

1985  
TOP CAMP



Top Camp Log

1985.

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**MEDICAL INFO  
AND MAPS  
IN BACK OF BOOK**

10 <sup>TWT</sup> AM July.

20  
φ  
ops

Fred + Sean.

Got up here absolutely knackered.

Hardly any snow at all.

Had to go to the dam to get water, but there wasn't even any there. But I found some nearby.

Sean was as knackered as you would expect having done an

Arno carry in morning - for the 1st time ever followed by trip to the

Thurs <sup>11 AM</sup> ~~12 AM~~ July  
Dingbat

Set up met stations

Found F20 easily from the sketch in

shaft bashing folder. No trouble with snow.

Rigged 1st pitch, but the second one will be

re rigging. Shaft is as Andy describes

in shaft bashing. No snow problems.

Set it down.

Set at Ann Lagos - 5.15 got there

~8:20. Nicole, Phil D + Gerhard had

Set at D<sup>n</sup> 2 and 3. No sign of them.

I will head down to Arno to see if

they are there.

①

12<sup>th</sup> Pillockit  
13

Friday July Not a good day!

Me (P.D.) Nicola Gerhott set off from Logos having carried our topcamp gear as far as Amio and left it there. We set off at 6-20 AM after a hearty breakfast and arrived at Amio at  $\approx 8:45$  to the delight of our companions. Gerhott arrived  $3/4$  of an hour later and decided that topcamp for him was best left until later. Nicola and I set off. We had some route-finding problems and finally sighted topcamp at  $\approx 3$ , arrived there 3-30 pretty wiped out. Ate, slept, made some water from the nearby snow. Tried to cook at 7, but the stove ran out of petrol, bad karma. Returning to Amio forthwith, to get gear for F20 and camping stuff. Where is the water supposed to be here?

Will return tomorrow AM. Hasta la Vista P.D. Clint, Nicola, Gerhott

13<sup>th</sup>  
Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July

P.D., Nicola, Gerhott + Man-Mountain May arrived 11:30 AM. Gerhott + Man-Mountain returned to Los Logos, P.D. + N set up camp <sup>at</sup> the  $\uparrow$  in search of F20 - hopefully getting underway by about 3.

Adios Amieps!

P.S. If you do use water from the black bar line system please can you refill the bowls etc. with snow. So far no other system of getting water rigged.

Saturday

12th.

Right!!

(2)

8:45. Martin + SGR arrive, having  
left Lagos ~~at~~ ~ 5:15  
Sawnt off Paul (Cab Mirador, retiral hut)  
and took Geoff! (He had to pick up some stuff from  
Ario, but did not re-appear). Odd spots of rain  
on the way up from Vege Secca.  
Brought you some food + rope, knives, also  
rigging gear, etc. You have a good %age  
of the car food - don't eat it all at once!  
Good luck down PZO. We go back down to  
Ario now, I will return @ Sunday evening / Monday  
morning with kits to CAVE!

I found a pitch Hut's lined with rubble:  
David Keston comes to me,  
speaking words of wisdom:  
"Hang it free"

Geoff was ~~to~~ bring up anchors for Ario.  
If he doesn't take it, I'm sorry but you  
will have to pop down to Ario to fetch some.  
After much mega dragging and encouragement have  
managed to slog up here with tons of goodies for your  
enjoyment. I should feel a sense of enjoyment but am too  
knackered even to move from this spot as Steve throws  
it all into the tent Bye bye. Steve.

Richard Serra + Steve M arrived, full of goodies. Went  
to Ario.

⇒ Nicola + Phil - I have brought up a bottle of  
Brandy which you could buy off me @ 415 pts,  
so long as you use it for medicinal purposes only.  
Richard.

(5)

This is what I call a food tent! The only thing that could happen to disrupt our ecstasy would be the Rose brothers appearing, hell bent on eating it all leaving only Maillous and Carbide for breakfast. Thanks for the gear too. Suppose we'll have to go caving tomorrow then!

Having got over the sight of so much food, it is necessary to relate today's progress. It took us a long time to find F20, largely due to the enormous amounts of gear in our rucksacks making the terrain even more difficult than normal. Found it eventually (Nicola) and prepared to descend. The first pitch has been rigged by ~~them~~<sup>Seam</sup> and Fred. descended, rigged a ladder then spent a long time rigging a trowse line to get to the tree hang off a flake. This cave has a constant stream of meltwater passing through it. After I'd rigged the pitch we were both quite cold. I descended. To my disgust, the knot at the edge of the rope swung about 4 or 5 metres above where it ought to be. I came ~~out~~ back up and we decided to leave. I'll re-rig it tomorrow in a different style. Climbed up to the ridge. If you ever come out of F20 in the evening and it's still light,

go up to the ridge, (watch out for loose boulders and choss on the way) Its truly spectacular, I can't describe the view go and see it for yourself.

Seconded: - its a superb view - well worth the climb. Quite a sight.

P.S. The started writing is not because I'm justified; its cos its 10.41 pm, I've taken my lenses out & I can't see a thing. - I got justified later.

Sun 14

No eggs.

SO. The old "Brandy at top camp trick" eh? Ill get you for this Richard Gregson, you wait! At the moment though, topcamp seems to be the best place to be suffering from a hangover. Its a bit windy but we are above a thick carpet of cloud which stretches out to the horizon on all fronts, the upper levels of which is a couple of hundred feet above Anno which means thick mist both there and at base camp. Top camp is definitely the place to be! As all cavers know, the best cure for a hangover is to do a cave so that's what we'll do today, I believe there are <sup>some</sup> caves round here somewhere.

WATER

The snow field nearby is diminishing at an alarming rate. The water from the snow is full of bits and probably sheep, goat and Rebecca pee, so we ought to boil it before drinking.

(5)

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> Steve R + Paul

Steve and I sat in the mist at Ario watching people depart for their various activities this <sup>morning</sup>. Shaft baskers in area 9, Martin and Gerhard returned having been unable to locate area 9! ~~but~~ Anyway after a snack lunch the two of us blundered off into the mist with visibility at c. 25 m.

We wandered round on the hillside above the Vega Seca with Steve continually saying things like "I don't recognise this" or "I reckon we should be over there" and then pointing in a different direction each time. However in the midst of all this Steve finds a small puddle and ~~ann~~ announces that he now knows where we are. To <sup>cut</sup> a long story short I then follow Steve up the mountain in the mist whilst having no idea where we are going, and we arrive at the shaft Steve 'found' yesterday right next to the path. Steve kitted up and belayed the rope around the only suitable rock in the near vicinity. Unfortunately the rope now rests on some v. jagged rocks. Aha! rope protectors we both thought. This was followed by a furious search which comes up empty. After a short period of depression the magic word "Karrimat" appears in my thoughts and so I unstrap mine and drape this over the edge as a mega-rope-protector. While Steve makes a serial check I walk 5 yards up the hill to find the inscription "OUCC '82 D1". Depression blues set in while we remove the tackle. These were only ~~slightly~~ offset when Steve offered



to eat his Petzl lamp if the shaft was less than 50 m to the bottom.

Anyhow we trot off up the hill to find Top camp empty. A quick search reveals that D1 is only c. 40 m deep, but Steve has not yet eaten his lamp.

An interesting 1<sup>st</sup> trip up!

Paul //

### F20 The Awful truth!

Phil D. Nicola.

There's a lot of bad karma manifesting itself on this mountainside. Today's adventure started with a tiring exercise in technical mountaineering, attempting the Lethal approach to F20 across scree slopes, cliffs, snowplugs and boulders. There are 2 kinds of boulders: ① Boulders that have fallen off, ② boulders that are going to fall off. Differentiating between the 2 types is not easy but adds spice.

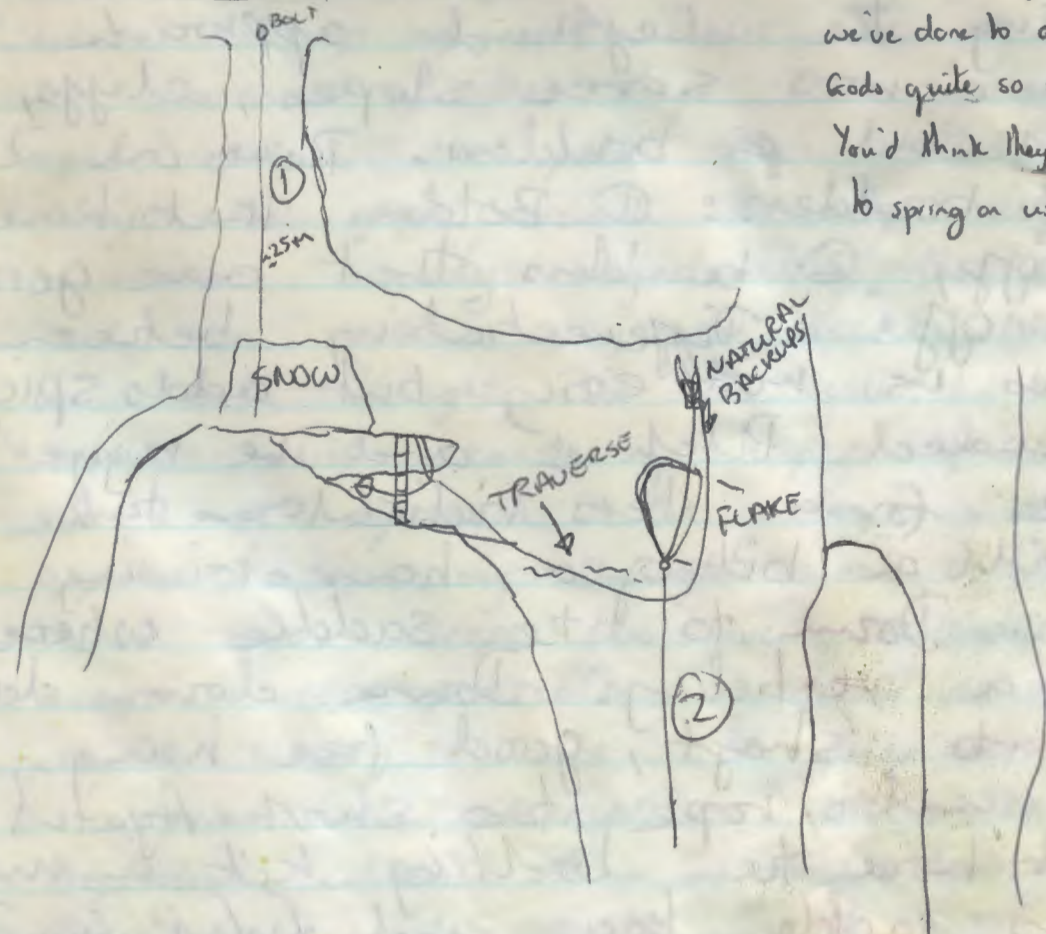
Descended Pitch 1 and re-rigged Pitch 2 for a less ridiculous take off. Still a bit of a hair raising traverse. Down to the saddle where I rigged a re-belay. Down down down, a superb shaft, good free hang not too wet, rope too short. Again! I didn't have the bolting kit in my enormous tackle bag and didn't fancy

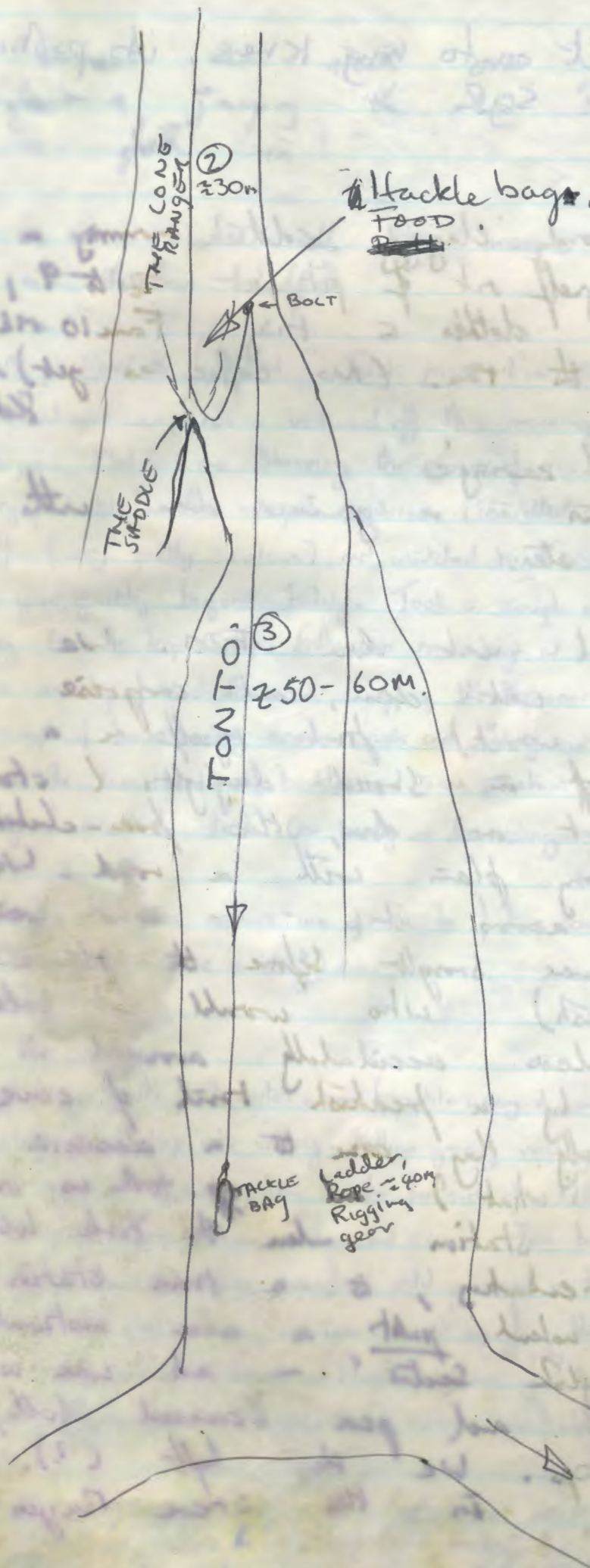
(7)

a flying knot changeover so I prussicked back up, leaving the tackle bag tied to the rope. We decided to abandon the trip as we were both quite cold and ~~solly~~ missed by these infernal short ropes. The trouble is that last year the pitch ended on a huge snow plug which has gone. To add the final blow to our misadventures, ~~the~~ the steadily rising mist had engulfed the entrance. We trudged back, at last finding a fairly safe way and found Steve and Paul at camp. Some consolation, they can do the hole tomorrow, good luck to them. P.D

F.20 SO FAR

Not much else you can say really - what we've done to annoy the Mountain Gods quite so much is beyond me - You'd think they'd have run out of tricks to spring on us by now...





Tackle bags, rope

FOOD

BOLT

THE LONG RANGERS

THE SADDLE

TONTO

TACKLE BAG

Ladder, Rope ~ 40m, Rigging gear

good Rattle!

(9)

Nicola "

"If I can get it onto my knee, its probably worth holding" SGR

Monday 15th.

Horrible cloudy day, oddish morning. I finally drag myself out of bed at 9, put on my clothes & try. Found still and start up the tea. (No coffee as yet).  
Sik

'A dream of caring'

This is a genuine dream, with nothing added etc.

I dreamt I was down F20. We raggah tents, I was down, and surprised (except that I wasn't) found myself on a ledge on a cliff in broad daylight. I started to try to get me down, then free-fell it to a grassy plain with a road. We started wandering across it and were arrested! We were sought before the police (a vaguely Spanish) who would not believe we were Spanish. I accidentally arrived in this country by a freakish trick of cave geography. Eventually they came to a decision (I know not what) and took us out past a bus station where the York lot were all disembarking, to a train station. We were asked past a nice restaurant to the 'English Section' - and were served grotty potato and pea (canned, both) carry & chips. We then left (?).  
Somewhere in the Steve Meyer

crossed an ice over river by using  
just a jump, the last bit - but he stopped  
& fell in!

What all this means I don't know. Can  
a doctor help?

S.G.R. + Paul B (Paul "Fuck me, I'm all sweaty before I even get in  
- The intrepid explorers - vertwed off this morning to descend F20; their two  
Sherpas, Phil D + me showing the easier of our various routes to el hole +  
carrying tackle for the intrepid explorers. Marvelled at Pauls shiny, clean S.R.T  
stuff (very pretty colours) and watched him + Steve descend, to get all that nice  
new gear, grubby beyond belief. Took a couple of pikies <sup>edding</sup> before picking our  
way back to Top Camp. Enthusiasm ran high at first for juggling boulders and  
rocks on top of each other and wrapping the topones in black bin liners, but after  
a couple of hours making arrows, cairns and seeking out the best and safest way to get  
between the two locations; boulders and stones somehow lost their appeal. Fog / cloud  
getting thicker all the time. Can barely see the rain gauge thing from the camp.

Hope the cairns and arrows are of use to future cavers. Brief description of routes  
(and rather sketchy map is overleaf) :-

From Top Camp

Follow bog path past toilet area (polite way of saying it that...!) until you see  
left slightly and drop into valley. Follow grassy valley right to bottom where you  
meet a massive boulder pile on the far side of a little snow plug. From here,  
turn sharp left and follow cairns and arrows. You basically want to be heading  
up the left hand side of a snowfield until you spot a brownish coloured gully and go  
up this (all this is more or less straight up from the boulder field). Where you  
meet a line of pebbles covered in black polythene you turn left again and climb out of  
the gully. Keep following cairns round various snowfields up and you can't miss it  
(No No)

22/8/85 In a year like this, path descriptions in terms of snowfields are  
pretty useless. When I went up to detach the thing there weren't any  
along the whole cairned route. - One of the route cairns (the one at the bottom

The F20 gully has been promoted to a permanent (reliable) at least survey & triangulation station. G.W.B.