

before. Over the top of Tantalus Pitch we
traversed up into a dry, abandoned continuation.
The walls were bare but our courage no
knew no limit.

After some metres ~~that~~ we climbed a little
pile of rocks... into vast, empty blackness:
a great aven, with water pushing down,
at the bottom of steep, shaly slope of
rocks — ~~as~~ by far the biggest chamber so
far. Its name: Sala Nelson Mandela.

As we went The water, the way on was
into a cherty, descending rift which brought
us back to the increasingly unstable ~~at~~
high level above the stream. As notes began
to open up all around we reached
a patch — Pot Pot.

This short (12m) drop is the most disgusting
I've seen in a long time. It being 3am I

Kept nodding off, tending the unweakened Steve
 to rig it a long job. Finally he descended,
 leaving me loitering at the edge of oblivion.
 He came back some weeks later to say
 that he had found hundreds of metres
 of stream passage ending in a boulder
 pit. That was enough to rouse me
 from my torpor & I awoke down to
 join him.

The landing of the pitch was a
 ghostly, bare boulder pit, with
 an equally disturbing (or easily disturbed)
 dirt down to the stream. The
 stream (or perhaps river: a FLUMEN not
 a FLUVIUS) entered a ~~seemingly~~ seemingly
 endles, ^{BRAHMAPUTRA} largely featureless meander-
 THE ~~BRAHMAPUTRA~~ Steve's boulder pit was passed;
 more hundreds of metres of passage followed.

Eventually we heard a low rumbling, gradually getting louder as we advanced. ~~The~~ found a bend. The rumble revealed itself as a 10 m waterfall pitch in a much-enlarged passage. Steve we timed round, reaching the surface after 22½ hours at midday. We might not have added much depth (40m at most) but we had at least quadrupled the length of FU56.

Mon 11th - Tues 12th Paul, Graham & Phil

Walked up from Anjo. Down FU56 after Dave & Steve came out. Re-rigged the Sphinx on Marlow and added an handline on the climb down to the river (After considerable gardening!) When we eventually reached limit of exploration rigging the pitch took several hours! Really the primary

bolt was placed, Phil & Graham ascended down but the bolt crunched out of the calcite when I put my weight on it. In the ensuing panic I managed to scramble to safety and was left with the problem of getting the other two up.

A good thread came to the rescue - meanwhile Phil & Graham were stopped a short way down stream by deep pools. The modified hauly was wet, but not as wet as the rest of the cave looks like being!

WNC

7th - 15th July. Dave, Steve M., Richard.

Reached unit (with little tackle except food) in less than 4 hours. Traverses found leading over deep water. After a short distance the stream splits, or appears to. The left branch ends in a deep pool + mud choke. The right carries on as a traverse into a fine river chamber with an inlet on the right. This passage (several hundred metres long) is dry to begin with, a perfect flat floor of pebbles: an ~~excellent~~ ideal campsite. Water ~~starts~~ ^{after} this section, providing an unpolluted drinking source.

The main stream now enters an immature vadose passage with a phreatic roof. This dips down after 100 m. or so to the head of a v. wet coating,

rather terrifying pitch - THE VORTEX. This
 so put us off that we spent mostly
 on Steve's freeclimbing activities } many
 hours looking for a high level.
 Eventually Steve found a crack which
 rapidly enlarged to Xitu Teresa - seems
 like dry funnel. On the strength of this
 we rigged a line + ladder + wanted
 all the gear up. we spent the
 next 3-4 hours searching for the
 stream bypass - to no avail.
 After a X roads in a big chander
 all ways on petered out: in ditches
 or (in one case) leading back to
 the campsite inlet.

Somewhat depressed (and doubly
 so for having no tin-opener
 to get at the Calamores on Saturday)

we had another look at the tight wet
 pit. Richard squeezed through the
 slot at the takeoff + free dived $\frac{1}{4}$
 way down; fetching a ladder he rigged
 for Steve to descend another
 $\frac{2}{5}$ or so before putting himself
 in a scary position (the ladder being
 in danger of pulling off a slab)
 still 20' off the floor. A black
 pool was visible below - maybe a sump;
 maybe a wet continuation.

~~to~~ The next party can start out.
 Steve made off out first + Richard
 + I followed, reaching sun, sky +
 Fabada at about 9 am.

Later Graham came up + I shouted
 at him, regrettably forgetting to turn on the
 tape recorder first. We therefore did

an action replay, but by this time
 the original dinosaurs had cooked
 too much to provide any more
 than an oblique, humorous record
 of those little everyday tensions that
 beset every well-organised world
 come depth record attempts.

16th July

Phil R. & Graham.

This trip started at the mixed table
 hour of 10 o'clock and before
 midday we had descended the entrance
 stairs to Dait Look At The Roof. By traversing
 higher than usual I found a very
 large high level passage entering Sala Wilson
 Mandela 15' above the normal entrance.
 Perhaps this continues all the way above the

trunk?

An hour or so later we had reached the Vortex the previous limit of exploration. Graham added another ladder to the end of this and descended the extremely wet pitch finding a small tight rift, Armageddon Rift, on the through the waterfall. I then had the rather terrifying task of carrying the heavy tackle bags down this sooty wet pitch untied and getting thoroughly wet in the process. At the other end of the rift was another pitch in which the passage reopened. Our hearts were really going now as we thought the cure was going again. However only 50 yds or so down the stream, involving some highish traversing, the passage closed what we had all hoped for so long; A SUMP! (This lead us to think of the previous pitch as the Coch Teason!)

Returning back towards the rift we desperately
 looked for some high level bypass but to
 no avail so leaving the truck bags at the
 bottom of the Cook Teasong we started to make
 our way out. Back in the Mekong River Passage
 Graham climbed up the track to find
 some more large scale high level passage,
 however he could not follow it too far
 as it became rather exposed. When we
 reached Sala Nelson Mandela I tried to find
 the continuation of the high level on this side.
 However after nearly hitting myself on the loose
 boulder slope I decided discretion was the
 better part of valor as we made the
 rest of the way out of the cave at a little past
 sunrise the surface at about 1 a.m.

Alpha.