

CCPC



Newsletter No.26

November 1990

NEW CHARGES FOR GEAR

As from last month, the charge for hiring gear from the central store has been adjusted to be realistic with replacement prices etc. The new charges are:-

- OVERSUITES - £1.50 per day (Not available for arduous trips)
- HELMETS - £1.00 per day
- LAMPS - £1.00 per day
- SRT KITS - First 4 trips free, then £3.00 a day for full set.

Please try and book well in advance and return gear at a sensible time. Staffordshire CC have priority over certain gear.

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SETBACK TO PEAK DEPTH RECORD

Readers of the caving press may recently have noticed a claim to the record for finding the deepest shaft in the Peak district. The claimant, a Mr Ralph Johnson claims a shaft near to Magpie mine discovered during a CRO search, having a depth of 500 ft. (?) Self appointed rule setters have tried to pour scorn on this record, claiming that it doesn't count as the shaft is not normally accessible to the caving public. Do I detect sour grapes?

BBQ

By all accounts the Barbeque at Shugborough Hall was a 'right good do' (despite the weather) - the highlight being a 'Berger' slide show by Paul Deakin FRPS (etc). If you managed to avoid paying and can't sleep at night the costs were £1 plus £1 a day (ie 1 day = £2, 2 days = £3 - dead easy) plus a donation towards Cave Rescue Organisation for the slide show. Cheques to Ralph (no credit cards accepted).

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KNOTLOW COMES UP SMELLING OF ROSES

It is rumoured that the dead sheep has been removed from the 210' shaft at Knotlow and air is once again fit for human beings to breath. The National Farmers Union have sent out a reminder to all it's members pointing out the reasons for not disposing of sheep down shafts.

THE LIONEL PARKINSON GUIDE TO SAFE RIGGING

For my first example of safe rigging, I have chosen Alum Pot in North Yorkshire. This is a lovely cave and a fantastic trip to the bottom, if you manage to get that far.

There are several routes to the bottom but I have chosen to highlight the straight route down the main shaft. The first part of the pitch to the ledge is about 120' and for this I strongly recommend the Edelrid 90mm. It is very strong rope and has been known to take the breaking strain of a Boeing 747 falling 36,000'. For this tyrip, I suggest that you take about 10 Km as 9 Km could be cutting it a bit fine.

RIGGING

To rig this pitch you start on the tree towards the edge of the bottom path, the redwood. From there you take the rope up to the top path and through the fork in the tree behind which you put in a backup belay (don't forget to backup the backup as well). After that throw the rope to the other side and tie it to the other large tree with about 20m of supertape and nine or ten shock knots for good measure.

Now that you have backed up to all the trees, you think that you are safe, but what if a plague of tree eating locusts comes along? - then you are knackered! -so you need a main backup of course.

There are three options for this, some better than others. First of all, there's Caving Supplies in Buxton. But Phil Brown would probably try to sell your rope to someone else while you were still hanging onto it, so not always a good idea.

Next, there's Ingleborough Common, but you never know if some nosey rambler will mess with it so it's not safe enough, after all, your life may depend upon it.

The third option in my opinion is the best, Inglesports in Ingleton. If you backup to this it could stand a 20 Megaton nuclear warhead going off within 500 yards, but anything less and your rope disintegrates so it's still not completely bombproof. There is always a certain element of risk in caving.

So that's just about it for Alum Pot, and remember the golden safety rule for caving: don't go, rig it my way.

Rob

CHRISTINE SCRAGG

It is with regret that I have to inform you of the death of Christine on 20th October at the NSRI.

Christine has been ill for some time but on each occasion that members contacted her she was without complaint, bearing her illness with bravery that defies description.

Christine was introduced to CCPC more than a decade ago by Alan whom she later married. They have two children - Adina aged three and Emma aged one year old.

She helped the club in many ways acting as minutes secretary (she was far from complimentary about my writting) and taking on the thankless task of arranging club 'dos'. Her confrontations with Tony became legendary.

She will be sadly missed and our thoughts go out to Alan and the children.

Ralph

WHEELING AND DEALING IN THE TATRAS

I have been asked to write an account of the financial situation our party faced on the Czechoslovakia trip, June/July 1989. It's a long story!

When Tom Piskula first contacted Liam, he wrote that we would have an exchange trip with an equal number of Czech cavers. We would go first as they had other plans for the next year. In their country, they would pay our expenses including spending money, petrol etc. and vice versa when they visited England. Previously, a few of our party had visited Bulgaria and we had an idea of how valuable Western currency is in the Eastern Block. You could exchange money at 4 to 5 times the official rate.

When we arrived in Pilsen, Robert and Lenka met us at the train station and took us off to see a church (the first of many) and then on for lunch. Tom had left in his keeping 14,000 Koruns (Kcs). 1,000 for each of us for which we had to sign for. After getting lost a number of times (Robert's map reading, everyone will agree, leaves a lot to be desired), we arrived at Lipovec. There, we met Tom and his brother Michael along with Melos, Blanka, Pavai and Eva.

After a special Czech dish (you guessed it, dumplings, pork and sauerkraut) and a number of quite palatable beers, I went over to talk to Tom explain that reading between the lines, we thought that he did not want to go to England and what exchange rate did he want for the money. He replied that he wanted the official rate which he quoted as 12Kcs : £1. (the official rate was actually 15Kcs : £1 and I thought this was very greedy and with a few beers in my stomach I disagreed with him and left to discuss the situation with the others.

Robert was furious with Tom and took Kev and Mark outside to explain how much we could receive on the black market (40Kcs : £1).

We decided that we could not stay if we had to use Tom's 'official rate'. We went to a room and discussed what we had learned from Robert and decided to pay 35Kcs : £1. Alternatively, we could buy money elsewhere and give Tom his money back, or simply leave and go elsewhere as we were free to travel the country as restrictions were not as severe as they were a few years ago.

The next day, Tom and Rob had left and we explained to Micheal that we could not afford to buy petrol, food or anything else and that we would have to go home after one week. We told him that we would accept 35Kcs or would take one of the other options. At this point, he seemed as though he disagreed with Tom and although he could not agree with us (Tom is in a very strong position as Chairman of their club) he said that he would put forward our proposals.

Later, after a number of very interesting show caves, Eva came up to me very secretly with a note from Rob and 8,000Kcs. The note, which I was asked to burn afterwards (such is the way of spies) read that Tom was acting illegally by asking for money and an exchange should take place. The money was to repay Tom and then if necessary we should leave his company. Rob had arranged alternative accommodation with Lenka's parents and he could also arrange most of the caving trips that Tom had planned for us. The top black market rate was 75Kcs : £1 but this was too high for him and his friends; he could accept 60Kcs : £1.

Eva had mentioned Robert's name when giving me the note and Pavai had overheard this and told Micheal. Not wishing to get Robert into trouble, we stuck to the exchange rate of 35Kcs for Tom.

Tom and Rob returned two days later and after consultation with Micheal, John Gillett and myself, we retired to a bedroom to sort things out (that's one way of doing it - Ed). Tom at first refused to budge saying that he had clearly stated

his intention in the correspondence with Liam. Luckily I had all the letters with me, but when asked to read them out, he declined. He wanted us to exchange 1,000Kcs a week plus pay for our accommodation. At this rate it would cost us approx. £250 each. This I doubt any of us could afford.

I gave Tom our alternatives and eventually he agreed although we told him we would only require 1,000Kcs spending money. This worked out at a cost of £57 each. We rounded this up to £60 for goodwill.

We returned downstairs and started to drink, all relieved that the ordeal was over. Whilst smiling at us he was saying in Czech how bad we were and we had gone back on our word. He also told the Czechs not to change any money with us.

After the initial problems, Micheal changed some money with John, but all the others were changing via myself with Robert at 60Kcs. This made the holiday very cheap. Kev and myself bought top of the range Koflach ski boots for £57 (more than £200 in the UK), beer was 14p a litre and you could fill your car's tank for £5.

On the second week we were taken to a very posh restaurant. By this time we were all fed up with Tom ordering everything for us and so Robert translated the menu (much to Tom's displeasure).

We started with vegetable soup (with meat stock - tough for us vegetarians) followed by trout in garlic or chicken "curry" and chocolate pancakes, all washed down with three beers each. Tom and the other Czechs were very anxious that we would not have enough money to pay. Tom was smirking and was overheard to say to Pavel (by our bilingual spy) that we would have to change more money with him. There were 22 of us eating at the table and when the bill came at the end, we laughed - 75p per head. Tom's face was a picture!

I hope that this account will help any future visitors to this wonderful country. The problem was caused only by the greed of one man. All the other Czechs in the club were superb and although not saying anything to his face, they kept turning their noses up when he spoke. [If they get thrown out of the club, they could not rejoin any other and would find it difficult to travel to the West or even meet Westerners]. Myself and others have said that this was probably the best holiday we have ever had and are looking forward to returning to go skiing. [Derek and Jane did return in February; Robert and Lenka are now living in England - Ed].

P.S. A very hospitable couple that we met in the Low Tatras are interested in a small exchange trip, possibly 5 people (a real exchange trip!). If anyone is interested, let me or John Gillett know and we will tell you how to go about it.

Derek



HOLIDAYS

WANTED - Crampons and ice axe. Phil c/o Leek 387995 (Bill Bentley Home for Retired Cavers).

DURACELL BATERIES
£1.20 Ralph

FOUND - Wally of the Year Award. Contact P Ton.

FOR SALE - CCPC 'T' shirts (blue) £3.50
Vests (various) £2.50
Hooded tops (pukey yellow) £2.50
Other 'T' Shirts £2.50 See Ralph.

PERSONAL If 'ON' (or is it 'NO') contacts Ralph it could be to his/her advantage. Does the figure '8' mean anything?

CELLS - 10 hrs, 6 months guarantee, £5.00

HEADSETS - Suitable for above, £5.00. Why not treat yourself to a spare?

STOP PRESS - Large members of CCPC definitely cannot get through Shit Pot - ask Keith!

HAS ANYONE FOUND MY WELLY? Left NCB size 10 Mark (0625) 26946

I JUST put this little bit in to fill up the space at the bottom of the column and make it look neat.

GLOSSARY

ADIT - something you may not have done for a long time(or ever).
ANASTOMOSIS - abusive old testament prophet.
BEDDING PLANE- tool usefull for cleaning lonely male cavers blankets.
BELAY - stopping mate on the way to the bar and persuading him to buy you a larger.
BOULDER CHOKE - result of trying to eat your way out of a cave.
CAVE - place to avoid.
CAVE PEARLS - cavers of dubious sexuality (best avoided).
CAVERN - miniscule shit-hole.
CHAMBER - two places useful to pee in.
CRAWL - best way of being nominated to join CCPC.
DEADS - incompetent, unlucky or drunk cavers.
DOLOMITE - Type of ferrous deposit mainly found in scrap yards.
DUCK - see "cave pearls".
EFFLUENT CAVE - Carlswark Cavern.
ERRATIC - caver leaving pub.
FAULT - let he who is without sin....
FORMATION - very slow congregation of hung-over cavers prior to 'meet'. Also dirty brown mud spattered thing found in caves.
GINGING - that stuff which falls on your head in lead mine entrances (not to be confused with hung-over cavers being sick).
JOINT - way of getting arrested.
LEVEL - something that is certain.
LIFELINE - a mutual suicide pact.
MASTER CAVE - place frequented by organised parties and novices during bouts of heavy rain.
PHREA - word unknown in most caving shops.
POT - see "joint".
POTHOLE - another place to invent an excuse for avoiding.
RAKE - a bit of a lad, but best kept clear of if of the "cave pearl" type.
RESURGENCE - something experienced after breakfast at "Bennies".
RISING - that feeling felt in the pit of the stomach at the top of a pitch after a heavy night.
RIFT - source of nasty smell from caver in front in tight crawl.
RUCKLE - pile of cavers after yet another heavy night... you'll probably find Mark L at the bottom.

SYPHON - handy for eeking out your Scotch.
SOUGH - term used to describe well known equipment vendors wife, AKA Winnie.
SPELEOLOGY - totally pointless hobby.
SQUEEZE - something to do with mortgage rates and the reason you can't afford to replace worn out gear.
STALAGMITE - something of a rarity in underground condition.
STEMPLE - type of subteranian chime in joke only understood by people who have seen same dead cat six times.
SWALLOW - essential when drinking.
TACKLE - what Lionel spends 20 minutes standing on during practicing mid-pitch rescue (I think this may have deprived me of my 2nd child).
TETHER - lots of fun if you are into restraint, red hot electrified barbed-wire etc.
TRAVERSE - persuade other people to do this during pitch rigging etc.

Anyone know any others?

Nigel.

CREWE CLIMBING & POTHOLING CLUB JOURNAL. VOL. 2 & 3.

Vol. 2: 53pp with pullout surveys. Vol. 3: Bigger than Vol. 2 but pages unnumbered with pullout surveys. Available from Ralph Johnson, 92 Long Valley Rd, Biddulph, Stoke on Trent, ST8 6QZ. Price 2.50.

The last Crewe C.P.Cl. Journal I saw was Volume 1, back in 1984, before a trip to the Gouffre Berger. This one contained a useful guide on rigging the cave and we made a good deal of use of it on our trip. I opened up these two new volumes in anticipation of some more useful and interesting reading; I was not to be disappointed. Both volumes have been well produced on a word processor and have plastic ring binders.

The first half of Vol. 2 deals with the caves of the Jura, a region in mid-Eastern France near to the Swiss border. This section is an extremely readable account of the clubs exploits in this popular caving region. The longest and deepest caves are listed at the end with over 30 caves longer than 1km. A detailed description of the Réseau du Verneau, which is the fourth longest cave in France, is given (-387m, 28.5km long) along with good descriptions and tackle lists for several other caves. At the end is a list of source references; very useful. The next article deals with caving in Belgium in Easter 1984. Again this is a useful guide for those intending to visit this area. Following on from this is a potted guide to the larger cave systems in North Wales. There is some good caving in North Wales and if you are not familiar with it this article is well worth a read. The remainder of the Journal is taken up with some entertaining articles on equipment.

Volume 3 has a more varied format with descriptions of caving trips in varied areas of both France and Spain including the Vercour, Maritime Alps, Cantabrian Mts and Pyrennes. There is a detailed section on various aspects of exploration by the club in the PSM system which makes useful reading. In conclusion then, two very useful Journals for anyone wanting to know more of caving in either France or Spain. One small gripe however. It would have been better if the pages of Vol.3 had been numbered and that the items had been grouped together more by country.

Andy Hall

WILDERNESS LECTURES

Worldwide Adventure Lecture Series

for Winter 1990/91

BIRMINGHAM

see inside for details of FREE DRAW

Venue:

Lecture Theatre
The Dept. of Electrical and Electronic Engineering
Pritchatt's Road, off Edgbaston Park Road
University of Birmingham

Ticket Prices:

Advance £3.00 At the Door £3.50
Concessions £2.50

Season Tickets £15.00

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Snow and Rock 021 236 6816

14 Priory Queensway, Birmingham B4 6BS
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Wilderness Lectures 0272 633013



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Cecilia Neville

23rd November
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Pat Littlejohn

14th December
Skiing off the Beaten Track
Rob Collister

25th January 1991
Underground in Samarkand
Dick Willis

22nd February 1991
A Slimmer's Guide to the Himalayas
Jim Curran

15th March 1991
Dolphins & Diving in Truk Lagoon
Horace Dodds

All Lectures begin at 7.30 pm

see over for ticket prices and venue details

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CAPTION COMPETITION No 8



Study the photo and use your skill/experience to fill in the caption to indicate what Martin / Tipple / the voyeur saying/thinking.

Best entries to be included in a forthcoming newsletter.

CAPTION COMPETITION No 8.

Martin/Tipple/voyeur

Meiv/George/Photographer "....."

Please send me a copy of "Big Boys Bondage Monthly" ☐

Please give/post entries to Mark Lovatt

83 Paradise St
Macclesfield
SK11 6QP

INVITATION TO TENDER

BCRA invites tenders from self employed individuals and organisations for providing the following service.

General administration of the associations business which will include membership records, book-keeping, distribution and sale of publications and recording minutes at meetings. Attendance at Council meetings will be required along with other meetings organised by the Association.

Computer literacy and a knowledge of caving will be an advantage.

The post is expected to require an average of 15 hours per week and will initially be for a contract period of 1 year.

The service will be required to available from 1st January 1991 and offers must be received no later than 30th November 1990.

Offers to be sent to: Deputy Chairman - BCRA

Redacted

Tel:

NOMINATIONS FOR COUNCIL

I would like to nominate the following person as a member of BCRA Council from April 1st 1991.

Name (of Nominee) _____

Address _____

BCRA Membership Number (of Nominee) _____

Signed (Nominator) _____ Signed (Seconder) _____

Date _____ Date _____

BCRA Membership No. _____ BCRA Membership No. _____

I agree to be nominated for Council, signed _____ (nominee)

Nominations to be sent to Redacted

. To arrive not later than 31/12/90.
