$$

$$X^3 - TX^2Y - (T+3)XY^2 - Y^3 = 1 \qquad T \in \mathbb{Z},\ T \geq -1$$

has only the obvious solutions $(1,0)$, $(0,-1)$, $(-1,1)$

if $T \neq -1, 0, 2$ (E. THOMAS, M. MIGNOTTE. 1980)

$\xi, \xi' - \frac{1}{1+\xi}, -1 - \frac{1}{\xi}$ the three roots of $X^3 - TX^2 - (T+3)X - 1$

units to be considered are $\xi^a \xi'^b$; $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$

$\beta = \frac{\ln 5}{\ln(1+1/5)}$ would be ridiculously well approximable by a rational if there were a nontriv. sol'n.

(Intended only for Barbi's eyes)

After that brief and stimulating interlude we must return to the main story...

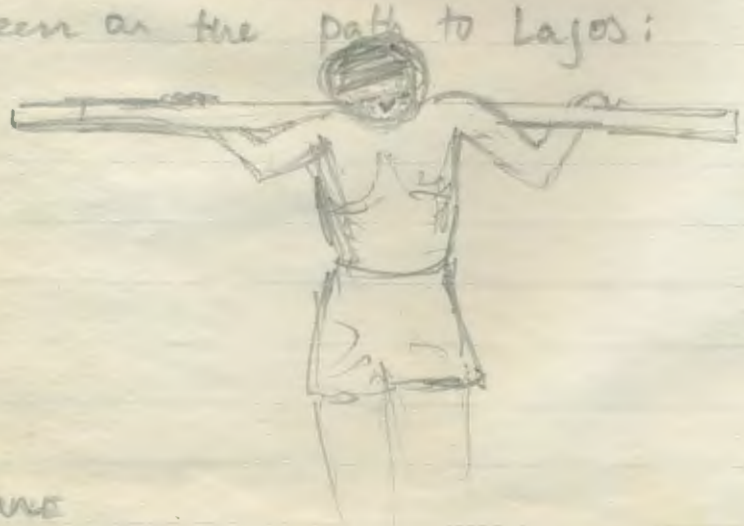
Last Detackling trip - 9/8/91

Those present: Dave B, Tony, Jenny, Ewald, Dirk, AQB, Dave L, David.

In 12 hours or so we Paellaed the rope from Ascension Pot to the surface and detackled the cave.
We learnt that
① You must pack Dalesweer Tacklebags very carefully if you want to get them out.
② Tacklebags & paella don't mix, and it is better to remove the bags ~~to~~ from the cave beforehand
③ 8 is really the minimum number for a good paella.

David

11/8/91
Seen on the path to Lajos:



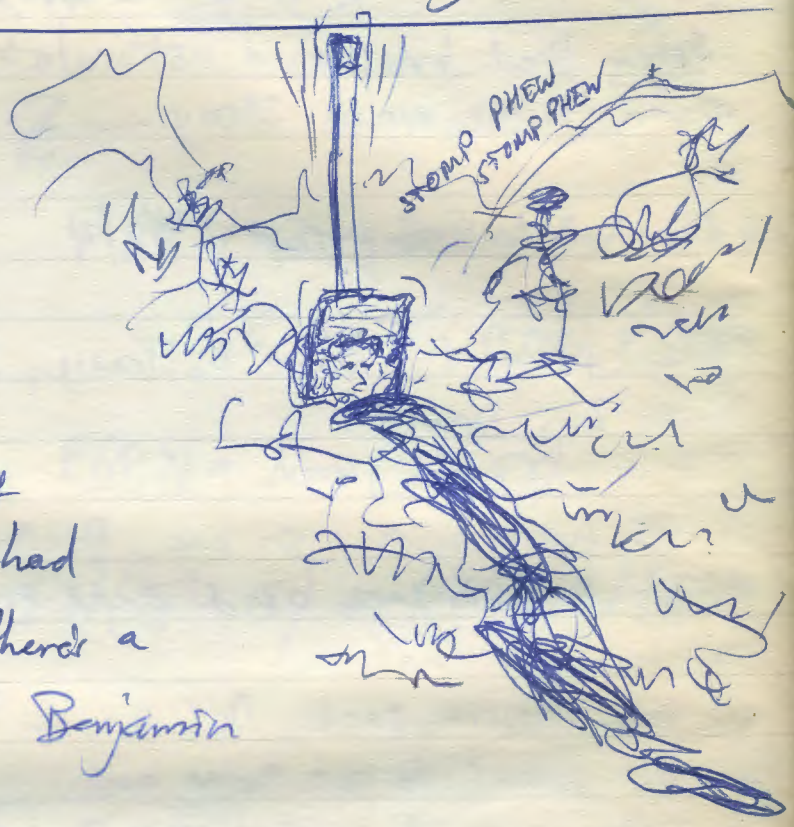
p.s. Don't worry Gavin, You don't actually look like this, it's just I can't draw people
David

Dirk" There must be some explanation for all my muscles aching" Vertigen

---

Negation cub(i)ed: "I haven't not decided not to go down"

Seen also on the path to Lagos:



The David Franklin Walking Lightning Rod (Note freshly washed and combed hair — not in perfect state, after Somebody Else had broken his hairbrush) "If there's a thunderstorm, I'll be killed" Benjamin Monaghan

---

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

New cave discovered on Jultzgu.

Location: Walk to 2/7 then continue up to the ridge top
- entrance is obvious

Name: Pozu del ' 30m above 2/7' or 0/7

Description: Entrance scramble down a 3m climb, walk across short boulder slope, climb up 2m climb to ledge. This ledge has a window into an enormous chamber. The roof is very high indeed and can't be seen. The far wall is about 12 miles away, and there is a 14 second drop to the floor of the chamber.

This <u>must</u> be pushed next year.

124 end

64/5 Page 15 66/5 79 + 84 + 89. 92 Descript. 97. 111

Area 5

65/5 Pages 14 + 20. + 79.

Area 4 some Page 55 + 61. + 67 → 69 Tatyn's 108-9 116 (2x).

Area 11 Page 59 + 74 → 77 (1/11 or was 30/5 - optional to 114 + 116)

Area 10 Pg 60 + 63 → 66 69 Page 71 (Names) etc.

Hsks noted from other side of George.

Area 7 Page 97 → 98. 0/7 Pg 123

~~66/5 79~~

To get Matterhorn

Follow Trea past Junct i Jultp. + 300m before to Puerta del Rey to (R) + fairly visible. Small rock 40cm high

Lits a top of big rock + is well described

(Yestins 'A' Cave WHERE THE FUCK IS IT
Jultayn or Llambra?
Pg 71 Pge 108/9
10/10 descript pg 70 the same prob)

B1

Call Outs

Who?	Where?	Time + date away	Time + date for call out
Tony, Dave T, Dave B	→ J.A	8/7/91, 1pm	9/7/91 noon
Dave H, ~~[illegible]~~ Pauline	Skull	8/7/91, 1pm	9/7/91 midnight
David, Sean, Pauline, Chris	Porto → end of rifts	9/7/91 11:00	10/7/91 am
Steve, Michelle	End of rifts, maybe further	10/7/91 11.10	11/7/91 1am
Gavin	Skull	11/7 9.43	11/7 18.00
Paul & Chris	Skull [redacted]	12/7 ~~11/7~~ 11.11	12/7 20.00
Dave (Dr) + Dave (Eng)	53/5	12/7 11.00	12/7 18.00
Tim + Chris.	65/5 → Puerta del Rey → 53/5	13/7 10.30	13/7 20.00
Dave [illegible]	53/5	13/7 11.00	13/7 6.00pm
Sean + Pauline.	Skull.	13/7 11.00	13/7. 19.00
Tim + Michelle	53/5	14/7 10.45	14/7 20.00
Sean & Tony	Skull	14/7 11.00	14/7 22.00
Paul, Dave B,	2/7 - Camp & Egret	14/7 11.30	Out on 17/7 22.00
Pauline, Chris	—	—	Call out 18/7 9.00
Tim, Gavin	53/5 (and possibly Regional 48/5 later)	15/7 10.00	15/7 21.00
Sean + Tony.	Skull.	15/7 9.30	15/7 22.00
Tim, Gavin, Mark, Steve.	53/5	16/7 10.30	16/7 2200
Dave Lacey	2/7 Seminabilistó	16/7 11.15	16/7 21.00
Tim, Dave H., Mark.	53/5	17/7 11.00.	17/7 2200.
Gavin, Mark, Dirk	53/5	18/7 13.00	18/7 midnight
Gavin Mark	53/5	19/7 11.00	19/7 midnight

UNA/O KAS NARANJA
—I— COCA COLA
Y UNA CERVEZA POR FAVOR.

25-28 GL JGV, DV, CD
28-31 DRM, AMM
1-4
4-6

1-4 penultimate camp
4 dengers down
6-9 dering
10-12 carry
13 R.P
14 → 5

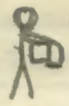
CALL OUTS

TEAM	CAVE + DISTANCE e.g. "2/7 RIFTS"	DATE + TIME DOWN		DATE + TIME FOR CALL OUT		RETURNED (TICK)
Dave H + Q	53/5 SILENCE LAMBS	19/7	11.30	19/7	22.00	✓
Gavin & Mark (again)	53/5 end	19/7	11.00	19/7	23.59.	✓
Gavin + Jenny	53/5	20/7	11.00	20/7	midnight	✓
Chris & William	53/5 survey to end	22/7	13.00	23/7	9 a.m	✓
Richard + Dick	Huerta del Rey → Extremadura	23/7	9.40	23/7	Midnight	✓
Gavin	53/5	23/7	9.40	23/7	RD 22.00	✓
Jenny + Tim	53/5	23.7.	2.45	MIDNIGHT (unless Tim + Jenny arrive)		✓
Dave B	Area 4	23/7	2.45	23/7	21:00	✓
FM, JV, DV, CD	2/7 Corp/Gilbert	25/7	11:30	29/7	09.00	✓
Tim + William (?)	53/5	25/7	12.00.	25/7	24.00	✓
Gavin + Richard.	Cuarobles below Huerta Dalley	25/7	15.00	25/7	Dark.	✓
Dick + Sue	53/5 P.P.P.P	26/7/91	12.00	26/7	DARK +	✓
Tim.	Area 4, + Galeza/Valverde	26/7/	12.45	26/7.	Dark.	✓
SGR, Michelle, Richard	Area 4	26/7	14.30	26/7	Dark	✓
SGR, Richard, Nicky, Tim, Helen	9/10.	27/7	10.30.	27/7	2400	✓
Gavin	Old Lays' Fantasy	28/7	12.30	28/7	21.00	✓
Tim + William.	53 fucking 5 (pluck permitted).	28/7.	13.00	28/7	24.00	✓
Gavin	53/5 end	29/7	10.30	29/7	21.00	✓
Paul	Shaft looking area 11 with 1 ladder.	29/7	12.00	29/7	4.00	✓
Tim	Area 10 ish to lug Rooms	29/7/	11.30	29/7	20.00	✓
~~Paul, Dave~~ SS Jenny	Skull Cave	29/7/91	13.00	29/7	midnight	✓
Dave, Jacob, William	53/5 photography	30/7/91	1200	Saturday	midnight	✓
Tim ~~Pauline~~ Jenny	66/5	30/7/91	ca 1100	30/7	midnight	✓
Tony & William	66/5	31/7/91	12.20	1/8	00 00	✓
Dave & Pauline	Canal de Trea George. Return along path from Gavin over back of Sultanyi Ridge.	31/7/91		4/8	afternoon	✓
Gavin + Dick	53/5	2/8/91		Midnight		✓
Dave & Pauline	66/5	2/8/91		Midnight		✓
Paul	53/5 Re. 66/5	2/8/91		4pm / Midnight		✓

B4

Comments on Gear

① Primuses are good if you are nice to them.
② We need more Darien Drums.
③ Daleswear small gold flask bags are actually quite good for taking a camp down in. You can fit a whole pit set (inner, outer, bivvy bag & alpinex) into a single bag. The result is light and fits all known squeezes. It is also pleasant to carry along London Underground.
④ Water carriers - wrong shape to fit into rucksack, handle not over centre of gravity
⑤ CS generator. Needs jubilee clip on tube. Very poor seal between base and top. Why the hole in the base? Base should be bigger. Otherwise good.
⑥ Water Carriers - fit into my rucksack no problem, can be carried by placing arms over top and holding outermost underside thus:



quite easily

→ This is a damn good way to strain your back muscles.

So?

Not true see new scientist

⑦ Daleswear zips are crap
⑧ Saunders Basecamp tent: very good, but not enough pegs. Also inner tent door tiles fairly naff
⑨ Petzl Mac oversuits rip v. easily and the seam seams are crap. However the yellow PVC oversuits from Anglesport are much more hard wearing
Actually most Petzl gear is a pile of shite but that's no surprise to you, is it?

Medical

Sellers/Tums/Milk of magnesia medicines needed.
More anti-inflammatories
More Dioralyte even if we have to buy it.
More Sunburn cream (? William able to help).
Pain killers at Underground Camp - Tangesic for a mild headache is overkill!

Call Outs

Who	Where	Time + Date down	Call out time + date	
Jenny + Gavin	66/5	3/8 10 am	3/8 22.00	✓
Jenny, Gavin	2/7	4/8 9.30	7/8 8.00	
Daniel, Pauline				
Bernard + Gaurard (digging)	Valley of Dried Bones	6/8 10 am	6/8 9 pm	✓