

Pedantic note: they're not lizards, they're Fire Salamanders.

Ferella: "Do we need the dille, or just the hammer?"

14/7/95 Oly, Gavin, Alison, Will
Localizing F41 / F80

We located F41 and F80 today. F41 has very little snow in it compared with previous years, so may be pushed successfully this year. A 140m rope was left at the entrance.

F80 is a somewhat longer walk away requiring the negotiation of an entertaining scree slope. It is just off the ridge in the Leon area, and a 200m rope was left there. F81 was also found, a little higher up the ridge. F81 has a Leon mark, but no OHCC tag. F80 is now marked as H1.

Oly.

15/7/95 Oly, Keith, Will, Jo (sunbathing)
Rigging F41.

Will rigged the first pitch while I started uncoiling and packing the rope. 2 1/2 hours later Will had lost enthusiasm while waiting for me to uncoil the rope. In the end, Will finished coiling out the rope while I got changed, and I then proceeded down the ~~cord~~ to continue the rigging, with Keith in hot pursuit.

I managed to rig down to the near the bottom of the third pitch (ice rift), and I have left the rope in the table-sack hanging from a bolt belay.

I ran out of slings, so more will be needed. The bolt hit and the rest of the rigging gear (a couple of snap cars, a reasonable number of levers and maillors) is at the entrance along with a new 200m length of rope and a piece of piece of the 140m rope which had to be chopped because of a nub point. The cave is wide open...

p.s. WARNING!

There is a large loose boulder at the bottom of the first pitch. Do not annoy it, as it has a short temper. It may not be possible to garden it safely without derigging the cave.

Oh.

Will: "I always tie a knot in both ends of the rope so that I don't prussik off the end"

Will: "Perhaps you should drag a spare jammer up the rope behind you, in case the rope breaks above you"

15/7/97

Janie & I walked up Punta G. & retrieved the rope from near F30, having established that it was indeed MS-67. A phone call to JJ is our last resort, I guess.

Stumbled along the ridge for a couple of hours without finding very much, though climbing down the face to what might be F1 (Cliff Lift Hard?) gave some interesting views down onto what might be entrances further down towards the base. Came back via F41 to find that Olly had just got underground. -

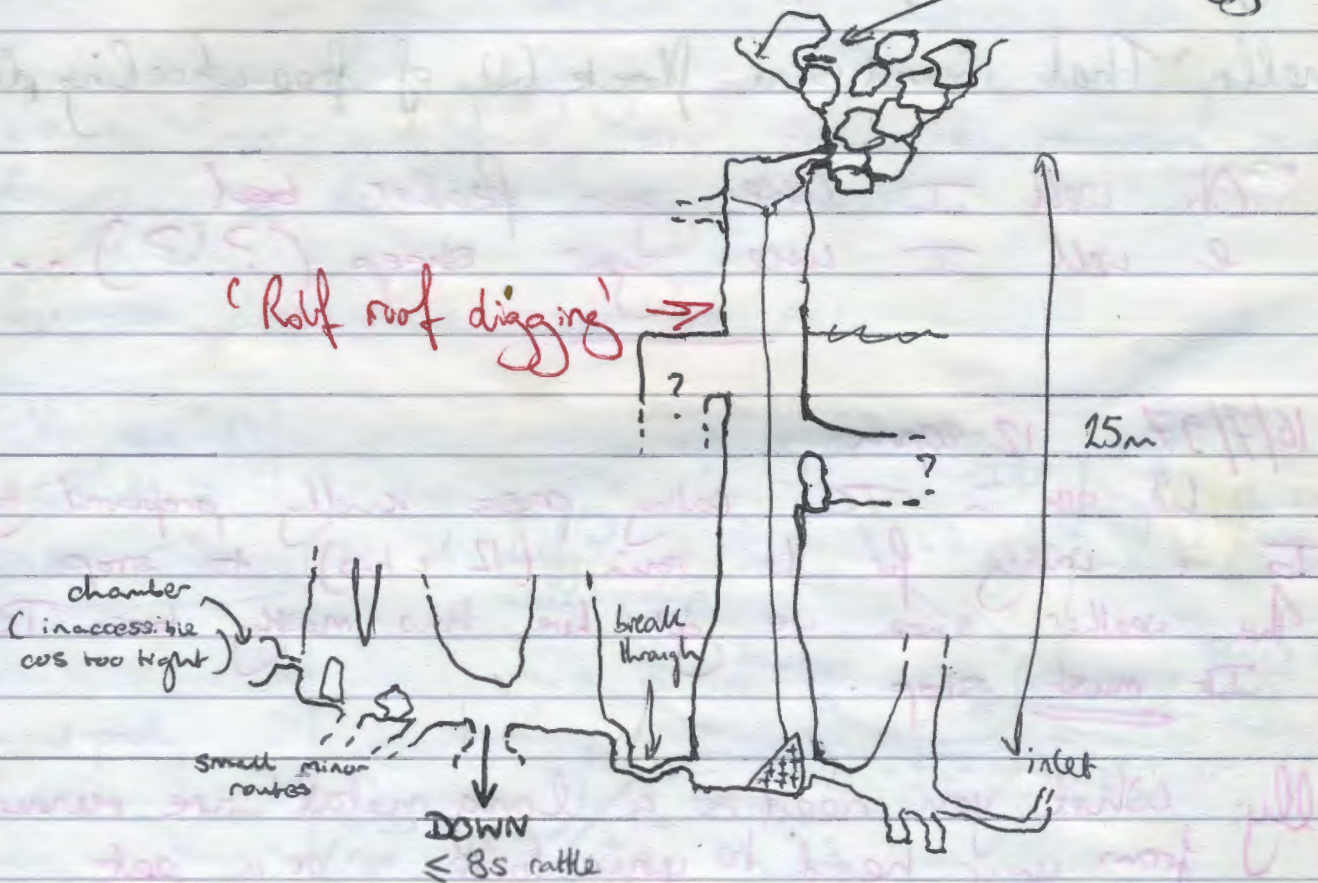
NJM

first finds of 97 expedition are in :

D7 (!) 15/7/97

Nobby, Alison

Bird's Nest
(+ eggs)



We climbed down through the boulders in the shake hole and then rigged down about a 25 m pitch with a tight take off and a small amount of snow at the bottom to land on, which was fortunate as otherwise the rope would have probably been to short. At the bottom there seemed to be lots of promising leads but they all seemed to choke, until we were left with one nasty looking squeeze which seemed to have a huge draft coming out of it, but which involved pushing feet first into a tight u-bend with a sideways s-bend as well. Nobby got through feet first and I followed head first when I knew I'd be able to turn round + get out again. This lead into more passage, with a hole in the floor which had about an 8 second rattle, but we didn't have any rope with us, so we looked around at some small things going off the main passage and then headed back out. Unfortunately, we discovered a birds nest at the entrance so we decided it might be a good idea to leave the cave alone for a bit.

Alison

Nobby: "I lost my worm"

Farella: "That sound is a flock (?) of free-wheeling planes"

Oh well I like your feather bed
 I will I like your sheep (?!?) ...

16/7/97 12:40pm

We sit in TC eating pasta kindly prepared by
 Jo & waiting for the rain (12 1/2 hrs) to stop.

The weather since we got here has mostly been TASS!
It must stop.

Ollie: "What you need is a long metal wire running
 from your head to your toes... or a pet
 salamander with a kite"

Rescue Call Out midnight 17/7

Nobby and Keith missed call out from FA1

First wave: Ollie and Will to go to entrance to
 assess situation, with rescue down. 0:16, left
 camp

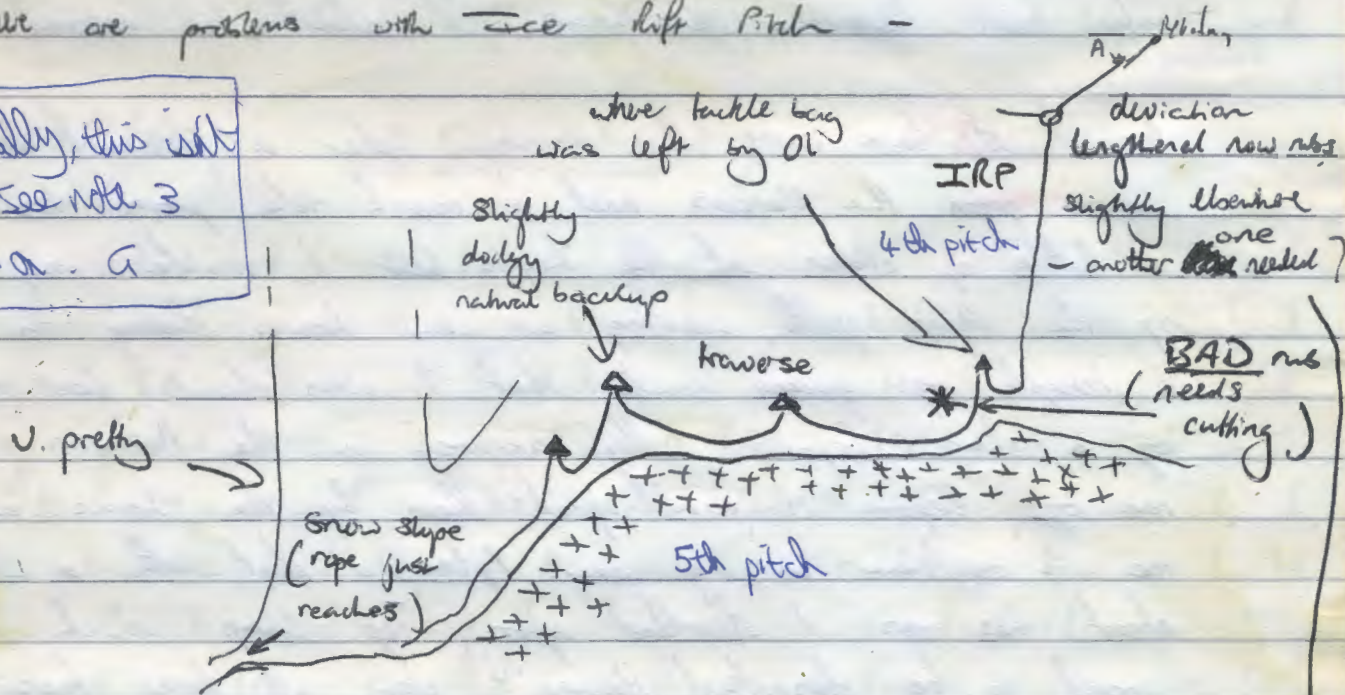
0:17, lights spotted, Rescue stood down,

F41 16/7/97 NJM, veik

Sorry everyone for getting you out of bed last night. We were over-ambitious, slow, without the necessary sense of urgency & then lost in the mist.

There are problems with Ice lift Pitch -

Actually, this isn't IRP. See note 3 pages on G



Not too sure about the big perched boulder that provides the main belay at top of IRP (or 2nd pitch). There's a selection of gear at the entrance, & a short rope hanging from a rebelay further down.

Very slight ~~big~~ fray 2m below rebelay at pt. A on diagram. Rubs on ice further down this pitch.

Until this is fixed make sure U stay to right of pitch (facing rock) i.e. heading straight towards rebelay. This helps to avoid the rub point. Also, if you don't do this, you can get into all sorts of trouble at the rebelay.

17/7/97 - Yes, ***T's back for a second time. For those who don't know me, I do consider myself to be a right one, as do most of those whose misfortune it was to meet me last year. However, I have promised Nobby that I will be nicer to this year's expedition members than I was to Tim last August, who, even though I've only been here a few hours, I admit to missing already.

Arrived at base camp this morning, after a pleasant hitch across from the Cercos and a coach ride from Leon. After a bottle of cider at the Lagos bar I made my way up the Aris path, wasting a few hours trying to convince a couple of young goats that I was their best chance of a slag before Billy arrives in the Autumn.... They ran off before I could grab them by the horns and left me to continue on my way. After a chat with a shepherd about his cows I stumbled upon Top Camp which I found to be deserted. Haven't you all been busy!

Nick

17/7/97. Shaft Bashing F88. Will and Keith.

After a late start whilst I built up enthusiasm for canyoning opposed to sunbathing (sorry Keith!) we set off for F88, as yet unmarked, but spotted by Gavin on the way back from F80. Lies further up the side of the Green Tangle a few shakeholes away from F41 at base of Cliff.

Keith put in backup but whilst I changed I abseiled down the obvious gully looking for a good bolt placement or natural - traversed to right and put in bolt for hanging planning detacher from opposite wall. Climbed to surface and rearranged backup but found a few tonnes of rock piled above chock route. Tried gardening unsuccessfully. Abseiled down to fix detacher - unsuccessfully. Got scared as boulders were vibrating

So made a hasty exit. I'll leave it to someone more proficient (I think).

→ These boulders hanging above the top ledge look very dangerous - there's a whole river of them just waiting to cascade down the pitch at any minute. They moved a bit by touch as well.

17/7/97

"Goat Wars"

Keith

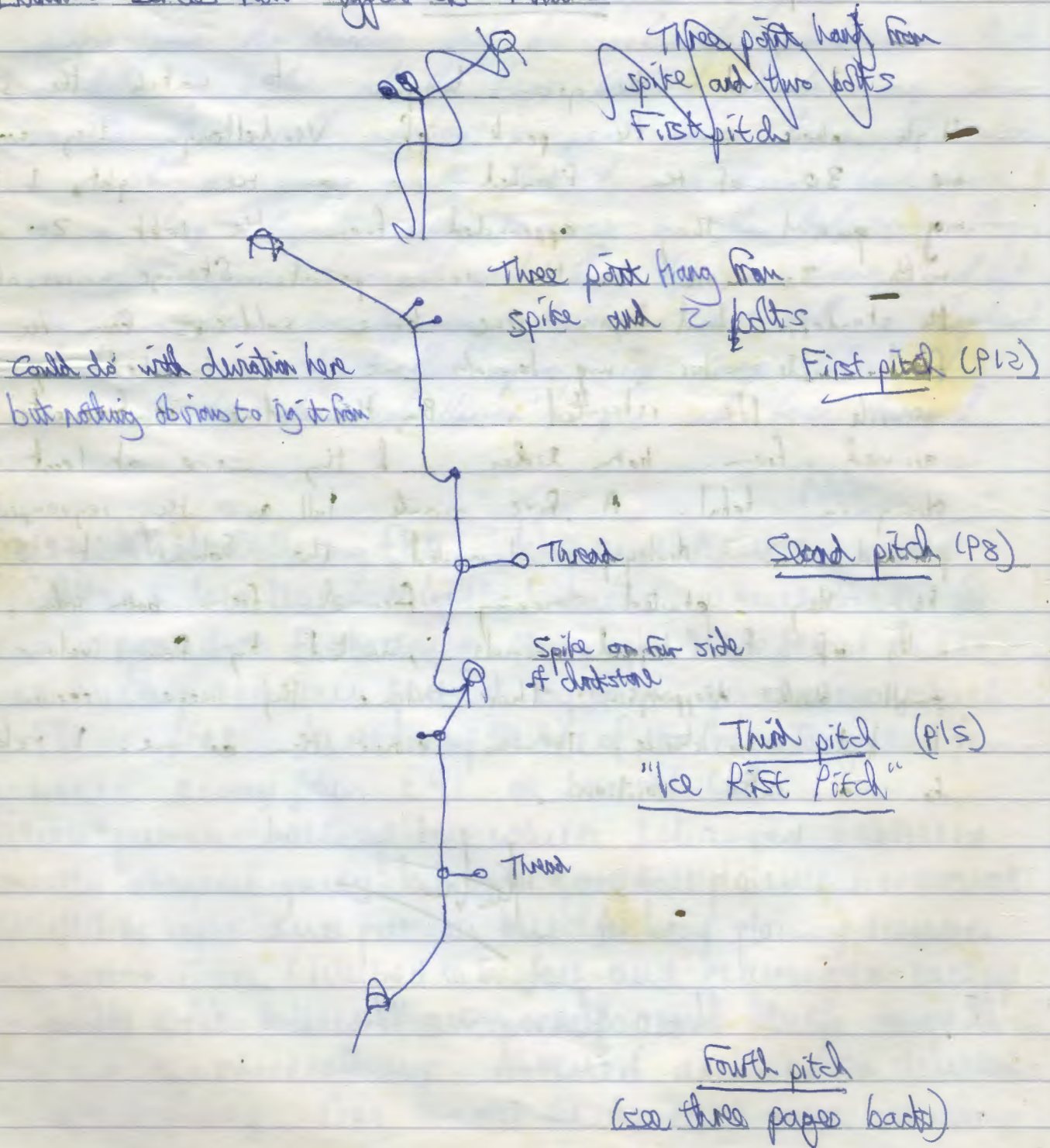
I climbed the green tongue to watch the sunset. High above on the peak of Verdellanga they watched me. 30 of them flanked me on the right. I held my ground. They approached from the left, 20 of them with 30 more in the rear. Strange noises abound, the standoff had begun. One brave soldier from the left front made his way towards me. I launched my 1st missile. He retreated. By this time reinforcements had arrived from both sides & they were at least 80 strong in total. A five minute lull as they regrouped and planned their strategy. I waited. The same it was to be. They started moving forward from both sides, flocks of four legged animals, united by fear, valour & small black droppings. This time they were serious. I had no choice. It was either them or me. I retreated to a safer position.

Keith

"I'll just spend the afternoon with the d/ds, then." - Will

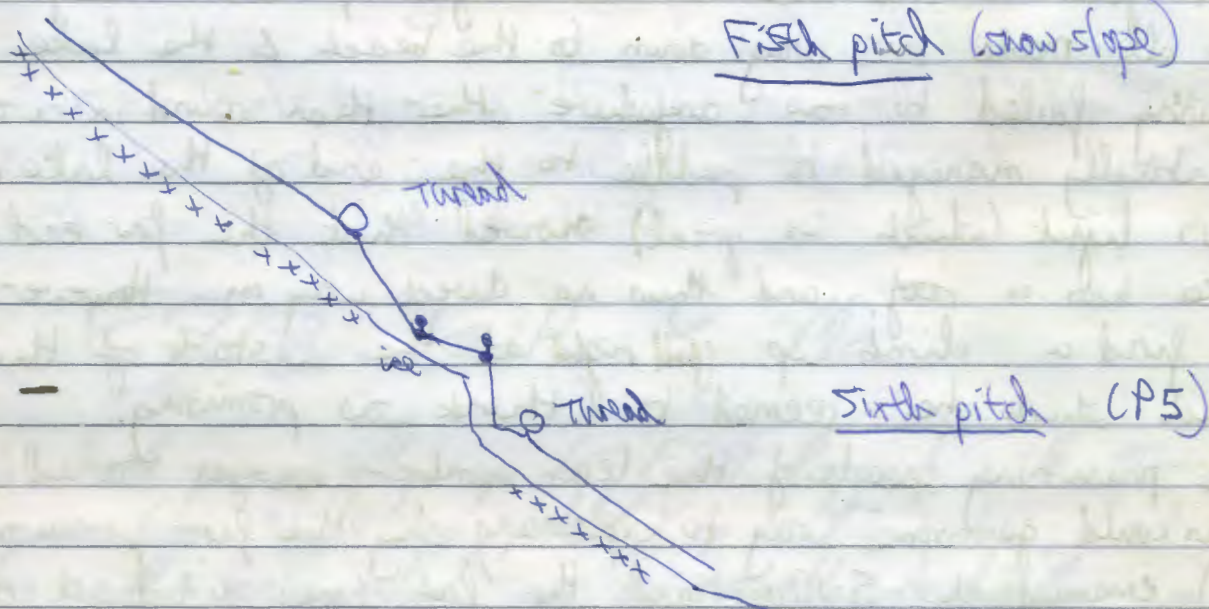
Didn't like the rigging on the first three pitches, so decided to re-rig them. Unfortunately, the rope went the wrong side of a chockstone at the top of the third pitch, and was tied off below, so I had to re-rig using a new rope. Then found that the bolt driver had lost its pin, so returned to camp to fix it.

Entrance series now rigged as follows



The third pitch, "Ice Rist Pitch", is very different from four years ago - then it was solid ice on both walls; also the pitch used to be deeper, although the present route gives a nice hang. Replaced the rebelay on the fourth pitch by a deviation, which seems to avoid all the Tub points.

Reached the point Nobby got to the previous day, rigged the rist, and then a shaft drop into a chamber



At the bottom, the chamber choked with rocks. A climb up to the left also choked. Climbed back up, and looked at a ledge to the side of the fifth pitch. Two holes down through the snow: one definitely chokes, and I didn't fancy the other.

The one possibility that we spotted was to go the other way at the bottom of the fourth ~~have~~ pitch: it doesn't ~~look~~ look very promising, although needs checking.

Derigged the old rope on the way out, getting it horribly tangled round the new rope, deviations, rocks, etc.

17/18. 7. 97 - C4 to beach

Ferella, Nobby, Olly, Jo

This trip was notable in that on it lots of records were broken. No, not the most efficient trip ever, or the most distance pushed in one trip. Nothing so exciting. It was, however, Ferella's Olly's & my deepest trip ever and my longest ever in time. On the way down to ~~the~~ "Marie Celeste" we worked in 2 waves, with Nobby & Olly taking tackle down first and rigging "M.C.". Ferella & I followed and once we had caught up with the first wave we all made our way down to the beach & the lake. Olly, having failed to row anywhere other than round in circles, eventually managed to paddle to the end of the lake where Ker's light (which is great) showed that the far end of the lake has a roof, and thus no direct way on. However, Nobby did find a climb up just right at the start of the beach which he seemed to think was promising.

The paddling speeds of the team members ~~never~~ varied wildly. This could go some way to explaining why the first person out (Ol) emerged at 5:10am, and the last (me) didn't get out until 9:00am. Pleasant little 19hr trip!

Alison says: "You do get some very black cows"

Ferella: "The sky is so blue its almost black"

Keith: "What time is the midday bus?"

Nick: "Keith's got loads of potential"

Jo: "Mines got big brown holes in the ~~arm~~"

Keith: "How do you know which ways left & which ways right."