

without back-up with bowls round pieces of glass.

Many of the pitches are quite wet: by the end we were all soaked through. In a fine fossil section, ~~so~~ Ian felt stirring and using a handily available plastic bag excreted 2 gallons of liquid ~~water~~ through his anus.

A little further on I destroyed my generator trying to stuff carbide into it with only $\frac{1}{2}$ a dozenall ~~DD~~ + Ian's bowel problem we + Sarah turned round.

Our exit was long, for me quite dark except at re-belays when I flicked the light on, and arduous, but exhilarating none the less; and ~~see~~ by the time one found the belay one was above it, generally ^{better} ~~good~~ for peace of mind.

Ian was out first at 4-30; I joined him half an hour later + changed, keeping warm by copying to imaginary James Brown. By 7am we were all out of the doline, and soon met Victorio on the path. He had come

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to look for us, which I found
very touching. Well done SIE. ~~They~~ had
rigging but a superb cave unlike any
other I have seen in the Pies.
And as promised. pas des étroitures!
(It was Sarah's 10th caving trip. To c. 800m.)

Well, as Fred said, the SIE would have thought we were
wimps if none of us made it to the bottom. So when it became
evident that the destruction of Ian's bowels and Dave's light
would halt their progress in the cave, Fred and I (Ukey) made
our way down. The streamway became increasingly beautiful:
deep clear wide pools alternated with spectacularly wet pitches
rigged on a fascinating variety of clothesline, broom, a catgut etc.
The SIE obviously take caving ethics to their logical extreme - to
the point, in one case, of disdaining actually to attach the rope to
anything at the pitchhead. Such purity of vision! The rope from the
previous pitch was simply ~~washed~~ wound round a projection on the
far side of the chamber and trailed over the edge of the pitch;
when it unwound itself in mid-abseil Fred fell six foot resoundingly
to a wet pool full of rocky spikes. Fred in his shortsightedness
wasn't very happy about this, but I ~~wasn't~~ was granted a
beatific vision of the future of lightweight speleology stretching
out before me.

After some deep wading in large round chambers and traversing around those white formations in the river, we reached the SIEFON. White walls reach down through clear water; it looks like an underwater pitch leading to further unguessable cave... Fred & I, although normally quite sane, understood the urge to go cave diving as we sat silently and looked down.

The way out was enlivened by Fred exploding a carlidge dump into his face ("Ah! Classique!" said Victoria when we told him) and by Fred and I both falling in the water and getting totally soaked when climbing around a bit of cave we needn't have been in in the first place. We were cold and a bit disgruntled by the time we caught up with the others at the bottom of the long pousse out, but agreed that the sight of the SIEFON had been worth risking our necks on Catalonian rigging for!

88

11/11

Monday

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Small Suits Comments. (D. Hurstley)

Problems. Breast pocket stitching wears ^{through} quickly as pocket folds off. Poppers break easily (the head snaps off). I (Dave H.) have lost two poppers. Hood - good design but could be either bigger or more stretchy.

Advantages: V. hand wearing - they have stood up very well to many hard trips down 1215.

Dave C - By far the best suit I've had - after 7 serious trips it has only 2 small holes in the knees. It is much better (seams esp) than the Troll I had 2 yrs ago; and compared to last yr's Petal, magnificent - that was virtually unusable after 3 trips + required hrs + hrs of mending.

Velcro is too narrow and loses its stickiness. Hood too small.

Jan H. I have the ^(3 years) old design of suit, which has the old ex-house seams. The seams are superior to the new ones, since they only fall apart when abraded right through (this has taken 3 years of very hard caring to wear out). The points where my ^{suits} finally went were the

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forearm seams, and a knee seam (This will obviously be affected by one's carving style). The new suits definitely fail prematurely at the breast pocket seam, but also show evidence of being less ~~rob~~ long lasting in the other seams such as the leg seam. Some suits have split rib on the seam directly, but along the line formed by the seam backing material, presumably due to the different stiffnesses of the seam and neighbouring material.

All in all, the new Troll suit is still better than the Petzl, but now only marginally. 16 The new suit does not have the outstanding performance that the old suit had, that lead me to recommend it to my carving colleagues, but is still v. good. Other points: The front seam needs poppers all the way down (why were they omitted?) and thicker velcro. The suits also do not fit some of the tall, thin people well, apparently. The hood needs re-designing. 16 is too restrictive.

After 3 years, my suit has about 15 pispich style holes, 3 1" bears in the LH knee, a 3" split in the RH knee seam, and has required re-reinforcing patching on the forearm seams and one underarm seam.

12/8/84

Ian H. (Solo)
(Almost)

12/5

The day of the abortive detackle: My intention was to follow Phil^{Phil D, + B} ^{to help} with the deep detackle, after they had completed the survey. En route, I was to take notes of the rigs on all the pitches. There was no perma-^{brace} left, so I had to use bits of paper, which became increasingly difficult to write on, particularly after I dropped the plastic bag containing them down a pitch into a pool of water. At Gesellschacht I abseiled into a mid air knot - rather to my surprise, as the pitch is a complete free-hand. The rope ^{sheath} had broken at the site of a rub on the earlier rig! Spent a little time getting wet, and getting prussikers out of bags.

At Grand Mal, I met Phil Durcan, who gave me the bad news that the compass was totally fogged. Indeed it was: not even the sighting wire was visible. Something akin to staring at tissue paper.

I obtained the perma-^{brace} from Phil^D and copied out my notes, discovering that the information for the previous 7 pitches had become unreadable. Continuing on, I met Phil S and led byn at the Heath. A brief chat, and I continued on, deciding to take a calculated risk to see the Xitu and finish my notes.

Soloing out was slow and rather lonely. My glasses kept steaming up, which was very annoying when I was trying to examine the rigs on ^{the} pitches for which the information had been lost. No further mishaps, and I exited at about

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4:00 am. At camp, rather to my surprise, I met ledger, who had been left behind by Phil & is the upper streamway, had had great difficulty route finding, and ^{had} eventually got to camp only $\frac{3}{4}$ an hour before me.

17/8/84

The Great Detackle

Tail: Bowels now ~~have~~ changed from full on to full off. I don't know what my body is doing, but I prefer this version of it. At least I can now form wave 1 in safety, so I thought
 Ita Ita.

Wave 1 (me) got up at 0600 and was down 12/5 at 0800. Everything was planned: I would attempt to speed the detackling by getting as much done early in the morning as I could and Phil S. (Wave 2) would follow a couple of hours later.

Unfortunately, my now rather well-known desire to re-do rigs that I don't like got the better of me, ^{so} and I pulled up the rope at Gesellschacht (knotted at the nub) and cut it, retying the knot with a nice, safe, long tail. I then abseiled down, changed over ^{to} past the knot, changed ~~to~~ back to abseil, and --- abseiled off the end of the rope.

I landed in a 2 foot deep pool, 15 feet down, completely unhurt, my impact completely cushioned by the water as I landed in abseiling position with no time for thoughts (such as WHERE? WHAT? or having even a very small part of my life flash unpleasantly before my eyes) The rope was clearly out of reach, I observed, ^{and instinctively} wetly lighting my carbide light (~~mistakenly~~).

To be continued.

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S.I.E. del C.E.A.

Viladomat, 152

080015 BARCELONA

tel. 2544056

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19 August 1984

I (Philp) walk up from Lagos with a light pack + collapse at Aris. Various others discuss heroic carries and detaching trays and I moan gently as a means of putting my point of view. 3 hours later I wake up to a deserted campsite - still totally knocked, however, after discovering the restorative effects of bread dipped in strawberry soup (very hot in the stove tent) and driven by a raging thirst, I decide that this is a good time to test out the Sargent Groundwalking Rig. A quick check reveals that no bits have been stolen by Asturian Bandits so I set off: Hmm - surprisingly comfortable system given the general deplorable state of my component wanky ankles, sore feet, dodgy knees etc. Recommended for short distances only, with no

tackle bags - with this system these should be hauled (by other people). Nothing drastically wrong with any particular part but the system is definitely not as efficient as it should be, I'll try oiling the cams and soaking everything in a strong ~~coffee~~ caffeine solution...

Lates: Shit! I've slept for another 2 hours - what is wrong with me?! Sun now behind clouds so my brains are boiling a little less furiously; better go & help ^{desira &} ~~heave~~ tackle: Cistra -> Arico Camp. Phujs 17-25

Shit Aloys! Having fettled gear etc (untouched since El Deriggo Grande) it is now 1800 - too late to be really useful to go underground. For the Good of the Expedition I will forgo my opportunity to have a look at the Cistra pettles and put my knackered limbs to better use moving gear on the surface. Ow. Angz.

19-20. No sign of SB, SR, IH or DR at Cistra - or of tackle bags. Met Jan on return & since conditions are perfect, am now going to Top Camp to bring a load down to Arico this evening. ETA at Arico ~ 22:30.

Jan
19:30 - No sign of anyone at Cistra so am taking gear to Lagos. Back early morning to ferry gear from cave
Wine in food tent. JM

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Got back from Top Camp at 22-31, bit heavy getting back in the dark but fairly clear and skyline always visible. No sign of Ukey & Chris up there, but Testyn's rucksack + bag were in the stove tent (the only one still there). Brought a load down. Rather surprised not to find anyone back yet at Aris so began to prepare a meal. Tried to find logbook + failed - eventually found it 20 mins later when I tripped over it going for a pee, had been left on open ground - no doubt clearly visible in daylight.

20 AUGUST 1984 P.M. Sargant 10-55

Steve R, Dave H & Jan emerged at about 23-30 having brought all the bags out of Cista. No sign of Jan & Steve G's photo/survey trip except for some distant noise: they got back some four or five hours later.

Steve R. & Jan now gone to Lagos carrying personal gear, Steve G, Dave R & Jan have gone to finish dismantling Top Camp & to try & find out what happened to Testyn, Chris + Ukey. I am taking 55 mins for the round trip to Cista + back (carrying 2 little bags + a few shags etc) and my knees are killing me. Will do washing up to recover & then get on with it again.

15-45 Dave our bit for international relations by giving tea to 4 germans who had come up from Lagos to find the Refugio skat. Better get on with things I suppose. Dave H. came up & helped get some bags out of the entrance - I will do one more carry then take my gear down to Lagos & then do ~~over~~ 2 or 3 hours dye detector collecting.

Arrival of Testyn & Chris on 17-28, Chris absolutely knocked.

Gesellschaft