

IMPERIAL COLLEGE CAVING CLUB



NEWSLETTER No. 6 June 1987

IMPERIAL COLLEGE CAVING CLUB COMMITTEE

	1986/7	1987/8
President :	Simon Seward	Richard Collcott
Vice-President :	Richard Collcott	Tim Flack
Secretary :	Sarah Jane Hunt	Rob Chaddock
Treasurer :	Kath Bonnick	Dave Wilson
Tackle Officer :	Dave Wilson	

Weekly meetings are held on Wednesdays at 1:00pm in the Union Lower Lounge, IC Union, Prince Consort Road, London, SW72BB
Phone 01 589 5111

MEETS LIST 1987/8

DATES	REGION	HUT	PERMITS
Oct 16-18	Mendips	B.E.C.	
23-25	South Wales	C.S.S.	O.F.D., Tunnel Top, Agen Allwed*
Nov 6-8	Yorkshire	N.P.C.	
20-22	Derbyshire	O.C.C	
Dec 4-6	Yorkshire	N.P.C.	Lost John's
18-25	Yorkshire	N.P.C.	Notts Pot, Lost John's Pen-y-Ghent, Hunt, Washfold*
Jan 22-24	Mendips	B.E.C.	
Feb 5-7	Yorkshire	N.P.C.	Dale Head Pot, White Scar*
19-21	Yorkshire	N.P.C.	Echo Pot, Magnetometer
Mar 4-6	South Wales	W.S.G.	O.F.D., D.Y.O.* *provisional only

Easter Tour and Dinner Meet to be announced.

Cover Photo : Neill in the rift cascade in Mad Dog Cave, Alnus Creek, Alberta, Canada.
From a colour slide by Dave Wilson .
(See article on Cave Photography).

EDITORIAL

Since this newsletter is appearing at the end of the year, I cannot start in the customary way by welcoming new members; only by wishing all those leaving college, the best of luck.

The beginning of the year saw many freshers signing up at the fair (myself included), and two full vanloads of keen potential cavers going on each freshers' trip. The early enthusiasm, however unfortunately wore off for most, and the club will be starting next year with few college members. Is it a coincidence that this decline occurred at the same time as the clean up of the club's image ?

The freshers' trips this year will once again be to Mendip and South Wales following the resolving of the SSSI problem. There will be trips to Mendip (no regional bias intended), South Wales and Derbyshire later in the year. This year several freshers commented that the distance to Yorkshire was off-putting, so maybe these "minority areas" have a role to play, if only (in some people's opinion) in encouraging initial interest.

Following last years expedition to Canada, the club is this summer going to Italy. The van will be leaving college on July 1st. (returning on the 22nd.) and heading to the Apuan Alps. This is a coastal mountain range between Genoa and Florence, containing a system 1210 m. deep and several over 500 m. Since this is a new area for us it should provide an interesting and challenging summer.

In this issue you will find the first part of a history of the club. The second part will be appearing in the next issue which will be a special silver jubilee collectors edition. If any of you have any memories of the last 25 years (or less!), get them down on paper and send them to me to mark this milestone in ICCC's history. Anything will be gratefully received.

Rob.

"The meek shall inherit the earth,
but not the mineral rights."

Anon.

Inspired by Richard's "Cave Wars", I have been prompted to set down the historical precedent for his lively fiction. In Europe speleology was started for the most part by academic professors and dilettante noblemen seeking knowledge or sensation. By contrast in the U.S.A. pure commercialism provided the driving force for cave exploration. To this day the techniques, ethics and general approach to caving differ from the Old World to the New. Anyway, here is the true tale of the so-called Kentucky Cave Wars - an insight into how caving originated in the U.S.A.

Long, long ago in a country far away.....

..... a lone hunter, John Houchins, tracked a wounded bear through the wooded hills of Kentucky to a large, open cave, and so stumbled on the entrance to Mammoth Cave. Houchins told his ranch boss of the find, and so lost out while his employer proceeded to make money from the cave. Mammoth was originally exploited for its vast guano reserves to make gunpowder during the War of Independence [1812] and only later became a minor show cave. After many changes of ownership the parcel of land containing the entrance was acquired in 1839 by the Croghan family. They promptly set about making Mammoth into a major tourist attraction, so that by the time of the Civil War it was receiving over 40,000 visitors a year.

Amongst local folk it was known that, although indisputably the largest, Mammoth Cave was by no means the only cave in the area. Such caves offered glittering monetary possibilities, but the reality was that, by the turn of the century Mammoth Cave, still owned by the Croghans, had a total monopoly on all the tourist money flowing into the otherwise very poor agricultural area. Numerous would-be cave operators were determined to change this situation.

Most successful of these cave prospectors was George Morrison, a mining engineer, who was convinced that Mammoth Cave extended far beyond the Croghan land. If it did, then anyone who discovered

or blasted a way in could set up in business for himself. Morrison acquired the mineral rights on some adjoining land and started drilling towards the cave, explaining disingenuously that he was searching for oil. He also conducted an illicit survey of Mammoth Cave, sneaking in at night, and even had some of his men set off charges of dynamite in Mammoth while he scanned the horizon for tell-tale signs of smoke. Eventually he was caught trespassing in Mammoth Cave, but the heavy fines did little to stop him.

After several years of this cat-and-mouse game he was finally rewarded by the discovery of a back door into Mammoth on his own property. He promptly advertised it as, "The New Entrance to Mammoth Cave", built an hotel, and a staircase to the wonders below. Particularly important to Morrison's point of view, was that his entrance was closer to the main road than the Croghans' and so captured the substantial part of their business. Successfully fending off numerous court challenges by the Croghans, Morrison prospered.

Others inspired by his lead prospected, discovered and dug. Consequently soon both Mammoth and Morrison's New Entrance were in competition with Colossal, Great Crystal, Great Onyx, Mammoth Onyx, Diamond Cave and several others. The bitter rivalry between these concerns finally flared up in the 1920's as the so-called Kentucky Cave Wars, reaching their climax with the death of Floyd Collins.

As a potential tourist approached the area, billboards promised "Kentucky's Most Beautiful Cave" or "The Greatest Cave of All". Agents for the various attractions roamed the major roads, flagging down motorists and leaping onto their running boards to deliver their spiels. They removed each others signs and even resorted to impersonating policemen to intimidate tourists, advising Mammoth-bound travellers that the tour was not worth the effort or was too difficult. Hecklers were planted amongst Mammoth crowds to sneer at the sights and to tout the superior grandeur of an attraction down the road. Fights were frequent, bill-board bearing trucks were stoned and rival information booths were burnt down.

One cave, Great Crystal, discovered by Floyd Collins in 1917 failed to prosper being the last stop on the road. Collins realised that the only way to beat all opposition was to discover an entrance closer to the main highway than any of the others. Entering into partnership with the owners of a small farm close to the main road, Collins began to dig in a small constricted cave. Here began a drama that was to enrapt the nation. On his way out having broken through into open passage, he was worming up a vertical chute between loose boulders when he knocked a rock onto his left leg and in struggling brought down loose earth and stones so that eventually both his arms and legs were pinned. He was trapped, not by the weight of rock but by his inability to reach the small amount of rubble wedging him in the tube.

Poor Collins plight immediately caught the popular imagination and impassioned newspaper accounts of the numerous rescue attempts attracted thousands to the scene. Business had never been so good. Just fifty feet from where Collins lay, the scene resembled a county fair with hot-dog stands, sandwich makers and side shows. While Floyd Collins was slowly dying inches from his rescuers his 65 year old father Lee Collins moved through the crowd handing out leaflets and touting the wonders of the family's Great Crystal Cave. Finally after two weeks of in-effectual rescue attempts Floyd Collins expired. The body was extricated shortly after via a surface shaft.

Lee Collins sold Great Crystal Cave to a local dentist who exhibited Floyd's corpse in a glass-topped coffin in the cave's main hall; a ghoulish bit of showmanship which proved very profitable. The bitter competition that had driven young Collins to his death persisted for years, spilling over into such cave-rich states as Virginia, New York, Tennessee and especially Missouri. In Missouri a years long dispute over the ownership and control of Onondaga Cave culminated in the placing of barbed wire barricades along a 10 m. wide no-man's land through the middle of a beautiful cavern. The dispute was finally settled in 1935, but deep underground the rusting strands of barbed wire are still to be found.

Cave Photography - a simple guide

Cave photography is a field of caving which few people ever seem to consider. Many seem to believe it is something which can only achieve worthwhile results when done by 'the Professionals', who seem to spend their lives down Lancaster Hole, or some really interesting S.Wales cavern taking pictures with expensive and delicate SLRs, or even more expensive and delicate large-format cameras. Most of these shots seem to be black and white prints of boulder chambers and wetsuit-clad figures climbing horrendously difficult five-foot waterfalls. The purpose of this article is to show you that it can be cheap and easy to get good underground shots, without being tied to an ammo box, or being paranoid about someone moving anywhere near your precious gear.

My personal underground setup is probably worth about £50, and has proved quite durable, even under 'Expedition conditions', giving perfectly good shots both above and below ground. In fact, the cost of the raw film and developing for the slides I took last summer in Canada was more than my entire photographic outfit.

a) The Camera

Basically, all you need to take pictures underground is a 35mm camera that has a moderately decent lens, variable aperture, some flashguns, and a means of triggering them. The best method is a hotshoe (or PC socket) on the camera, to which you can fit a long lead (1m+), for triggering a local flashgun. A small onboard flash saves space, but is usually of low power, and suffers from proximity to the lens.

b) The flashguns

If the camera does not have a built in flash, you will really need two flashguns. One, used on a lead from the camera hotshoe or sync socket, henceforth called the camera flash, and another one, triggered by the light from the camera flash, henceforth called the slave flash. If the camera has a built in flash, this will serve the same purpose as the camera flash, but has drawbacks mentioned elsewhere. Electronic guns are better than bulb guns, unless you take lots of exposures in massive chambers, or like burning your hands regularly. Always use alkaline batteries, or, better still, Nicads, as flashguns take quite a current whilst charging up, and ordinary batteries just can't take the strain. The guide No. of a flashgun is a measure of its range (or power), the larger the no., the more powerful the gun. A good rule of thumb is to go for a guide number of about 15 or more for the flashguns, much less is not really big enough, but if you get much larger guns, make sure you can protect and carry them. Both flashes should have sockets for external sync leads, the camera gun for regular use, and the slave for use in case of main gun failure.

The camera gun, or built in gun if present, is used to light the shot from the front, and the slave is used to either supplement the frontal lighting, or to light the shot from a different angle, to add local strong light to a small part of the picture, or to remove shadows caused by the positioning of the camera gun. In some shots, the camera gun is merely used to trigger a distant slave or slaves, from which all the lighting effectively comes. Obviously, if the two guns are of widely differing power, the more powerful will tend to dominate in a shot. If the camera gun is a very powerful one, and the camera aperture is calculated using this gun's power, the foreground shots will be exposed correctly, but areas lit by the slave may be underexposed. The only distance used in the calculation of the camera aperture is the flash-subject distance, the distance of the camera from the subject being unimportant. Ideally, the aperture calculated from the camera gun, taking into account the distance between the camera gun and the part of the shot it is lighting, should be similar to the corresponding aperture calculated for the slave.

There are just a few simple rules in underground photography. The composition of your classic shots is a matter for you and you alone.

Keep the flashguns as far from the lens as possible. This is because there is often a lot of moisture around underground, either naturally occurring, or possibly just due to your sweaty presence. If a flash is near the lens, then a very misty picture can occur due to reflection of the flash by water vapour. If you have a built in flash, there is not much you can do about this, but if you use a separate camera flash, use it on a long lead, not just fixed onto the camera. You can hold the camera in one hand by your eye, and the flashgun in the other hand at arm's length. This also avoids red-eye, where light from the flash is reflected back from the retina of any human looking straight at the camera, with the result that the eyes of cavers come out as bright red on the film.

Do not have a flashgun pointing directly at the camera. This is a fairly obvious point, but, especially with the slave, it can take some skill to make sure the trigger sensor has direct line-of sight to the camera flash, without having the slave pointing straight at the camera. The slave often has to have direct visual connection with the camera gun, or possibly another slave in complex shots, to ensure triggering, as cave walls are not often very reflective.

Test fire your flashes before a shot. This is done to ensure the slaves are in a position where they can trigger from the camera flash, and also to ensure no flashes are firing directly into the lens.

Make sure all flashguns are charged before each shot, or test shot. It is easy to forget to check with whoever is holding the slave gun that it is charged before taking a picture. Some routine is best here, with all slave holders calling out when their guns are ready. If you give a warning before shooting, anyone not ready can tell you to wait.

If there is a human subject, try to make sure their pose is not too hard to hold for any length of time. Shots of speleos under waterfalls, or up to their necks in meltwater may be good shots, but any delay while you mess around with your equipment is unlikely to be appreciated.

Keep all equipment as dry and clean as possible, and dry and clean it after every trip. Keep a clean cloth in your camera container to wipe your hands before you use the gear. Always avoid getting the camera lens dirty, and in conditions of heavy spray, such as the bottom of a large wet pitch, keep the lens covered until just before you take the shot. When you clean out your gear after a trip, check the charging time of the guns, to see if the batteries need recharging or changing.

Some possible recommendations follow, but don't stick too firmly to them if you have any ideas of your own. If you decide to try cave phototgraphy, come and have a word with me or Steve, as I am sure we can both give useful tips and advice.

The camera I use is a Zenith Lomo compact, a £30 Russian 35mm compact in stylish black plastic. Features are a 35mm f2.8 lens, manual focussing, 0.8m to infinity, film speeds 25-400 ASA in x2 increments, a hotshoe contact, and two exposure modes. The manual mode has a fixed 1/60th second shutter speed mode with apertures from f2.8 to f16, the auto mode has a fixed aperture of f2.8, and continuously variable speed for great surface shots. For the price, this is a really excellent camera. The other cameras used by IC³ are Olympus XA2s, good cameras, but with built-in flash and at around £90, not the kind of thing i'd like to bash around too much, and Steve has a little Rollei fully manual compact. All these cameras have produced some great shots, but as the XA2 is expensive and the Rolleis are only available second-hand (and expensive), I think the Zenith (or a functionally identical Cosina camera) is probably your best choice.

There are so many possible reccomendations for the camera flash that I cannot really say any one is better than the others. All you need look for is a fairly compact flash with a guide No. of about 15 or 18, and a socket for a sync lead. An auto mode on the flashgun is probably not much use underground, where as much light as possible is usually required, but could be useful for indoor surface snaps.

There is little choice possible about the slave gun, as all the people I know use the same model. This is a Wotan SC18 servo gun. With its small size, sensitivity, durability, and guide No. of 18

it is probably the best gun currently available. It also has a sync socket, so if your camera gun gets squashed or drowned, you can still take pictures using it as your sole flashgun.

As far as containers go, there seems to be little room for choice. I use, as does every other ICCG photographer, BDH containers, occasionally available from certain departments. These containers are light, quite sturdy, apart from the lids, and watertight, if a neoprene disc is cut out to fill the lid. I use two of the small containers, one for flashguns, cables and spare batteries, and one for camera, clean cloth, spare film, and small medical kit. It is possible to get camera and flashes in just one, if the camera flash is small enough, and little else is carried.

The last thing to recommend is film. This is more a matter of taste, I usually use Ektachrome 200 ASA slide film, although 400 might be better for shots in big chambers, as the guns I use are not mega-powered ones. I use slide film as I prefer slides, and any very special shots can be printed up relatively cheaply.

The final thing I will say is try it and see. Obviously, not all trips can be photo trips, and taking photos does slow you down a bit, but in the long run it is certainly worth a little trouble. If you were going to buy a compact camera for surface shots anyway, then buy a Zenith, rather than one of those crappy little autofocus things, and then with the money you save you could buy some flashguns and join 'the Professionals'.

As a slight footnote, I would like you to have faith in modern film and processing. In the last few years, colour print film has progressed in leaps and bounds. You can now get 400 ASA film with resolution similar to 100 ASA of a few years ago, and with very wide exposure latitude, and even slide film now has quite a wide margin of error as far as exposure is concerned. Hopefully, the cover shot on this newsletter will be acceptable, and that was a photocopy of a dot-screen of a 12x8 print of an internegative from a slide from a cheap camera. The 12x8s themselves are quite impressive, and only cost £2.00 a time.



"Mark my words, these things will destroy the art of conversation "

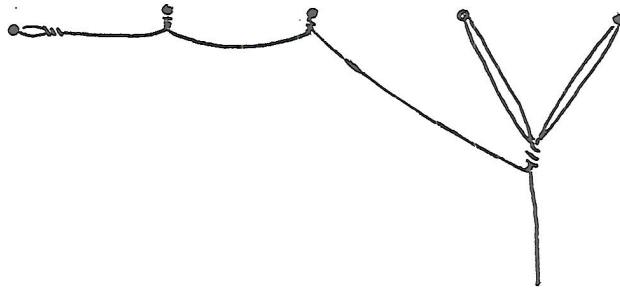
Modern Vertical Techniques.

Vertical caving techniques have come a long way from the days of ladder vs. SRT debates in "Caves & Caving", but new ideas are still being developed, and the "best" techniques of 1987 may not be the same as they were only a couple of years ago. The following are miscellaneous points and information from Harry.

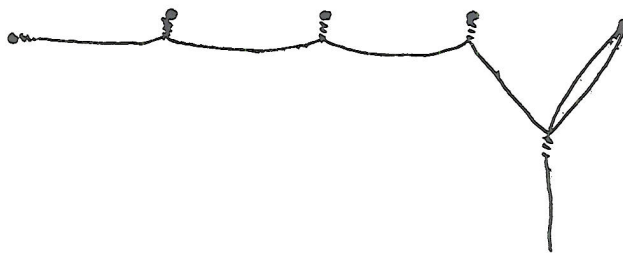
1. Weather Forecasts - for Lake District 09662 5151
 for Yorkshire and NE 091 246 8091
 Manchester Weather Centre 061 832 6701
2. Use plastic bags to line tackle bags - keeps ropes dry and clean 'till needed.
3. Armband spanners are by far the most convenient.
4. Tapes are out for underground use, every fibre is subject to abrasion, and the shock absorbing qualities are inferior to those of rope. Substitute belay ropes (8-10 mm) instead of tape slings.
5. For spreaders, link wire hoop to maillon via a tape loop. In an emergency eg. ladder entanglement on a wet pitch, the tape can be cut and the victim lowered off using lifeline.
6. Self-lining is now out as a concept, for it to be safe and comfortable needs rigging as if for SRT.
7. If you're using bolts for ladder and line, 2 bolts minimum for lifeline (as in SRT), can have ladder from one of them.
8. Lifelining method using a Petzl Stop is preferred for larger numbers of people.
9. When lifelining, a time saving method for the first person down is to take the rope directly out of the tacklebag into the Italian hitch. Suspend tacklebags of lifeline from belay or from harness of lifeliner.
10. Always make a point of coiling up spare ladder at the base of a pitch. Saves it getting kicked about, and speeds up derigging.
11. For leader protection at pitch heads, cowstails should be used in a knot of rope, never rely on a jammer alone (it always strips the sheath on one FF1). Using a descender is also inconvenient.
12. Use alpine butterflies on rebelay as well as on traverse lines. Alpine butterfly is 2% weaker than Fig. 8 on "normal" loading, but is far stronger in any other loading. It is also easier to untie.
13. Thread ring hangers onto rope before use, alternating the orientation so that the bowline-on-the-bights are not twisted. Excess hangers are taken off at base of pitch.
14. On a traverse line, keep alpine butterfly loops as small as possible to ensure line remains tight.

15. For traverses to pitch heads, use line for direct aid, ie. full weight on it, both cowstails in, rather than just for protection.

16. 1985 rig :



1987 rig :



In the 1985 rig, always used to be a difficult move off from the top of the pitch, now [1987] just clip cowstail high up and take off jammers. Use traverse line for direct aid, not just for protection.

17. After putting in a deviation, remember to anchor the rope at bottom of pitch so people following don't have to repeat pendulum. [Yes ! that's what the red bolts at the pitch base are for !].
18. Leave all hangers etc. on rope when derigging, but remove them later when checking and cleaning rope.
19. Prussiking with the tackle bag may sometimes be more efficient than hauling it up.

Seeing that this coming Autumn marks the official 25th. anniversary of the club, I felt that some sort of club history, for all its omissions and probable inaccuracies, might be of interest. Considering the difficulty I've had in finding out the information, it might also help out the future scribe who will one day set out to pen down "ICCC - the first 50 years". The information comes from a variety of sources: 1966-73 are covered by LUCC journals whilst from '73 to the present is covered by the annual Presidents' reports (apart from two who failed to write one) and which, almost without exception begin, "This has been one of the most successful years for the club". The stores contain a few old log books, letters, newsletters etc; and expedition reports are available from the Explo' Board, College Archives, Lyon Playfair Library or BCRA Library, In addition, the odd snippet can be gleaned from general caving reading, particularly ACW's prolific writings. Hearsay and memory can be valuable but should be treated with caution particularly those of the club folk-lore type. The most recent years are largely based on personal memory, and I apologise in advance for the inevitable bias.

.ooOOoo.

Although cavers were active at Imperial College throughout the previous year, the start of the 1962/63 academic session saw Imperial College Caving Club officially come into being as part of RCC, its aims being (as stated in the constitution - article 2):

- (a) To provide an efficient organisation at Imperial College for those people interested in caving.
- (b) To promote an interest in speleology at Imperial College.

Unfortunately I have been able to find little information on the club's first three years other than the successive Presidents were: Ian Lennon (wrongly put on the pot as J. Lennon), P Gregory, and Tony Waltham who held office for two years (1964/66). The emergence from these "dark ages" came in late 1966 when ICCG joined forces with the University College of London Speleo. Soc. (UCLSS) and Chelsea College Caving Club (CCCC) to produce a caving journal. The first journal of the London University Caving Clubs came out in December 1966, Tony Waltham's editorial stating that:

"..... the three University Club's histories are very closely inter-related and now the journal should ensure that this pattern of beneficial co-operation will continue. It is hoped that it will even stimulate some people to do some caving with a purpose - certainly far more rewarding than the old tourist trips. A mere write up of the log book has very limited interest, while an entirely scientific publication is beyond the scope of the clubs, so this journal is attempting to strike a happy medium."

Aims which, in my opinion, the Journal met very well. The first edition kicked off in fine style with articles on a minor extension in Easegill and a description of ICCG.CDG's diving sites, which ranged from Swildons and Lost Johns (where Phil Collett had found "several cubic feet of undiscovered airspace" in March '66) to the Fontaine Noire in the Dent de Crolles. There was also an extensive description of the IC summer 1966 trip to France. Camping at St. Pierre de Chartreuse (do things ever change) they had been privileged to be permitted to do "tourist" trips in the Dent de Crolles system (the whole cave still being in the course of exploration by a number of very possessive French clubs).

1967 started well for ICCC with some maypoling in Lost Johns, but despite erecting the pole no less than twelve times between Groundsheet Junction and the Lake, no significant inlet passages were found. There was also a lot of activity in Mendip. Several Swildons sites were probed in attempts to find a "dry" cavers by-pass to, the then divers-only, sump 6. There was also an abortive attempt to discover the Mendip Master Cave at the bottom of a very muddy dig (Frog Pot; Priddy) which was eventually filled in by the long-suffering farmer; and in Hollowfield Swallet, IC cavers pushed a dodgy crawl gaining about 20 m. of new passage - which has probably long since collapsed. But, despite all this Spring activity, as well as the "old tourist trips", 1967 was not generally counted a good year for British caving.

On Saturday June 24th, six cavers, two from ULSA and four from the Happy Wanderers Cave and Pothole Club were killed by flood waters in Mossdale Caverns. The tragedy, the worst in British caving was felt acutely by London clubs. The HWCPC were a recently formed, London-based club, well known to ICCC with whom they had co-operated on several projects, and which contained a few ICCC members.

The second half of 1967 did little to make amends. An epidemic of foot-and-mouth disease swept the country, almost completely curtailing caving. As a consequence, after a frustrated Autumn ICCC eloped to France for Christmas. Under the leadership of Jim Winterhalder, the small IC contingent went to Vercors where, despite snowy conditions, they chalked up several classic trips including the Grottes Coufin, Favot, Chevaline, Bournillon, and Gournier. Here I'm ashamed to say they left record of their visit in large sooty letters still clearly visible when the club returned 15 years later.

Back at home and faced with an almost total ban on caving, there was little to do but resort to armchair-caving. During the Winter of 67/68 ICCC joined forces with the Pengelly Cave Research Centre to produce a series of scientific lectures (held in Physics Dept. admission free). These were by outside speakers, and covered such diverse topics as:

Caving in E. African volcanoes and coral reefs.

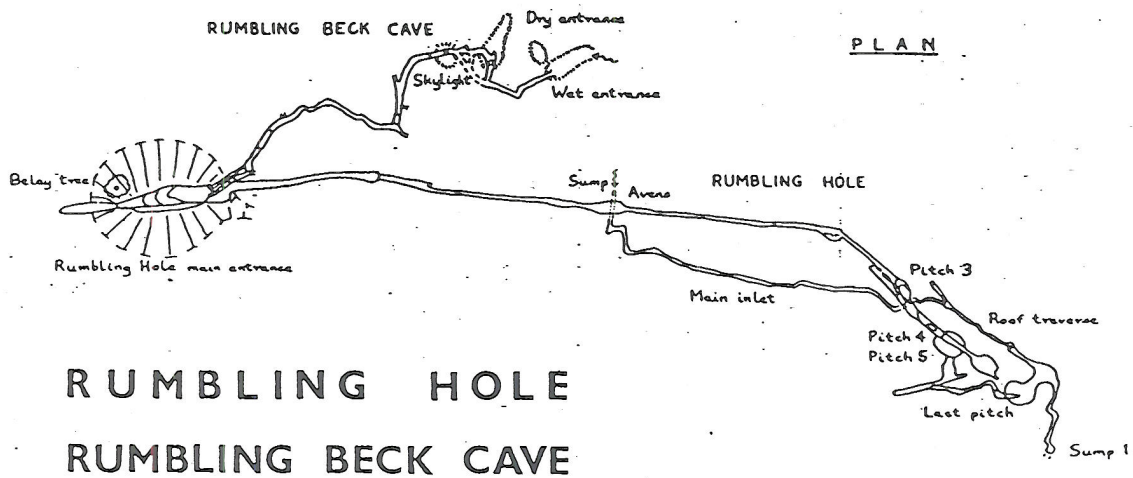
Karst studies in Peak Cavern, Derbyshire.

The strange beings of Kirkdale Cave and their (stranger) discoverers.

Thankfully the onset of 1968 saw an end to the restrictions on caving, and IC were immediately active again in the Dales. In March ICCC and UCLSS surveyed Rumbling Hole and Marble Steps Pot, after which IC turned their attention onto Gaping Gill. In late February, during abortive escapades with scaling poles, they had had a look at the far end of East Passage at the place marked "sump" on the survey. Rod Knapp (the only one with a wetsuit) had been persuaded to investigate, and had negotiated 6m of muddy canal to a very loose boulder choke through which he could see a black void. Concerned about his diminishing life expectancy beneath the hanging blocks he had hastily retreated and the site was left for the time being.

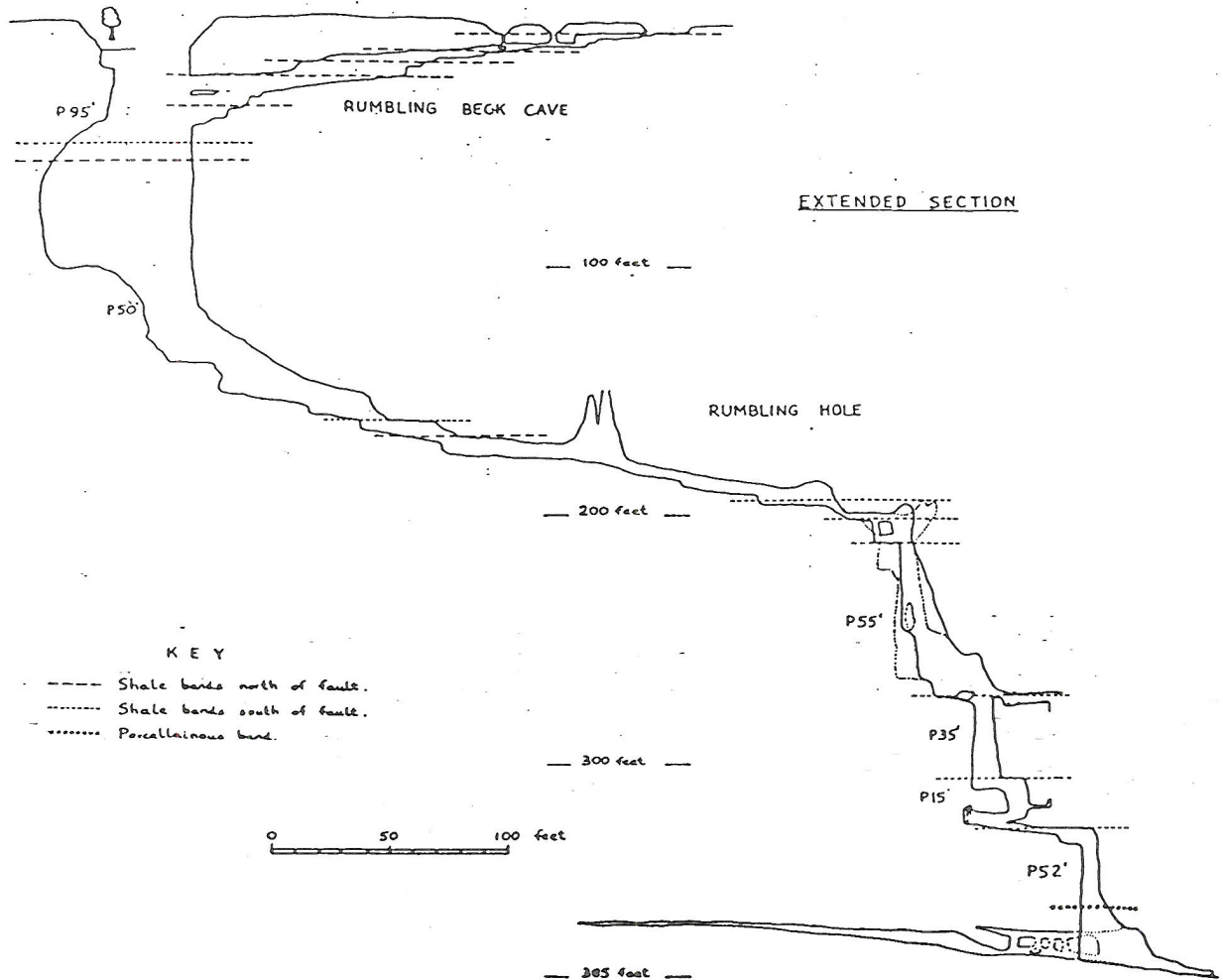
Several more sporadic trips were made during March but only in early May was the choke re-investigated. Rod Knapp and Jon Hallam (UCLSS) did some delicate gardening with a crowbar and got through to a small chamber ending in a "hopeless sump", and a smaller side chamber with an equally unpromising pool which was probed feet-first and found to go on, but with no air space.

Due to several factors ICCC did not return until Whit Monday, but alas it was then too late. In Mud Hall they met a BPC party who told them a little story..... On the preceeding Saturday a BPC group had gone to investigate the original "sump" on the GG survey and had passed the canal and choke to IC's second sump. Here one of the BPC group accidentally knocked a flake off the roof of the sump to reveal a small space. A bit of work produced a useable air



RUMBLING HOLE RUMBLING BECK CAVE

LECK FELL NGR. SD671791 Altitude 1160'
I.C.C.C.-U.C.L.S.S. Survey 1968 C.R.G. Grade 4B.



space so that they could pass through and promptly walked into, "the most important find in GG since the discovery of Hensler's Passages". When finally surveyed this quarter mile of new passage was found to go in a SE direction right under Clapham Bottoms to end only a few hundred feet from the terminal lake in Ingleborough Cave. IC's chagrin on having just missed the "discovery of the decade", can hardly have been more acute.

Meanwhile in June 1968 ICCC returned to St Pierre de Chartreuse, again with permission to enter the Dent de Crolles system for tourist trips. The resulting pitch/route descriptions in the LUCC Journal were based on P Chevalier's surveys, and although described for ladders they remained as one of the few comprehensive English Language guides available of the system until quite recently. ICCC's main diving man Phil Collett went with two CSS members at the invitation of the Speleo Club de Paris to dive resurgences in Turkey.

Perhaps because of having been beaten to the prize in GG after all their considerable work there, IC abandoned the Gill during 1969. The only major extensions of the year were to the Lyle Cavern High Level Series in Lost Johns, done in conjunction with HWCPC. However in diving Phil Collett was breaking new ground. With James Cobbett (BEC), Phil dived the main rising at Ilam Hall, Derbyshire, penetrating a dicey boulder choke to enter a gently descending bedding-plane passage going upstream, which they explored for 26m to a depth of about 10m.

In Notts Pot Phil dived the static sump - although both the nearby up- and down-stream sumps had been explored, this was still uninvestigated. About 3m in he met a cross rift about 10m long and very tight but at one point just wide enough to allow descent to a depth of about 7m whereupon he returned saying that "on the whole the prospects are fairly hopeless". In the light of recent results the NPC obviously did not agree.

In 1970 Tony Waltham led eight UCLSS and three ICCC on the British Karst Research Expedition to the Himalayas. Notable results of this were the exploration and survey of the spectacular Harpan River Cave in Nepal, and an equally spectacular cock-up when dye-testing near the sacred Achabal Spring in the Indian Kashmir. They inserted a large quantity of rhodamine B into a small sink, but unfortunately the underground hydrology was not as they thought, for two days later the marble lined pool in the temple gardens turned blood red; the expedition left hastily for the border.

With a change of editor the LUCC Journal lay somewhat dormant during 1970. Its absence was partly filled by a lesser rag calling itself the "University of South Kensington Caving Clubs News" - an ICCC/CCCC newsletter with Lloyd Tunbridge as editor. As far as I am aware it only managed one edition before 1971 and the revitalised LUCC Journal got under way.

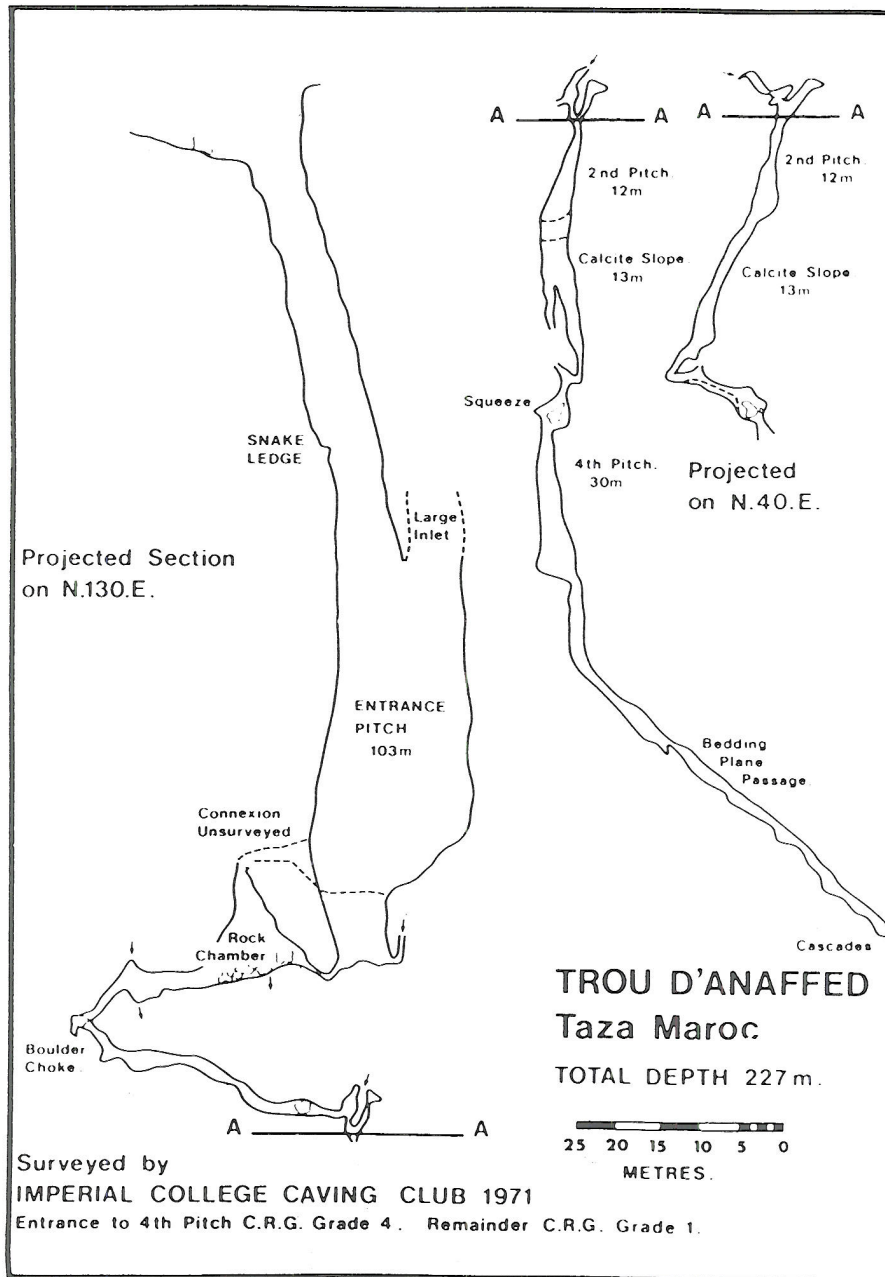
Despite considerable efforts, 1971 saw no major discoveries at home. ICCC and CCCC cavers scaled a massive 25m aven at the end of SE Passage in Lost Johns, but were only rewarded with a meagre 60m of new passage. In November Phil Collett dived upstream in the Gavel terminal sump to find a pleasant phreatic tunnel with a considerable flow of water, but was stopped from continuing beyond 50m by shortage of line (by 1987 this sump has still not been extended beyond a flooded shaft whose depth effectively blocks further progress).

In the Summer of 1971 ICCC originally planned to go to Peru but due to a variety of reasons this was postponed. Instead they went to Morocco which was thought would be "useful for training purposes". The nine men plus camp followers under the leadership of Dave Prime were all transported out in a heavily laden 35 cwt. transit crewbus which suffered considerable tyre trouble

despite being restricted to "good" roads. In contrast to the Himalaya expedition it was, as the report says:

"..... envisaged from the very beginning as being virtually non-scientific; its purpose merely to discover any caves we could in the High Atlas."

Which they did, surveying several new caves as well as others briefly investigated by a previous SUSS expedition, including Trou d'Anaffed which at -227m was the second deepest cave in North Africa.



Tony Waltham and Roger Bowser did not go, being down the Berger with MUSS and ULSA. In the LUCS Journal write-up of their trip (which exceeds the Morocco expedition report in length), ACW says:

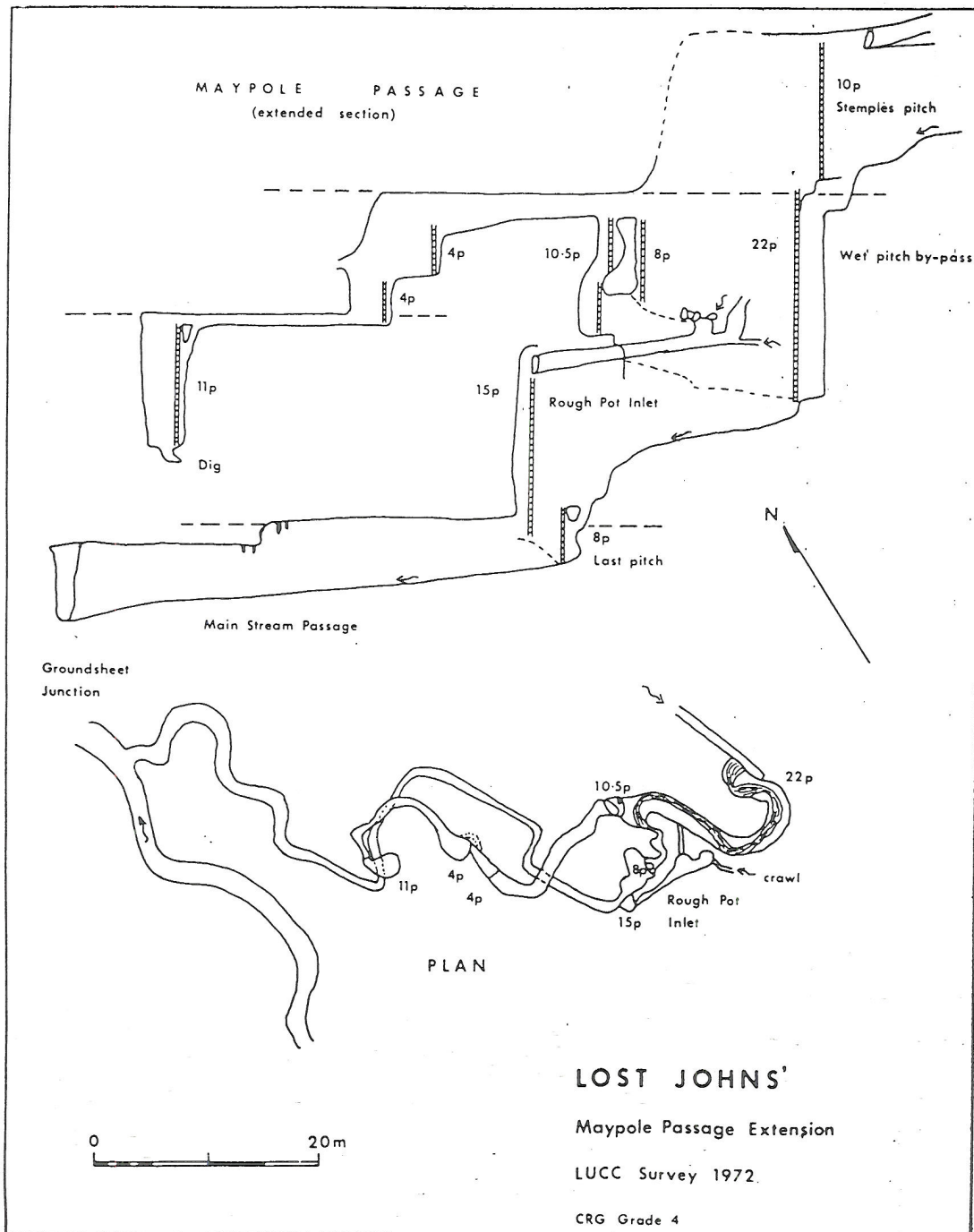
"A club could hardly have a finer summer excursion than a visit to the Berger - though there are only a handful of clubs in the country who could provide a suitable team"

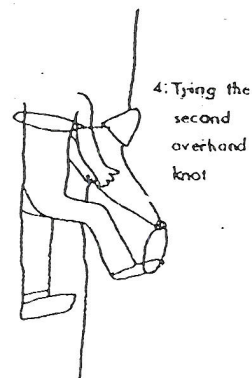
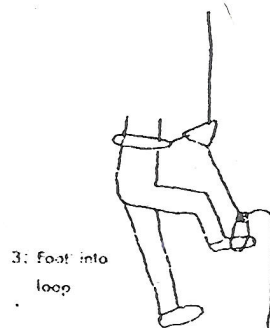
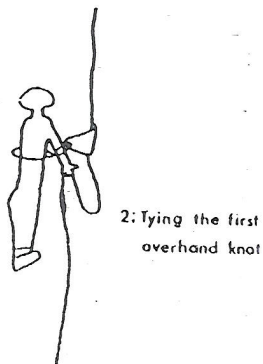
A pity they had to go with other clubs and not ICCS. The write-up also includes the revealing little sentence (by the spanner bearer?):

"Tony Wa. rigged most of the pitches."

In 1972 the delayed IC Karst Research Expedition to the Peruvian Andes finally took place with six members and Rog Bowser as the leader. This was a highly successful expedition doing much pioneering speleological and geological work. Notable successes were the first bottoming and survey of Peru's and S America's deepest cave at -407m (the record still stands today), the first survey of Peru's (then) longest cave, as well as the exploration and survey of many other new caves.

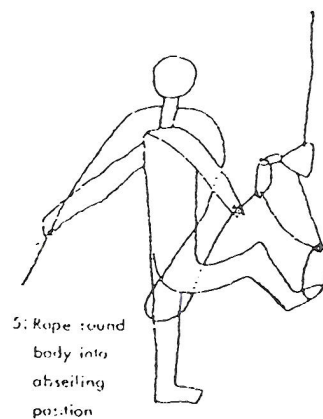
Back at home exploration was also being done, including the discovery of Maypole Passage in Lost Johns, Keld Nook Pot in Kingsdale and a soon abandoned attempt to dig into "caverns measureless to man" at the bottom of an old mine shaft on Grassington Moor. the club also managed to persuade IC Film Soc. to make a film of IC cavers defying death in an epic Calf Holes-Browgill epic. Shot on 16 mm with minimal provision for film lights, only some came out - I wonder what became of it?



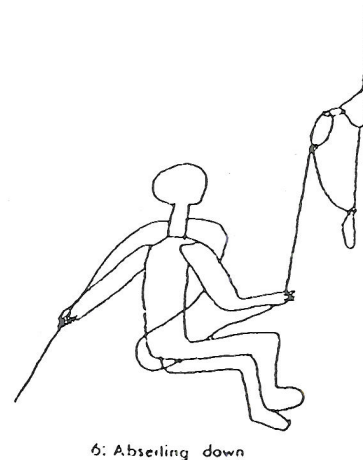


Reflecting the current advances in pitch work, the Lucc Journal of Spring 1973, for the first time described single rope techniques (of a sort!) as well as ICC/CCCC's latest maypoling/climbing activities, which read something like an English version of "Subterranean Climbers". During trips to the Far Eastern Passages in Gaping Gill it had been noticed that in wet weather considerable volumes of water descended from an aven above Avalanche Pot in Boulder Chamber.

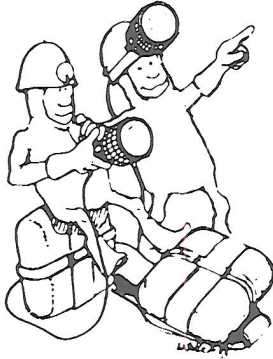
Maypoling began at an aven immediately before Boulder Chamber but this met with failure. Resorting to aid climbing, they traversed out from Far East Passage to reach the central back wall of Boulder Chamber, and from here started bolting up the wall. At a point 21m up the wall directly above Avalanche Pot a restricted hole led to 50m of active keyhole-shaped passage. Some climbs followed, then some pools (with cave pearls), after which was another aven. Scaling 24m up this, a short traverse entered a superbly decorated grotto. From here more short climbs and traverses led to yet another aven. Off to one side of this, the water was followed up climbs of 10m and 11m, a short section of passage and a further 10m climb. Yet more traverses and climbs finally reached a strongly draughting, but hopelessly tight calcited hole, requiring very liberal applications of Dr Nobel's Linctus. This point has since been shown to be within 3m of the surface and very close to Grange Rigg Pot.



.oo00oo.



At this point the fortunes of ICC briefly waned. Having plotted the rise of the club in the years up to 1973, part 2 will deal with its fall, near extinction and resurrection in the years up to the present.



Time again for another thrilling installment of Cave Wars. In the last episode our heroes had narrowly escaped from the Empire's new secret weapon OFD 4, in the KLO Falcon, having rescued Princess Sarah in the process. However, OB1 Laneobe, Master of the Farce and silly walks, was killed by Daft Raider, but this freed Laneobe's powerful spirit to aid the calm and heroic Harry Skywalker and his friends in their fight against the Empire.

Now, in the rebel base on the planet En-pee-see our heroes are in the middle of a very important conference.....

"Well Plorrock, what have you concluded from studying the plans of OFD 4?" enquired Sarah.

Before the rebel tactical advisor, Colonel Plive Plorrock could answer, Simon Solo butted-in with his usual diplomatic ease.

"Hey chick, one thing is pretty clear - IT IS BIG !!!" he said leaning back in his chair impressed with his stating the obvious.

Simon continued, "It's so BIG, its even bigger than Major Harrison's pe..."

Fortunately, before Simon could finish his comparison between OFD 4 and bodily parts, he managed to fall backwards off his chair into a mumbling FX2.

"Bee dep bloody oaf woo wee clumsy numbskull, zap cer pow!"

Unaffected by Simon's display of lack of physical coordination, Colonel Plorrock continued with his report.

"OFD 4 is the biggest, meanest and not-very-nice weapon the Empire have come up with yet, though it does have one weakness - the ventilation ports for the central reactor."

"Weer plump pretty damn convenient ner bee wop," interrupted FX2 in his annoying fashion.

"Grrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr !!!!" menaced Malcy, ceasing further comment from the over-active machine.

"Could a delayed fuse, overloaded, inverted photonic torpedo fired into the port, cause the reactor to go out of control, explode, and destroy the whole battle station?" calmly suggested Harry.

"Exactly my young man," agreed Plorrock in sagely tones.

Sarah sighed dreamily and Simon started to get angry - how come he never came up with the bright ideas. FX2 would have liked to tell him if he'd asked.

Suddenly a rather worried figure burst into the control room;
"OFD 4 is approaching our base Colonel Plorrock !!"

"Calm down Lieutenant Bonniac, we still have time to arm the fighters and destroy it before it gets into range, and with those new Petzl X-wing fighters you bought, we stand a very good chance," soothed Plorrock in reassuring tones.

"Ah yes, the new fighters, hmmm well, they were very expensive, so I errr, I bought some second-hand clapped out war surplus versions to save money for the rebel base's annual dinner," apologised Bonniac.

"Oh my gawd, what have you done !? we're all doomed, don't panic, DON'T PANIC !!" yelled Plorrock, doing a very good impression of pannicking, whilst his toupée fell off as he ran for his life.

"Does this mean things aren't as good as we'd hoped?" put in Sarah.

Her question was answered by disbelieving groans.

"Neep pooh typical cer dunk thick as a geologist pow wee zap."

"Well at least we still have KLO Falcon to help us in our hour of desparate need," commented Harry.

"Grrrrrrrrrrrrr !!" said Malcy.

"Yeah that's right Malcy, my urgent dental appointment, and I'd nearly forgotten. Aw shucks, hate to leave just as it was getting exciting, but them's the breaks," lied Simon in a very unconvincing manner.

"Great, so we have to take on OFD 4 with a few scrap-yard fighters, get in real close and put a torp right smack bang down the ventilation port," said Harry, starting to show signs of strain.

Then once more a voice sounded in his head, the voice of his mentor, OB1 Laneobe.

"Remember Harry, you have the farce with you, how can you fail ?"

Before Harry could give one of the many obvious replies which immediately sprang to mind, sirens started to wail, and a speaker came to life.

"This is Flight Captain Haddock, OFD 4 will be within range of the rebel base in 42 minutes, all rebel pilots to lauch stations."

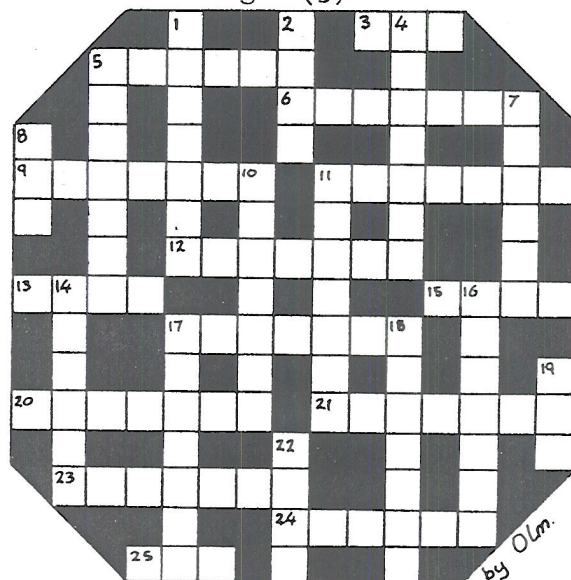


Will our heroes manage the impossible and destroy OFD 4 before it destroys En-pee-cee or will the powerful emperor Jimbo crush our heroes with the aid of his evil machine and the help of Daft Raider ?

Stay tuned for another spine-chilling, mind-boggling episode.

Across:

3. Marbach's. (3)
5. Faults in Royal Navy Cave. (6)
6. Alum's resurgence. (4,3)
9. Not just bump guards ! (7)
11. Change at Charing Cross for a cave in Attermire Scar. (7)
12. No rigger should be without one. (7)
13. A knock before 'e enter, protects the pretties. (4)
15. Ladders pitches ? No, does 'em on ropes ! (4)
17. Joins with Easegill and Kingsdale systems ! (4,3)
20. Rubberwear. (7)
21. Abseils for spelunkers. (7)
23. Tall relations perhaps ? E. or W. its still a big drop. (7)
24. Why count a pot in Easegill Beck ? (6)
25. Old cave, at end of Roaring ? (3)



Down:

1. Bondage for cavers. (7)
2. (OK, so I had to fill the space) - Peruvian currency. (4)
4. Gritty Mars ar'n's bad as a pub wi' no beer ! (4,3)
5. Helmet mounted light. (7)
7. A stroke to enter the Gournier. (7)
8. Big but muddy in North Wales. (3)
10. Sink hole. (7)
11. A fine gulf, if perhaps a little sloe. (7)
14. Beal is useful. (6)
16. Intermediate rope attachment. (7)
17. Large hall in the Berger. (7)
18. This ink spot is a long way from Lancaster. (4,3)
19. Deep (-1342 m) in a sump. (3)
22. Cavers need council control ? (4)

Solutions to acrostics in No. 6:

(I) Sump
Tatham
Abseil
Link
Anchor
Centipede (or Cathedral)
Tackle bag
Italian
Tape
Edelrid

(II) Dent
Echo
Nettle
Trowgill
Duck
Entrance
Cigalère
Rung
Oldham
Lancaster
Lost
Eldon
Sarawak