

1985

BASE

LOG

# Base Camp Log 1985

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THE BACK IS FULL OF  
USEFUL INFO

MAPS  
MEDICAL  
FIRST AID  
PERMITS  
HOME ADDRESSES.

READ IT!  
NO!!

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

The expedition dinner should  
be held in Casse crôte - the cheap  
part of the Sorbonne in the High Street  
as they do a fantastic dinner (13x  
as good as Middle Brass.) for the same  
price! (2/2 each) P.L.R.

↑ if this is £12. I think it  
is too much (alcohol on top to  
pay for, remember) but

↑  
what's wrong with a slap up curry  
at £6 a head. Sausage??

9/7/85

The first day. The Tife looked in the  
 van springs and it was not good. Lo! the tent  
 arose like giant unpleasant mushrooms in the land  
 David huge Andy Eason its frame, as promised, had  
 a very nice non-fitting frame of fractal geometry. The chosen  
 you look, the more bits there are, none of them of  
 the right type. Too many lesbian bits, not enough short  
 bisexuals. Use of hachewas found a remedy. Park  
 hangs debates of our credentials, Richard + Jane + Steve +  
 descent to seek out the Real of LONA set as  
 success in finding the promised Laguna Yotto Club.  
 Now gone again, to Lanes to push Colicumbra.  
 Wants improving. A good beginning. My hangover  
 has gone.

Geoff. "I like it dangling around my ankles" Hogan.  
 William "We've got to walk a long way before we get onto these maps" Stead.  
 Steve "If the injection system fucks you up, you're bugged" Roberts  
 Lo William "Now is this a passive use of the word?" Stead  
 (before Exp. but referring to BMR 641N)  
 Paul "I haven't got any hips" Brennan.

At about 9pm the cloud lifted: first the tops  
 (unbelievably high) and then, gradually, the whole range  
 revealed. Vibes great. Singleton + Lesley here but  
 no potting gear. YEAMH!! WATCOO!! JULYAYU  
 85 HA ~~was~~ EMPREZADO!! Y MUCHO VINO!!

Bill "I like eating real chocolate" Stead  
 Bill "I have a reputation for eating <sup>Spanish cooking</sup> used chocolate" Stead  
 Martin "It's getting smaller all the time" May.  
 Paul "if you had a piece of string you could wear it as trousers" Brennan

Phil "You can have a lot of fun with a sleeping bag" Duncan.

Sean "What does Vd stand for?" Hodges

Wed am

Richard, Sarah & Steve Rogers have gone to Culicentro with the intention of pushing the climbs. Nicola & Phil Duncan have gone to place Dye Detectors at ~~Hoya to Madra~~ <sup>Rio Dobra</sup> in the Vca + buy odds & ends. Everyone else has gone on a mega carry to Ario with some people phoning on two! The cows are as bad as ever but the early start took me aback. First people were off by 9am!!! Told by Phil R. to read barometer or max & min thermometers without telling me where they were. Great! By the time I'd realised <sup>2 min</sup> he was halfway to Ario. Thus observations will be only qualitative. Boiling hot already at 10am. Good to be back though. W.

Wot Sean + Fred took to top camp.

1 Vango Mk. II

Top camplog

Rain ~~gauge~~ gauge + Cylinder

4 Pt Billic

First Aid Box

Coleman Stove

Shaft bashing file.

Paint + Brush

30m Rope.

Wed 10-17-85 am: Introductory Carry up to Ario: Sean, <sup>Coiff</sup> Martin, Dave R, Sae, Fred, David, Paul, Gerhard / SGR, Phil R. (Also: John S & Leslie)  
3 waves, each ~~sheep~~ carrying a very modestly heavy rucksack. Paul said it was nothing like Yorkshire but changed his mind after Sed 2. Steve R ran all the way up and caught up with the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave, who had spent some time installing a rain gauge above Sed 3. Had an awed, respectful glance at Kira entrance from the path. - John confused the Ario warden thoroughly by announcing that 8 people were to stay there in the bunk. -

Rules of thumb for novice mountain-walkers:

- Use: - Walk in a steady rhythm. Breathe deeply and regularly. If you need more than one breath per step (i.e. more than "left-in-right-out"), you're going too fast.
- Straighten your legs completely before lifting them. The muscles mustn't remain contracted.
  - On a slope, pick your steps such that each ~~gait~~ <sup>gait</sup> is about the same height.

Downs - Never step with all your weight onto a straight leg! You'll ruin your knees. Always bend the legs and use them as shock absorbers. This does get into your muscles but, unlike the joints, they recover fast. 3  
G.N

Steve's notes for Wednesday/Thursday.

Dave R, Martin M + Geoff gone to do T.L.R.  
Dave will stay at Arico until bettered.  
Martin + Geoff to return to Arico after 1 day.

William + Phil R. to reg in 3/5.  
Phil R. to return for Friday to go to Oviada for permits. Will come back this night, Fri am endy.  
Bill will stay up if 3/5 going.

Steve R + Dave H gone to Arico to shaft - Jack  
in even 3/7. Will return this night  
or Fri am.

Fred + Sean gone to Top Camp to set it  
up, (see left) will return Thurs  
am.

(Sue + Paul will do test on the 'cave route')  
in Thurs.

Paul to Arico tomorrow, shaft lucky with?

All others will be around tonight. When Fred returns tomorrow, it will be possible that Top Camp will need to be set up, and Fred gone set up. Several people should carry direct to Top Camp and return here. Sue + Paul to go to Arico anyway to carry on with T.L. Graydon with Dave on Friday. Don't leave bags unattended. Fred + Sean should eat something out.  
Still need Fred + Sean carriers to Arico

If the warden comes back + asks about the Camping Permit, Richard was looking for the Director of ICONA (Coronado) in Caracas but could not, despite much effort, find him. Phil R will go to Oviada on FRIDAY to sort matters out

What Dave Stone et al have taken to Avizo,  
 Ford, Big Billy, Washing Bowl, Tent.  
 Mum Ford & Larry gear needed.

Sean

Hodges

In case Phil R. doesn't get back in time, the address <sup>of the person to see about</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>permission is:</sup>

Don Javier de Sebastian

Director del Parque Nacional de Covadonga

Inspección del ICONA

C/ Arquitecto

Requera.

Wed 10-7-85 pm Dave M & Gerhard N went to Hoya La Madre and placed  
 4 dye detectors below the resurgence. -  $1\frac{3}{4}$  hours ~~to get~~ there,  
 1 hour messing around,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  hours back - perfectly knackered. Leslog's  
 Chicken à la Vegetables built us up again (more or less). G.M.

P.S. Couldn't measure the altitudes since the altimeter had gone off to Dobra -  
 P.P.S. Long trousers are essential for the nettles-and-thistles gorge. Gloves are recommended  
 since not all the handholds consist of grass alone. Take a full waterbottle with you.

(string)

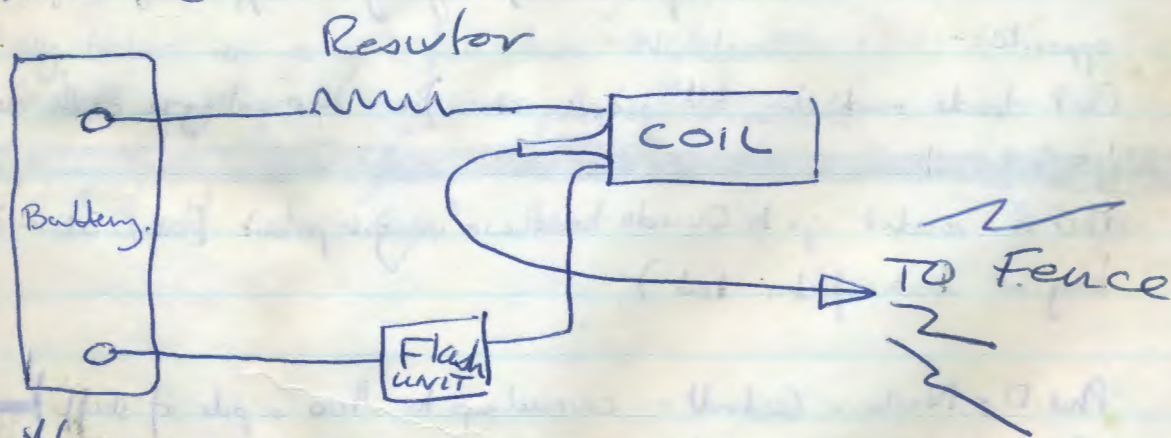
William "Stream of ~~Consciousness~~ Consciousness" Stead

Paul "I'm not a cheese person" Brennan

"Paul" "That's not the way I like to do it / Keep fit" Brennan

Thu 1-7-85

last night, a cow got into the kitchen tent due to the broken zip in the entrance. luckily it didn't do much damage, but made a fearful row as it burst out amongst the flying <sup>metal</sup> crockery <sup>at 3-30am</sup>. It sicked up the pan cleaner later which it must have eaten during its visit. A simple and obvious solution to the cow problem would be to construct a simple electric fence from an ignition coil and flasher unit as in the following diagram:



Battery  
 (possibly the van battery used only at night, charged during the day)

The bits could be got from a scrap-yard or crashed vehicle. The

resistor is chosen to ~~to~~ prolong battery life and prevent ~~electrocution~~ electrocution to the cows which would be a bit embarrassing.

P. D.

~~Thu~~ Thu 11-7-85, 12<sup>05</sup> noon: Hurrah, we've got the camping permits!! And guess what, the Nat. Park wardens actually brought them up to our tents! Aren't they nice?!  
g.v.

### Thursday / Friday Plans:-

Sue and Paul - T. L. H. on Friday meet Dave R up at Arrio

Sean - look after Los Lagos Friday (or Fred - sort it out between you)

Phil D + Nicole Carry to ~~Top Camp~~ <sup>Arrio</sup> Thursday <sup>pm</sup> Return Base Camp <sup>late</sup> pm

~~Friday:- Personal gear to Top Camp with intention of leaving~~  
Carry canvas kibble to Top Camp from Arrio Friday

Carries needed to Top Camp, assuming it's going - stuff brought up so far as that opposite:-

Can't decide much else till people return from la mortogria with news of les holes etc..

Phil R needn't go to Ouedo cos we've got permit (in SGR's black bag at back of his tent).

Phil D & Nicole & Geholdt - carried up to Arrio a pile of stuff ~~from~~ for Top Camp (see opposite) - didn't leave till late Thursday cos no news till late, have returned to Base Camp (to dump stuff) at Arrio. A.n to leave Los Lagos 6.00 am tomorrow (Friday) taking our own gear to Arrio. Changeover at Arrio & take canvas rigging gear up. When it gets cooler again, back down to Arrio to pick up our own gear, then off to Top Camp again to stay.

Richard, Sean, Steve Stuff leaving Friday Top Camp.



Wol PD + Nicola took to Top Camp:-

*one small*

Carbide (1 BDN container full) ✓

Phil's Tent has petrol stove ✓ tea bags, pepper, odds & socks, salt, marmalade, batteries, rice etc.

Couple of loaves of bread, a few tomatoes & just enough for anyone gets stuck up there.

Slings (assorted) ✓

Washing up bowl, ~~frigate~~ cutlery, ~~plates~~ etc. - couple rolls bog roll ✓ tea towels ✓

#2 Tackle bags ✓

Couple of ladders.. 2 25 ft ones ✓

#3 wire belays ✓

#4 rope protectors ✓ Mions.

2 45 ft ropes ✓

1 35 ft rope.

Awning ✓

Couple of spreaders ✓

Water carrier ✓

Petrol.

- Key Nicola - have you discovered a new sub-atomic particle?

*Someone said this before me  
It's not my quote!  
N.D.*

Nicola "This is an Expedition, not a holiday!" Dollimore

Gerhard "My trousers are going to fall down" Nicklasch

John "Gerhard is going on the green plate" Singleton

William "I should do 'Yoga' Stead

Thurs p.m.

Sue placed dye detectors in the top of the Rio La Beyera (near Vega la Cueva) and in the resurgence of the Rio Pompeni but didn't make it to the junction between the Pompeni and the Pelabarda because the gorge is very precipitous with no paths and also full of gorse, long grass concealing holes, bare rock, nettles + other nasties. Gave up after 1½ hours<sup>of this</sup> and made my way back. Fantastic views though. *SK*

## CULIEMBRO SARA.

Sara, Steve Mayer & I (R. Greyson) drove round to Culiebro the gorge. Wonderful view of the Naranjo de Bulnes on the way, before we ate a late but well-received meal at El Bar del Emigrante. Slept in tent under the milky way and actually made an early start - flogging up the path to reach Cueva del Culiebro at around midday, where we didn't have any lunch.

Next move - Steve put detectors in the resurgence whilst S & I put others upstream in the Caves, of which more in section re location of dye detectors.

Ultimately, the time came to go caving, and in the tropical heat put on our thick fannies, lit our lamps and so on.

And so to the cave:

### Description of Cave

The easy entrance led to some pipes left by the Swiss - why? The answer was just ahead a duck with only 1½" of air space, but short, as Sara's reckless free dive proved.

Beyond this the cave progressed beautifully, with splendid Swiss fixed-aids (a wire targon and a fairly useless beam).

It you pointed out to Wordsworth that they might have been narcissi he'd have said you would have missed the point. Try not to be so pompous.

Do you mean a white opaque mineral? Try not to be so dogmatic. (It's probably to a huge descending calcite).

Some ups & downs lead to a huge descending calcite passage with a hole in the floor, from which issues the distant roar of the (1) main Culicumbro stream.

Crossing this hole the far wall has two climbs up, and the right, easier one, leads upwards and upwards on good futed holds until the passage eases once more to the horizontal.

This is good going now - a circular passage ~~with~~ of clean rock with AI quartz veins; the passage begins to descend again and leads to a hole in the floor over which you traverse ~~on~~ using a prominent flake to stand on. After this, drip down to a pool and you have a choice - wade through the crystal pool or climb up left to by pass it. We did the latter.

Now you can hear the roar of the stream again, and you soon meet it, descending a circular tube of some 10 foot diameter to the streamway which flows left to right and, inexplicably, away from you to a sumup. It's here we left the second dye-detector, and, we felt, the most distant point reached by OVEE.

The way on is a slippery climb up a slope on the (2) to the continuation of the 10 foot circular tube which brings you to a massive & still pool - one of those where the water's so clear you can't decide where the waterfall is.

The Swiss have rigged a strenuous wire to haul yourself around the Right wall and you begin to climb up a long calcite slope with a difficult move @ one point.

At the top, a piece of string fell out of an arbor, and proved that there was a way over. Steve boldly climbed up this, and rigged a ladder for those who believe in gravity.

The top of this area breaks out into the largest.

passage yet in culiebora - leading off (B) & (C). We went (E) and climbed still higher to a ladder pitch which we rigged, using the only hanger we remembered to bring, from the Swiss bolt (poxy). Straight away an SRT pitch followed, which the Swiss had bolted. But how to descend it? The only rope we had left was a climbing rope, and no hangers so we rigged up an expedition classic - a main hang from a clove-kitch around the bolt-driver (screwed into the Swiss anchor) and backed up to two fragile-looking stalagmites.

It was worth it because the foot of the pitch led once more to the stream - for the third time we heard the roar of the Tifa & Cabeza Muxo resurgence water. The passage we were in was some way above, with connecting holes rather like Scylla & Charibdis in lanes. The Swiss had a wire traverse-line on one of them.

When we could eventually get down to the stream it was in a thin, juvenile passage not a yard wide, with only the top of the water visible - some 12 foot of passage must have been flooded.

The way on was an overhanging traverse over a pool - the hand-holds were good, but if you fell in the force of the water would surely have swept you down the plughole.

Beyond the pool was perhaps the best bit of culiebora. A boulder chock could be climbed until you got into the streamway, and then wide bridging <sup>or deep</sup> over white water gave a very exciting route up to the terminal sump. The sump chamber itself was another mind-boggler. It took quite a while before you realized that the climber