

CCPC



Newsletter

No. 42

December 1994.

Hmm....There's alot of nice things in here-
A lament for a dead dog.

By Brian Edmonds.

Screaming guitars, pounding baseline, I drive like a maniac, cornering to the limit. The engines probably red-lining, but I can't hear it over the cassette-deck. No rev' counter, so no arguments. Frozen Welsh countryside flashes past in the cold grey light before dawn. The last stars have gone, the moon a pale ghost. The high wispy clouds haven't caught the sun yet. My blood races with the music, my skin feels greasy from lack of sleep. The passengers drowse. The A5 glides under the wheels, white lines and catseyes rush out of the frosty twilight at me. White line fever! Hope there's no black ice about. We have an urgent appointment with a greasy breakfast at capel.

My mind wanders back from the here and now to the there and then. Black rock, white snow, grey ice; swirling mist and flying spindrift, frost feathers growing from everywhere; beard frozen to balaclava, gloves frozen to axes. Heavy rock still runs through my mind as I climb blood pounding, breath in gasps. frozen air catches in the back of my throat.

My pitch is a small icy overhang. I teeter up, bridge, pull, look around. I pause and think - risky. I step out to the left, and I'm over. 80ft of "easy" snow leads to a belay by a rock-rib. The apprentice has the next pitch. Iain and I hide by the rib until he gets a runner on, our Goretex is safer now. We step out and watch him over the crux - looks good. Grade IV for a first decent ice-route, and lead.

On the plateau edge our ribs ache with laughter, the result of a badly opened can of fish and a liberal coating of tomato sauce spurting over us. . . . ➔

FUN QUIZ.

1. What Barbondale sink is at an altitude of 800ft, is 200ft long and 40ft in depth. It is listed as a grade III, and as the NGR, SD 666840 ?
2. The longest and deepest Salt Cave in the world is, Malham Cave in Isreal, which as 3,100m of passages and is 130m deep. It is found 45 miles south of what city ?
3. In Mendip underground three Caves at Stoke St Michael are listed together, Hilliers Cave, Hillwithy Cave and what ?
4. Almost 90% of the Caves of this country are found in the southern mountain range or TOROS DAGLARI. What is the country ?
5. A large meandering passage leads on, past two holes in the floor, to a short drop into a large unstable chamber, the Assembly Hall. Almost opposite the point of entry into this chamber is the short climb up which leads into a beautiful chamber. Name the chamber ?
6. You should now have five answers, what is the conection ?

The answers will be printed in the next news letter.

Lament for a dead dog cont.

Back to the present. We sit in the cafe, drinking coffee and smoking after our pig on a plate. Through the misted windows the summit of Snowdon catches the dawn. The powder turns rosy-pink in the first rays of the sun.

Breakfast done, we head for our chosen route down in Nantlle Cwm Dulyn. The snows are all powder, the ice a merest veneer on the high crags. Frost has gripped the hills for a month, so no freeze-thaw to give a build up. Maybe a lower crag will do better? The arduous level, 10 minute walk in, passes quickly, the ground is bone hard and the lake frozen over. Blue-grey ice beckons from the dark cliffs.

Our chosen route has added incentive not to fall - a dead Labrador lies rotting at its foot, its body broken by a fall from where we will tread. The carcass stinks despite the frost, its grin of death waits below us, beckoning.

The hard pitch has thin ice, water runs gurgling and springs out from underneath, coating us with a layer of verglas! Poised above us chandeliers of ice hang like a frozen fringe of brittle daggers. Front pointing on clear ice, axes in hollow ice - will they rip? Protection is adequate, a tied off icicle and a tube in another. Too scared for thought - thinking is definitely out. Frozen clothing, ice coated, exhilarated, the blood fizzles in our veins. OK the route was short, but hard and scary. Buzzing we head for Idwal. The lake is frozen so we walk over it. The appendix beckons but it isn't complete yet and ice-falls gleam all around the Cwm. A lost soul on "The Sting" squeals for help and its getting late, so we boulder on a 15ft ice cliff: Slabs and walls. As we head out of the valley that poor character is still on "The Sting" and hoping for rescue.

Lament for a dead dog cont,

At the campsite the ground is as hard as concrete under the powder. Ice hammers and picks help us get the tent pegs 2 inches into the turf - hope the wind doesn't get up in the night! After a chilly supper and a few pints for insulation we sleep, fully dressed and warm enough until the overnight snow builds up on the tent, pulling the pegs and collapsing it on top of us. The loft of our sleeping bags collapses, and it's a cold, clear cheerless dawn.

Another fried piggy breakfast at the cafe and then it's up to Idwal again. Today we have novices with us so it's back to the boulder for practice, then up to "our" route, another IV, climb in two ropes of three. Again the water is blue and brittle, and the stream flows underneath. From up here we can see some of the lake has thawed - that explains the ominous cracks beneath our feet as we walked in, nearly an early bath! Again it's tied off icicles and tubes in hollow ice. The ice is firmer, but still steep, bridging on bubbly fringes and front-pointing on organpipes, hooking on to rock ledges.

Later we hear that Kev, while leaning out on the belay and swinging around to watch the climb fell out of the icy niche where we started the route. His twelve foot backwards plunge down the gully started when he pulled out the main belay, the chockstone had looked good, but was only held in by frozen snow. Luckily for all concerned no damage was done, and the two Johns easily held his graceless dive into the powder below. If they hadn't then all three could have taken the quick way down over boulders and cliffs to the lake shore 300 feet below. Kev, shaken but not stirred, finished the climb in a good though nervous style!

A brilliant day on the hill, a real buzz. Tea and stickies at the cafe rounded off a great day, and our stomachs looked well rounded too.

Two years ago I was press ganged into doing the Newsletter at an AGM I did not attend. The first I knew about it was when I was informed who the new committee for 1993 where.

You must appreciate it is not easy putting the Newsletter together, Mainly because as you may all know I work away from home alot. So what little time I do have at home you can imagine I do not always wish to be in my attic putting the next Newsletter together. luckily my wife is very supportive, (she as been known to enter the odd article into my computer for me), so if I disappear for an afternoon she never complains.

For this reason and because I think it is only fair to give somebody else a chance, if there is a member new or old who would like to have a go at doing the Newsletter I am willing to give it up at the forth coming AGM. If not with your support I am quite happy to carry on, but they may not be so frequent.

Tracy Conde. News Editor.

RESULTS OF ECO-HANGER TESTS.

As reported in April's Newsletter that it was possible to over heat Eco-hangers by running ropes through them, thus causing damage to the resin and possibly weakening there anchor. Les Sykes installed three hangers in a quarry and performed a series of tests on them. The results of which have been published in a CNCC Newsletter. Two of the hangers tested were monitored for movement and distortion with the use of a fixed gauge while drop testing, the third had a thermometer set in its resin touching the hanger half the depth of the hole.

In the cases of the first two hangers the tests were taken to extreme, and even when a hanger bent and resin cracked under the stress they still held the load. It was found that if the hanger had a slight rotation this did not compromise the safety of the hanger, as found in the past hangers with a slight rotation proved stubborn and hard to remove.

The third hanger was subjected to 60m of rope travel with a 51Kg loading, resulting in the rope glazing through misuse and the hanger becoming to hot to touch, but the interesting part being the thermometer didn't read any change in temperature.

Although the results were encouraging it is still not advisable to use Eco-hangers without the use of a Karabiner or Maillon if the rope is going to run through the hanger, or if used for lowering off better still use a pulley.

EASE GILL LADDERS.

Some time during September, the Red Rose CPC were planning to remove the ladders from Fall Pot and Stake Pot on the grounds of safety. In their place they are installing fixed anchors (I assume they have used P bolts) enabling ladders to be installed when needed and also ropes for through trips or S.R.T. The ladder at Stop pot will remain.

At present I have had no update of the situation so if planning a trip into the Ease Gill system, to be on the safe side take ropes or ladders for Fall Pot and Stake Pot .

FOR THE PERSON WITH EVERY THING.

Are you sitting at home racking your brains out about what to buy him or her for christmas, loosing valuable sleep, can't concentrate on your work. Then don't despair, help is at hand, why not buy them the one thing that can't be bought in the shops and make them the envy of every one they meet. Yes you have got it, a CCPC Sweatshirt or rugby shirt, a give away of £11.00. Interested then see Ralph, but be quick and make sure you are not the one that miss's out on this great deal.

DERBYSHIRE RIGGING GUIDE.

Don't be disappointed- order your copy of the new CCPC Rigging type guide to derbyshire. Approximately £2.50 . All profits to go towards the bolting of the Caves we all use.

DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Information Circular August/September 1994

NEXT DCA MEETING

Council Meeting, 10am, Saturday 12 November at Monyash Village Hall.

Items for the agenda to the Secretary by October 15th at the latest please. The Village Hall will be open from just after 9.30am. Tea/coffee and biscuits will be available at the meeting. The Old Smithy Tea Room, next to the Bull, does breakfast from 9am. and both the village tea shops and the pub do lunches.

DERBYSHIRE ACCESS AND CONSERVATION NEWS

If you have any information to pass on or have any queries about Derbyshire access, please contact DCA's Conservation & Access Officer direct:

Pete Mellors, "Fairview", Station Road, Edingley, Newark, Notts. NG22 8BX. Tel. 01623-882515

Knotlow Pollution: The heavy rain of 24 June cleared the pollution out of Knotlow and we have no reports of it having returned. Please let Pete know as quickly as possible if you encounter pollution again as we have made arrangements to send samples for testing.

Long Rake Mine, Youlgreave: We received a report that the cavers' way into part of this mine has been obliterated by dumping. Part of the rake is still being worked and so far this report has not been checked.

Long Rake Mine, Bradwell: Pegasus C.C. are due to start bolting soon at this site. Access is possible but needs to be arranged in advance with the farmer, Mr. Hadfield. You need to phone him on 01298-22139 or call at Oakhouse Farm, Smalldale, Nr. Buxton and arrange your trip two or three weeks in advance. This is a sensitive area, so go carefully please!

Eldon Hole: Pegasus C.C. have reclinbed Damocles Rift and a fixed rope has been left in place. Nigel Atkins has placed 3 DMMs in Eldon - exact details of siting will follow later.

Nettle Pot: 6 DMMs have been placed in the first part of Nettle Pot as follows: Sentry Box - 2 bolts, Gully Pitch (foot of 1st pitch) - 2 bolts, Top of Elizabeth Shaft - 2 bolts. Thanks to Ivan Woolley for supplying and fixing these. There is more work to be done here.

Oxlow Cavern: The Rowlands of Oxlow House Farm sold up at an auction in Bakewell on 8th. August. Pete had already arranged with Mr. Rowlands to be introduced to the new owner of the farm when it was known who this would be. There have been no reports of any problems since the sale, please let Pete know as soon as possible if you do have any difficulties.

Ball Eye Mine: Access reverts to what it was, except that some entrances remain fitted with grilles which the owner is unlikely to try and remove.

Ashford Marble Mine and Holme Bank Chert Mine: Access will soon be available for both these sites as the access licence is organised and a keyholder has come forward. Some work on gates etc. has to be done first so hang on just a little longer and please DON'T pester at Smiths Runners for access to Holme Bank Chert Mine, they don't have a key now. Also, please DON'T attempt to gain access without permission or you may upset all the work done by patient negotiation.

Cumberland/Wapping: The separate owners of these sites are still considering options. Meanwhile, neither has taken steps yet to close the system.

Bats in Caves: Don't forget that bats are now protected by law and it is illegal to remove or disturb them. There is normally no problem in caves or mines which contain bats, provided you don't touch them or hang about near the roost. Occasionally dead bats are found, particularly in the entrance to caves, and in this case you may like to consider reporting this to a local bat group. A useful phone number is the Secretary of the area Bat Group: Richard Sandbach: 01629-55586. If you can't contact him, try the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (based at Elvaston Castle, Derby): 01332-756610 or 01332-756378.

Mandale Mine: Sorry, but definitely no access for the present! Pete is working on it but it is likely that negotiations will be very difficult and protracted.

Robins Shaft Mine: The owner now requires a £1.00 trespass fee. The old anchors and bolts have been replaced by new 8mm anchors so take your own bolts.

DCA/NCA CAVERS' WORKSHOP, 26/27 NOVEMBER 1994

DCA Training Officer Nigel Atkins is organising the annual DCA/NCA Cavers' Workshop this year for 26 and 27 November, 1994. Full details and a booking form are included with this circular. You are welcome to photocopy the form if you need more copies.

BOLT FUND PROGRESS

Since the July Council Meeting we have received a further £45 in donations to the bolt fund from Lincoln Scouts C.C., Chesterfield C.C. and The Sheep C.C. We have also had a donation of DMM Hangers from Ivan Woolley. Many thanks to these people. Donations to date since the Fund was started in January 1992 total £570.15 plus donations of actual hangers. So far we have spent a total of £640.15 and further expenses are expected soon.

NCA ROPE TESTING

If you would like to have a sample of your caving rope tested on the NCA Rope Test Rig you can post the sample direct to Owen Clarke and receive the results by post. Owen requires a piece of rope about 2.5m long in order to carry out the test and he also requires some information about the rope, its history of use and storage in order to make sense of the whole programme of testing. If you are interested, ring Jenny Potts to ask for a copy of Owen's "NCA Rope Test Record" form and then send the completed form with your rope sample to:

Owen Clarke, [REDACTED]

DO YOU NEED A WINCH?

Dave George has a 12volt winch surplus to requirements which he is willing to pass on free to any DCA member. (This is NOT a man-riding winch.) If you are interested, contact Dave direct:

Dave George, [REDACTED]

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Congratulations to Nigel and Bekki Atkins who were married earlier this month!

Address Changes

Chesterfield C.C.: [REDACTED]

Crags & Pots: [REDACTED]

Keyhole C.C.: [REDACTED]

Welcome to 2 New Individual Members, elected in July

J. Gordon Cooper, [REDACTED]

John R. Thomas, [REDACTED]

Welcome to 2 New Prospective Members

Ass. Memb.: Whit, [REDACTED]

Ind. Memb.: Steven M. Newell, [REDACTED]

New DCA Address List with Updated Phone Numbers

I shall be issuing a new DCA Address List with the next circular and will update the phone numbers to the new system which is due to come into operation fully on 16 April next year. The new-style numbers are already operating alongside the old code. In most cases it just means an extra 1 after the 0 in the area code but codes for Leeds, Sheffield, Nottingham, Leicester and Bristol change completely. Please check that your phone number on the address label is correct and let me know if it's wrong so I can update it properly for the new list.

ALL AREA PHONE CODES QUOTED IN THIS CIRCULAR ARE THE UPDATED ONES.

DCA NEWSLETTER NO. 85

Newsletter No. 85 is in the process of being compiled and it will be available at the Council Meeting on 12 November. Your deadline is 10 October, so don't forget to send news, views, letters, etc. ready for No. 85 direct to the Editor:

DCA Newsletter Editor, Terry Rayner, [REDACTED]

FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER AND/OR NOTICEBOARD

Hon. Sec./Treas., Jenny Potts, [REDACTED]

CCPC MEETS LIST

Saturady 10th December	Knotlow - Hillocks exchange
Sunday 18th December	Tatham Wife Hole
Saturday 7th January	Lancaster Hole
Sunday 8th January	Peak Cavern
saturday 21st January	Vesper Pot