

①

OUCC EXPEDITION to PICOS DE EUROPA,  
NORTHERN SPAIN

8th JULY - 21st AUGUST 1979

MEMBERS

OUCC	Martin Lavery	- Leader (!?) (until 30 July).
	Simon Rowler	the whole bloody time
	Mark Godden	"
	Dave Thwaites	"
	Pete Ireland	(until 30 July).
	John Singleton	TWIST
	Graham Naglor	(Until 27th July)
	Mike Busheer	TWIST Announcing!
	Stephan Green	(until 23rd July) Interpreter
	Colin Nicholls	(From 25th July) Tactician
	Jim Sheppard	(From 25th July) Deputy leader Until 14th August

Others

Kevin Senior	} Southampton UCC. (until 30 July).
Kathy Young	
Ian Dumbekton	
Liz Lloyd-Jones (I.C.U., S.B.U., Royal Victoria Hospital)	(until 26th July) <sup>Bournemouth</sup>
Alan Cousins (OUCC)	(until 13th August)
Shank (Mike Clarke)	} W&MSEC
Shippy (Chris Ankoru)	

(\* Intensive Care Unit, Surgical Back-up Unit)

+ appearances by a newish Escort, a middle aged VW and  
an elderly Land Rover!

~~8th~~ 7th - 10th July

The group started to meet on Saturday at 2:00 pm. Once Gorg had finally beaten Turner (5:00 pm) the 3rd person arrived and parking commenced and continued for the rest of the afternoon, with much loading and unloading. Finally, with the VW loaded down to its spring steps we retired to Nag's Head for food, then to the Chequers for quite a few beers and then on to Gate of India for a celebratory curry send off, which we still 'felt' the following morning.

On Sunday the Land Rover turned up bearing Shank and Shippy at about lunchtime. The rest of the luggage was loaded up and we set off separately. The VW stopped at Bath to pick up Mr. Simon, Ker and Kathy, plus half a ton of kit. After a zigzag route across the Mendips we joined the M4 and headed to Plymouth.

At Plymouth, once the LTR had arrived (after spinning the wheel; remaining on after leaving M4), we visited the various hostels about town, finding it too late to search for any decent area to sleep in. Most of us curled up in awkward positions in the various vehicles awaiting the early morning sailing. The men and women living in six (I've never found this place for, says Colin) found a nearby I and II, and consequently nearly missed the boat the Monday morning.

The crossing was smooth and safe, no waves

185

of mal de mer. In fact a few layers produces a sort of rolling that cancels out the steep motion anyway.

On Tuesday, we arrived in Spain at last, and were actually so early that ~~the~~ the Customs were had not arrived by the time the boat docked. Ian, Liz and Al were dispatched to the station in Santander. The next few days in company toward Cangas along the Oviedo road. At St. Vicente we stopped for our last lunch (no lunch on sailing esp.) and a bit of shopping.

Arrived at campsite next to Lago de la Erina  $\approx$  6.00pm, where we met Stephan.

### Wednesday 11th July

Osu - Skippy, Ian, John, Graham, Simon, Kevin ~~to~~ went down Osu, the surveying of which was to be our first project.

Entered Osu and followed ~~the~~ the survey points to a 15' pitch, which was rigged (5m below, 12' below). Big pitch came soon after - various holes in the floor drop into shaft as well. A bolt was placed at the second attempt & ~~a~~ a large very secure looking jughandle was used as a backup belay. Ken was sent down first - amazingly the bolt held! A rather loose boulder chock ~~then~~ bypasses a large drop down to the 'streamway'. Upstream goes nowhere - but it was virgin! Downstream a large rift-like passage goes on to a T-junction. Before this was reached I noticed an inlet and Skippy & I climbed up it. After several climbs & crawls (one past another inlet) we entered the bottom of a 30' shaft. Skippy climbed 10' up a rather

contains water  
men

Sketch survey of inlet ~~at~~ C. de Osh.



← does this mean anything to anybody? (except Simon)

Very probably not  
 (note the lack of a mirror!)

← Simon filling wine glass using log as a funnel.

Dave, Al, Stephen and Mike practiced SRT down Potho Las Nieves ( $\approx 50'$ , 5hr). The rest went shopping or mended wet-suits etc.

The high point of the day and following night was the continuous heavy rain  $\approx 3''$ , we think, and the mist. Al dug yards and yards of drainage channel.

Thursday 12th July

0800 - Skank, Skippy, Sean, John, Graham, Dave, Al.

loose wall to a narrow <sup>vertical</sup> slot about 6' x 6". One side of the slot ~~is~~ moved when touched. At this point some footholds gave way & Skippy descended very rapidly, joining the heap of debris on the shaft floor. Gravelly he ascended again! ~~The~~ A couple of blows ~~is~~ on the slot wall resulted in it whopping into the slot — a few seconds later there was a loud crash, immediately followed by some ~~not~~ <sup>unconventional</sup> words of astonishment from us. We estimated the depth as about 50/60'.

We met the others at the streamway. They had explored <sup>upstream</sup> up and downstream to the T-junction to a variety of sumps, chambers etc. Skippy, Skank & I then went downstream & found an inlet. While I sat bouncing on the pebbly floor Skippy went through a tight wet squeeze & Skank climbed up ~~to~~ and found a chamber + some stal.

Soon after this we went out — aiming to return the next day to push our two virgin inlets.

Simon →

12th July - Osu.      Surveyors: Dave, John, Graham  
 'Pushers': Skank, Skippy, Simon

Only a brief note really needed. One party started surveying — off to pitch. By this time ~~we~~ S, S & S had lugged gear up the inlet & started rigging. All was halted when we heard the surveyors on the pitch — who were suitably confounded with our cries of "where are we?". Sifttrips were taken and tackle was dropped down from our windows. ~~The other inlet found a stal~~ Then we got the hell out of there, emerging finally at 8.45 pm to riot & run —

Friday's Menu ↑

CHIVERS RESTAURANT



— Hugm  
Caver

MENU:-

Starters

- ~~Sea on the cots~~ ✓
- ~~Adwicards pear~~ ✓
- ~~paté & toast~~ ✓
- ~~French vegetable~~ ✓

MAIN MEALS

- ~~chilli con carne~~ ✓
- ~~Roast beef & ale~~ ✓
- ~~Pattaturoe~~ ✓
- ~~Duck a la Orange~~ ✓

SWEETS

- ~~Ice cream~~ ✓
- ~~Black cherry~~ ✓
- ~~Suprae~~ ✓
- ~~Banana split~~ ✓

~~Coffee cheese & biscuit~~ ✓

HOUSE WINE AVAILABLE AT BAR

NEVER MIND!

KATHY \$ LIZZIE

INVITE

YOU TO TRY OUR  
DELICIOUS MEAL

Bring a bottle.

If you want pay please wash up.



— fat caver

after our meal!

note web suit

bursing at the

Seamus!

Martin, Stephen and Mike played about in the nearby mine workings, more SRT practice  
Mark, Pete, Ian, Kevin, Liz, Kathy. We decided to investigate the nearest valley, ~~which~~ (to East of campsite) which contains a very promising line of shotholes in the floor, and several obvious entrances in the valley walls - these all turned out to be blind. Three or four possible entrances were found. The best was a shaft in a shothole we estimated at 20-30 m deep. We decided to return for the descent tomorrow.  
P.S. I found the entrance to *Pessimista loma* on this trip. Ker.

### Friday 13th July

Ian, Kevin, Pete, Mark. We returned to our shothole in order to descend. It was a fairly large pot, approx 38 m deep with a bald pile at the bottom. A narrow downwards-sloping rift at one end <sup>of the floor</sup> was found, but it was too tight and unstable to risk joining a descent. While Ian, Mark and Kevin descended this shaft, Pete went off to find the shepherd. He was shown a very obvious deep shaft, which we had somehow missed the previous day. We bolted it up, and Mark <sup>(ie me)</sup> volunteered to descend first. I decided to come up after descending 20', because of a crow below. I made a b. awful changeover, and less Kevin descended - and regretted it. No trouble with the bird, but the pot was full of shit, and didn't go anyway.



8  
purses, photographs, binoculars etc

1st surveying party + Mike?

Osu - Skunk, Skippy, Simon, Al, Dave, Graham, John, Stephen  
Mike, Martin.

Dave, Graham & John continued surveying from pt pitch (re-measured & found to be 30 m, not 28.3 m). Discovered D5 cave? (Other entrance)

Skunk, Skippy, Simon & Al took 2 pieces of pitch under the severest conditions of flashlight failure, monumental drip-onto-camera rate etc. Simon & Al then took pieces in the inlet with some help? from Mike. Skunk & Skippy went on to push various bits. Al found a spider! Simon & Al pushed on and explored Skunk's chamber. This formed a closed circuit with Skippy's little chamber - the water came from another tiny chamber which it entered by a tiny hole.

Simon & Al then decided to investigate the final sump - which proved to be a long way! We passed under the 2nd surveying grasp and Skunk & Skippy (without me realising it!). Eventually got to a sump, with an obvious bypass under a chamber or it. Streamway went on and on frequently changed character remarkably. Some cascades were reached with wires rigged. These were very wet & quite spitting. My "dry" kit got totally soaked on the last one. Finally got to sump & Al went for a swim, declaring it rather cold. No immediately obvious bypasses. Plenty of inlets were passed, and much surveying to do. Met Skippy & Skunk at 1st sump & left them to bottom the lake - unfortunately for them an exploding carbide etc prevented this.

Found some Pronotellus sp on way back. ~~Back~~ Boulder in chert had moved providing some hectic moments. Mike had some antics on pitch providing a few more slightly less hectic moments (for us, not him!?). Sedate exit to a superb sunset got S, S, S & Al back to camp by ~~about~~ about 10.15, with mist just engulfing the tents, cars, Fortering Injeks, grassy ~~Delagets~~, Wags etc.

Sat. July 14<sup>th</sup>

In Search of the Fabled Resurgence. ~~at Hoyo de la Madre~~  
E2 HOYO LA MADRE

After putting away all the gear everyone else had left strewn around the camp, Simon, Pete, Ian and myself (Kev) set off with full packs toward the R. Casario. A large resurgence had been reported on the last expedition with rather a vague description of its location.

We took a rather difficult route to the northern end of the moraine near Belbin. We walked to the north and looked over a vertical drop. There was a sound of a large waterfall way down in the valley. It was not possible to be sure this was the resurgence, or a feature of the main river.

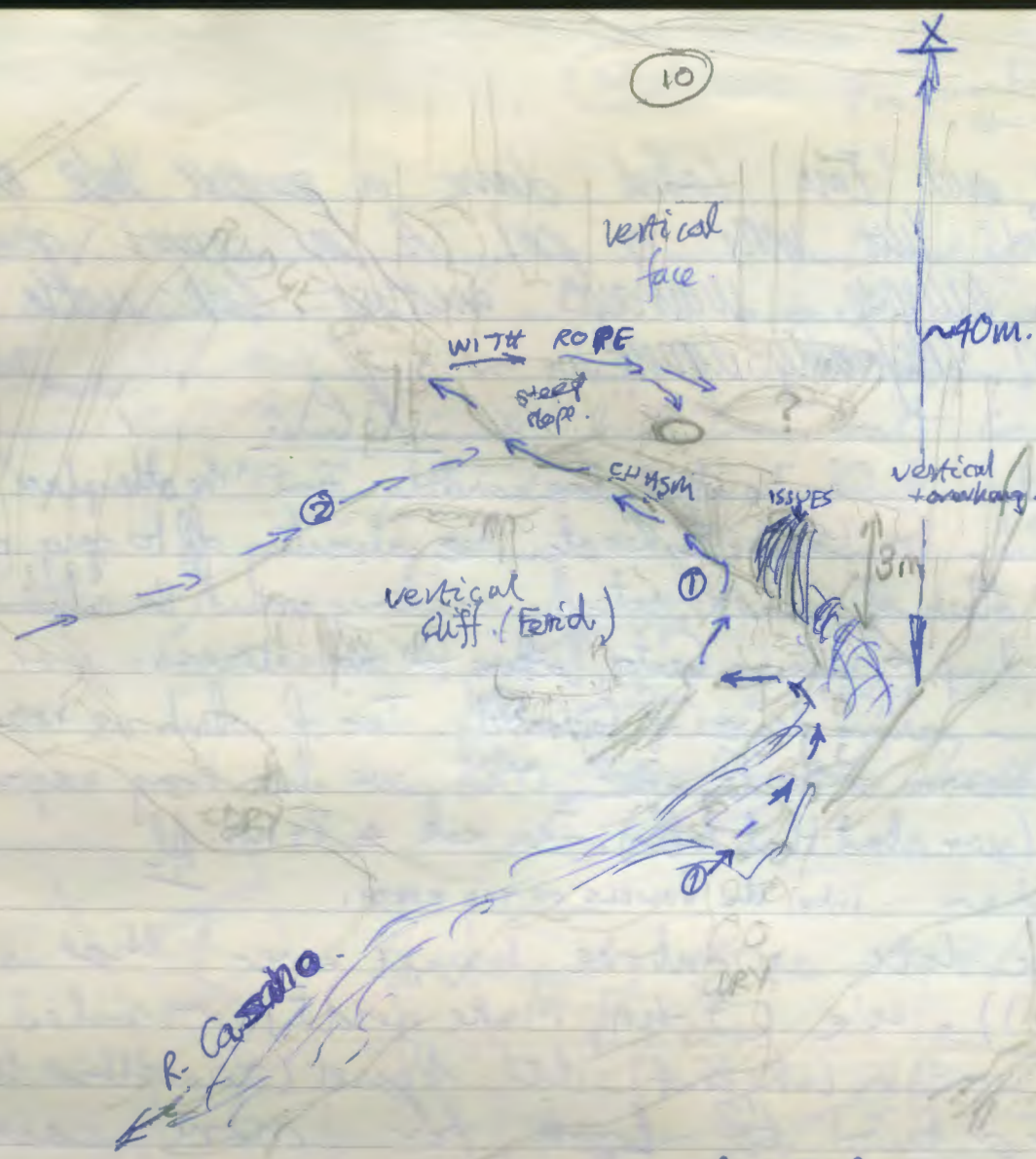
The packs were left at the top because of the obviously difficult descent. Eventually Simon & I climbed all the way to the valley bottom, ~ 300 m, and found that the river was being totally supplied from a waterfall which issued from a side ~ 50 m up the right hand wall of a steep gorge. See sketch. Other sides were seen further up but access to these was clearly pure vertical difficult & possibly acrobatic.

Above the vertical face from X upwards, there is ~ 50 m of very steeply sloping grass to another ridge. It was not clear if this was the top.

more  
 left  
 m.  
 in  
 the  
 es  
 8  
 I

10

Easy Route  
 To Belbin??  
 R. Casana



Possible Routes up. ①. ②.

It may be best to follow the valley down from near Belbin, ~~then~~ get to the resurgence. <sup>(see later notes)</sup> The problem of getting to the two visible holes remains.

Siman and I climbed back up - knackered as completely. Pete & Ian had wandered off to look at a festering sheep shelter.

We looked at the small sink at Belbin. Siman got in it & reckons it will go with some digging. Rather tight. Should trace water to the resurgence.