

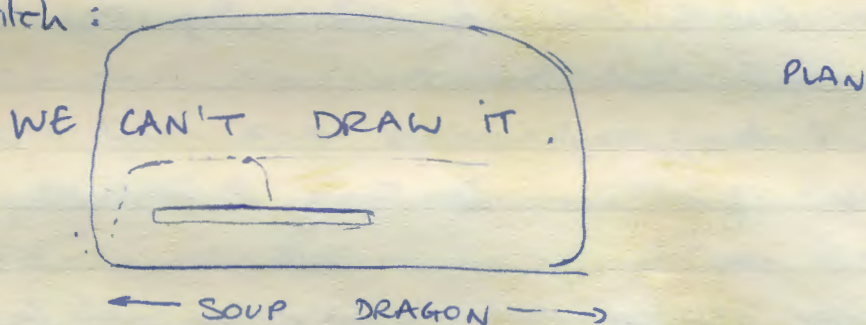
I will NEVER fly in a Spanish helicopter. The pilot must be completely out of his tree, having landed beside the water tank at the Refugio. Anyway, back to the story...

Dave down 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

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

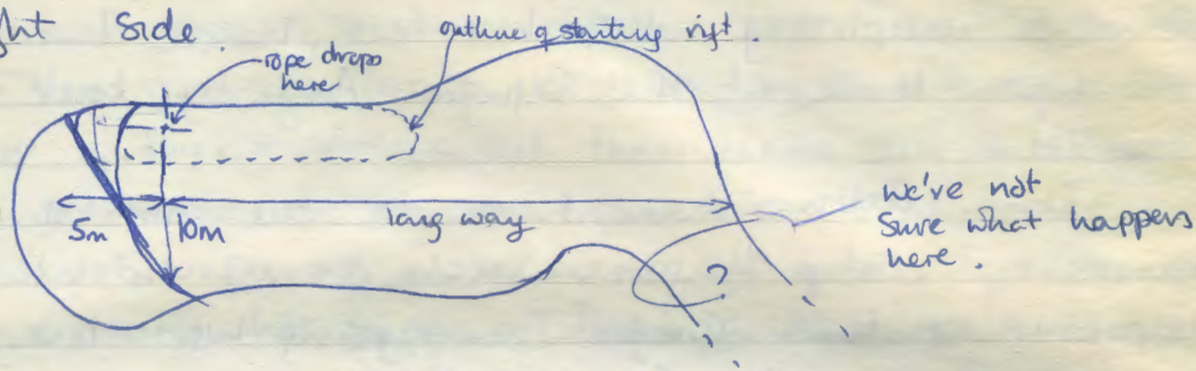
We then returned to the pit in Soup Dragon, convinced we had sufficient rope to bottom it. Tary and David began to bolt it properly, and Dave & AQB got so wild they returned to camp to make supper. The pit was bounced to find that the rope still did not reach the bottom, but the floor is in sight, about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



Start again:

Y hang off edge of pit drops to rebelay off 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 onto 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 Soap Dragon to the floor is probably 50m, but again we couldn't reach it. This is a big place. It is not 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 Tary.

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

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

I decided 53/5 sounded too hard, so volunteered for this nice sounding 66/5 cave. Consequently Gavin chose to do 53/5, needing 1 assistant, while I felt 2 might be more useful on 66/5, so Dick was recruited to Gavin, the Righty with myself. The day then revolved around this plan, with 2 further parameters, a) Gavin wanted a hour lead start, b) the surveying tape was in 53/5. Gavin went derigging (as described), leaving at about 10.30. Maggie was press gaged into getting the tape, and not knowing 53/5 decided to wait for Dick, who would be at some quiet assistance.

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

When it came to the evening, as always, it wasn't so easy. I changed more rapidly than Dirk, so headed into 53/5 first. No problem until the coffin stone I had a look, thought wrong, shoved my head into the slot and gave it a go. Swing back round, then where? - No not there - stuck stuck. Ok keep calm, wriggle back up and try again. Head up, wiggles round, gently does it, that's better. Left arm in slot, slide down, force it a little, that's it, past the slot. Fuch, I think this is wrong, my legs well jammed, and half my body weight supported by my neck. Helmet jammed, can't push head forwards, tube de plastic caught. Generator wedged in narrow rift below. Lets move my weight a little - down - now I've wedged my pressed leg 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 stuck. Panic, Claustrophobia. Wriggle more frantically - drop another inch, Now I can't even breathe - blocks. I want to jolt, 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, what's stopping me - best remove it, get me out of here, gently. Then worry about rescuing gear.

Brilliant plan of action, 2 minutes later I dropped back out of the slot, into cave one would describe as merely tight. Now to rescue my helmet, tube de plastic, generator, baby talk, pressed leg, rock, and my other welly, which were scattered in various parts of the squeeze.

I dived to the thought of jolting, 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 evening

gear, and me. And I won't let past Dirk in the above passage anyway. Have a good look, take a deep breath, keep quiet, and remember, stay high. The odd useful piece of advice from Dirk and I was through to the pithead. Well, with this cover reputation, I'll be removing SRT gear for exit rift, I can't be arsed with that. It's only 10m, one decision - lets attack 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 Esmerian 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 Dunderbuff. Then all of a sudden it went quiet. Being familiar with the ways of the Vertigan school of spoko-market arts, where every move is accompanied by its own great vocal outburst in the run 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, channeling 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 celtic kid's job was clearly none of sterner stuff than paradise, and after many attempts, the eighth of an inch gained proved not to be enough. Dirk, who'd helped to guide me so well, admitted defeat this time, and ~~humbly~~ humbly 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 'outward' 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 Green explaining the fate of his partner, but materials were scarce. Eventually I came on the idea of soaking a painted pebble, and using it like a pencil to write on a sheet of perma-trace. It worked, badly. I was just about ~~was~~ able to write legibly the message 'DV Jack', I think that was about as effective as I could be with words - it might even have been comprehensible.

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 Aric 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 'agon' 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), it's my writing, I'm a free man, so I'll do what I want, so there!!!))))))!

... So we'd planned to meet at 2 pm. We all three arrived at 2:30, so what the heck. I was hitted up first - probably because I had a head start, only wearing overalls at the time - so I leded in. GWS rounded a nice curve, except maybe this corner-step rift double bend. Maybe I was misled. Three double bends, tight & frightening. I rebekled at the start of this rift - no bastard sit harness was going to snag on me! Tlog sez that

can tell a lot about a persons sexuality 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 foot 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 throttle... but then it takes all sorts.

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

So I kicked up, descended Les Misérables, and decided the bottom was wet, cold & drizzly. That way didn't look right, lets try the other end. Nothing. So it must be that way.

Yorkshire rift wasn't over pleasant I must confess, but that had the edge of the end was good to hear on.

Oh look, a ten foot climb - hardly worth living, looks too simple - but I am on my own at the moment. Descend on rope, oh, might take off, well lets through my present bag soon, save it getting caught. A moment's inspiration made me clip it on the line first - to help guide it's descent. I'm glad this inspiration came when it did. 15 feet down I found my bag snagged by the device, and a lot of dead space beneath me - 45 feet to a boulder ledge, and then a bit more down a spiky small rift, that might have been unpleasant.

I clambered down route 66, getting again quickly snagged on the horizontal locking square base of block, and presently arrived down at the bottom of the cave.

I started the survey, and soon Dave joined me. 'Porline found Cornerstep 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 ~~the~~ Pudding became Todd-in-the-Hole for a few minutes as I jammed myself again. I did better here than in the coltstone squeeze earlier - this time I managed to retain both wettes on my person. Going out, not in, proved to be a big incentive ~~not~~ 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 Long belayed from a chockstone - so this was Blackstone Pat - "Dove, 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 Long, '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 rift to take on epically epic proportions.

In the end, we derigged Los Aisrellas, ^{having} surveyed to its head, and being soft, hauled the rope through Cornerstone in stages, leaving the remaining part of the cable to be surveyed, and one pitch to be derigged the following day by Gawn & Jenny. And I can't find their survey notes!

Paul

P.S. - I had a really good relaxing days coming.

Paul "I've got lovely antlers, the loveliest in
the Cave Club" Mann
William J "No I'm not going to eat other people's merryflakes" Stead

5 August 1991

Freel and William 1st ^{human} Ascent To Ljestyn's A Cave

We walked up from Lago's and after a cup of tea, went down the Trea path to show Liebert and Ewald 6b/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 Extreme, 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 us with 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~~ 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 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 look 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, abiding off the line on the left pitch, and returned to Aino tired and very thirsty.

P.S. I've added the word human because the caves were full of rebecca skitt.

Freed

Many thanks to Gedford for one loan of a rope. Altrae Club ~~is~~ have been taken down to Los Lagos.

6 August 1991

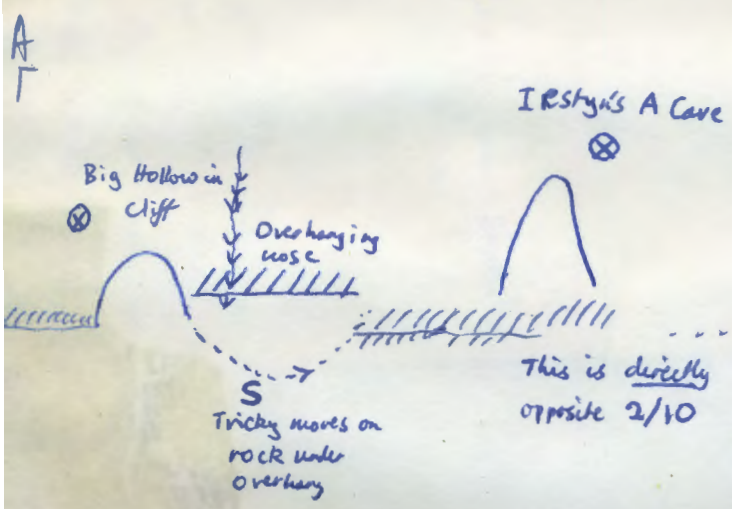
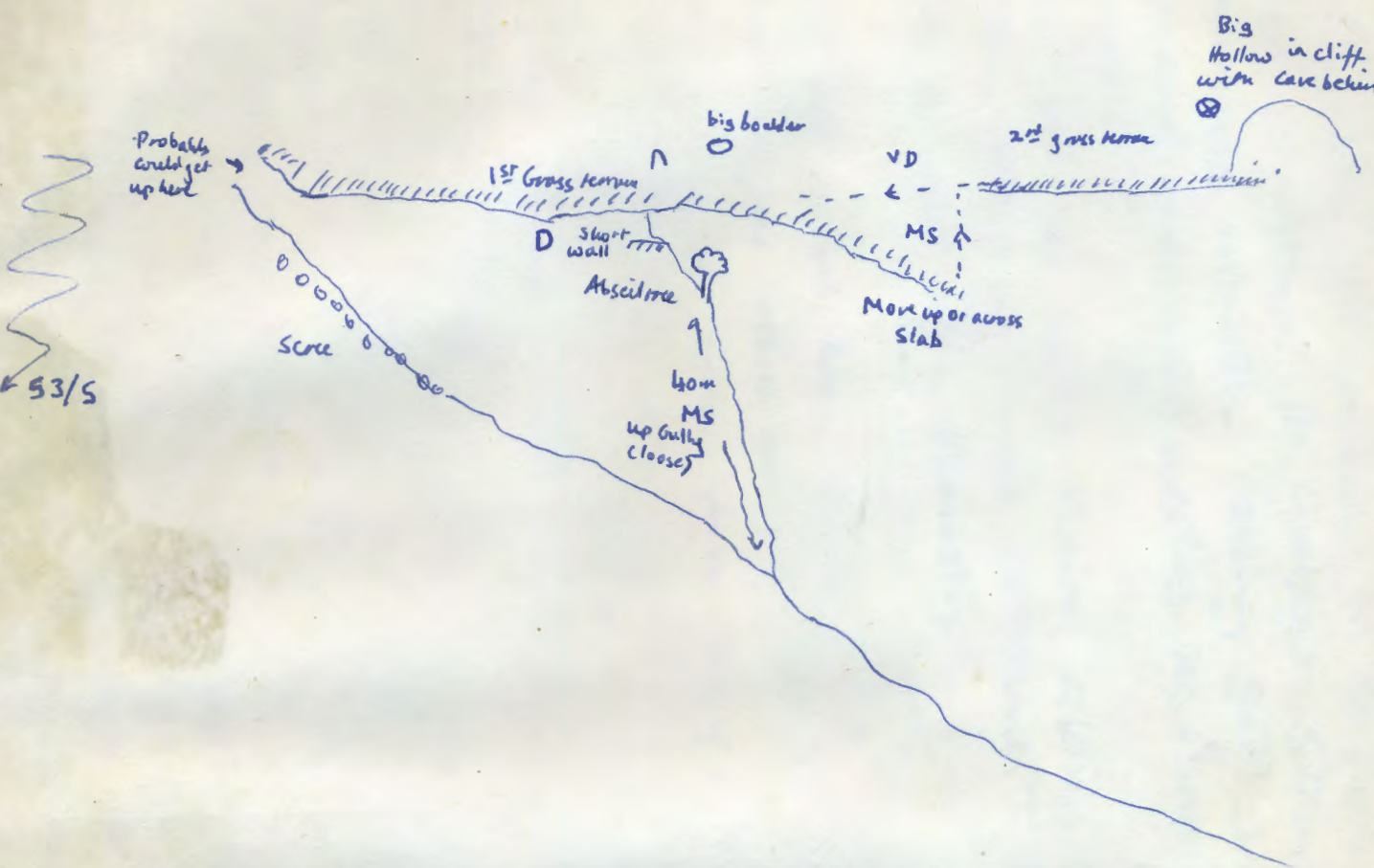
I have been considering the question of whether we should rig in to 2/7 next year. The best answer would seem to be a compromise.

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 2/1 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

← West → east
 ↑ up ↓ down



View of cliff of
 Cabeza Llambría
 looking N (as seen
 from ~~the~~ El
 Reguexon) by WJS

7 Aug Shows route taken by Fred & William to Irestyn's A Cave (which doesn't go)
 IIII are ^{sloping} grass terraces & are walking (+ lifeline!). Climbing bits are
 marked --- + English climbing grade. Wear walking boots for a good
 grip on the sloping grass.
 Are these in Areas 4, or do we ^{use 'Gout' letters} just use ~~an area~~ for vertical areas?

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 extent than 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 lots of shaft 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

purple
a trip

6/8/92

Burnhard, Gerhard "Make Your Own Cave"

Valley of Dried Bones, or

Very { Old } Draughting Boulders
 { Oddly }

purple
a trip
a trip
a trip