

2006

“It is not the beginning but the continuing of the same until it be thoroughly finished that yieldeth the true glory.” Sir Francis Drake

Unfortunately, there was no club expedition in summer 2006. Wedding bells were tolling for some while others had non-caving plans. Tetley and I, for instance, went for a jaunt round the Atlantic in a stupidly small 26 foot sailboat. But as Autumn came around, Migovec weighed heavily on my mind. With my summer travels at an end, it was with little surprise that I found myself booking solo flights.

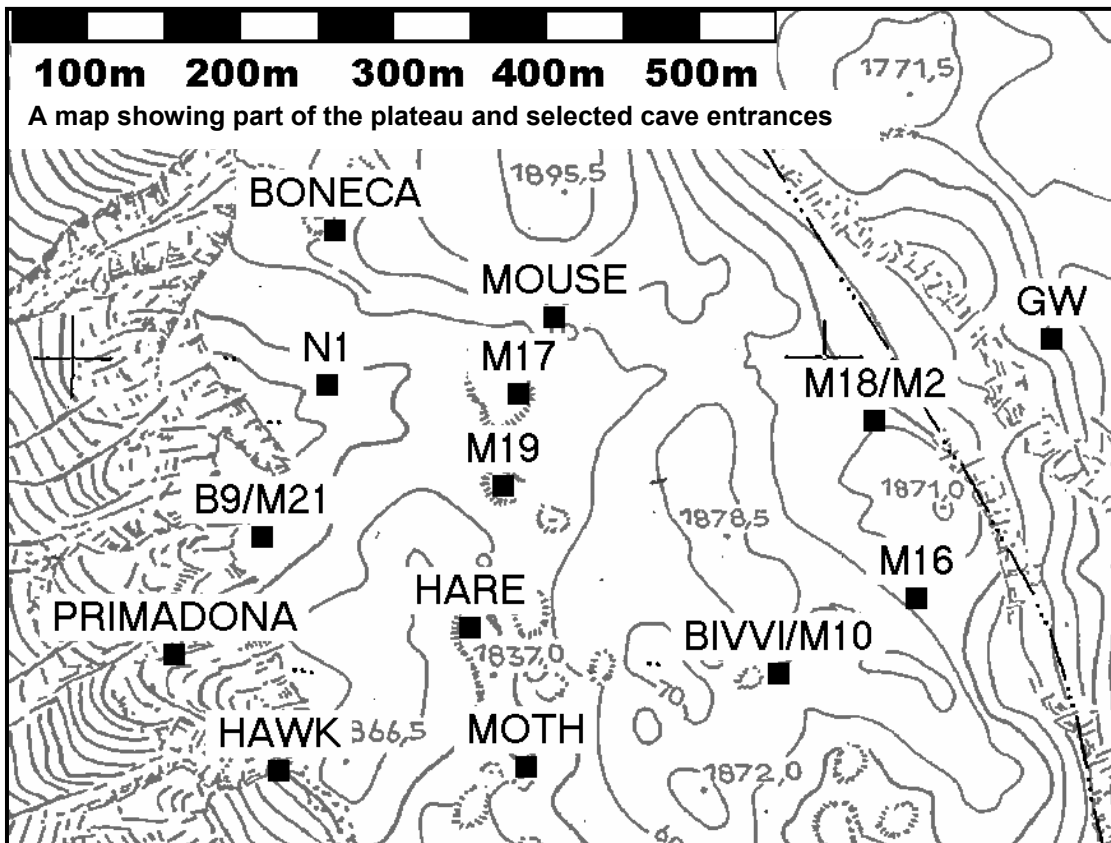
To lay the groundwork for the 2007 expedition, a vast quantity of surface work needed to be completed in a systematic fashion; an ideal job for just one person with a lot of time, rather than consuming days on end when the mountain-top bivvy was running at great man-power expense. This was also an ideal opportunity to strengthen ties with the JSPDT, continue the editing of this report and to polish the survey!



Sunset Above the Clouds, Jana looking towards Grusnica (JMF/JC)

So I found myself once again in stores, packing the usual equipment. Tetley used some of his ever plentiful holiday to join me for a ten day stretch.

Jarvist Frost



On a technical note: GPS on Migovec

The Slovenian national **Datum** does not come pre-programmed into GPS handsets or navigational software - at Migovec's longitude, an difference of about 150m is found compared to WGS84. It is **D48**, with a Bessel (1841) Spheroid:

DX	+682.0m
DY	-203.0m
DZ	+480.0m
DA	+740.8m
DF	+0.10037484

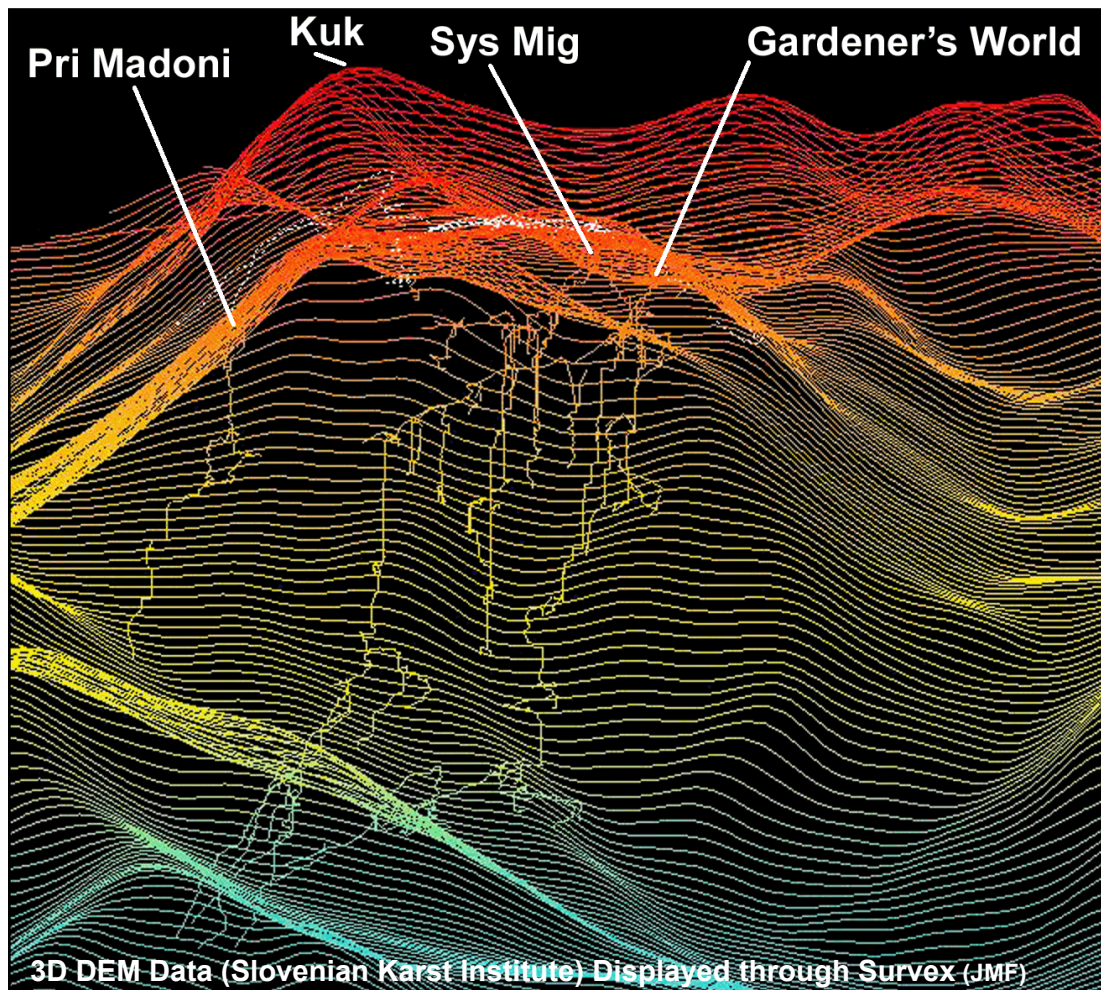
Garmin GPS units use WGS84 internally (and for transfer via serial cable), and translate on the fly depending what mode the device is in, meaning that waypoints taken while the device is running under differing Datums are consistent with each other.

The Slovenian **grid** (Gauß-Krüger) is really a conformal transversal cylindrical projection. It can be approximated with a UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator) of the following specification:

Longitude Origin	E 015°00.0'
Scale	+0.9996
False Easting	+5'500'000.0m
False Northing	+0.0m

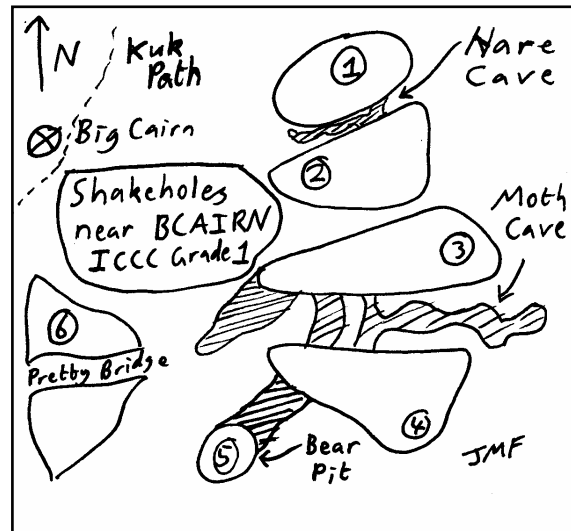
The Scale Factor is quoted as +0.9999 on a number of websites, yet is officially +0.9990. Zdenko of the JSPDT reports that +0.9996 gives more accurate behaviour for the Tolmin region of Slovenia. As of December 2006, there was still some uncertainty about the exact specification for this grid.

Jarvist Frost



Moths and Hares Make Strange Bedfellows Indeed: More shaft-bashing

Our alpine start didn't quite work out as intended; a late lunch at the pizzeria was followed by for one last tea drinking session at Andrej's. Tetley and I then drove up to Razor, in our small hire car, walked to Kal as the sun was setting, built an open fire in the third hut and cooked food before bedding down for the night. The following day we headed up to the plateau, keen to get back to what Tetley calls "Our Mountain Kingdom." Once there, we headed straight for the interesting collection of shakeholes around Hare Cave. There is obvious cave development in all of them (Hare, Keyhole and Postcard cave are all within 50m). With all the snow melted, this was the obvious target for a recce.

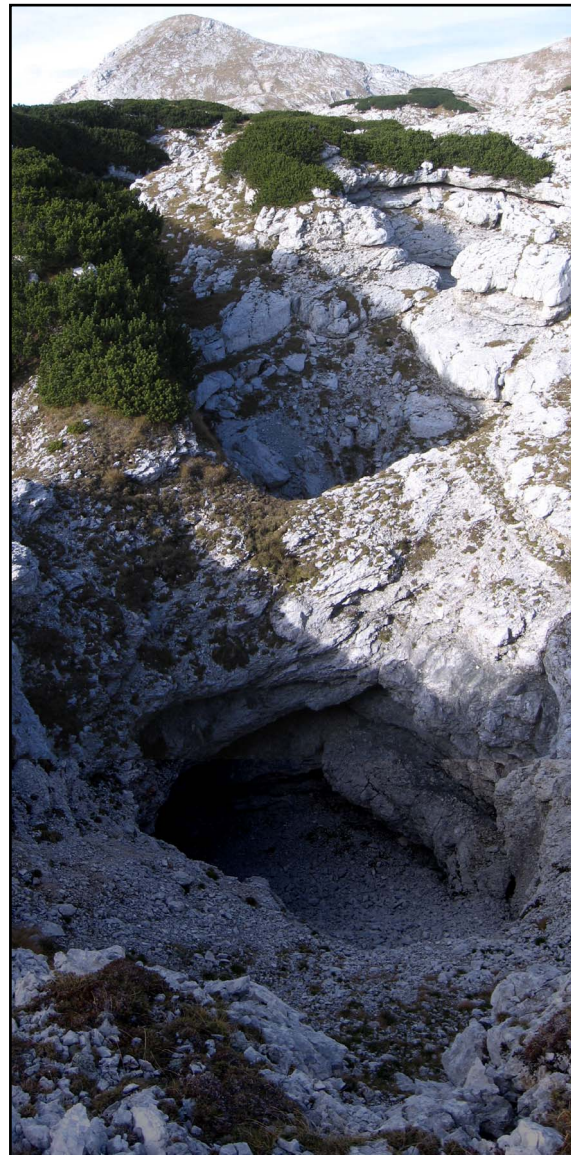


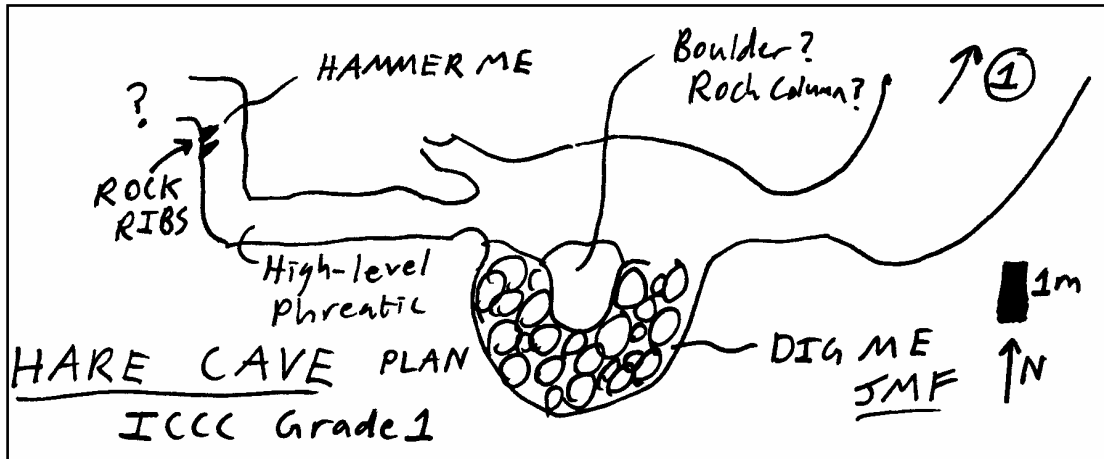
Our first 'attack' was **Hare Cave**. We both wriggled to the first corner in the phreatic tube for an inspection. This lead is still a worthwhile hammer, but feels as though it might just return to the surface. While we took turns in the squeeze, the other was digging down in a boulder pile. This is very much draughting, but a large 'boulder' hindering progress in the centre of chamber may well be part of the stream sculpted bedrock. It needs a few more hours of serious digging to ascertain whether it goes or not.

Later, Tetley noticed an obvious entrance in the North of the shakehole to the South of Hare Ridge (this shakehole was full of snow in summer 2004). This body-sized two metre crawl, led to a small low chamber. Light came in from the Northerly shakehole. It clearly connects with Hare, but not via a human-sized route.

We then started a systematic search of the nearby shake-holes, all of which show clear potential for caves.

The photo-mosaic to the right was composed from south of hole #4, the hare-cave ridge (crowned with dwarf pine) can be seen at the top right, while the moth-cave ridge lies in the fore-ground. These shakeholes contain a far amount of snow in the summer! The camera was pointing almost due north, Kuk can be seen in the background. The 'Big Cairn' on the Mig-Kuk path is almost due west of the Hare cave ridge.





Moth Cave:

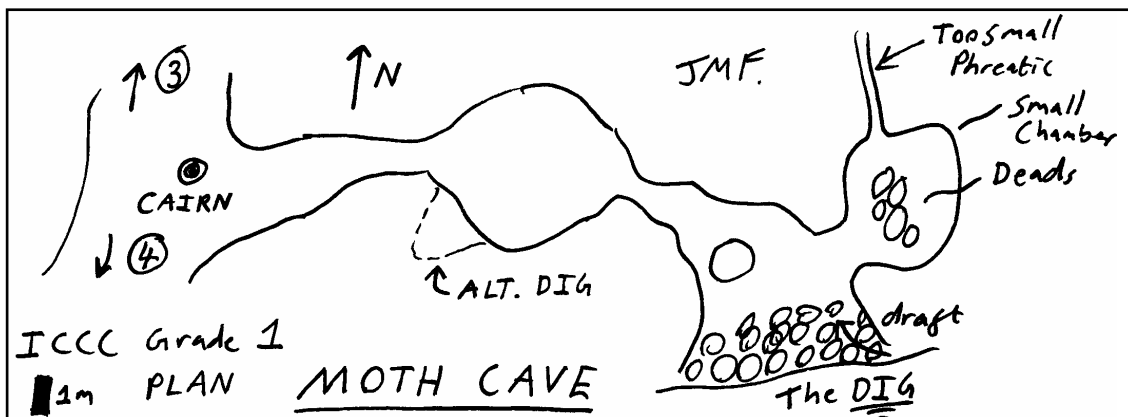
Slovenija Datum: LatLong N46.252219 E013.764609, UTM 5404788.2/5122292.6, Alt: 1831m

This cave is located between two shakeholes, and one can access it via low-level windows from either side. It might require digging through snow in the summer. The cave goes DOWN and to the east, straight into solid rock. A few small chambers leads to the pushing front - a pile of draughting boulders (the draught seems to be coming from the east) below a very stable 45 degree solid ceiling. Easy, and extremely quick, digging. There is a drip-formed chamber for storing spoil just to the East, the majority of the choss is a mixture of gravel and small boulders, but Jarv and Tet were stopped after an hour of effort by a boulder that needed smashing apart with a hammer. An absolutely stonking lead, in the all but mythical 'Primadona / SysMig' connection area, situated almost directly above Hotel Tolminka and within ten minutes walk of tea at the bivvy! A bucket, a hammer and a sound system will make this essential project an enjoyable part of the summer 2007 expo.



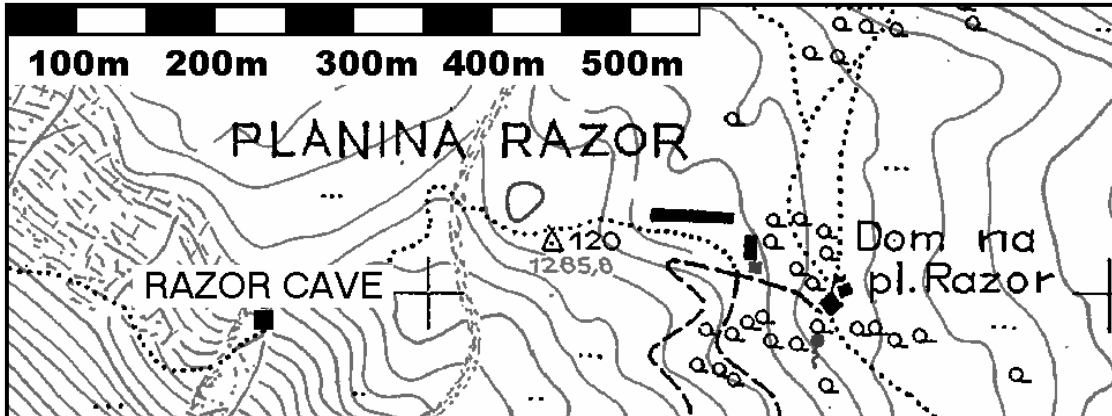
Looking South (towards Mig) from Northern Shakehole. Moth Cave is through pink highlighted window. GPS location was taken from saddle point marked in blue. Tetfey can be seen in left-most hole inspecting a rattling dig

Jarvist Frost

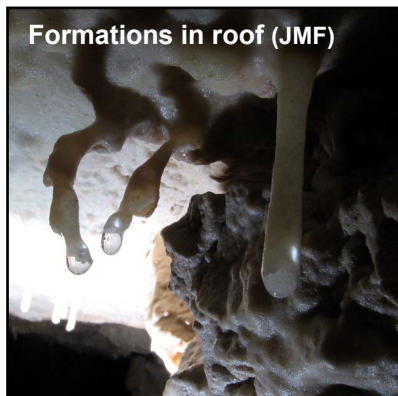


Razor Cave

Slovenija Datum: (LatLong N46.236071 E013.792441) (UTM 5406906 / 5120466) Alt: 1230m



This cave is located on the Razor - Ravne Forest path, just to the East of the short section of Via Ferrata steel handline (350m from the Razor hut). A short climb up into right-angled section of the cliff gets you to the ample entrance.



Formations in roof (JMF)

The short entrance climb, by a large painted 'JSPDT', leads to a pleasant chamber with a large boulder sitting in the moonbeam of illumination coming in the entrance. The way on is an obvious (clearly dug) crawl, into a series of chambers which follow a fault line NW into the mountain. A ten metre or so freeclimb down with easy handholds is eventually reached in a thin bit of rift. The way on from the bottom is to apparently climb up over the overhang at the opposite end of the rift - though some kind of belay or hand-line is necessary! The active way follows a small stream down and off to the left. A small gour-pool is forming in a body-sized side chamber, fed by a drip from above.



Rift beyond freeclimb (JMF)

This cave, that has been known about for decades, has the possibility for future development. There is apparently between 200 and 2000 metres of passageway depending on who in the JSPDT you talk to! The original exploration was driven by an attempt to reach the waterfall that could be heard near the entrance. This sound turned out to be merely the rustling of the wind!

Jarvist Frost



Tetley in a chamber near the entrance (JMF)

A return to Primadona

With perfect timing, Tetley and Jarv were both out in Slovenia for the first major Primadona push by JSPDT members in three years. The aim of the trip was twofold - to train up some new Slovenian cavers to Migovec standard, and to push a climb in the north-heading gallery named Smer0, that was hoped to provide the mythical mystical link into the main system.

The following article was originally published in 'Felix' the student newspaper of Imperial College):

I awake at 1500m, in a hut on the slope of mountain Migovec in Slovenia, to the sight of a cup of coffee being waved in my general direction. ICCC has been exploring the deep caves of this mountain in conjunction with the local club for over a decade. The main cave system is over eleven kilometres long, and nearly a thousand metres deep. Our hope for today was to enter a more recently discovered cave - 'Primadona', and explore in the direction of this main system - barely a hundred metres away. Combined, these caves would be the longest cave in Slovenia that can be explored without diving equipment.



Tetley on the Entrance Slope (JMF)

Setting off for the peak high above, we are accompanied along the steep path by the roar of a river in the deep valley to our side, the stark peaks of the next mountain range jutting purposefully from the white cloud that rolled below our feet. At the cave entrance we check and stow all our gear carefully, one forgotten item would spell a premature and disappointing end to the trip.

The entrance is an enormous slope of permanent snow, a fast toboggan-ride in a plastic oversuit! A quick crawl and a wander along a passageway, to reach the first rope. Down we shoot, zipping through the inky blackness. Kept company by the click of the karabiners onto rope, and the clunk of the boulders beneath the feet, forever chasing the headlight in front, the calls of 'Rope Free!' and 'OK!' merging into soporific mumbles over the echo. Today I am in luck - the Slovenian at the front of our advance party sings bass in a choir. Soon the chambers are resounding to his sonorous renditions, Slovenian folk songs interspersed with Leonard Cohen.

Abseiling down through a chimney between the rock, the walls suddenly disappear. Looking down far below, I can see pinpricks of light - the headlamps of the rest of the party waiting for me. I reach a reattachment point in the rope, where I need to take my abseil device off one section of rope and reattach it beyond the rock anchor. Before I joined the caving club, the very idea of doing such a manoeuvre would have filled me with dread. The drop is not just enough to guarantee a certain death, but would allow plenty of time for contemplation before hitting the rock. However, I now know that I am safe in my harness and am perfectly at ease, my actions totally automatic as I attach multiple safety cords, transfer my weight over and tested my descending device before taking out the last safety.

Free once more, with absolutely no effort I gently drift down. Abseiling down into this bell jar I am left dangling in free space; the thin white line of the rope disappearing beyond my light's illumination above. The knit of the rope sheath started me gently spinning - I don't even have to turn my head to watch the chamber go by, to see the waterfall across the way develop from a drippy purr into an almighty roar.

An energetic scramble up a slope of boulders got me to my companions, sitting on insulating coils of rope in a side chamber away from the damp and the draught of the falling water. Cravings for chocolate and nicotine were indulged by the various cavers, ice-cold drinking water collected from a nearby rock pool. How deep were we now? Still very shallow - not much more than two hundred metres. So, only deeper than 'Canary Wharf' is high!

We then undulate along scrambling over enormous house-sized chunks of limestone, ducking through rock archways and stomping along tube-tunnel-sized passageways. At the limit of exploration, we unpack and prepare to climb. Hours of work are spent gaining a precious ten metres of height through the roof of the corridor. Finally up, we had entered the unknown.

A little chamber with a clamber up into a crawlspace. No one has ever seen this passage, and we have no idea where it goes. This bit of cave was very old indeed, having formed when this part of the mountain was below the water table, before the kilometre-deep valleys formed on either side. As the last of the water drained out, it left behind amazing formations in the rock and the mud, some of which, inevitably, were illuminated, admired and then crushed underfoot.



Andrej placing the bolt (JMF)

Some rather acrobatic manoeuvres later, and the passage starts getting much bigger. Drawn on by the sound of a waterfall, we clamber down increasingly large climbs onto an enormous rock shelf. The main drop was too far for the short rope that we have, though looking carefully over the edge, one can see a little underground river running past far below. Placing rock-anchors on the very end of the ledge and bouncing sideways as we abseil down, one could reach a false floor just within the length of our rope.

Safely down, we walk around the corner to be confronted with a clear sign that someone had been here before - a neat cairn of rocks placed on a boulder in the middle of the passageway, marking the location of a survey station. But in which cave are we now? We had certainly travelled a sufficient distance to reach the main system, but the path had so many twists that we have no way of telling our overall direction. Exciting stuff indeed!

We split up and scramble around, looking for another station - hopefully one with a little note on waterproof paper stating which part of the survey it was - and therefore which cave. This part of the cave was an absolute rabbit warren, with extinct waterfalls and passageways criss-crossing and spiralling around each other. Like some Escher drawing, you can step across a chasm and look down to see another member of the team crawling along sideways below you, while another caver traversed along high above.

Time was passing, and it was many hours of effort to reach the surface. Half the team started surveying the way back, slowly taking point-to-point compass, clinometer and distance measurements for feeding into a computer once back to the nearby town. The rest of us continue to explore. Climbing down with the other English caver [Tetley], we found a route which doubles back under the way that we have come, shuffling along an increasingly wide gorge. Looking down is terrifying indeed - the roaring river being very far below, but the climbing was easy, along wide mantelpieces of limestone. Back in a corridor-like passage we explore with dawning realisation - to be suddenly confronted with the sight of our original rope disappearing into the ceiling! This bit of cave simply reconnects to itself in a loop.



So we had failed to make the big breakthrough, on that trip at least. But no one has ever been down to that underground river - all it requires is more rope and more time. We finish the survey, tidy up the ropes and start back towards the surface, saying goodbye to the dangling bats as we go. Climbing vertically into the heavens, I am having the workout of my life, in the most awesome surroundings. Finally at the entrance, we scramble up the snow slope towards the stars beyond after eleven hours underground.

Back at the hut, a flood of warmth and pine smoke flows from the door into the icy night. You can always squeeze another caver around a table; bowls of hot soup and hunks of bread magically appear, followed by cake and a wee dram here and there. Sitting around me are the faces that go along with the motes of light in the dark, people who I had barely met when going underground now seem like old friends, united by the joy of cooperative exploration and the shared experience underground.

The chatter runs late into the night - where next to explore? And what was the cave going to do next? Where did that underground river run to? And where does it come from?

The discovery of a streamway in Smer0 gallery was extremely exciting, and is a first priority for the next exploratory trip in Primadona. The end of Smer0, an aven, is located barely 100m below the surface and is only three valleys north of the entrance. Above this point there are a number of newly found surface caves. Finding such an entrance to the far end of Primadona would provide an excellent method of attacking the 'connection' leads.

I am sure that a caving geologist would be able to tell us some very interesting things about the formation of Primadona - the change of limestone from the dirty shattered rock which forms the pitch series, into the beautiful (and extremely reminiscent of SysMig) smooth walls of the Smer0 passage is extremely striking.

Jarvist Frost

The Primadona Survey: A note

Although a main-line survey exists for Primadona (the Slovenians use Survex and ICC and JSPDT share all data), a fully drawn up survey has not been made since 2000. In my opinion, some areas need to be resurveyed. A lack of permanent survey stations will make this a fairly hard task, however. As well as the Smer0 gallery, heading towards the system, the bottom of the cave, at a depth of about -600m, is also a going lead. It has proved to hard to find out more information about this pushing front, however, as the original Slovenian explorers haven't returned there for six years and memories have faded.

James Hooper

Exploring the Western Valleys of the Plateau

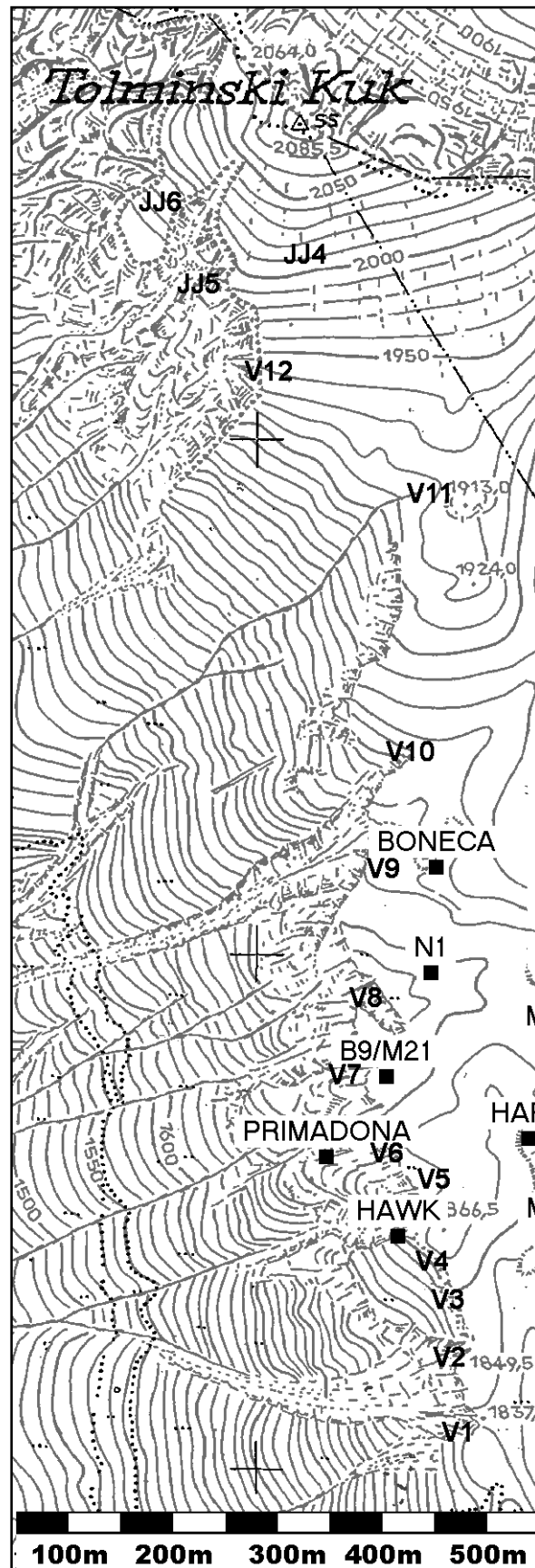
The weather in Tolmin was grim, and after a cadged lift, Ravne was not much better. It all changed at 1400m though; suddenly the peak of Migovec leered at us through the cloud, and Jana and I broke out into startling sunshine. The clouds rolled gently below our feet, we sat in shorts on Grusnica as the sun gently dipped. An auspicious start to an extremely productive long weekend of surface exploration.

'Up Top' once again, our plan was to meticulously examine the western edge of the plateau; GPS, camera and notebook at the ready. Vast quantities of surface pushing has been done during the main summer expeditions, but the difficulties in coordination and information being lost over the years meant that a comprehensive examination was felt to be a good idea.

The western valleys were numbered (and the majority GPS'ed) starting at where the mule-track reaches the Plateau (Gateway to Mig), and progressing north towards Kuk. The location of the GPS waypoints is printed on a reproduction of government 1:10000 scale maps. Some plateau features can be clearly seen on the maps, whereas other as-large locations are simply non-existent. Defining individual valleys was rather difficult; hanging valleys, double-headed valleys and all but indefinable limestones dominate the western edge of the plateau. At first glance, these valleys look impenetrable, cliff edges, unstable scree, and a 1.4km tumble to the valley below if you misstep. In reality, if you take your time, and look carefully for a route - most are free-climbable.

And so we explored, finding caves everywhere we looked - the mountain is hollow after all. The first big shock came when exploring around B9, a cave that had been explored and then ignored back in the mid 90s. After Jana Climbed down the cliff below the entrance ledge (to continue a comprehensive series of 'located' photos), a rather startling question came floating back:

"Why are there two Primadonas down there?"



I joined her down there, and soon saw the difficulty - you could clearly see Primadona, the dwarf pine, the traverse, the scree slope, the large overhanging entrance. But then, about a hundred metres further up the valley, you could see another, almost identical entrance.

From this vantage point, you could also see the cliff from which the surface abseil between U-Bend and Primadona was carried out in 2000. The higher entrance was isolated from the lower by an obvious cliff, separated from us by another cliff, and protected from viewing in almost any other location on the plateau by the long headland that extended from the north of the B9 valley.



After all the other valleys were accounted for, we headed back to the shepherd's huts in the gathering gloom. We had one last valley to tick off (V5) that Jana demanded we look at. I wasn't particularly cooperative in the fading light. Dreaming of the fire in the hut, I raced down ahead. A through cave - leading onto an impossible freeclimb down a cliff. Nothing. But Jana was already off, and up, the side of the valley. Just what was that? Scrambling up - the most amazing cave sat before us, with a wonderful rock bridge and green moss hanging around. Thrown stones soon 'banged' back as they fell to the bottom; it wasn't deep - perhaps 10-30m, but it was large, no matter which way we threw - they fell to the bottom.

Speaking to Andrej Fratnik later, our description sounded like a cave he had found with another Andrej back in the 70s, before either Jana or myself had been born. Climbing up from below, they had gone through a through-cave, and come to an entrance - though they didn't remember the rock bridge. With no rope, they could only peer down the drop to the snow covering on the floor below. They called it 'Hawk Cave', after the bird of prey they startled upon finding it.

Descriptions of the Valleys on the Western Edge of the plateau

V1: A short valley leading to cliff.

V2: Valley hidden behind deep dwarf pine; too steep to free climb. A rock spar extends west from the north headland of the valley, on which Slovenian walkers can be seen picnicking! There is a very noticeable cave entrance on the flank of this spar, viewable from V3.

V3/V4: Two shallow valleys. Valleys V1-V4 would be most productively explored from below; leave the mule track where it turns right past some earthquake scree, and follow a 'sort of path' to halfway along the rock spar of V2.

V5/JJ3: The valley of JJ3(a.k.a. Hawk Cave). This steep valley drops down to shallow bowl. The through-cave on right hand side leads to cliff face. On left, a climb up the cliff leads to the Hawk Cave entrance, sheltering below the rock bridge. The headland between V4 and V5 should be looked at for alternative ways into, or alternative caves near Hawk Cave.

V6/U-Bend: U-bend is a considerable distance down this tiny hanging valley, which is an easy freeclimb between dwarf pine and a precipice to the north, and a cliff to the south. From U-bend, a rock bridge can be seen to the South-West. The bolted way down to Primadona is believed to extend past U-bend and then abseil down a cliff-face.

V7/B9: This valley is hidden by a considerable belt of dwarf pine. B9 (a.k.a Jackie's Blower and M21) is noted in red point on the start of a series of large through caves that lead to an isolated ledge, before continuing into B9 proper. The cave appears to have changed significantly since the mid 90s - possibly due to earthquake damage. What was described by a pitch is now an easy free-climb (using a large boulder that may or may not have been part of the roof!), and there's a new chamber that reconnects to the cliff face accessible via a sinuous piece of rift. Climbing down from the ledge (CARE!), one can reach a lower edge on the cliff face, from where one can see (requiring a bit of a dangle) the two Primadona-like entrances below, as well as the U-Bend cliff face from which the Primadona abseil was made in 2000.

V8/JJ1: A very large and broken valley, but with many caves, most of which are on the South Face, as one traverses round towards Mig. 1st cave in valley itself, through cave choked with gravel / boulders. 2nd is around the first corner, traversing around to the south - two cairns placed. Further crazy (and very exposed) traverse only carried out by Jana lead to small chamber with a blowing aven and a wet crawl onwards, cairn on traverse. Rope advised for further exploration! A very large cracked boulder (two story house size) leans over the northern edge of the valley, and is very noticeable - should it still be there next year!

V9/JJ2 (Pella's Feathers): Lots of caves on south-side of this fairly stable valley. First one was a tight blowing hole, but which requires the use of a hammer for initial exploration. Further down one comes to 'Pella's Feathers Cave', an obvious triangular crawl way, which was found with a pile of orange-tipped black feathers in front of it. Jana (the smallest!) explored, getting 10m into this body-sized tube. Heads down, and round - before reaching a branch. Going left reaches an early dead-end, whereas the right way is soon blocked by a large boulder - which will need destruction somehow before further exploration.



From this point on, the prospect for cave development seems to reduce enormously. Hitherto all the bedding planes appear to slope down and to the south-east. From here on, after a period of confusion, all the planes seem to go up and to the east or north-east. As such, the caves that are found are invariably heading 'upstream' and into the mountain, the downstream track having been eroded to form the Tolminka valley.

V10: A very broken valley, near bone-cave.

V11: A large broken valley below Kuk; there is evidence of surface rivers further down. No obvious caves.

V12: A tiny hanging valley on Kuk face, above large section of limestone pavement. Extremely windy; clouds forming vertically around it.

JJ4 Cave: A window on side of Kuk. An eight metre long phreatic tube with 1-1.5m diameter, shuts down to too-small aven. Would make a great campsite, with an epic view across to Krn - nicknamed 'The Dining Room' as we ate lunch here. Cairned in entrance with PSS note. Alt: 1970m

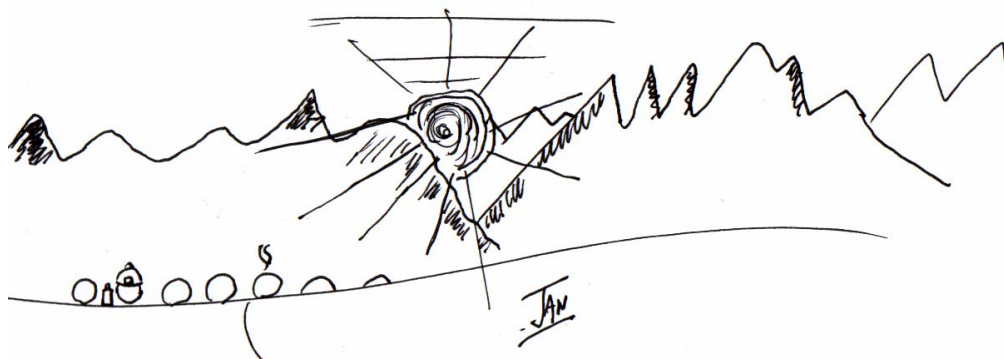


JJ5 Cave: Further down valley. A rift entrance leads to a small chamber. A crawl right, amongst death from above, leads to a further chamber, which shuts down to nothing. A desperate dig! Alt: 1946m

JJ6 Waypoint: Not a cave - but on the flank of Kuk where many cave entrances visible across the way. Most accessible from path beyond Kuk, climb up via peak and follow footpath till you reach a 'Giants Causeway' section of enormous boulders.

Jarvist Frost

GPS positions (decimalised longitude/latitude) of places described above. Slovenija datum.			
JJ1,	46.25332,	013.76233,	V8
JJ2,	46.25476,	013.76299,	V9
JJ3BAD,	46.25135,	013.76296,	Entrance (bad fix)
JJ3STAT,	46.25176,	013.76335,	V5 Start of JJ3 Valley
JJ4	46.25985,	013.76137,	The Dining Room
JJ5,	46.25969,	013.76028,	
JJ6	46.26041,	013.76001,	Caves on top of Kuk
BONECA,	46.25459,	013.76341,	Bone Cave
UBEND,	46.25200,	013.76240,	Entrance itself (bad fix)
U-START,	46.25255,	013.76305,	Start of U-Bend valley
V1,	46.24978,	013.76423,	
V3,	46.25076,	013.76390,	
V7,	46.25292,	013.76301,	
V10,	46.25568,	013.76319,	
V11,	46.25769,	013.76291,	
V12,	46.25888,	013.76102,	
PRIMADONA,	46.25203,	013.76204,	Position derived by Zdenko



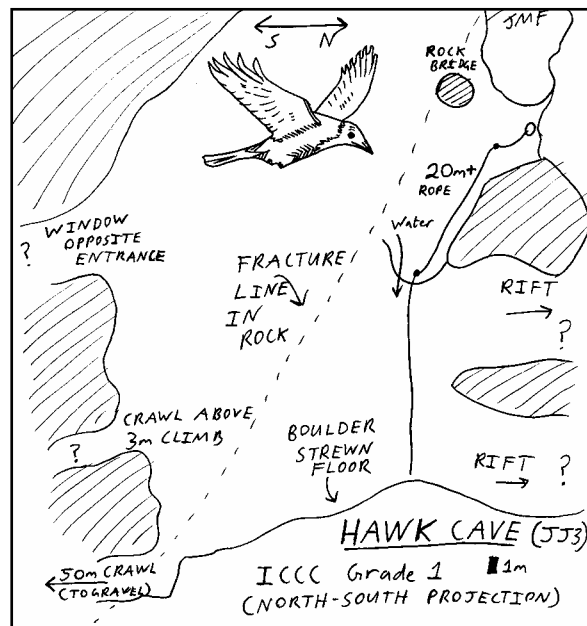
JJ3 a.k.a. Hawk Cave a.k.a. The Lost Cave

Up to Ravne with Goran and Zdenko of the JSPDT, Jana and myself were soon laden down with pieces of chimney for the continual upgrade of the JSPDT hut at Kal - 'Satellite TV next year!'. Fratnik joined us after dusk, while the boys built a new staircase and Jana rustled up a delectable combination of steaks (for the meat eaters) and pasta with sauce, eaten out of the communal bowl as usual.

The heavy rain started at bedtime, midnight. I was lulled to sleep by the drumming on the roof competing with Andrej singing snatches of Leonard Cohen songs between snores. I slept in late due to incessant rain, to find the hut entirely rearranged - everything on the right side (including stairs) were now on the left and vice versa! Truly confusing. After innumerable cups of chai and coffee, and a mountain of bread, three determined cavers headed for the top (in between rainstorms).

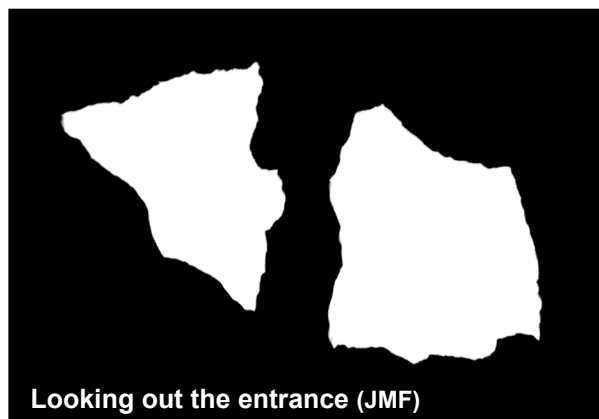
We arrived directly at JJ3 cave, following the GPS through the 5m visibility clag. Fratnik confirmed that this was his 'Hawk Cave' found in the 1970s with the other Andrej, though such a name now competes with 'The Lost Cave' for obvious reasons! Climbing up the cliff to the beautiful entrance below the rock bridge, no hawks were present but a pair of blackbirds took off and flew INTO the cave, heading roughly SE to where a window from the entrance shaft is visible.

Bolting was interrupted by both of the Slovenians requiring shits - bloody meat eaters! Soaked, frozen and distinctly unmotivated, we wiggled into our SRT kits and abseiled down, a lovely rebelay ledge at about -8m producing a free-hang alongside a small waterfall to the floor. The overall drop was about 20m deep.



From the bottom of the chamber (a cone of rubble as usual, but not too much choss), a rift can be entered at a number of heights to the North. This seems to be sloping uphill, and is almost certain to break out on the cliff face, though such investigations might yield an easier entrance. There is an obvious fault line crack running roughly E-W, taking one to the obvious way on in the SE corner of the chamber. There are crawls at multiple heights; Fratnik found a low one that entered 50m of passage heading south-ish to an easily-shifted gravel blockage, draughting strongly. A 3m climb arrives at a body-sized draughting crawl in which stones rattle for a considerable distance, but wasn't pushed due to lack of an oversuit on my part.

After twenty minutes or so, we derigged out into the gathering gloom, pausing briefly to pack kit before sprinting down off the mountain and back to Kal to get the fire stoked - we were dissuaded from a GPS waypointing mission to Mig. After packing in the Polenta with cheese for supper, we played international eye-spy before bed. Lying in bed, I dreamed of our excellent new lead that needs to be looked at again.



Looking out the entrance (JMF)

The Longest Caves in Slovenia*

Cave	Length	Depth	Area
1 Postojnska jama (sistem) (1)	20 570	115	Pivška kotlina
2 Predjama (sistem) (2)	13 092	143	Pivška kotlina
3 Kačna jama	12 750	280	Divaški kras
4 Črnelso brezno	11 450	1 241	Rombonski podi
5 Sistem Migovec / Mig (3)	11 300	970	zaledje Tolminke
6 Pološka jama	10 800	704	zaledje Tolminke
7 Križna jama	8 273	32	Loško polje
8 Sistem Mala Boka - BC4 (4)	8 168	1 319	Bovška kotlina
9 Karlovice (sistem) (5)	8 057	12	Cerkniško polje
10 Planinska jama	6 656	65	Planinsko polje
11 Vodna jama v Lozi	6 538	75	Slavinski ravnik
12 Dimnice	6 020	134	Matarsko podolje
13 Brezno pri gamsovi glavici	6 000	817	Bohinjske planine
14 Škocjanske jame (sistem)	5 800	250	Divaški kras
15 Čehi 2	5 291	1 502	Rombonski podi
16 Najdena jama	5 110	121	Planinsko polje
17 Vrtnarija (Gardeners' World)	5 044	802	zaledje Tolminke
18 Skalarjevo brezno	4 765	911	Kaninski podi
19 Zelške jame	4 742	45	Rakov Škocjan
20 Podpeška jama	4 390	20	Dobropolje
21 Logarček	4 334	120	Planinsko polje
22 Velika ledena jama v Paradani	4 090	650	Trnovski gozd
23 Prvi sistem Moličke planine	3 827	1 135	Dleskovška planota
24 Podstenska jama	3 376	60	Mala gora (Ribnica)
25 Gašpinova jama	3 375	103	Logaški ravnik
26 Drugi sistem Moličke planine	3 224	533	Dleskovška planota
27 Tkalca jama	2 885	71	Rakov Škocjan
28 Beško-Ocizeljski sistem	2 780	150	Podgorski kras (Črni Kal)
29 Hotiško-Sliverski sistem	2 644	180	Matarsko podolje
30 Primadona	2 605	597	zaledje Tolminke

*as of November 2006

Notes

- 1 - includes also Otoška jama, Magdalena jama, Pivka jama and Črna jama
- 2 - includes also Požiralnik Lokve and Jama v Grapi
- 3 - includes M16, Kavkna jama (M2) and Jama strgane srajce (Torn T-shirt cave)
- 4 - includes Mala Boka and BC4
- 5 - includes Velika Karlovica and Mala Karlovica

This table, together with the one on the following page, provides a good summary of our major discoveries on the Migovec plateau to date. Only 150m separates the System from both Primadona and from Vrtnarija (Gardeners' World). These two connections would make the system the longest cave in Slovenia and would be particularly notable as such long systems are relatively rare in similar Alpine Karst. It would also, hopefully, lead the authorities at the world famous Postojna Show Cave to reprint all their guidebooks!

James Hooper



The Deepest Caves in Slovenia*

Cave	Depth	Length	Area
1 Čehi 2	1 502	5 291	Rombonski podi
2 Sistem Mala Boka - BC4 (4)	1 319	8 168	Bovška kotlina
3 Črnelsko brezno (sistem) (6)	1 241	11 450	Rombonski podi
4 Vandima	1 182	2 500	Rombonski podi
5 Prvi sistem Moličke planine (7)	1 135	3 827	Dleskovška planota
6 Renejevo brezno	1 071	1 700	Kaninski podi
7 Sistem Migovec / Mig (3)	970	11 300	zaledje Tolminke
8 Skalarjevo brezno	911	4 765	Kaninski podi
9 Brezno pod velbom	910	1 565	Kaninski podi
10 Brezno pri gamsovi glavici	817	6 000	Bohinjske planine
11 Vrtnarija (Gardeners' World)	802	5 044	zaledje Tolminke
12 Bela griža 1	795	1 652	Trnovski gozd
13 Pološka jama	704	10 800	zaledje Tolminke
14 Velika ledena jama v Paradani	650	4 090	Trnovski gozd
15 C 11 (Možnica)	644	1 074	zaledje Koritnice
16 Vrtiglavica	643	643	Kaninski podi
17 Brezno Hudi Vršič	620	737	Rombonski podi
18 Primadona	597	2 605	zaledje Tolminke

*as of November 2006

Notes

3 - includes M16, Kavkna jama (M2) and Jama strgane srajce (Torn T-shirt cave)

4 - includes Mala Boka and BC4

6 - includes also J4 (6052)

7 - includes Zadnikovo brezno and Ledena devica

Useful Slovene Vocabulary

brda - hills

brezno, brezen - shaft

čelada - helmet

desonder - descender

dolina, doline - valley

dvorana - chamber

"fraj štrik" - rope free

gora - mountain

gozd - forest

grapa - gorge

jama, jame - cave

kamen - stone

karabin/vponka - karabiner

kotlina - basin

kras - karst

mala - small

na pomoč - help!

obronki - hillsides

planina - mountain pasture

planota - plateau

podj - high plateau

podolje - lowlands

pogorje - mountains

polje - polje

ponikve - sinkhole

ponor - sinkhole

popkovina - cowstail

ravnik - plain

reka - river

sistem - cave system

skala - rock, cliff

slap - waterfall

šotor - tent

spalna vreča - sleeping bag

velika - big

vhodi - entrance

vrv/ štrik - rope

žimar - jammer