



ICCC PROTEUS 2008.1



The irregular newsletter from Imperial College Caving Club, **Journal #24.**

Imperial College Union, Prince Consort Rd, Longon, SW7 2BB

Weekend Meets Spring Term 2008:

11-13th Jan: South Wales, SWCC - OFD III.

25-27th Jan: NPC / Yorkshire. King Pot / Brown Hill.

8-10th Feb: Orpheus / Derbyshire. Titan / JH Permit.

22-24th Feb: BPF / Yorkshire. Easegill massive attack.

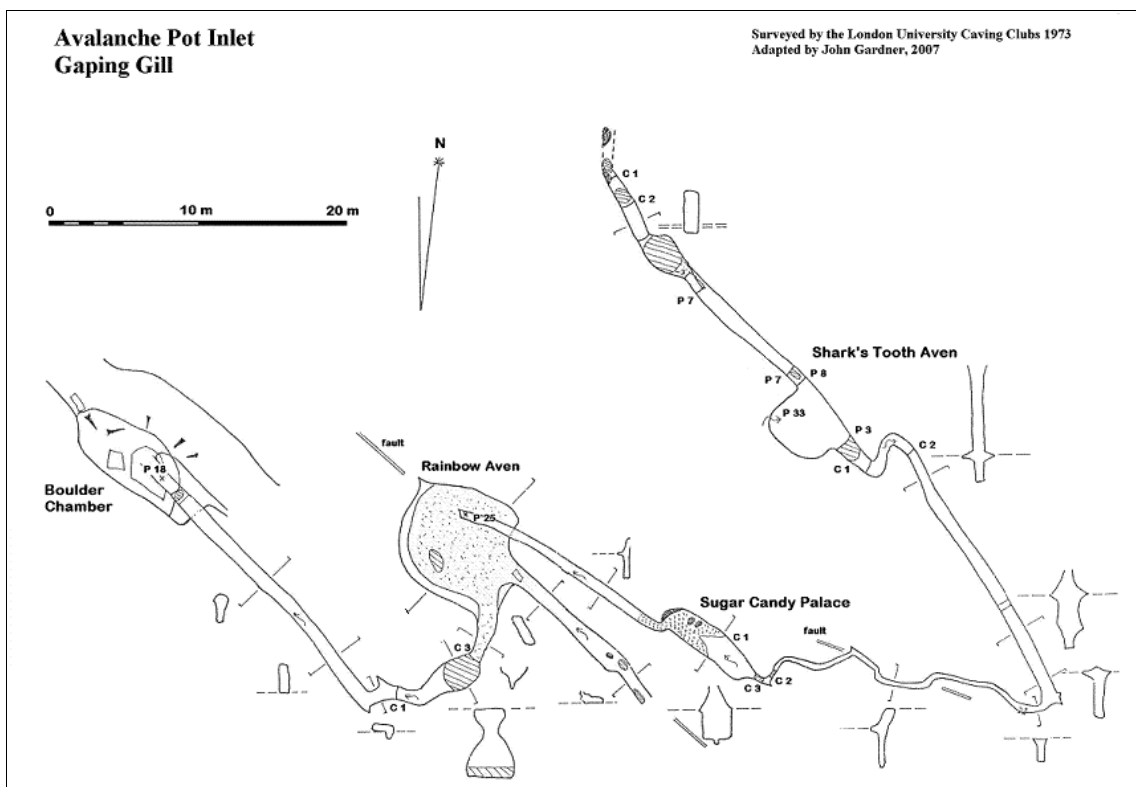
7-9th March: NPC / Yorkshire. Last Trip of Term. Birthday Cake. Rift / Large & Temple of Doom.

Socials:

5th Feb (Shrove Tuesday): Pancake Fest @ 309a Acre Lane, SW2 5RJ (Hosted by J, J & J)

Tues 11th March: AGM Elections for next years committee, club t-shirts to hand out & etc!

Weekly Meetings Tuesday 7pm in the Union Bar



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The Presidential Soap Box

So: what on Earth? A paper publication in the age of Facebook? Well – a few of us ICCC old hands wondered whether there might be a better way of keeping in touch with everyone and spreading the good news of caving at IC – and we wondered whether a newsletter might be suitably retro. Of course, its 2008 now – so these PDFs contain hyper-links galore, and yet should stand alone when printed out to send to your Gran to explain what you do 'down those horrid holes'. Hopefully we'll be publishing this every term, cross fingers.

First off – a welcome to all the new people! There's been a great dozen-odd freshers who have joined this year, and its been a pleasure caving with you all. IC offers an unbelievable choice in clubs and societies, but I really believe Caving is one worth sticking with – it only gets more exciting as time goes on, as you work your way up through the harder trips, learn to rig and get your first taste of exploring the unknown.

ICCC has a long and impressive history: we have been exploring caves and operating at the very height of our sport since 1962, and the current crop of leaders are skilled and experienced. But we all started out at the same level as you new guys, and we lack the elitism that unfortunately mars so many activity clubs.

We've got an absolutely cracking set of weekend trips lined up for the spring term – including a visit to the coveted **Titan**, a Easter tour to Croatia, a place which seems to be very rarely visited by UK cavers but contains some absolute stonkers, and our summer expedition **Votla Gora 2008** – where we hope to connect two extensive caves and form the 2nd longest in Slovenia. Musing on UK exploration, we discuss a little visited region of Gaping Gill, and a possible return to an old aven climbing project in Avalanche Inlet.

Also, don't forget that our AGM is coming up: **your** opportunity to take the club forward to new depths (both of caves and culinary depravity). We also need an arty type to design a new caving t-shirt.

So whether first-year or 1960s ICCC president, welcome to the first edition of the next chapter of newsletters. Long may the happy times and the good caving continue!

Jarvist 'your smiling despot' Frost

The Next Edition of Proteus

For **Proteus 2008.2**, we should have a full writeup of our **Christmas Tour to Yorkshire**, and the promise of article by the rather curiously named **Grinning Skeleton** on **Subterranean London** delights.

Missing Gear

Our entire new-purchase of Spectra Slings had disappeared by our first club meet. A couple may be in the Bivvi in Slov, but the others? Please return – especially if you stole them for canyoning.

Also AWOL is Jarv's eTrex GPS. It was used extensively in Sardinia last Easter and hasn't been seen since. Its in an orange aquapac, and helpfully has "FROST CT14 7BQ" written on every available surface, including within the battery compartment.

New Gear

The club now has a brand-spanking new set of 12 Petzl Duo 14s (with 1W LED main bulb) – thanks to the Harlington Fund. A set of Eneloop rechargables and fast chargers will be arriving in the new year. It will take a while to figure out how to organise and charge these new batteries, and please take care when handling them. They're a lighter and more flexible alternative to the FX3 stalwarts which are now dying off, but they are definitely more delicate.

The club's also just purchased a Dremel drill for further graffiti activity, a dedicated club-branded eTrex GPS, and the usual yearly consumables (flat packs, AA bats, AAA bats).

Drugs: Its been almost impossibly difficult to replace our outdated pain killers. One assumes that codeine & its ilk have a suitable street value. However, a new stock of Sam Splints, space blankets & other non-prescription gear has been purchased from the amazingly cheap medekit.com. Please treat with care as the aluminium in a Sam Splint gets knackered through use – use one of the old ones to practice!

Trip Costs

Inflation, alas, effects even cavers. Price hikes in food, petrol, union minibus hire & hut fees (the Orpheus now charges £5 per night!) will almost certainly require an increase in weekend trip costs to **£35**. But don't forget that the 'raw' cost pre subsidy is around £50, so its still an astoundingly good deal.

Easter Tour: Croatia

(~21-31st March 2008 ish, depending on cheap flights + logistics: Cost ~£140-190 post subsidy?)

The country with the most beautiful scenery, the most beautiful people and some of the most beautiful caves in Europe!

So why haven't we been there before? Well - there's a language barrier as tall as the mountains which is now being effortlessly hopped over by Jana, and a **lot** of bureaucracy to sort out. We've found a local club (based at Kastav, near Rijeka) that will invite us to visit their country (with the possibility of a bit of joint exploration & survey!), but will still need to apply for individual nationwide permits to cave from the Government, for which **we will need a full set of personal details ASAP - DOB, Passport number, full name & home address.** (Plus we should be booking flights...)

Logistics will be to fly to Trieste (Monfalcone) with Ryanair from London Stansted, then dive into hire vehicles and razz across the border. Hope is to camp in the field (live out the back of the cars / van) which should keep the prices down, and get us adept at fending off the wild dogs and brown bears that live in the mountains!

The caves are very impressive and very mixed, the low-lying Karst near the sea wiggles around mostly horizontally, very pretty with underground lakes and festooned with formations. In other words, very similar to Sardinia where we went for our tour last spring:

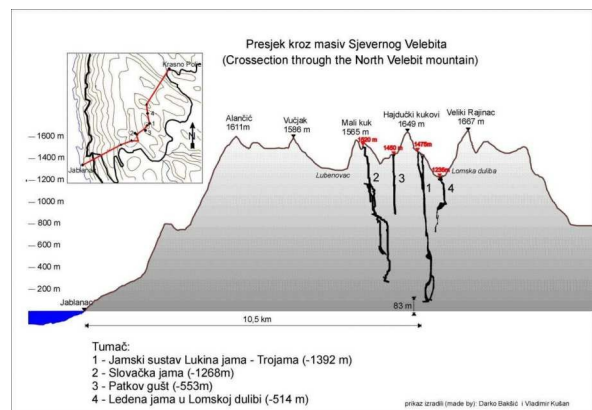
<http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/caving/sardinia/sardinia07.php>

Yet for the caver who sleeps cuddling up to his 9mm rope, the mountain chain further away from the Sea offers 1000m+ deep monsters.

<http://public.carnet.hr/speleo/images/presjek.jpg>

The climate should be very stable and dry for Easter, hot in the sun, cold at night.

We will (most likely) be visiting the Istria (the big peninsula) & Velebit (large national park further around the coast and slightly inland) regions – Istria is mainly classic Karst, whereas Velebit has considerable mountainous cave development (see cross-section to right of the North Velebit mountains).



Links to pretties, Croatian caving clubs & maps on the Wiki:

<http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/caving/wiki/index.php?n=Main.Croatia2008>

So: amazing caves, a 100% limestone country (caver's paradise?), cheap price, already got some local contacts, Jana speaks the language: what could you possibly be waiting for?



GET YOUR NAME DOWN!

Country is pretty well linked up, Internet wise – the following Croatian Speleoserver is a good start point for surfing...

http://public.carnet.hr/speleo/index_en.html

From there the 'Deepest and Longest' is hyper-linked to descriptions of exploration / club homepages / photos / surveys. Click away!



Publication of The Hollow Mountain (1974-2006)

Dear Migovec Cavers,

It gives me great pleasure to announce the final publication of "The Hollow Mountain 1974-2006", 246 pages of scintillating international exploration.

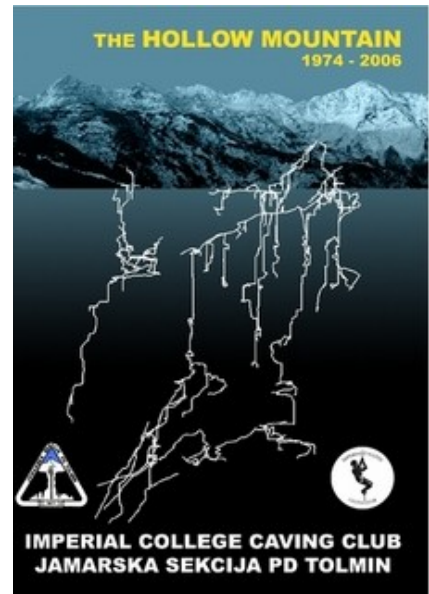
http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/rcc/caving/slovenia/intro/slov_intro.php

<http://www.lulu.com/content/909368>

To buy one copy & send to anywhere in the EU is £6.27. You can also download the PDF free of charge from the Lulu link above.

The club will be buying a number of copies and distributing in London & caving huts of the country for the low price of £5.

We will also be sending free copies to any club library / notable person / prior sponsor - if you can suggest anyone, please forward a contact address...



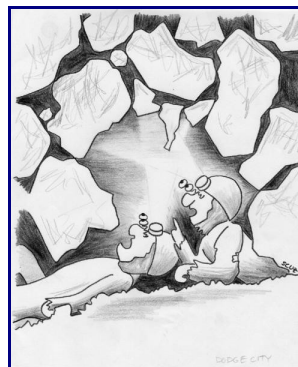
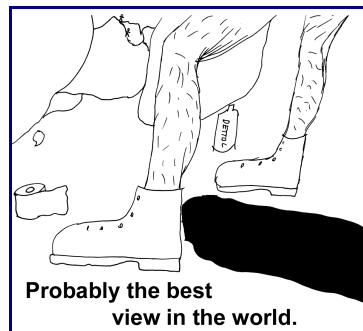
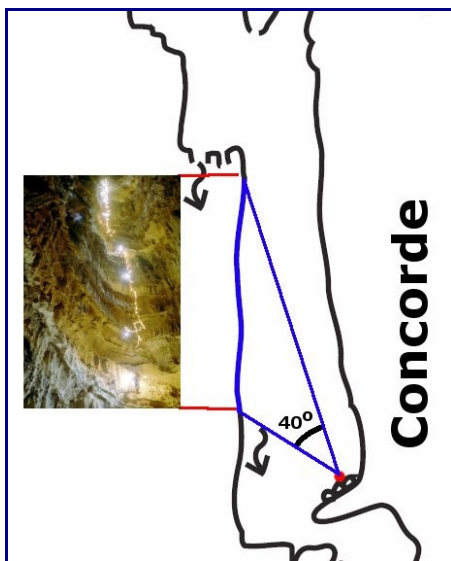
Many many thanks to all those that made this possible: Clive & Tetley for doing the bulk of the editing, Colm for securing the publication money from the IC Trust, and every single contributor, proofreader and caver - which basically covers every single person reading this email!

And if all the above spiel means nothing to you, then where to start? Since 1994 a focus of our clubs activities has been exploring the caves of Tolminski Migovec in western Slovenia during summer expeditions. Along with the JSPDT we've found over 20km of cave passage, taking it down to a depth just shy of 970m, the thunder-cloud like drawing on the cover above shows a trace of the passages through the mountain.

Which all sounds very trainspotter-esque, until you realise the extreme scale and level of caving that it requires. We camped underground to explore the limits of these caves, spending at least 3 days underground. More men have stood on the moon than have reached the limits of these systems.

There are hundreds of stories in here, from inane wonderings about gear and the future, descriptions of various parts of the system to horrifying incidents at the shit pit. Should you ever wish to learn how to run an international expedition to explore deep caves, or try and understand why you would want to its all in here, somewhere. Even as an armchair explorer, it will help you grasp what it feels like to make those first foot prints, to be somewhere so remote and difficult to get to that fewer people have been there than have stood on the moon.

by Jarvist Frost



Club T-Shirt Design

So guys, we need a new t-shirt design! Below left is the 2005 design by Jarvist Frost, and on the right is the 2007 design by Tharatorn Supasiti. The black-bordered prussic logo is de rigour for the front of club t-shirts, but you (yes – YOU!) have complete freedom with what to design for the back as long as it doesn't get us locked up when we try to have it printed...

Technical ability is not in short supply at IC, but artistic inspiration most certainly is: all we really need is a good idea doodled in Biro on the back of a fag packet!



Where is Journal #23?

The more astute amongst you will have noticed (actually this is a complete and utter lie, I know its only me) that we've skipped a number – our last publication (er... 6 days ago) was "The Hollow Mountain (1974-2006)" which was Journal #22, and preceding that was IC Newsletter #21 (published in 1998). So what's up?

Well – on my 'To Do' list is make journal #23, which is going to be a newsletter that attempts to cover club events 1998-2007. Most of this can simply be scraped off the website (which was pretty complete from June 2001) and stuck together anecdotes from the Lags, but its a rather boring, fiddly and arduous task so I simply haven't got around to it.

But I will! (nb: this is not legally binding) And it will then have the coveted Journal #23 designation.

Our Faces Are Legends

The filthy Union filched a photo from our website to deface their buses with! As part of their 'rebranding' exercise, in their infinite wisdom they've decided on the utterly dotty plan of having the new minibuses with custom full-colour printed panels. This will make it approximately three times more expensive to repair any bodywork. Nice one!

And on one of the minibuses (which I am sure they will not hire to us for at least 5 years, when its been properly driven into the ground), the photo they choose is of us staring blearily at the fire in Slovenia.

Now I wonder how many Union rules we're breaking in that one photo?

Personally I'm flattered – just don't expect me to write a risk assessment for the Bivi...

Jarvist Frost



Summer Expedition: Votla Gora 2008 (Slovenia)

[2007 info + surveys](#)

Dates: 12th July -> 17th August 2008 (5 weeks)

Main Aim: Connection of **Sistem Migovec** (11493m - 5th longest in Slovenia) with **Vrtnarija** (5229m - 11th longest) to make the **second longest cave in Slovenia** (16722+m). Separation is currently **28m** on the centre line with many going leads.

Logistics: We'll be taking the usual heavily-overladen 9-seater minibus via the autobahn (1000miles), with spaces reserved for Drivers and the Poor (undergrads). Everyone else to fly.

Base camp (where we park the bus) is at Ravne at 912m, the Bivvi (mountain camp) is at 1850m or so: and all the cheese, equipment, tents & etc. needs to be carried up on our backs!

Why on Earth would I want to do this?: Many reasons! This is your opportunity to find something BIG, have an absolutely cracking summer a world away from London living in the wild battling with the rock and the storms above. If you've got any hunger for adventure, or a thirst to be first – you will not want to miss out on this.

Living on top of a mountain drinking snow melt is great fun (if at little stone-age sometimes), and we'll be caving with the JSPDT. Eastern Europe's amazing and completely different to elsewhere – don't faff around interrailing visiting Tourist traps, come and visit a country properly and learn the Slovene for "Cheese, Please, Yes, Please, Cheese!"

Also, you'd be joining in a very exciting year – the oft hypothesised connection between the two systems in almost unbearably close now, and you will have a serious chance of being there both at the big moment, and to bask in the glory afterwards!

How can I get involved?: We have grant applications to write in January, begging letters to possible sponsors, vast quantities of coordination necessary, a man-years worth of food to buy, logistics to scope out and so on. Talk to someone in the committee, we'll probably try and have approximately monthly meetings (probably at Acre Lane, with pasta'n'pesto) to share out the jobs and work things out. Your presence and help would be greatly appreciated!

Costs: All a bit up in the air at the moment – too many variables, such as degree of support from college (Exploration board & etc.), and degree of expenditure we choose (such as buying a lightweight electric drill). We do everything we can to keep it affordable for undergraduates though.

Other Aims: Pushing of streamway at **Red Cow Roundabout**, by camping at **Camp X-Ray** (-600m) in **Vrtnarija**.

Concerted effort into the Eastern end of **National Coal Board (SysMig)**, where **Plopzilla** (105m deep) was found in 2007.

Extension of Western Plateau caves (**Planika**, 110m & others), pushing of 'other window' in **U-Bend** (first one dropped into **Drugi - Primadona**, other is heading towards blank space
Assist the young JSPDT in there extensions to **Smer 0** and **Smer 1** in **Primadona**.

Surface Bashing Effort to be concentrated on the neglected **East Pole** region, including the new **E series** which need some demolition work. Satellite Bivi (if we can find water) hoped for in the plateau beyond **Kuk**.

Side Projects Continued repush & survey of **Razor Cave** (not just because its 300m from the hut + beer), and an exploration of **Poloska Jama** across the **Polog Valley** in consideration of the movement of the resurgence after the 1998 & 2004 earth quakes.



Quick Report on Winter Tour 2007 (Yorkshire)

by Jarvist Frost

*There will come a time during the next week when you will ask yourself:
"Just what have I done in these last few days before Christmas?"*

And yes, you may have truly found the perfect Candlestick for Aunt Esmerelda in the Oxford Street scrum, but what of your soul? What of the spiritual nourishment that can only come from bouncing down to the terminal sump on rope thinner than your index finger? Of the perfect night-time stillness unbroken by coarse carols sung by binge drinking Santas, of the clear vista across the Dales, the scrunch of Frost under your feet as you stride up Kingsdale to the roar of Rowten!

Come to the come to the Northern Pennine Club, come to Greenclose. Come make use of our permits. The revision can wait, your soul cannot.

So ran the last motivational email. Unfortunately, lack of enthusiasm to endure the cold made it a rather more elite team than one might have hoped – just seven of us for the full whack (Dave W, Tet, Ben B, J.Huggett, Jana, Dan G. & Jarv), with a couple of brief appearances. Promises of people making it up on the train didn't happen – we must get more adept at bundling people into the back of the van!



Still, we had an absolutely brilliant time, and did some really nice long caving. It was damn cold – subzero the whole week, I certainly made use of my 4 Season sleeping bag! Wonderful to walk across the frozen tops of the bogs rather than plunging waste deep as usual... Great evenings spent lazing in front of the coal fire at the NPC scoffing mince pies... The views in Yorkshire was spectacular, I wandered up Ingleborough with Jana on a day off and could see Scarfell slicing up the horizon.



Well, I won't try and hammer out a whole write-up in the next five minutes, so will just leave you with a trip list and a comment that 'rigging the traverse in Rat Hole really isn't for the faint hearted!

Rat Hole <-> Stream (GG), County Pot <-> Lancaster Hole (EG), Lost Johns', Ireby Fell (on ladders to satisfy Tetley's perversions), Notts I (Anderson's route + Acrobat series?), Swinstow / Valley Ent

The view South-West from Ingleborough, by *Jana Čarga*



Avalanche Inlet in Gaping Gill: IC Aven Climbs in 1973

by Jarvist Frost

A paragraph in our 25yr history reads: (see <http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/rcc/caving/lib/lib.php>)

"Maypoling began at an even 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. 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 vey 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."

Which triggered a memory and made me look up John Gardner's website (see <http://www.braemoor.co.uk/cavingtrip/ap.shtml>), where I found that along with Mike Wooding he had carried through some considerable work down this end, following on from the LUC 1973 work described above (which included removing a rust ruined ladder of ours!). In correspondence with J. Gardner it transpired that the above paragraph by Clive Orrock was most likely derived from the interim exploration article ("Discoveries above Boulder Chamber" by Roger Bowser, published in the BCRA Bulletin No. 1, in 1973), and that the full description which was to be published in LUC #15 never made it to print.

Pushing was prematurely ended by the death of Mike Wooding. Notes on possible leads from J. Gardner:

The main work that Mike and I did was to climb the the main 33m aven, and re-rig the place for modern SRT techniques with permanent bolts and new rope (Ed: 10.5mm 2005 Lanex, 8mm and 10mm drill-placed rawl bolts – one assumes stainless). We also needed to re-climb the Shark's Tooth Inlet pitches.

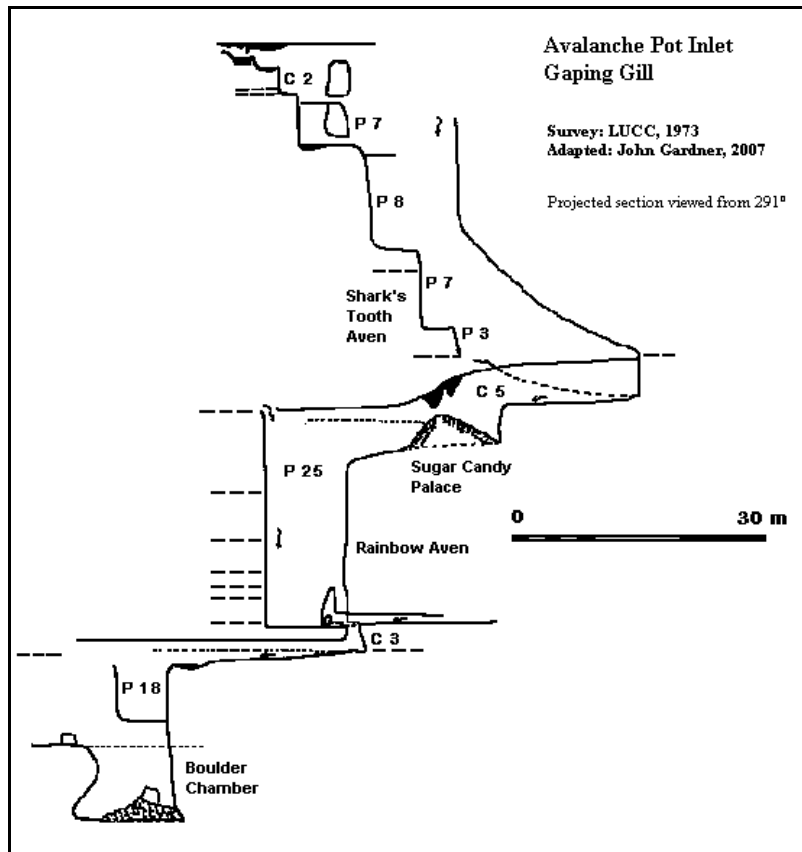
A smell test was conducted by the CPC from Clod Dyke, a dig 20 m east of Grange Rigg started by Mike and myself and taken over by the CPC, to Shark's Tooth Inlet (the water comes down the main aven). The dig reached bedrock after about three metres, but the passage at the bottom is very immature.

The end of Shark's Tooth Inlet was radio-located at SD 75442 72614 at a depth of 15 m by the BPC, fairly recently. This position is near the wall about 35 m from Clod Dyke, and on top of the ridge between Klondyke and Grange Rigg, so much of the height difference between the end of Shark's Tooth and the bottom of Clod Dyke will accounted for by the difference in topographic elevation.

There are three places where Mike and I were intending to take a second look at. The first is the inlet crawl at the bottom of Rainbow Aven. The second is a continuation at the top of Rainbow Aven. If you lean right out on the rope at the top of the pitch, you will see that the aven continues up. We placed a permanent bolt to allow access, but never got round to looking at it. The third is we believe that there is a dry aven parallel to the 33 m aven at the end, just downstream of the main aven.

Clod Dyke will require a lot of bang. CPC are still vaguely active there, as the moor around is still strewn with their scaffolding and planks (as of two days ago), but they have transferred their efforts to Smeagol pro tem.

I think this definitely deserves a return visit by ICC - to photo and document if nothing else.



The Rescue Tacklesac – Provision of Emergency Equipment on Club Trips

by Jarvist Frost

The more astute of you might have noticed the bright yellow tacklesac marked '**RESCUE**' that does nothing but get driven around in the minibus. It contains two Daren drums, the one on top is first aid, the one at the bottom of the sac (and therefore able to take more abuse) is anti-hypothermia stuff, sam splints, emergency provisions and a **SMALL** amount of self-rescue gear. The motivation to limit the amount of self-rescue gear is that in any UK situation where you'd be using the rescue kit in anger, a CRO call out would be made, and so the main use of the grab bag is to stabilise the casualty until the cavalry arrive. There should however be enough for assistance – such as double-lining someone on SRT.

Obviously, the fact that the tacklesac is in the minibus is less than optimal, but its too much gear to carry for a general trip. On an arduous, long, deep or flood pone trip (or even just one with the excess man power to carry it), you really should have a lightweight sac with a Blizzard bag, food, candles etc. in order to be able to deal with a prolonged stoppage (due to injury, flooding, etc.)

For the record, I'll list what **should** be in both the Rescue tacklesac and the 400ml 'Leader Kits' that should be stashed in all leader's SRT bags. Naturally, you really should check that its all there & that someone hasn't wiped their arse with the triangular bandage.

Also note that club practice calls for Leaders to have a **prussic loop** around their neck with a **knife** and a **whistle**, and to take **backup lights**, all club helmets contain a **magic plastic bag** to get into. We have a number of 1W 4AA battery dive lights (eLED q40 & Princeton Tec Impact XIs) that can be abused in an SRT bag without vomiting their batteries (Tikka anyone?) but can still relied on for a ~10hr supply of light to exit – **USE THEM**, they get lonely if left in stores and want to go caving.

Jarvs' Hints on not Freezing to Death: Get away from the water: its cold, damp and drags the air along. If you climb to crumbly mud, its unlikely to flood there. Insulate yourself from the ground (use rope, tackle sacs, or perch on a digital camera peli-case – even a welly if necessary), put your hood up / Balaclava on, make sure all your zips / openings are done up (even the cuffs). If you sit in your plastic sack hugging your knees, you only have a small region of flabby buttock in contact with the floor – don't lounge around like you're at a sleeper. You can wrap a space blanket around your torso under the arms, or put it under your helmet rim (like **Laurence of Arabia**). Cave air is cold: pull the plastic bag over your head and crumple it down to a small hole in front so that you breathe a mix of fresh/cold and stale/warm air. If you pull your furry up above your lip you can breathe in through your nose and then blow warm air down onto your chest with every breath. Light some **candles** – its more romantic, and you actually get a shocking amount of heat of them (try putting them below your arched knees within your bag). And don't forget to huddle for warmth – **Spoon for Survival**.

Contents of the **four** Leader Packs (400ml beakers): Triangular Bandage, Space Blanket (these together take up >70% of available space), Zinc Oxide Tape, Two Tea-lights, Watch-Strap / Button Compass (Gelert), Waterproof paper, Pencil Stub, Piezo Lighter (clicky type, not flint roller – those rust away), Safety pins .

Film Canister With: Wax-dipped strike-anywhere red-headed matches (loose), Folded strip of lighting paper for above, Ibuprofan 400mg, Paracetamol 500mg, Gut-stopping drugs.

Additional Suggestions: Balaclava, A Plastic bag & Bog paper, Nylon pulley, Safety Pins

Rescue Tackle Sac

First-Aid Daren Drum

Based around mountain-leader / expo UG-camp first-aid kit + exciting drugs

Rescue / Anti-hypothermia / Food / Sam Splint Daren Drum (on bottom)

Blizzard three-layer survival bag (equiv. to a 2/3 season sleeping bag; people have slept in Daren in them)

Jammer-pulleys on oval krabs

Chocolate bars

Sam Splints sufficient to immobilize a foot / arm

Autumn 2007 Trip Reports

Lovely little start to the caving year, with five weekend trips during the Autumn term, and a whole host of new faces – Annie, Laurence, Jingzhi, Lester, Jackson, Jackin, Vero, Pete, Jamie, Tom J, JKP, Tom H, Aisha, Hannah & the others who I'm sure I've forgot!

So without further ado; reports from the five weekends in reverse order:

Yorkshire

Wet Weekend Trip 30th Nov - 2nd Dec 2007

Photos

Jarv, Clew, Le Rik, TomB, James KP, Dave Wilson, Andy Jurd, Lyndon, TimO, Paul H, Jana Carga

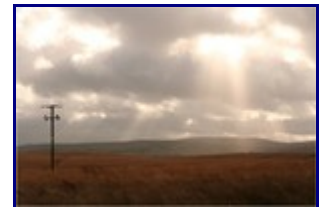
Saturday

TomB: *This Porridge is really nice, did you add anything special?*

JKP: *Half a pat of butter. Amateurs.*



Up to Leck Fell (coldest place on the planet) to get changed in the rain. The water welling up from below the fence to Lost Johns' was an early warning to what we were about to experience...



Boxhead: Tim, Clew, Jarv

Spent a good hour looking for the cave. Large grey plastic pipe in one of a small series of shake holes about 300m almost due south of LJs, so bear away from the stone wall by about 30 degrees and walk.

Naturally, we had walked halfway to Kingsdale before deciding we had gone too far. The skies darkened as we turned around and the sleet started. It was horrid. You desperately tried to point your helmet into the onslaught, unable to look around as your face was battered by the sticky freezing horror. It started hailing, which was far more pleasant as they generally bounced off.



At the entrance we rigged a dodgy Y-hang in the (gas?) pipe that serves as the entrance, rethreading a double fig-8 through a bolt hole in the plastic, with a sling + krab 'Y' from the other side. P-bolts just below the pipe provided a rebelay where the river rushed down the back of your neck. The pitch was very wet, to the point where 'heavy rain' actually had weight that you could feel pushing on your shoulders. Clewin swung across for the rebelay which led via a dry hang to an extremely unstable boulder slope, anything dislodged tumbling down the main pitch. Nice!



I took over for the next segment of rigging and strung a Y-hang from the P-bolts across the pitch-head offering the direct hang. Abseiled down 10m and I found myself rather at a loss as what to do. The waterfall was brushing my feet, any lower and I would be properly under it. It needed a deviation, but

upon bouncing away I found nowt but mud to attach anything to. No P-bolts in evidence, but you couldn't see far - everything that wasn't filled with falling water was obscured by steam. The one pointer I could see was a permanently rigged rope in a dry alcove...

I came up and went across to these exploration bolts, backing things up nice and tight. The hangers were pretty dodge, but the hang was dry. A swing to a rebelay bolt (Mmmm, rusty) and then a further swing around the corner to another Y-hang. These bolts were particularly dodge. I had had enough.

Clewin came down as I tied on the next rope into a Y, I shuffled the far side and got romantically entangled as he passed me by and took the rope bag. Tim and I exchanged pleasantries on the Y-hang (Tim looking rather soggy in his fabric oversuit) as Clewing deployed his suspicious-bolts tight-rigging skills. We dropped down to another rebelay bolt, then swung in to a muddy side passage. The peace and calm was wonderful. A few dotted helictites, instruments of diggage (pick axe, carpet, rubber hilti sheet, hacksaws and scaffolding poles) abounded as well as a suspicious 'is that going to explode?' Daren drum. The air was still and dry, we gobbled our chocolate supply and considered what to do.



We believed that we should have been on the other side of the shaft, where you could now see parallel development (Kendel Flyover we presume), which we had no way of reaching from down here. So we choose to make a speedy exit considered how chilled we were, and then possibly pop down LJs to see how they were doing.



Exit was smooth except for a bit of a rope tangle. Entrance pipe was difficult on the way out - our long thigh-bones being exactly the thing you didn't need! Exited into the dusk and light rain. Headed back for the road and bumped into the Rumbling team at LJs. Lyndon joined us for a brief foray, whereas Tim headed back for the warmth of the minibus.

Lost Johns' really is a nice cave! The stream was bigger than I'd ever seen, and there was a frightful 'Thud, Thud, Thud' in the dry old section of the cave of the water crashing down the main pitch. Lyndon came as far as the traverse, Clew and I got to one pitch before battleaxe when we met Paul coming the other way and waited in the little warm ante chamber for a natter. Clewin deployed the Biere D'Or that he'd been chilling in his SRT bag, and I derigged out behind Andy. We managed to break surface just after a sleet storm that had completely whited out the windows of the bus, and got to change in (relative) warmth.

Jarvist Frost

Rumbling: Rik, Lyndon, TomB

Seemed to get on alright, abandoned the cave when the pits got excessively wet, making a rather short trip. Was eminently doable though, even in the extreme weather.

Jarvist Frost

Lost Johns': Andy, James KP, Paul

They got a long way before being turned around by the comedy water levels. With assistance, Andy made it to the backup bolt on the final pitch only by a soaking to the nipple line. Sensibly abandoned at this point, for a smooth exit with a little tea-break halfway.

Jarvist Frost



ULSA Pary:The NPC was absolutely jam-packed in the evening as [Ulsa](#) were using it as the venue for a double whammy birthday party. Wolfed down a delicious Curry (Hmm, with mixed-meat from the Preston Tesco reduced shelf...), and then settled into an evening of drinking (tea for me!). ULSA peeps were a good laugh, and shared their most amazing collection of birthday cakes. I went to bed dreaming of that chocolate smartie cake, smeared with clotted cream...

Jarvist Frost

Sunday

Rowten: Andy, Le Rik, James KP



Grim grim weather. Drove over to Kingsdale in the increasing rain. A sum of zero caving cars there at Noon, indicating that all the sensible people were tucked up in bed or Bernies. All the cavers dropped out, except for our keen fresher James, who shamed Rik and Andy out into the drizzle and up to Rowten.

Rik managed to leave his shiny Meander in the NPC drying room, so took Tim's rather breezy and arse-ripped fabric monster. He recalled having the spray on the main pitch blow straight through him!

Seems like they had a good enough time, making use of their whistles to communicate above the roar of the plunging river, and

getting down to see the torrent disappearing down the sump.



Bernies & Inglethief

Rest of us escaped to Ingleton, picking up our Harlington award funded lights (so nice, so lovely), grabbed some bigger plastic oversuits for the excess 6-footers that have joined this year, and sampled some house-brick chocolate cake.

Escape from Green Close

Abysmal drive home. Practically had to punt the minibus back to the M6 over frightful puddles. Water was seeping into the foot wells via the breathe holes. I wonder how close we were to flooding? Wind and rain didn't abate till we got to London, nice weather for the minibus unpack!

Jarvist 'he writes too much' Frost

The Mendips

Weekend Trip 23-25th November 2007

Photos

Jarv, Jana, Rik, Jackin, Jackson, Jamie & Others.

Other driver dropped out & I was zonked after travelling 700 miles across Europe during the day and wasn't up for Solo'ing it to Yorkshire, so headed down for the homely delights of the Mendips and broke into the BEC. Unbelievably cold on the way down, played Asteroids with the gritters on the M4 and marvelled at the full moon scattering off the deep deep frost in the fields around. Careful drive to Priddy in view of the conditions, but arrived without incident just after midnight, to find the fire still lit.

Fear we woke up a couple of cavers who were similarly hiding from the (all too easily imagined) vomit stained SWCC and planned to do some actual caving...



Saturday

Eastwater: Everyone!

We had heard rumours of a cave, a cave so close to the BEC hut that one could avoid driving at all, and be back straight in front of the hot hot fire with the minimum of frostbite.

The description was rather lacking, both in how much gear would actually be required, and where exactly the cave was! We set off with an odd assemblage of equipment and a vague sense of direction, popping via the farm to ask for permission. We were rather disturbed by the shake hole, which had a fenced off area of spare tyres. More distressing was the 110V electric cable that had been strung down through the dodgy boulder choke. Apparently, at the digging front (where vast quantities of Bang were being deployed), they had a electric kettle and lightbulb, but had to choose which of the two to run at any one time!

Disturbed by the dodgy ruckle, and suitable warned by the signage fortelling suffocation by poisonous gas should we poke our nose's down the dig, we set off into the gloomy rift. Here it all got a bit fun, the rift was slippery on the direct traverse, whereas the steep crawl was low and rather slippery too. The biggest went via the traverse, a small (ho ho) party completed the upwards squeezing.

Way on was found relatively easily, shot down a dry set of cascades and via the (blow up?) no-longer infamous s-band crawl in a small puddle. Sat down for a spot of lunch, and found the way down to the lower levels on the way back. The size of the pitches was offputting, and after 'umming and 'arring about it for a while, decided to exit gently via having a poke around some corners.

Everyone exited via the crawl way (much easier on the way down), with a little bit of coaxing for those adverse to tight spaces. Exited together into the freezing night, stomped back to the hut and found the fire well built. Excellent!

Nice evening in the hut, preparing some outstanding Cottage Pie action in the new tricked-out oven. Surround sound system driven by Jamie's iPod was pretty impressive too!

Jarvist Frost

Sunday

GBs: Jarv, Jana, James, ?

What a beautiful cave! Some of the whitest formations I've ever seen. Cave is muddy rift with a few clambors (we avoided the Devil's Elbow), which dumps you in an enormous passage with a stream trickling through boulders. Nice waterfall freeclimb halfway along, which then closed down all-to-soon at the ladder P-bolt climb. Drat, didn't bring the ladder - Rik's description had scared us off. Meandered out looking at all the pretties, met a bunch of female cavers halfway along the white passage who suggested some nice areas to visit. Did so, then came back via the waterfall climb again and a gentle exit to dusk.

Sat shivering in the van (broken heater) while listening to the discs-getting-lost scandal on Radio 4. Longwood guys arrived within their callout, sopping wet and with wild staring eyes - but seemed to have had fun!

Longwood: Rik, Jackin, ?

They took two ladders, but I think they only got to the main chamber before turning around. Sounded horrifically wet - backing up stream even in the open passage, spray filled entrance. 'Sporting' shall we say...

Jarvist 'Yes, me again' Frost

Derbyshire

Weekend Trip 09-11th November 2007

Photos

Jarvist, Jana, James Kirkpatrick, Joe K, James Huggett, Dimitris, Dan C., Dimitris, Veronique, Shed, James Roberts, Goaty, Andy Jurd, Annie, Tom Hammant, Jan Evetts, Dan Greenwald



The van was packed, ropes sorted, all ready to go. But where was Le Rik? James brought us the answer: "**Rik's not coming because he thought today was Thursday.**" Fair Enough.

Saturday

Usual faff-tastic start to the day, delightful breakfast while a long deliberation of who was to do which cave & etc. Shed, Jarv and Jana planned for JH. Alas, Shed's car made it a good 10 metres from the Orpheus before the oil warning indicator turned on in a rather terminal way. Gear was repacked, oil was sought and he managed to limp onto the main road and into a more accessible car-park, leaving a long dashed line of smears behind him. Not very happy, we abandoned him to his fun with the AA, while we regrouped and continued in the 'bus.

I got home around midnight, having had to wait around 2:30 hours in Birmingham for someone to take me on the second leg. -- Shed

Giants Round Trip: Goaty, Dan, Tom, James R, Dan C., Veronique

(Attempt at Maskhill)-then Oxlowe: Jarv, Dimitris, Jana, James H

Sunday



Escaping the early Faff, JKP, JJK & JC escaped for a walk around the Orpheus, snapping photos of rainbows and vivid green fields...

Of course, when I woke up I thought the trio had been abducted by aliens, and it was only upon overhearing a muttered conversation in the dining room they had actually just eloped from cooking breakfast for a



romantic walk.

Hairy Arsed Aged Derbyshirian Caver #1: Bloody hell! They're not meant to be on that land frightening coows! Ther farmer has a guun don't he?

Hairy Arsed Aged Derbyshirian Caver #2: Aye. But we did a lot worse in our youth...

Oxlowe: James KP, Jana, Jarv, Veronique

Jana rigged down the entrance pitch, Vero learning all about rebelays on the way down! The next pitch we swapped leaders, myself (Jarv) rigging down and completely failing to notice the 'real' way on and instead ending up running out of P-bolts sitting on a beautifully calcited ledge with a dripping waterfall behind overlooking a visage into an enormous boulder-strewn chamber. Nice stuff!

Powered out as fast as possible in view of wanting to get back to London vaguely on time... Emerged for the last of the twilight, stumbled down to the van that turned up with perfect timing...

Maskhill: James H, Jan, Dan C

Eldon's Hole: Andy, Joe K, Annie, Dan Greenwald

Eldon's Hole is indeed... a hole. Kind of like Alum Pot, it goes *DOWN*. From disgruntled mutterings I believe that the keen Joe K convinced people to grot around in the funnel like constriction at the bottom, whereupon they all got covered in the exceptionally sticky mud marred with animal bones. Yum Yum. Still, it was somewhere new in Derbyshire!

Walking to the Pub: Tom H, Dimitris

Ok - maybe such a title is a bit dismissive! They actually took a long looping walk via that beautiful escarpment of rock (whose name naturally eludes me at this moment, but towards Edale), and then came back via Winnats Pass into Castleton. Getting properly lodged in a traditional pub, Tom was 2:1 up at Chess while the delish pub meals were sozzled in a suitable draught lubricant.

We handed over JKP to his relatives in the main car park - it was all a bit [Glienicke bridge](#)-esque, us quietly cruising around in our communistic minibus, the *squirrel* and *red fox* waiting in their enormous armoured personnel carrier to take away the *merry Italian*... Tom and Dimitris were extracted with some difficulty (well, the downing of carbonated beverage) and we sped out of Ingleton to deposit a rented helmet at H'n'H before heading for the M-way...

The Journey Home

Took Andy back home, now that his lift (Shed) had broken his car. Andy's got a great place, very convenient for the Nottingham University campus while avoiding all the hipsters living on the otherside. There's a supermarket just near by, but his place seemed a little small - though in truth the paper recycling bin was far cleaner and more roomy than the bottle bank he used to live in...

Jarvist Frost

Yorkshire

Weekend Trip 26-28th October 2007 [Photos](#)

Marc L, Rik, Dave Wilson, Jarv, Jana, Dan G, Tim O, James Huggett, Gerardo, Pete Mansbridge, Clewin, Aisha, Jamie Perrelet, Tom Jenkins, Hannah Heyemann, Annie Yiu, Jingzhi An

Bus was a little broken (oh WGO, how we love thee), but made it to the NPC for some ungodly hour in the morning. Marc drove a hire car up, shopping on the way.



Saturday

Nice early breakfast, but the inevitable couple of hours sorting out ropes, training SRT on the tree and adjusting the new guys' harnesses pushed us the wrong side of Noon.



Aquamole: Jarv, Jana, Jamie, Tim

A charming little cave, not as crowded as it should be due to the fact that its not in any of the cave books! Found a rope going down which along with the diver's BlueWater made for a rather spaghetti-filled entrance pitch. Crossed over with the two Yorkshire men at the bottom of the pitch, proceeded ourselves down the 2nd



pitch and had a look at the beautiful final one, before gently exiting out in time for sunset.

Lower Longchurn / Alum Pot: Rik, Marc, Annie, Jingzhi



Happy little caving trip, gentle exploration of the route, but ran out of rope before descending the greasy slab.

Heron Pot: Clewin, Tom, Aisha, Gerardo, Dan

They had a nice time, did it as a proper cave rather than pull-through due to the horror of the crawl out of the bottom.



County Pot: Dave W, Hannah, James, Pete

Smooth and efficient as expected. Dave continues to perfect his cave-discovery skills, for when Hannah's FX3 light started to give up the ghost due to lack of wingnuts, he stooped down and plucked a lost one out of the mud!

Saturday Night

County team took a while to make it back, so we had plenty of time to let the Chichekn Corriander Curry simmer to tastefulness. Bloody tasty (well, at least - I vouch for the Veggie pot!), and just about the right amount of sauce & rice.

Dave Wilson got the fire going in the Members' room and invited us in for an extended session of P&A in front of the roaring fire, with a brief interlude for consumption of the luxury christmas pudding, washed down with Whisky-max (no idea who left that bottle in stores...) and vast flagons of tea. Jana won the banana splitting contest, with a disturbingly sharp twitch of her biceps that neatly cleved the offending fruit.

Sunday

Rained buckets during the night! Our early morning plans including a Simpsons' pull through were hastily abandoned and ropes re-packed when we realised the extent of the downpour. Driving up to Kingsdale, where yesterday had been a dusty brown line of boulders was now a nearly-overflowing beck! Drizzled as we changed, and a few moments of confusion about who was on which trip...

Bullpot: Jarv, Jana, Annie, Jingzhi

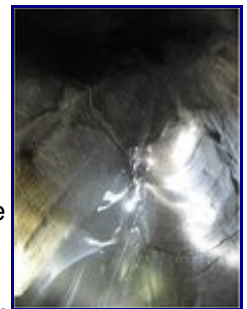


Lovely entrance pitch - truly picturesque! Roof traverse took a while to locate - an absolute torrent of water was racing downstairs and making one rather unhappy to tread in the stream of an unknown cave...

Second pitch was dropped, becoming very wet at the bottom. Direct route down was far too wet, so went to end of rift and contemplated the third pitch. Extremely noisy - with the inexperience of the crew we decided to call it a day here.

Gentle exit with Jana leaving between Jingzhi & Annie while I derigged. Out after a speedy couple of hours, to walk along to see firs

the Aquamole, then Jingling then Rowten dudes! Amazing visibility Ingleborough was looking mighty fine from where we were.



Aquamole: Rik, Marc, Gerardo, Pete



Err... Seemed to have a nice time! Think they just did the first two pitches, and gawped at the third.



Jingling: Dave W, Jamie, James

Dead sheep rather unamusing placed directly below the final hang. You could avoid the carcass, but not the film of maggots wandering around. I don't think they spent very long at the bottom! All out and derigged by James H.

Rowten: Clew, Tim, Dan

Clewin really seemed to enjoy himself! First attempted a direct descent, to run out of rope & be faced with a 40m prussic under the spray to get a second rope and form an exciting mid-rope changeover. All made it out for sunset.

Welly Removing Competition: Rik & Dan



Stiff competition in the welly removing competition, Dan was in the lead early on by providing some serious twisting action to Rik's ankle, but the running suddenly switched and Dan was ejected forcibly into the drystone wall while showering himself with Welly Juice.



Walking: Hannah, Tom, Aisha

Got halfway to Ingleborough (they think!) before deciding the weather looked dodgy and that some sandwiches had to be constructed. Cooked us fried eggs before we cleaned & left the NPC.

Journey Home



The M6 bites my tranny! Horrific log-jam half-way to Birmingham. Boredom was relieved by listening to the highly entertaining [BBC Shropshire Sunday Folk](#) (with Mary Tudor!). Rik TXT'ed in with a request: "A raucous sea-shanty in honour of James' enormous beard!". Unfortunately the 2-message missive got cut-off halfway through so the Beard was AWOL, and Mary Tudor failed to honour our request even though she read the message, preferring to read out some reader 'contributed' poetry about vampires with tooth ache.

Jarvist 'yes-its-bloody-well-me-again-why-does-noone-else-ever-write-for-this-thing? -its-practically-turning-into-a-flipping-personal-blog-mightas-well-upload-some-photos-of-my-non-existent-cats-or-something' Frost

Wales 12/14th October 2007 [Photos](#)

Jarv, Jana, Tim, Dan, Rik, Ben Banfield, Laurence Moran, Jamie Perrelet, Jack Jones, Pete Mansbridge, Jackson Bong, Gabriel Cher, Veronique Mahue



First trip of the year... Naturally it was going to be a horrific Cluster Faff of epic proportions. But low and behold, all the new people turned up at Stores on the dot of 6pm, and duly



dived into the enormous pile of odd wellys. Which is not something you want to try and say quickly unless you want to be investigated for cottaging.

Naturally, the balance of the Faff, the Yin/Yang, the Light Vs. Darkness that powers the core of the caving club had to be conserved. This time it was Rik who stepped to the fore to prevent us leaving London on time, playing with his Lasers



down the Lab late into the evening, as we only over left at 8pm, right?

Uneventful trip, except that the WGO bus probably shouldn't have been on the road as the tracking was absolutely screwed to the point where we drove the entire length of the M4 turning 'right', evening around the sweeping left hand bends through the Cotswolds... The 24hrs Tesco was its usual post-midnight graveyard self, though the self-service checkout was frustrating at best - and didn't take to the dozens of cans of beans we attempted to pass over it. But we trundled up to the SWCC at long last, and started the Cheese on Toast production line.

Jarvist Frost

Saturday

OFD (Top -> Waterfall): Jarv (Fearless Leader), Jana, Ben, Pete, Laurence, Gabriel, Jackson



Roll out of bed and start frying breakfast. Forgot the French-toast, but the porridge + dried apes was stellar.

A good hard stuffing and gear fettling kept us safe from going caving anti-meridian as it were, entrance to the depths of OFD was only delayed by having to pull-in regularly on the Salubrious super-streamway for NUCC groups coming out!



Spiralled down to the Maypole climb with ease, whereupon the horror of climbing struck the freshers, quite deservedly so! For a poor innocent, rescued by the big yellow speleo van from their London cocoon, its quite a frightening proposition: you

start by climbing backwards and forwards over enormous fridge-sized wedged boulders, like some kind of perverse Jacob's ladder as you seesaw down. Then there's a particularly nasty climb over a boulder on an overhang, then a crazy jam-your-arms-out and pivot to a small football sized chock-stone in the rift. Then comes the really nasty bit - take a deep breath then fling yourself forward pushing out against the scalloped rock. You are literally flying, loosing height as you glide forward, fixated by an implausibly small ledge that is your salvation, a tiny 3cm wide wedge that you can jam the edge of your left foot on as you come in for your landing, before pulling yourself around and standing on something rather more sensible.



It took us a while, and there were a few moments where I was tempted to call it a day and abort, but with gentle coaxing (there's not much physical help you can lend in such a foothold-less rift), everyone was safely down. We cracked open a malt-loaf and swigged from the Sigg - the tackle-sack was too much of a faff for the next more constrained bit so we dumped it here and took slings in pockets for the climb. Way on to the ladder was easily covered - with sheer rock walls disappearing tens of metres above you the echo is brilliant, and led to singing

bouts - all of which were thankfully more tuneful than my attempts. The ladder was bounced down, with some rather particularly enthusiastic bailing of the natural dams above. Pity that they generally seemed to get emptied as someone was on the moon-milk free-climb below, which made it all a bit pointless! Swing down to the stream was easily carried out - it makes a nice 'Z' as you step down off a stemple onto a natural crack in the rock, then walk back down before hopping off just before the waterfall.

Streamway was lovely - just the right height to be impressive, but not to scare the new members. I lopped off upstream, hoping over the dwarf traps and bounding off the walls. Its moments like these that remind me how much I love caving. A quick stop for a choc, a swim for the shorter members of the party who found the manhole in the Oxbow too taxing and an entirely unnecessary Tarzan-like swing across a pool (to nowhere) on a handy rope that appeared to be made out of hemp (!). The cascades just before the waterfall were beautiful, absolute roaring white water bouncing down the footholds. Saluted the waterfall, then stormed our way out.

Bumped into Rik's posy at Salubrious after paying our respects to the Judge and admiring the new Epoxied-on nature of the Trident. A brief discussion of tactics, and a promise to point their tacklesac in the direction of the corkscrew and save them from [wandering aimlessly around the labyrinth for hours](#). Once back with the Gnomes, we stopped for a few photos, had a sightsee and were out for Dusk and running down the hill for tea and medals.

Food was pretty Epic. Pasta bolognese with a red wine sauce after a fleshy salad starter. Two kilos of pasta disappeared as soon as the Colander of Doom was put down.



Post food and washing up, we fought for the Imperial side in the great Squeeze-through-the-church-bench competition of the long common room. We lost, 8 passed the test of 11 to compete, 2 abstentions from battle. I think we get the moral victory though: Nottingham had a roomful of people and even then had to buy in mercenaries to fight back our lead.

Jarvist Frost

OFD (Top Ed's Shortcut + Sightseeing): Rik, Jamie, Jack, Tim, Dan, Veronique



Hmm... well, no one else has written anything yet... All I know is that they started a quick trip down Ed's shortcut via a controversial head-towards OFDIII method... but got there eventually, had a peer at the Maypole Inlet rift climb and backed away with an anxious new member (most definitely fair enough), and had an awfully exciting time exploring the dry upper levels and sightseeing everywhere.



Jarvist Frost

Sunday

Hmm... I think the Presidents & Arseholes session lasted till about 2am, fuelled by tea and a desperate urge to knock Dan from his presidential perch. I awake, the hut is quiet. Festooned in the triple-high bunk beds around me the troops are sleeping like babes, even the snorer is silent. I check my watch - gone twelve. Jesus. There goes the early start.

Stiff-limbed we lay on another epic breakfast, and badger the SWCC till they give us a cave key. Its gone 2 by the time the cavers stumble off to the Quarry, followed by the faffers / fell-wanderers heading up over the hill to stretch their legs. A few flashes, fiddling with the rusty lock and we're off!

Cwm Ddu: Jarv, Rik, Jana, Tim, Pete, Jamie



Well - you start by climbing down some egg-shell sewer tubing, then clamber down a series of increasingly rotten wooden supports. It must have been a serious engineering project to dig in! Lovely walking passage, till you come across a curious sign: **Grade II Confined Space. Follow Site Working Procedure** (Or words to that effect). The following is a rather horrific belly crawl across boulders that were they round would function as



very useful ball-bearings, but instead just jackknife repeatedly and stab you in the chest.

It opens out marvellously beyond though, and soon you're following an enormous chamber along and find a stream. We dived into the boulder-choke and writhed ourselves around and up and over and down to get to a drippy chamber, with the way on looking rather confined (but very worn) disappearing down to the left. Alas it was time to turn back, but I'm almost certain we were on our way to the Confluence...

Walking: Dan, Veronique, Gabriel, Jackson, Laurence, Jack, Ben



The Walkers walked, enjoying the Flora and Fauna of the national park.

Rocket-powered exit, to find the hut mid-clean, windswept walkers and a bus ready to whisk us home. Zoomed off into the setting sunset, Dan live DJ'ing a mix on his iPlod, suspicious sandwiches prepared from the breakfast leftovers, the M4 junction numbers counting down to home. Caving is great, weekends away from

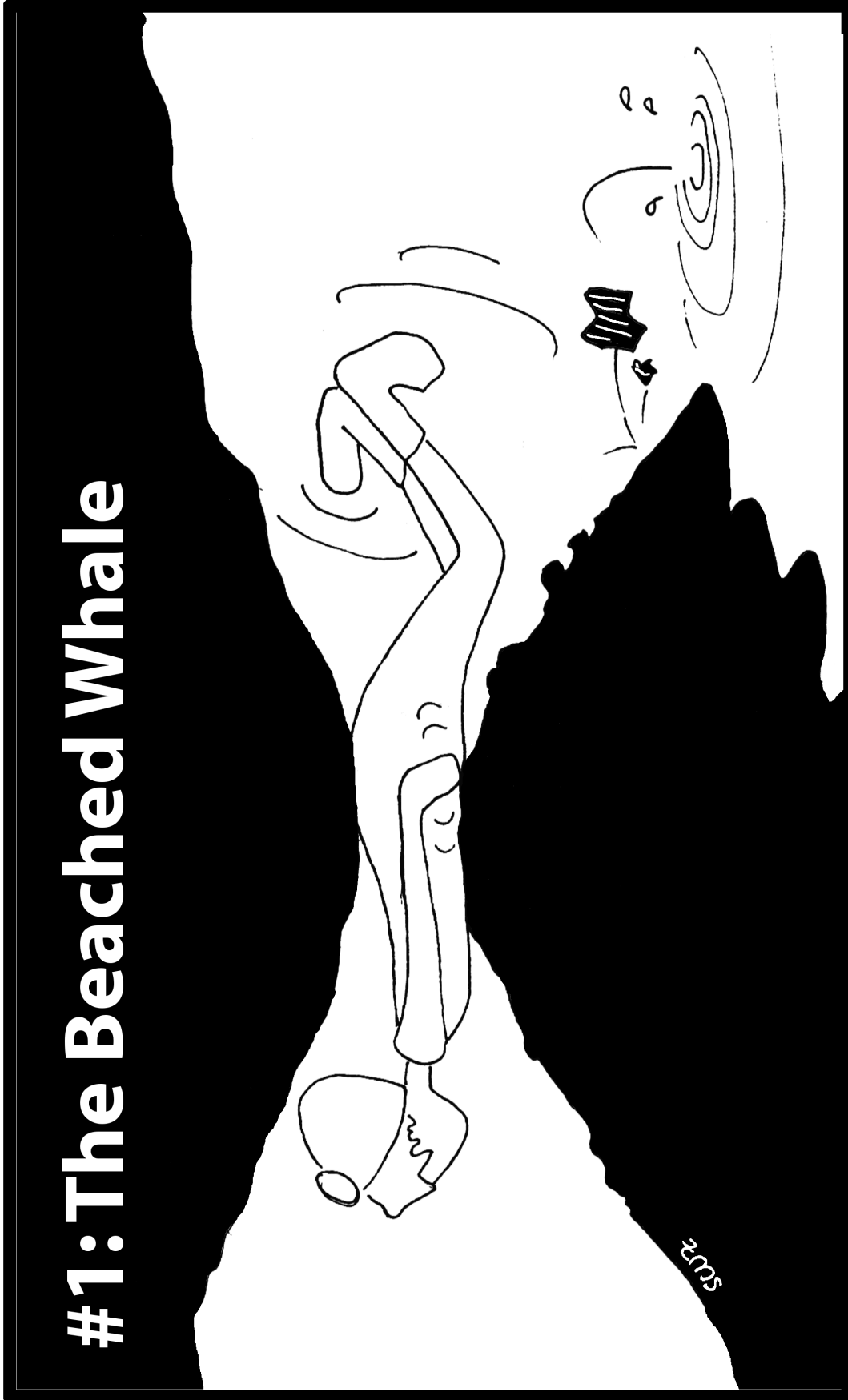


London rock, ICCC whoops ass, the new members this year are a great bunch, LETS HAVE SOME GOOD MUDDY FUN!

Jarvist Frost

A Collectable Guide of Caving Technique

#1: The Beached Whale



<http://union.ic.ac.uk/caving>