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Speleo Spiel

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Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

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NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

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FORWARD PROGRAMME

Wed. Oct. 6 SOCIAL/GENERAL MEETING 7 Rupert Avenue, bring yourself and the usual socialising items.

Sat. Oct. 9 NIAGARA POT First find the entrance, but if you are keen see Nich Hume.

Sat. Oct. 16 CAULDRON POT Once again Nick is the bod to see about this wet masochistic exercise.

Wed. Oct. 20 COMMITTEE MEETING 7 Rupert Avenue. If you are an office bearer why not be brave and actually appear at a meeting?!

Wed. Oct. 27 PUB NITE Which pub? See Trev.

Most Weekends CAVING! See Trev. or Stuart or someone.

Wed. Nov. 3 SOCIAL/GENERAL MEETING Usual time and place.

EDITORIAL

The Annual Dinner has been and gone - it was probably one of the most successful yet with about thirty eight bodies in attendance. The venue was somewhat "posh" but everyone had a good time, some better than others by the look of them the next day (or more correctly, later the same day)!

This edition of Speleo Spiel contains the second part of Nick's New Guinea Adventures, two reports about a mid-week trip in the snow and some ramblings from Trev. about a recent K.D. trip. There are other goodies inside too, so read on

NEWS AND TRIVIA

- During the last week of school term 2, a group of about 30 Hutchins boys were shown the "tourist" section of Exit Cave over a period of three days. Trev. and Craig camped just outside the entrance while Rick Tunney, Mike Edwards, Nick and his mate Rik and Stuart went down on various days to help out. A mad rush back with six people plus gear in one car to meet Terry O'Leary from Sydney at the Wheatsheaf finished off a pleasant if somewhat slack trip.
- New comer to TCC Mike Edwards from the great homeland of Paddy Pallin fame was married recently to a 5th year medical student

named Chris. All the best to you both for the future and may the medicine be good but not too expensive!

- This esteemed and highly reputable publication will shortly be in need of a new cover picture. If you have any action/sporting type pix please bring them along to the next meeting for perusal.
- Those long legged spiders often seen in cave entrances, Hickmania troglodytes, were recently the subject of a short article in "The Mercury" contributed by Alison Green, the curator of invertebrate zoology at the Museum. Maybe our local rag could be persuaded to include an article sometime on the sport of caving.

CIRCULATING IN KHAZAD DUM

K.D. is a very varied system with at the moment 3 entrances JF 4, 5 and 14. Through trips are possible though to my knowledge have never been accomplished or attempted by TCC alone. For some time the Serpentine passage has intrigued me and to the club's knowledge this passage has only been traversed once, on a bolting and surveying trip by Peter Shaw and Co. back in the early 70's. I would be interested to hear of anyone "doing" it since.

On a very wet weekend 4/9/82 a TCC party set out on an exchange trip to descend the Serpentine route and return by the standard "Tourist Route" and vice-verca. Hoping the tackle list was accurate our party of Nick Hume, Janine McKinnon, Chris Davies and Trevor Wailes armed with ropes, ladders, traces and bolt hangars entered the Serpentine. The other party of John Salt, Stuart Nicholas and Rick Tunney with their share of gear also entered the Serpentine as far as the first climb down to the junction. Everyone who has been into K.D. must have noticed the left hand passage at this junction as it is possibly the obvious way on. In the past it was reputed to be wet with part of the main stream flowing into the entrance of JF 4. However, the main stream now by-passes this "dry" entrance and is totally absorbed by the main streamway. Here the party split and we continued down the delightful Serpentine route to the first pitch. The passage is basically horizontal with several climbs in good rock - the walls are solid and it makes for a pleasant change from scrambling through rock piles. A well scoured pristine easy passage just wide enough to be comfortable so fast time can be made. I was hoping our total trip would be dry but a small inlet on the left issued a small stream that was to make the pitches damp but not uncomfortable.

Some time was lost at the top of the first pitch as we looked for a suitable rigging point which eventually was found by Chris in the shape of a bolt (an old bolt). With the 25m pitch finally rigged and descended amid a shower of drips we continued down similar passage-way and short climbs to the 17m pitch where, for a change, belay points were in abundance. A fine "jug handle" beneath the last climb into the small chamber was located in the stream bedrock and with a sling back up I descended the rope to a roomy ledge 7m down. A small pool here could be baled to give a dry descent into a large aven with a collapsed roof littering the floor. Here the system took a change in direction and a further drop of about 8m was encountered. Not being sure whether this was a pitch or not I free climbed down and came to conclusion that it was. Not only would a ladder here be an assistance but it would also provide the exchange party with a route guide, for if they were following the stream they would lose time routing through the talus blockage in which the stream flows.

A short distance further on is a visually attractive(!) 10m pitch

with a bolt belay requiring a hanger - as rock sculpture goes this pitch is a delight and the ladder hangs about 0.5m off the wall for its entire length. At the base of this pitch there appears to be a dry inlet rift which is not shown on the survey (existing) but could yield more passage. A short passage with a constricting boulder gives way to the final 5m pitch into a small aven where our exchange party were patiently waiting for us consuming jelly beans, cigarettes and Mars Bars. Sitting here took me back a few years to Yorkshire and the Kingsdale system as visually it reminded me of a Simpsons Pot - Swinsto exchange trip with roughly the same depth descended but less effort expended. For our party the trip out would be familiar but for Stuart's group it was basically unknown. We followed what was left of the Serpentine route to the cold, raging waters of the main passage up which we trogged to the base of the main inlet water fall that was in full spate. The air, spray filled and raging with the fury of a force 9 gale made conversation impossible and with diminished visability route finding to the base of the "dry" 23m bypass pitch was awkward.

The ascent went smoothly although the supposedly dry 23m pitch was wet as was the following 10m ladder pitch. Avens which were normally dry sported waterfalls and the dull roar of the main stream could be constantly heard. Chris and Nick derigged to the 30m pitch which meant there was little hold up and the ascent of this pitch went smoothly with only Chris having a short wait. Our Exodus from here was straight forward although Nick and myself used the "scaling pole" to drop into the main stream and exit via the rocky streamway, a quick but damp way to the surface.

The other team were out into the rainy spring day ahead of us after a short but very enjoyable 4hr trip.

NOTE: 1. The wooden scaling pole is quite rotten as Nick found out when part of it disintegrated in his hands. It should be replaced or used with great care.

2. The bolts appear to be in good condition (ie. they did not break!)

GROUPS: Going Chris Davies, Nick Hume, Janine McKinnon and Trevor Wailes.

Coming Stuart Nicholas, John Salt, Rick Tunney.

Tackle for the Serpentine Route:

1st pitch	25m rope	2 rope protectors	1 hanger, 1short trace
2nd "	17m "	2 " "	1 medium, 1 " "
3rd "	8m ladder		1 " trace
4th "	10m "		1 hanger, 1short trace
5th "	5m "		1 medium trace

Tackle for the "Tourist" Route: (Bolted)

1st pitch	5m ladder	
2nd "	30m rope	
3rd "	9m ladder	
4th "	23m rope	2 rope protectors

GROWLING SWALLET 4th September, 1982

Party: Richard Hortle, Stefan Eberhard.

God knows why but Stefan was keen for something hard and wet, with exploration potential straight after crawling out of P.N.G. I was fool enough to be in on it too, mainly through being twice stopped at the entrance So Saturday saw Stefan and I marching towards Growling Swallet while others were on the way to the ex-deepest.

As was expected, Growling was. The entrance pumped with more water than had driven Nick, Trevor, Stuart and I back some weeks previously. However, a wetsuit for me and long underwear and masochism for Stefan saw us along the main streamway to the beginning of the new extension. Here foam on the walls and ceiling attested to the fact that this area would have been inaccessible in the last few days. At the first hand-line I managed to lose 3m of altitude I'd just gained and twisted an ankle. A hasty tabacco spin administered by Stefan soon had me more or less OK and we continued on. The section of passage prior to the aven at the extension's end was flooded. So we waded and finally swam, kept afloat by the cold and more unoriginal swearing from Stefan.

Stefan had an uninspired scramble up the aven but we soon turned to sodden chocolate and unlightable cigarettes before starting back. The water had risen while we were in the extension and the streamway presented a sporting and very exhilarating return. Some acrobatics and a will to live finally produced daylight. In general, a fantastic trip in awe-inspiring conditions.

Richard Hortle.

MID-WEEK CAVING OR HOW TO BUILD A SNOW PERSON

Various bods with nothing better to do decided that a caving trip during the week would provide some excitement between the weekends. And so it was that Trev. Nick, and after a wake-up phone call, Rolan assembled at Stu's place and consumed cups of tea at a great rate on a recent snowy Thursday morning.

With the clock chiming 10am we set off in the 4WD sound lounge with high (deep?) hopes of pushing Growling or a couple of the shafts near Serendipity.

Following the usual visit to the shop and then passing the time of day with Kim Creak in the A.N.M. office, 4WD was engaged and dodging a couple of heavily laden log trucks, the 'Cruiser' eventually made it up the Nine Road. The scenery was picture-book stuff - 150mm or more of snow on all the roads, snow covered trees hanging low over the track and Mt. Field West looming white and wild in the background.

Needless to say snow-balls were the order of the day but sanity eventually left us and a decision to actually go caving was made. Rolan knew of a small hole further up the Nine Road in need of surveying (the original plan was abandoned because of lack of interest). A snow person was built at the entrance to mark it for future reference and an extremely grotty 25m ladder pitch descended to a rift-like bottom chamber. Climbing 6m to a higher level revealed a small rock callapse in an equally small passage which at one time probably linked to a nearby very large doline. A surface survey was carried out to a junction on the Nine Road.

Emerging back on the surface to brilliant sunshine, mud was removed from overalls by rolling down a snow covered section of the road - a most effective process!

A stop at the "Park" concluded a very pleasant if slight off-beat day.

Stuart Nicholas

SNOW MAN POT September, 1982

Party: N. Hume, S. Nicholas, T. Wailes and R. Eberhard.

As a trip to look at some promising holes near Serendipity we were doomed from the start. Various delays meant we got a later than usual start, plus almost a foot of snow on the ground which although

very picturesque didn't tend to promote the desire to go bush bashing. We decided on plan B which involved surveying a hole not far from Owl Pot. This had been located and explored by R.E. and S.E. in August, 1980 and although small and scrungy, due to the close proximity of a large doline was thought to have potential to do something!

The entrance is a small slot which was half concealed by the layer of snow. Three ladders were used to rig the 22m entrance pitch, which drops down a muddy slope to a rather non-descript chamber. This chamber doesn't really go anywhere, although at one end a climb up a bank leads to a talus blockage. A survey of what was now SNOW MAN POT was carried out and in an incredible display of dedication Rolan and Trev. did an overland survey connecting the said cave and doline with a marked point of the F9 road.

Seriously though, a systematic approach to surveying caves and accurately plotting their entrances is necessary in any cave area, and it is hoped the club will continue its recent consistent record in this respect.

Rolan Eberhard.

FOLLOWING BELOW IS THE SECOND HALF OF NICK HUME'S EPISTLE ON
MULLER '82 - TOURIST CLASS

A bit of bushwhacking up to Mamo was a welcome change of pace, strolling midst hundred foot Pandanni. Tales abounded of carpet snakes that could drop from trees and crush you to death, three coils was all it took we were told. While studying the jungle canopy for these horrors I managed to tread on a small copperhead basking on the track. The going on the plateau was fairly indirect, meandering by huge dolines, at times within inches of substantial drops. The track spiralled down the inside of one crater to the very impressive Mamo campsite, here one lone festerer greeted me with a cup of tea. This festerer, believe it or not, had sprained it's ankle falling out of the toilet.

The living quarters were located inside the entrance mouth of "Mamo Kananda", previously "Hadia Yaneabogairi." Two pitches of five metres, two of ten metres, one of twenty metres and one of thirty five metres, linked to the major cave level at "Leaptover." The top pitch began just a few metres from my bunk, indeed you could smell dinner on the go from two to three pitches down depending on what it was. "Bloody luxury " Trev would say.

Expedition politics were interesting, the renaming of "Mamo Kananda" was one particular gem. This side of the valley were saying, "..... Atea's got more goodies than we have", meanwhile on the other bank they were saying the exact opposite. However, both sides seemed sufficiently stocked with life's essentials, namely Mutros tobacco sticks and Negrita rum, gasp, choke. Factions developed out of this fireside gossip and to be honest it was all bloody good fun.

Our lead in "Roll A Go Go" was a mere three quarters of an hour from the entrance and what a lead it was; stream passage three metres wide, several high and going like the clappers. In the first five hour trip we clocked up a kilometre of passage and found two more "ginormous" leads, all active. What a place!

Soon as we emerged from the cave we crunched our survey data in a Sharp PC 1500 "pocket" computer. Co-ordinates and traverse length detail promptly appeared on paper tape, together with a scale diagram of survey legs, so it was a simple matter to overlay the master survey and draw in the day's work. Same day survey.

Hal was also put to use printing the camp menu, a typical repast being as follows.

LA MENU

SOUPE DE JOUR

CONSOMME DE KOKURU AVEC NUDE - L

DINNER

PASTA SPAGHETTE DE POISSON AVEC DE
FROMAGE LIQUIDE

DESSERT

GEL DE FRAIS

BON NUIT

CAFE OU MILO
AVEC CAPSULE DE MYADEC

Gargling the unset jelly was forbidden.

A Westralian had a knack for thinking up the grossest names for cave features. "Kit Canyon" was a superb stream passage continuing from one of our previously found leads. For much of it the roof was too high to be seen. Following it upstream led us through a huge chamber to the base of a waterfall that plunged out of the darkness. The plunge pool here fed another decent stream passage, which we investigated until stopped by a pitch. By then we felt we had our daily quota, including two more major leads.

Swiftlets navigate these passages by echo location. You expect a face full of bat when you here their click-clicking sound approaching but they zoom past quite nicely. The occasional patch of feathers in the mud indicates they are not always clever enough to elude rising waters. However, its pretty amazing how they build perfectly shaped nests in the absolute darkness.

My modified Petzl had many times the light output of a Premier, comparable in fact to an Oldham but with more useful dispersion, naturally consuming more carbide to achieve this. A measure of its success was the number of times heads bobbed up to relight off mine, annoyingly frequent in wet sections. I was often pushed ahead to illuminate the the passage and minimize blinding of others. A Sydney caver with a similar setup had what is known as a "Petzl Meltdown", a terminal condition resulting when the piezo starter jams over the lit jet. The value of my spare starter skyrocketed after this event.

"Inguanadon" is to Mamo what the "Ship Canal" is to the Atea and I cursed not lugging my camera up here. It is a huge chamber, up to fifty metres wide and three hundred metres long. Floored mostly with large breakdown blocks, but smooth enough in spots to see fo tprints from 1978. After two laps of this impressive room, the two of us eventually located a well concealed passageway leading to new ground. A side passage was breathing heavily and obviously linked to a sizeable chamber, but we were prevented from exploring this fully by a pitch. We surveyed a few hundred metres upstream from "Screaming Frog" and found several reasonable leads in one of the most enjoyable caving trips I have ever done, and nearly my last. I used my Rappel Rack as a Fifi hook on a pitch top traverse at "Six Molar". As soon as I removed my weight from this, it leapt out in my hands, so beware of not tightening your screwgate krabs.

The porters were never keen to carry firewood from very far away to

the site of the campfire. This meant that trees were often skillfully felled into the camp itself, with never a mention of the word, "timber". Together with spontaneous treefall, this fed to a keen suspicion of creaking sounds.

We set off on the four day walk to the road, leaving behind a porters strike at Atea. It was hard to pick up the track in places, particularly as the Nationals use brightly coloured track marking tape for hair decoration. First night we were given hot food, shelter and fleas at Kirupes house, after a cold wet day. The rest of the walk was really excellent, wandering through spectacular arete karst up to the panorama of a nine thousand foot pass. Its quite something walking past a mountain higher than Mt. Tasman that has no tree line. In the last day one of our crew was ripped off by a pickpocket in, of all places, a policeman's home. We finally all squeezed into the Expedition Landcruiser for a massive binge at Hagen.

Meeting the many characters amongst Australian and overseas cavers was enough to make the trip worthwhile. Also I learn't a lot of course. The method of surveying while you actually explored was in stark contrast to my Tasmanian experiences. I had hoped for something really deep, but all areas: Legari, Hegaibagu, Mamo, Atea and the Nali proved disappointing in this respect. Shale layers within the varying quality limestone restrict what would otherwise be substantial vertical potential, though there may be some ray of hope as "Kananda Pugwa" has since gone to over 500 metres.

Mamo was the success story, with "Mamo Kananda" yielding 24 kilometres of passage up to the time of my leaving. It has subsequently been linked to "Kananda Pugwa" and extended to over fifty kilometres. The challenge now at Mamo would be to link separate doline networks in a "skies the limit" type situation, probably worth another trip. Irian Jaya also has much potential, and joining an expedition there would have the added lure of Karstens Pyramind at 16,000 feet. I'm not sure I'd recommend expeditions to everybody but then again, can't wait for Nettlebed.

Nick Hume.

WANTED

ICE CLIMBING GEAR: ICE HAMMER, ICE SCREWS,
SNOW STAKES ETC.

CONTACT ROLAN EBERHARD 39 6448 (H)

AND NOW FOR THE LATE NEWS

Following an unsuccessful attempt on Sunday, September 10 to dive the wreck of the S.S. Nord off Cape Pillar, Nick Hume and Stefan Eberhard turned their attention to the Junee Resurgence. Accompanied by Stuart for moral support and general sherpa duties, they dived the sump to check out their fixed lines, survey the submerged section and take photos for the grand children.

Nick's flash refused to, so he grabbed the line reel and left the survey to Stefan. Proceeding from the end of the fixed line on a starboard course, he emerged after about 30m travel in a 2m wide and 5m long chamber complete with straws hanging from the roof about 5m above.!

For those who don't see the significance of this, Nick had found the first air chamber in the system and by keeping even further to starboard on a future dive there is a very good chance of emerging in more extensive air chambers!