

First Sequel (by Gerhard)

On Sunday afternoon the last Ridge Cave pushing trip set out: Ukey & Fred, this being Fred's first caving trip since his Being Bashed In Me Face, Dave Rose & Graham at the same time undertook to push 2/6 to the possible connection, and Neil led a photo-trip assisted by Dan, Jonathan Tomlin, Gerhard's very efficient flashguns and a rather less efficient Gerhard down Ridge. The latter team had ~~set~~ gone down by 12<sup>30</sup> and took 4½ hours getting to the Big Cavern, most of the entertainment en route being caused by my top-heavy tangle and my tripod, which tried to entangle itself at every re-belay (not to mention backups). Goodness, I didn't remember the various rifts as being so narrow! I must apologize to Paul Cooper for discarding his view that 2/6 was far too big to break into 1/6; Ridge Cave is indeed a rabbit warren compared to the shaft. I crashed down Nick's Canal rather too speedily, spraining a finger joint and spoiling my good humour in the process. The improved Hugging of Fred Flintstone cheered me up again, and landing a Dinosaur Beach again after nearly a year made me positively euphoric. However, when we were at the Big Cavern at last and Neil had taken shots of JT worming his way up Fred's Folly I felt too tired to go on safely. So Team Photo split, Neil & Dan continuing to the Big Beluga and Johnny coming back to join me. We spent an entertaining hour taking pictures (with a magnesium volcano) and collecting dripwater and measured the air temperature to be less than 2.5°C. After this we moved on to D. Beach... I stepped round the corner and shouted and jumped with joy! There was the white Imm Beal dangling down right in the middle of the chamber! Unfortunately we had missed the

~~Got Cooper on this one, after all!~~ Got Cooper on this one, after all!

(2) big breakthrough, Dave R & Graham having landed around 6pm. Well, we took another string of pictures, measured the air temperature to be 2.0°C, and decided to continue the photo-trip up 2/6. Both caves photographed in one trip! But fate would have it otherwise.

I pruned up the Beal, swore at the rub points, asked Jonny to bring up an empty tacklebag (he also found some 'beavers'), and we padded the thing a bit more. Fun to look across to the rope on Fred Flintstone. We were about to look for the way on when we heard Dan shouting something from below. The echo made it quite hard to understand his words, What's an accident? Ukey? Go out as fast as possible - get Paul Cooper down? Oh shit. We dumped the photo stuff and ran along the one obvious route off, while Dan went up Ridge Cave. After some 50m traversing at high level in what seemed to be Upper Lower Streamway Upstream, unfortunately damaging some of the fossil slab in our haste, until <sup>the right</sup> (looked like it was about to close down. Getting lost in newly found passage was definitely not on, so we beat our retreat to Dinosaur Beach and followed Dan, not very fast although without luggage. Met Martin May & Jonny Cooper going in above the Axolotl (argh) and surfaced 3:30 am. Lovely warm starry night, though very windy.

What happened elsewhere? Richard had arrived at T.C. at nightfall and set out to descend 2/6 after a short stay. Ukey, Fred & Neil were making slow headway outwards taking the 2/6 route. Dave R & Ian H enter the following morning via 2/6 with sleeping bags, food, carbide and water. Fred had got out that way already by 7am reporting Martin, J. Cooper, Neil & Ukey to have reached Dinosaur Beach. Dave Rose, Graham & I are to go up to 2/6 entrance shortly to prepare a hauling system if necessary... (28/7/88 10am)

B. Neil & J Cooper arrive around 11am, Dave R & G. set out (without me), Graham returning 12<sup>45</sup> with the relieving news that Ukey is back to surface. Thanks Goodness.

27 July. Dave R. Graham.

Connected 2/B to Ridge via 25m pitch into <sup>Dinosaur Beach.</sup> ~~the~~ ~~area~~ should make system c. 650m deep but not the deepest in the world. Pausing for thought I remarked to Graham: "well it should make a rescue more feasible..."

27 July Ridge Pushing Fred + Ukey.

I walked up early from Base, and as usual we took hours doing little things before getting down. We came ~~around~~ just after 12.

We headed down to the crystal chamber, where we picked up some tackle, wires, tapes, eras, hangars, 20m marlow and an unmarked kym speleoscope ~ 50m.

The "great big" streamway was not that big. We thimble along it with the tackle bags to an inlet on the right hand side with earthen marks in it. Martin and Steve must have had a heroic trip surveying on this. We thought that this was probably the way on, so we left the bags to look at the swamp which was slightly reworked at the streamway deep down cabeza under, but nowhere near as pretty or spectacular.

We went back to the inlet, had a fettle and started to look for the way up. However the climbing got rather hard, and signs of human presence began to fade.

We went down to another inlet lower down, but it was rather narrow, and

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again there were no signs of people ~~we were~~  
~~both climbing~~

We were both climbing up and looking around when I heard Mikey slipping and swearing. She hit the ground, and I shouted, but there was no reply. About five seconds later I shouted again and she replied.

She was lying on her back in the stream, unconscious and coherent. She said that she couldn't feel her left hand side, and that she was deaf in her left ear, and dizzy. Her back was not sore, she didn't have any internal injuries, and there was no blood coming out of her ears. She said that she had fallen 15 ft onto her head. She mentioned something from Tom's notes saying that if you were bleeding inside the skull you would die in 2 hours. †

I tried to sit her up, but she went very dizzy, and had to sit down again, so I put a load of rope and tackle bags underneath her, generators inside her heavy suit, a space blanket over her, and chucked up as close as I could.

Still she was getting colder and colder, and eventually started to shiver uncontrollably. I was very scared, shook her all over and gave her a cup of tea. She was very cold, and was rapidly getting hypothermic. I thought that in half an hour I would be lying beside a dead body.

I had better sit up she says, so I handed her up and we sat back to back for a while, supporting and warming each other. Gradually she began to feel less dizzy. It was OK!

We sat for a while, and ate some pineapple and fish, and then tried to stand. She couldn't stand by herself, but I ~~hugged~~ wrapped the space blanket round her and hugged her to keep her warm, and hold her up. Eventually we were ready to start moving.

She couldn't put any weight on her left arm. We made our way slowly along the streamway, using cunning tactics to overcome the obstacles. At the pike we met Dan and Niel coming down. I sent out Dan with details of what had happened, and Niel stayed to help.

Times.

Fall ~ 6<sup>00</sup>.

Start Scott ~ 7<sup>00</sup>

Meet Dan and Niel ~ 8<sup>00</sup>

Niel was a tower of strength, and we made our way steadily but very slowly to the Big Crunch, we in front, Blakey in the middle, Niel behind.

I waited for hours in the Big Crunch while they did something at the top of Fox'sully. By now it was 2 am. We were running out of food and candles, Blakey's oversight was the tatters, and I was getting very cold and tired. We needed another hour ~~but~~ until help arrived.

We made our way to ~~the~~ ~~B~~ Dinosaur Beach where there was a load of carbide and a new rope hanging down from the roof. The 2/6 connection!

We decided to go out by 2/6, and left the tattered remains of the space blanket ~~set~~ in a sort of arrow pointing towards the rope. I went up the rope and Meezy started to follow. I stood at the top and heard the distant rumblings of people approaching. Meezy by his time was very slow, falling asleep on the pitch, and taking 10 minutes just to take off a rope protector.

As she reached the top of the pitch Paul C and Richard arrived loading full of beams and carrying warm clothes and food.

I was feeling very cold and tired, and felt that if I stayed I would be more of a liability than an help, so I headed out with messages for people at Top camp.

I struggled patiently slowly up seemingly endless shafts, occasionally stumbling around trying to find the bottom of the bits of black rope. I was absolutely shattered when I got out top a while windy down on the stage ~ 6:30 I got back to camp, told people the news and went to bed.

If anyone who happens to go down to F20 near the  
limit of exploration and sees a rope with two knots in  
a dunkey's click rope arrangement which may or may not be  
attached to a rope of a 15m length, then please bring it  
to the surface and arrange for it to be returned to me,  
eg. By putting it in the bag of my stuff which I will  
leave behind, then I shall be eternally grateful. If not  
I shall be eternally ungrateful and shot of two knots.

Yours affectionately Jonathan Cooper xx

what do these mean = Dr Dr 3

My many thanks to Fred & Neil, without whom I would never have made it  
to Dinosaur Beach (and who got uncomplainingly stood on and cold);  
to Dan for going out as fast as he could and announcing to a  
sleeping Top Camp at midnight: "You'd better all get up again"; to  
Paul & Richard, team Medic, whom I was very glad to see; to Dave &  
Graham who'd earlier that day connected 2/b and Ridge, making everyone's  
life a lot easier; to Martin who made my light work by the simple  
expedient of taking it away at intervals and giving me another one; and  
to everyone who carried stuff down and fed me chocolate and fruit and told  
me that I would be OK.

Upel

Dave "I know the technique of fire walking" Horsley

29/9/86 7<sup>30</sup>am Gerhardt rolling off downhill with empty bottles empty BDM, rubbish.  
Hope to be back tonight. Have fun in Ridge - see you there. y.

29<sup>th</sup> July

To Bottom of Ridge to push, take photos & bring out Neil's camera gear: Martin, Dan, Roy.

To detach Ridge from Dinosaur Beach:

Paul B., Jonathan C., Johnny T., Dave H., Martin L.

(2 Johns & Dave going down 2/6)

Gerhard arrives at a lonely Lages 10 am-ish. Everyone bar Marcus gone to the beach. We leave one diver to guard camp and drive to Cangas to go shopping. The Bar Rio Grande is closed till 1<sup>st</sup> August and is changing ownership! Had lunch at the Puente Romano. Met ~~the~~ Everyone on their way to the beach in between. Phil D & Paul C. asked us to buy some contraceptives but I left this responsibility with our doctors!

Stopped in Covadonga and went up to the Cueva Santa and to the Cathedral - maybe as a Thanksgiving for Fred's recovery and Ukey's rescue - for those who care about such things. The pool is still unhealthily red.

Afterwards we packed, had a brief swim in Enol (resp. a short sun-bath for Marcus) and ran uphill, 4 1/4 hrs, quite good for an out-of-practice Marcus with a heavy pack. Met one rebecca in the Jon los Cueros. Blazing heat most of the way up. Arrgh. Graham receives us with a brew-worthy man. Now Jim off to Ridge to help hauling...

9 pm Gerhard



29<sup>th</sup> July 86 Ridge Derigging.

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Martin L and I went down Ridge and met the others at the top of Fred Flintstone. From here derigging was fairly efficient with the only problems being caused by the mega-heavy bag containing the 120m rope. Jonathon C. blasphemed a lot and was v. tired and so went out early. Gerhard came in at 11 pm and hauled the heavy bag up dancing in the dark. Out at 3.30 am after 13 1/2 hours of good stuff.

Paul

P.S. The handwriting is much better as the festered fingers have now recovered.

- Additions -
- a) Nobody seems to have noticed that once more I carefully avoided passing the Axolotl... hehe...
  - b) Martin L came out of the cave with a 3m long tail of Marlow, which Jonny T was using as a lead!

Gerhard

Who said of what (at the entrance to Ridge):  
"Actually, mine is pretty distinctive". ?

Who said of what (at Top Camp):  
"I know it's easy, it's just not my idea of fun".

Answers on a postcard .....

At last the time approaches to say Adios to top camp. Fond memories I shall savour from this trouble dwelling place which I shall not leave anyone by repeating. In case I forget 5 trips down. FRO ripped the heart and soul out of me, but having participated in one of the 4 trips which pushed 4/6 to top Ridge this gives some relief. My one down to base is that in Oke's rescue and the ridge descending I may be the only person ever to do the 2/6, 1/6 connection both ways. Unless you know better as they say on That's Life.

Anyway it's been great to be here and I hope next year, there will be more grass (and if possible FRO pushed into FUS 2/6).

Southern Copper

P.S. My gear still at top camp includes 4 knots, two down FRO + two down 2/6 and one fuzzy. I hope they come home.

FOUND

P.S. I may also have left my yellow van sweat shirt behind as well so please don't take it with you.

Ridge 29-30 July. Dan, Martin M Roy

An amateur photography trip/pushing trip went down 2/6 following the ridge descending trip. Fairly efficient, down to the Chamber, & then I into the streamway. My 4<sup>th</sup> trip down ridge & I might actually get to the sumps. Picked up photography gear made our way thro' the squeeze to the top chamber. Explored an inlet & climbed over a rock that was so thin, light could shine thro' it. Explored