

Shaft Bashing

Gain 18/7

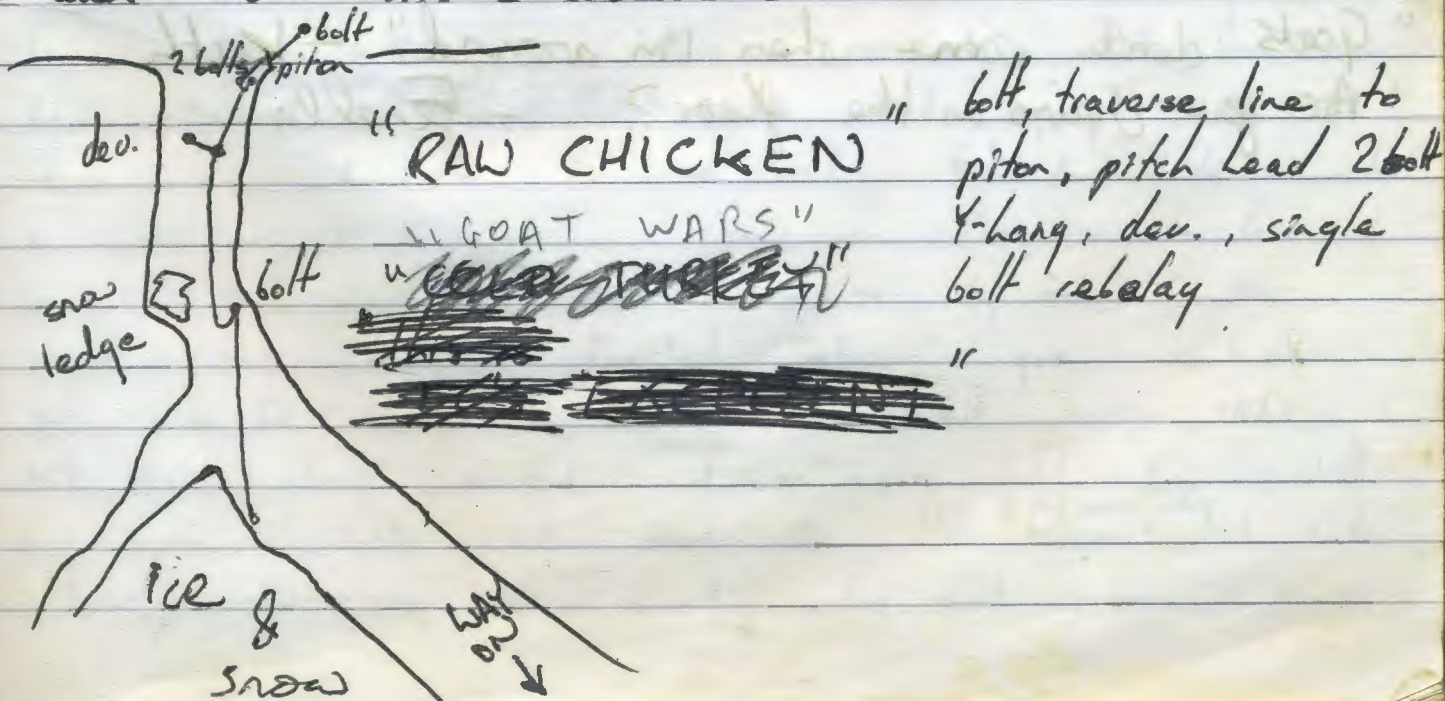
Went up flank of Cabron's past F5. Found F28, unbottomed, and worth checking. Then up to F5 - there's a small rift to the right that contained a Petzl bolting hammer! Might also be worth checking the rift although it's quite tight.

About two levels higher found F89, a small crawl, which seems to continue. Bearings: 300° to F2, 244° to right hand end (cliff) of Punta Gregoriana. Camp is not quite visible from the cave.

Another two levels higher is F90. Snow pole 8°, top of F13 rock 56° (about 200m), cave slightly higher than F13 rock. Impressive rift with snow plug heads into hillside.

18/7/97 - F88, Keith & Me

Took Keith for a jolly up to F88. Rigged with 90m of rope over two 35/40m pitches (Y lp, 1s: Y2s, dev., 1s) squealing with exaggerated joy as Keith led the way into virgin hde. Big & very, very pretty with ice slope to possible continuation.... Made our way out slowly, pausing for re-rigging, photos and re-education. Might be back tomorrow.... re-educated!



Keith's bit - beware of loose rocks at top on what used to be a pretty hairy traverse but is probably easier now it's been re-rigged. 1st pitch, "Raw Chicken" (40m) lands on a small snow plug with solid floor ^(beware of loose rocks at top) Next pitch "This is Excellent" (40m) descends 2nd half ^{lands on} steep ice/snow slope with a bit of a ledge near the bottom. Land on snow floor of rift at bottom. Way on ~~right~~ 60m ways, one of them seems more probable - the left one or the right one, depends on which direction you're facing. Nice cave. Sorted trip. Going places ?

Concise Dictionary
of New vocabulary (OUEC version)

Lev-orack - a very tight squeeze

Cave virginity - the quality of never having entered an unexplored cave

"Goats don't come when I'm around" - Keith
"Are your drawers on the floor?" - Fenella

Shaft Bashing

Garin, 19/7

F90 For location, see P21. Rigged pitch at back right of shakehole (P25; boulder backup, bolt, spike relay, spike relay) down onto snowplug. Looked at ~~ways~~ about 5 possible ways on, but all diked.

F89 For location, see P21. Crawl into chamber chokes

F5b 6m right (true left) of main FS shaft (see shaft bashing guide). Narrow crack leads into cliff face. Bottom chokes (this is where I found the hammer), but top might be hammerable. *Very good draft*

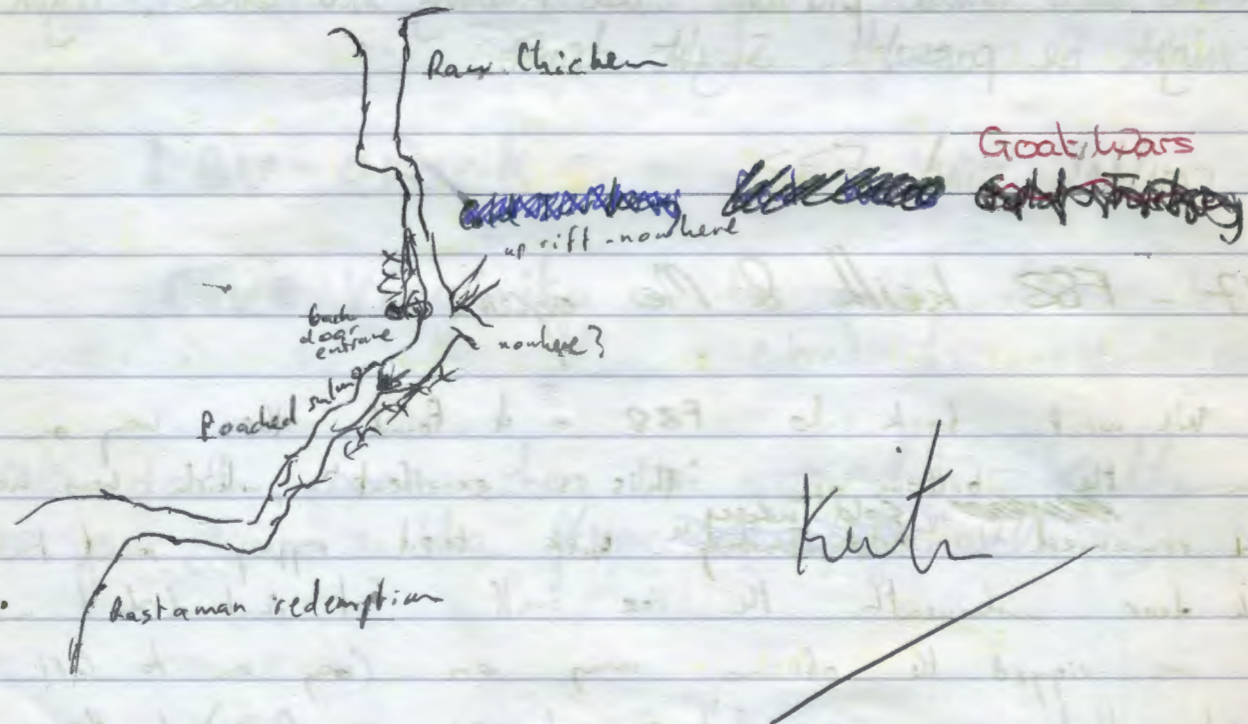
F5c Between main shaft and F5b. Bolt step across shakehole into small pneumatic tube leading into cliff. Tight but might be passable. Slight draft.

I couldn't find F32.

19/7/97 - F88 Keith & Me again

We went back to F88 & found the way on from the bottom of "This is excellent", which has now been renamed ~~"Cold Turkey"~~ ^{"Gold Turkey"}. Nick tried rigging round the back door underneath the ice wall but that didn't work so we rigged the obvious way on (way on to left & up above that over ice don't seem to go very far) to the right. This pitch, "Poached Salmon" goes sort of down a bit, across a bit, down a bit more, slope a bit, etc. along a sad of an icy rift. You reached a short walkable bit where the rift ^{& the snow ends} narrows which leads on to the top of a big, long black space in the rift.

"Rastaman Redemption" Stone throwing gave different results
~~not least a~~ depending on how far out it was thrown
 -but at least a 4 second drop, 4 second rattle. Some
 stones couldn't be heard to hit the floor! The top of
 that pitch is a most excellent place to ~~stand~~
 "Rastaman Redemption" seems like a gorgeous pitch.
 By the way, at the top of the "Raw Chicken" above the
 deviation there's a rubble sticky out which rubs on
 the rope unless you come slowly at the deviation
 and lean out against the wall when passing up.
 Also, when passing up the 1st half of
 "Goat Wars" ~~stay~~ stay close in to the ice to avoid
 a sub point high up above on the opposite wall.
 "Rastaman Redemption" drafts strongly.



OUCC El Regallón 1997
expedition Song

A long long time ago
 I can still remember when we used to go and cave
 And we'd put on my shiny gear, bolts on the pib without any
~~We'd put on our helmets, fleeces and gear. Pear,~~
 With a fudge in our pocket ~~we would~~ ~~we'd~~ ~~sure~~
 But ~~the~~ cold winds made me shiver with every
 carry I'd deliver,
 Fog outside in the morning, causing apathy was dawning,
 I can't remember what I lost, I went down a cave
 - a long time past.
 But I must get to base camp fast, to go shopping
 at last.

CHORUS:

So bye bye no more caring for me
 I drove the red van down to Cangas, ^{would have} arrived before
~~the~~ ~~time~~ ~~to~~ ~~go~~ ~~shopping~~ ~~at~~ ~~last~~
 But like a silly ~~idiot~~ I had forgotten the key.
 Singin' Rio Grande 'I want thee, Rio Grande 'I want thee

G
Well did you go caving in the end, or did you stay and
Am
fettle and mend,

Em
Did you choose to stay in bed?

G D Em Am 7
Well I can't be arsed to go down there, it'll rip
my fleece and dirty my hair.

~~I'll just walk back down the hill~~

EM Am 7 D
I'll just go and sunbathe, over there

Em D
Well I'm not going down no cave,
Em D
only underground when I go to my graves,

C G A7 C
We both kicked off our wellies, man, our feet were
bloody smelly

G D Em
We were ~~in~~ ^{diehard} cavers who'd kicked the habit, we
more Am caving and you can show it,

G D Em
So we hopped ~~to~~ to bare camp like a pair of rabbits,
to C go shopping at last, G C F.

CHORUS.

Jo: "My crabs are really stiff"

20th July

(27)

Last day in Top Camp.

Decided to leave 2 days early due to a very sore groin and an uncontrollable urge to go to the seaside. Thanks everyone for a completely knackered but fun few weeks. Never realised Gavin was such a party animal. Hope that Olly will be able to manage without me to carry his gear for him and that Will won't get too wet next time it rains. Thanks to EL Arbol for one of the best expeditions ever. Who needs depths when you can go shopping.

Maximum prussing for greater groin-ache
Forella

Yet more shafts bashing

Gavin 20/7

F19 chokes; no way on past the snow

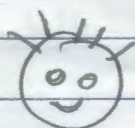
F18 chokes; no way on past the snow

Unnumbered shaft is continuation of F19 rise, a few metres SW: hand-lined climb (~1.0m). Rocks rattle down a slot to the left for a few seconds; I dug at this for a bit, before realising the slot was only 10cm wide.

Keith's farewell message:

And now the time is near, & I must face the final curtain - unless my passport hasn't arrived & you're stuck with me for another 5 weeks. I've had a good time on the expedition and the wobbly bits just made it more exciting. Thanks to everyone for making it a good laugh & to the committee, in particular El Arbal, for organising it. This is all starting to sound rather clichéd, so I'll end on a quote, as I guess I ought to:

"Blurple grape with sandal smothering ploobles"



Keith

Will: "It was a sort of dynamic stomach"

20th Ian / Will Survey of F-41

A good reintroduction to SRT for me, after about a year off. Interesting to see the ice formations toward the bottom and learn how to negotiate ice ramps underground. Survey out was quite efficient, especially when Will's tape measure fell off the down the 15m pitch and jammed on a ledge leaving the rest hanging vertically for an ideal

vertical survey leg from the last station.

Out in plenty of time to get Farello's helmet to Gavin to carry down the hill and have a look at F74 for snow. F74 snow plug now too deep for a ladder, could be worth looking at for caving top/instead.

Ian

20th F41 Andy, Jo, Sense of direction (jacked at old snow plug.)

My first caving of expedition had to wait as Jo indulged her passion for scrambling over random rock for no apparent reason whatsoever. Why take 20mins when with no navigational effort at all 2hrs is possible. Highlights included 15mins spent out of view of any green whatsoever, not good if you're supposed to be heading for the green tongue and 3/4 hr spent in the vicinity of the cave. Jo knew it was there somewhere. To be fair though this did give me a chance to take in the wonderfulness of the Central ch. from the ridge. Finally down the came we actually approached efficiency at least until the bottom were we realised we didn't have time to deny even if we wanted and had no rope to explore the lead human. Team Muppet report one tacklebag taken to bottom of cave and that was it, v. pretty though and some excellent sideways prussiking.

- Andy

21 Ian/Will F88 trip.

Lots of time spent checking pointless upstream area of rift at bottom, playing with drill and re-rigging after Nick's bandit trip. Will had fun with footloop failure and the uncertainties of Nick's de-rigging ahead of us. Bottom of rift left for another day.

(30)

D7 21/7/97 Torca del Fiasco

- a subterranean force in several parts

Dramatis Personae →

Andy as Percy Thrower, gardener extraordinaire
Nobby as a slacker and also as G. Naylor, placer of bad bolts
Alison as the gremlin who throws things down pitches
(see also Oddy)

A smooth start by about 2pm, negotiating the birds with ease, saw the 1st problem arise when the slacker got stuck in the squeeze he had pushed himself the previous week, for half an hour.

Eventually getting through, we all gathered at the head of a very loose pitch, at which point my helmet began to explode, making conversation with Andy impossible whilst Alison rigged.

A bolt a $\frac{3}{4}$ later, the y-hang was poised to be hung when the gremlin threw the driver down said pitch.

'Thin' I said. 'We could survey out instead'
Andy looked at the hairline crack running through the first bolt placement, I weighed up the ^{relative} attractions of suicide and surveying. 'I fancy that' he said.

Andy built himself a nuclear fallout shelter at the bottom whilst Alison finished rigging, and I sang in the dark, my head having exploded once & for all.

Once down all of 10m, we awoke Andy from an hours hibernation, and he proceeded to garden some big holes that 'looked like Swiss Cheese' by lying on them on his stomach. Maybe 30-35m down to the floor. Having decided that it clearly was, we denegged it. 7 hours for 10m. NOT