

WEVE GOT THE BLUES  
REAL BA D.



I WANT TO  
BE EATEN  
BY THE  
CRAZY ENGLISH  
SPEEDS

THE TUNA

"VERY VEGGY"

FERRY

Das soll ein Chemfisch sein? Schaut eher  
aus wie ein Wal...

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SECCION DE ESPELEOLOGIA DEL CENTRO EXCURSIONISTA  
PUIGCASTELLAR

ROUD SANT JOSEP, 20  
08922 SANTA COLOMA DE GRAMANET  
BARCELONA  
SPAIN

5th August

ARRIVED - FINALLY - AT BASE CAMP AFTER WANDERING  
AROUND IN DARK & DARKNESS FOR TWO HOURS LAST NIGHT  
AFTER BEING GIVEN DIRECTIONS TO THE WRONG CAMP SITE BY  
VARIOUS SPANARDS WHO HAD NEVER HEARD OF DE INGLASE  
SPAGOS. THE TENT I BROUGHT WAS HORRIBLY & I WOKE  
UP SCARED. - WON'T BE USING THAT AGAIN.

HAVE I MADE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE?!

PEPE

6th August - after 8hr drive (in thick lorry traffic followed by  
thick mist) from the French border, hit Base by pure chance  
in zero vis just before midnight on the 5th.

We'd valiantly tried to do some shopping on Friday after-  
noon. Drove into Castro Urdiales at half past five, repeatedly  
got stuck in two-way roads that were only slightly narrower  
than our car (with cars parked on either side), eventually  
found an 'ALIMENTACION' which did stock lentils but no  
vegetables nor bread, contemplated the 'SUPERMERCADO' across  
the square and, whilst waiting for a gap between the cars to  
cross the road, abstractedly watched these two guardias  
playing games with a wheel clamp at the car parked  
in front of ours.. Well the town seemed too small for  
the four of us so we left, fast.

JdG

P.S. Even at the late hour (10:30pm), the roads near Arriñadas & in Cangas were full of people. Must be the Descenso del Sella weekend - 10<sup>6</sup> folks coming to watch the world's biggest white water event... Lagos is, therefore, remarkably empty.

P.P.S. Commendations to recent Base Camp staff, it's singularly tidy (apart from the inevitable tadpole pond in the kitchen tent). Decided to get up late and spend the day festering, acclimatising, fetching some water (sterilizing tablets anywhere?!? only found the Miltons), so looted a some Micropur from ~~my~~ our cellar), washing up a minor number of items. <sup>some heavy</sup> Then G. decided to spoil his first holiday ~~trip~~ by going to top camp with load. P.P.P.S. This logbook is very uninformative. No clues what soever as to what's been happening cave-wise! - G.

17h20 - This day of keeping base camp has been more ~~enter~~ entertaining since a big spanish duxus bus got hopeles stuck in the mud; if you look around the campsite, you won't have any problem to recognize where exactly this happened. Was funny to see how a well dressed driver "transmogrified" into a not so well dressed "garagist" - reminded me some carers, especially when he started digging out his backwells with his bare hands... It still needed a dozen men pulling and a few pushing (don't look too close at the knots) to get him out, but they succeeded in the end. Was sorry I don't understand <sup>that</sup> ~~too~~ much spanish...

[P.S. I hate those pencils.]

Plkq

\* and coming back the same night left at 2pm. ]

7 Aug 94]

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Right let's try to make this logbook marginally more informative to those who've still expected to arrive.

Hello Steve! Hello Wookey!

(1) This is Base Camp. It is normally unguarded. The van keys are in the trailer and Jim ought to have let you know where the trailer keys are. There are some tent spaces and estriero bags here for your convenience.

The white container with the red lid is, at the time of this writing, the more recently filled one. I lobbed some silver tablets in.

The choughs are getting far more courageous than ever before... \* →

(2) Top Camp has wandered c. 250m NNE and downhill to where the multicoloured snow pole is. There are caves going on either side of La Verdelluenga with depths of ~500m and ~300m reached. The former seems excellently placed to lead into the bowels of 277 catchment... Shaft bashing is also proceeding well (well... passing from question marks to crossed-outs, most of the time...)

(15)

(3) Six Barcelonenses are rigging into Xitu. Latest I heard (yesterday afternoon) was that they'd reached the head of Pythagoras ~ 720m down, so they're getting close to the old bivouac site.

I have a mind of telling them s.th. Dave Rose told me once, concerning possible leads - beginning at the head of the Figer... don't know how much time they're going to spend looking for continuations, apart from tourist saving, but this is a unique possibility - and I rather suspect there's an entire fossilised subsystem there awaiting discovery. Maybe there'll be a joint multinational Xitu follow-up Expedition one of these years?

y.

(\*) So are the cows. Last night one vacca spent hours trying to wrestle a rubbish bin from its steel pillar.)

(4) Don't ask me how the Killy works or where the money is kept - I haven't found out yet.

5.

1994-08-08

Wook & Andy arrive at about 1am next morning. We were badly astonished at the shiteness of the 'big road atlas of Spain' from the AA. DO NOT BUY, I am a victim. Had conflicting info on cost of Spanish motorways so tried one road St Sebastian were shocked by the \$10 we had to pay for 50 miles so got off sharply, only to discover that in the next region they were free (and the road names keep changing)

We come from the Pyrenees term PAU, starting at about

2.30pm.

got lots of traffic just past Binarity & more on N634 where unknown is still being contacted.

After that it went fine all the way to Cordoba. Then we headed up to Los Lagos and the viz was appalling - couldn't see dipped car lights kept going out & temp gauge was knackered too.

Indubinson said 'Drive past 1st lake', but there was no chance of seeing any lakes!

Eventually got to a refuge & end of road. Wandered about & found campsite full of spainards - no sign of red van, or any other english cars.

Traced road back, K-found my van & came down to campsite - using headlights we found Red Van - hooray. However no-one here so we went to bed.

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Well done for the helpful info for our benefit - the only thing it didn't tell us was where top camp actually is! Fortunately your & pete arrived before we tried setting off in the direction of Ario/Verballunza in the hope of finding it.

Workey  
(& Andy Atkinson)

Even you wouldn't have found it by description.

8/8/94

# Steve arrives

Via ~~Two~~ Bus, Train, Seacat -

Train Metro ~~to~~ Train Bus, Hitch

Hitch. / Incidents

- 1) Nearly miss train in Paris over to  
 faster to reach watch to French  
 Time.
- 2) Bowseat Beauvauante Ferry conductor  
 ↑! into submission on behalf  
 of three dirty German  
 busses who are missin part of their Intercit  
 paperwork. He goes away defeated. German  
 fail to rip my clothes off in gratitude
- 3) At Louan, use LOCAL KNOWLEDGE to  
 walk from Louan station to Tavitrans  
 bus depot - 2 miles away at the Fontaine  
 Bridge. When I get there, I find they  
 have moved it... to just outside  
 Louan rail station.
- 4) Fail to get picked up at Arrives by  
 team shipping by 10min, Hitch up arriving  
 in ~ 1 1/2 hrs. Hoorah!  
 Get in bar with Andy + Steve +  
 leaving  
 HOCA ESPANA!

11/8/94

# ZASADZKA! No Base Camp.

12/8/94

Ok, now that we've recovered a little, I'll explain. Got down at lunchtime yesterday to find every single tent flattened apart from the yellow 'n' grey Wild Country one. Scotched any thoughts of going back up the hill, and set to work clearing up, together with Andy, Wlodek and Alex who had also walked down. Surprisingly enough, it wasn't the cows that had contributed to the damage, but it must have been the storm on Tuesday (9/8/94) night. Damage sustained:

Gain's green tent: Inner ok, but fly completely ripped down main ridge. Might be repairable with a sewing machine, but not here. Had to pack it up (before the rain came down) whilst slightly damp. Now in trailer.

Steve's Polish tent: Miraculously enough sustained the least damage. One bent tent pole. Mind you, that might have been from the car that ran over the tent. Andy did something miraculous to the tent pole and the tent is now up and functional again.

Tim's green tent: Fortunately it had been taken down and put in ~~the~~ Gain's tent so it was undamaged by the storm. However it was damaged at the rear (the metal hole was missing) and Alex



I told you to bring the hole-maker, Gavin!

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reinforced the material with tape and Andy fortunately had one of those metal hole-makers with spare holes, so we were able to put that up as well, which was just as well otherwise we wouldn't have had anything to sleep under.

Stormhaven. What can I say? It wasn't. We found a tangled mess of ropes, cloth, glass, mess, yuck. Unfortunately there was damage to the cloth of the tent, at the place where it's supposed to hold the main ridge pole. It might be repairable back in England, but it certainly won't act here. When the main ridge pole came down it smashed the light, smashing glass and gauze. Possibly ~~the~~ the tent might still live to face another day.

Contents of Storm Haven: Mostly undamaged, as the tent remainder managed to act as a big tarpaulin, keeping most of the rain off. Things escaped mostly about as unscathed as this log book.

Red van was moved to the area, and food loaded into it. Went for a shopping trip in the Wookmobile with Andy and Wlodek, after having recharged Porsche batteries. Wlodek was not a happy Wlodek, and consequently drank lots of red wine, and consequently I would urge you never to put ~~the~~ a drunk Wlodek in charge of a shopping trolley. Only got 10 loaves of bread as I only have 10 fingers. This ~~the~~ morning Wlodek vomited off to shop mae as we've eaten lots of bread and eggs. Phew.

(OK WHO WROTE THIS?)

Oh. Sorry. It was me. Sharon.

(20)

## Cuisine à la façon de Alex

Peanut butter sandwich:

~~Do~~ Tear off 9" length of bread.  
Smear end with peanut butter  
Bite off P'B'd end.  
Repeat until no bread left.

Gastronomie!

12/8/94

I have to head off home now, reluctantly. It's a pity that I can't be here for the last week, but I do hope that you all have a good week + journey back. Personally, I've had a great time and look forward to more caving back in the UK - and to Spain next year!

Enjoy your beach party and see you in Oxford (at BCLA)

Steve P.