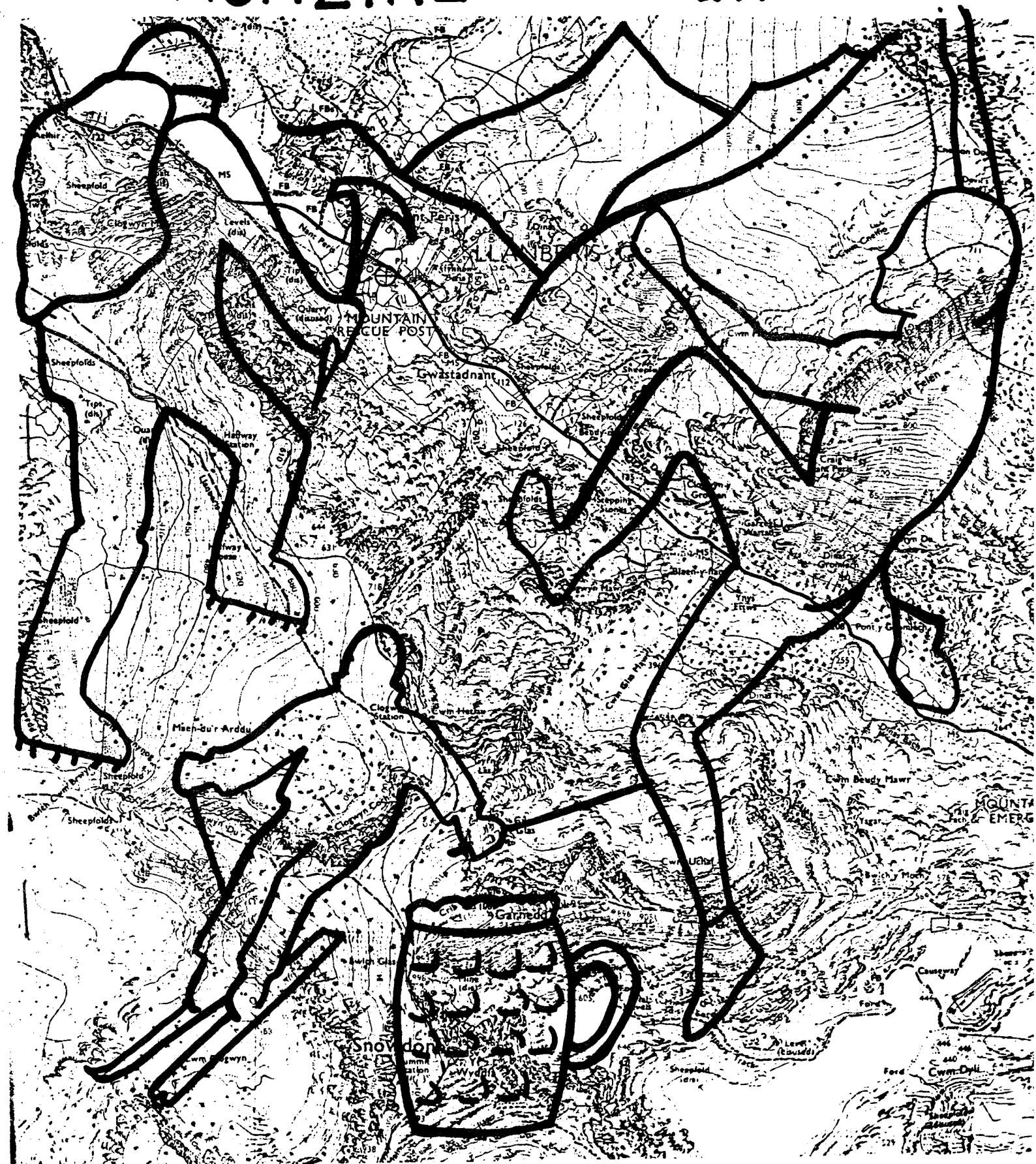


Jan '89



FROM THE EDITOR

Well here we are at last!

I make no apologies for the long lag time since the last magazine, you lot should be doing that.

Until last week, I still lacked enough articles to produce anything worthwhile, but after making one last effort of persuasion, the committed put pen to paper, I put two fingers to the typewriter, and here we are - a bumper magazine with some varied and interesting articles.

CONTENTS (not in order)

Chairman's report

USA climbing :.....by Charlie and Sarah

Mt Kenya (nearly)... by Dan

Hebrides (kids don't keep you homebound).. by Meg

The interior decor of the Crown and other stories by Ian

Dream of White Horses .. by Roger

Pakistan Karakorum (the text book version)..by Sue (me)

Pakistan (the real version) by Sue (London)

The World according to the Ceunant -map

The Alps in summer by Joe (who needs a sunhat)

Bridge Jumping by Pete (my lodger, who was fed up with my moans about no articles)

The Boys in Spainby Spencely

Route cleaningby Ewan (knownwell to those who use the cottage)

Stop Press

THE CROSSWORD Its O.K. ,theyr'e mostly four letter words!

Those who have been to the cottage will have seen the tremendous amount of work that has been done. Well done Charlie and all the others who worked hard.

But.. not enough hut users are doing their fair share of routine cleaning up.-
- Ask Joe about bonfire night- When did YOU last mop the floor/sweep the kitchen or clean the bogs?

Don't forget to send in those photo's for the common room....Blackmail corner?

See you all at the dinner - suitably dressed, I hope!

Sue Robins

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I would first like to apologise for not being more communicative during the last few months. Events, especially at the hut have kept myself and most of the committee very busy.

I would first like to report a major event in Pembroke earlier last year. No, not the monster face (Huntsmans Leap) collapsing into the sea, but Henry Folkard, last known member of the Cle an Hand Gang finally succumbed to white rot, and is now seen wearing a very smart looking number (POD) full of chalk.

Last year has seen much work on the hut : Two new toilets and soil pipes (a very smelly affair). A new hot water system - one can now be the last into the shower and not freeze to death. The walls of the main bedroom have been made sound, and two new windows have been fitted. The bunks have been repaired or replaced. Unfortunately the rendering of the East wall will not now be completed until the Spring. All the gas cookers are now working, and the rendering has been completed around the fireplace.

I would like to thank every body who has assisted with these jobs, especially Derek Grimmitt and Dan Slatcher. I am sorry if anyone has been inconvenienced by the above activities, especially the lack of hot water and the problems with the toilets.

It is hoped that a large photo frame, similar to the one in Pete's Eats will be placed on the common room wall. Any suitable material (photographs) to be handed to myself or any members of the committee. (embarrassing, trivial and funny photographs especially wanted.

Finally, as perhaps most of you have now heard, the chairman's GTI suffered a trip into the scenery, and then was hit by a coach at a recent Pembroke meet. It is interesting to note that the scene of this accident was only 500 yds from the very spot the chairman's first VW was written off! I think I'm going slower !

P.S.

The Christmas dinner meet at Pembroke was blessed with the finest weather at Pembroke for some years. Among the many routes done (which included a first ascent) the most impressive was that of Richard Pearce on Cupids Bow, which was led in fine style until he decided to cross his ropes. On arriving at the top, he remarked that he had enjoyed his lead of the 'Arrow'. I hope they teach him how to read this term.

The meal at St Govan's was excellent, so apparently was the beer, although Richard Daldorph said his last pint might have been a bit off. (it could also have been the eggs). Sunday saw Richard and Sue take an early morning walk around the Lily ponds whilst the rest of us were climbing on the Crystal Slabs. Many thanks to Alan and his wife (landlord of the Olde Worlde Inne).

Writing this in Mid January, the first snow since Christmas has started to fall in the Western Alps. I hope this will provide a good base for everybody's ski trips.

Hope to see you all at the club dinner.

Charlie & The Lady "S".

STOP PRES

WANTED FOR TYN-LÔN

~~CAT TO CATCH MICE.~~
DOG TO CATCH CATS

DERBYSHIRE MOON
DRAINED BY HIPPI
ON MOUNTAIN BIKE!

POISE and think

Have you carefully considered how these changes may affect the lives of those who really do love the outdoors?

Privatisation of:

Water Authority--access charges--the rest.

Lat. Parks -entry charges already discussed.

Health--given the obvious consequences, should we have a club scheme?

Electricity--Chernoble is an excuse,

Sellafield and wylfa are the problems,

as a club we must care about our environment, because without it, we are'n't.

--and those who don't care, don't know.--

his don't be conned--

BOOK REVIEW

ONE MAN AND HIS GRASS

His valiant attempt to battle against the cruel world of mole, tyres and bonfires, single handed.

ONE MAN AND HIS BED

How his love of sleep outlasts the pressures and pleasures of outdoor life.

ONE WOMAN AND HER MATE

The story of a womans travels around the world with her partner. Together, at breakneck speed, they climb America, Australia, Ireland- you name it, and back again in time for tea.

Mexican Police hunt English
Bank Robber - last seen
heading South in Ferrari!

TO LET

De- luxe gaol cell in town
of your choice if you book
early for New Year 1990.
Irishmen welcome.

FAWR INURDED BY
BULLY
HENAGERIE.

THE WEATHER



OUTLOOK- An intense LOW
is beginning to deve lope
across the Alpine region.
Heavy falls of snow are
expected after 6th Feb.

Birmingham Stronghold.
under Threat! Most active
members are taking over
outposts of North Wales
and Sheffield!

ROUGHNECKS ON THE ROCHEFORT

Two weeks into the holiday and the boys are getting restless. Too much looseness had crept into our lives. Every route so far had seemed a contest with the shattered results of the perennial game between frost and gravity. Beautiful from a distance but close up , shattered wrecks. A bit like Joan Collins.

Dodging great shards of rock like arrows hurled down by malevolent Gods was certainly good for the reactions. The mighty mass of mountain, apparantly capable of holding itself up, seemed to fall to pieces under our weight - the final straws that broke the camel's back.

Something in the classic Rebuffat/Tiariatz line was called for, some light relief, a pleasant day out to ease pressure on the nerves.

So, off we go from the Torino Hut, setting out for the Rochefort Ridge at the ridiculous hour of 3.00am. Climbing in the Mont Blanc Range, for all its many rewards, has to come to terms with the human factor. Progress along the sharp corniced ridge could be problematical with guided parties and others poleaxed along it. Mont Blanc is a major industry. Many livelihoods are earned on its ridges and facets. Thousands are taught to be independent in the mountains by being taken by the hand.

Stumbling around in pitch blackness with no moon to help, we hoped we had beaten everyone to it. One and a half hours out from the hut and my brand new duracells have already given up the ghost. At this rate other batteries would only get you to the hut door.

Steve has forged ahead and was incommunicado somewhere in the black bulk of the face dropping down from the Geant to the glacier.

Ping, bang, crash, splat, crunch, zap, rattle, boing, doink went the sound of small stones.

"STEVE, WHERE ARE YOU ?"

No answer. Where the hell are we ? Certainly on the loose stuff for sure.

BAMMM, KAPOWW, KERRUNNCHH, BOOOM !!

Holy Mammamia, what was that? Surely not Steve, but certainly now the big stuff.

"STEEVVEE!"

No answer. Must have hurt his feelings. But wait, what was that ?

Italian voices could be heard from on high. Faint but definite. Are we to be taught a lesson ? God's messengers on Earth have usually been Italian.

SPLATT, KABOOOM !!

Surely others have not been daft enough to have started out earlier than us? Maybe they are on the way back. Or maybe it was J J Gallagher (Demolition Contractors) Italian Branch on a works outing. The air was filled with the sound of crashing and exploding rock. They must be on a full scale practice session at time and a half.

Noise and sparks help in avoidance operations. We grope off to the right, out of the firing line but onto a fine stretch of destabilised matter. So far the pleasant ridge stroll was not shaping up too well.

Somehow we reach the 'Dining-room' stone at the top of the ridge and below the final obelisk of the Dent du Geant. Dawn light is just beginning to flood over marvellous scimitars of snow glowing creamy white above unlit depths and leading on towards the Aiguille de Rochefort. Just ahead, crashing and crunching could still be heard as the Gallaghers moved off the final rocks onto the ridge. We were catching up.

We had a short rest, waiting for the sound of falling cornices. Steve rematerialised.

The ridge was in fine condition, sharp, steep sided and of perfect frozen neve. Big cornices overhung the French side. From the Geant the ridge is a series of frozen waves to the Rochefort with a few short rock steps and pinnacles along the way. One of these has a hole through which you actually crawl from one side of the ridge to the other, on hands and knees across the international frontier.

Half way along there was the most enormous explosion as a double decker sized chunk of rock hurtled down to the Lescaux glacier amidst a crescendo of noise and exploding ice. The main ridge on which we were standing actually shook. Must make a note to cancel these early morning ambles. Perhaps take up polar bear baiting instead. At this rate the Alps will be eroded to sea level in about a year. The Gallaghers are definitely getting better.

By way of compensation the dawn was glorious but with some cumulonimbus nasties starting to shape up in the middle distance. Great lighting effects but a shame about the stage we trod.

The final section up to the Aiguille de Rochefort is a 250ft wall of tot, at the base of which we caught up on the Italiano Gallagheriti busily demolishing in the wrong place. We took our chance, overtook in the correct groove and had the pleasure of a fine rocky summit to ourselves.

Eventually, amidst the sounds of hellfire and brimstone, the Gallaghers arrive. One of them speaks English. Incredibly another looks like some sort of guide and possible author of Dante's Inferno.

"Senore, where are you from, pal ?

"Lago Maggiore"

"Ah, not too much loose stuff in there eh ?"

"Keh ?"

"The people of Maggiore have very large feet, what ?"

"You are saying I have knocked zee rocks ?"

"Oh no, not you chief. Its just your friends feet must be one third bigger than we thought."

"I do not comprehend."

A murmured conversation with the others and we decide to start down before any more demolition operations can commence. Out comes the rope for the first time and a couple of abseils take us near the base of the tottering wall. Only an awkward groove and traverse remain. We rope up because of a general instability situation.

Mynette leads off and round a corner out of sight. Suddenly the bombardment recommences. We're too late⁸ The Gallaghers have reactivated and started descending in a climbing style perfected on the beaches of Lago Maggiore.

"Tone - get a MOVE on⁸" No reply. The Mynette has gone into dream mode. Rattles and crashes all round. Looks like our Italian friends will yet get the last laugh. Stuck in a groove I feel like the subject of an experiment at the CERN nuclear particle accelerator. Why didn't I take my helmet, prayerbook, last will and testimony. I could bequeath my speed skates to Mynette in the vain hope he would put them on.

At last the rope starts to move and like a butcher's dog I take my shredded self out of there pretty damn pronto. Jim and Steve do the same.

Two or three later parties are now approaching along the ridge, making for complex bypass operations on the razor sharp arete. The first pair are an obviously nervous, possibly German, woman and Italian guide. This time a real cool dude, cigarette casually dangling from lower lip, prominent badges of office, tottering client held nonchalantly on a leash. This is his place of work and he arrogantly thinks we will wait ages at some inconvenient passing place. But we are not lovable types. Oh no. Why only last night in the hut Mynette interrupted a noisily copulating couple with dire threats of being parted from their wedding tackle if they again did so much as breathe even slightly more than was justified by the altitude.

On they came, the Guido on smooth cruise control. On we went until right up nose to nose. This was a narrow situation with big drops. The client had long since lost her vorsprung dur technic. A last minute step out onto the wall of the void with a large evil grin supported on front points over 3000ft of space produced the merest tremor in the now not so casual cigarette and a stony, silent stare.

"O.k. Amigo, its safe to go past now but watch out for some clangers and bricks further on."

"Keh?"

They are great on the Continent for the non-waiting and non-queuing. On they come thinking that you are going to await their slow passing. But this is a good trick, this last minute jumping off, for producing the nervous palpitations. It worked on at least one more party.

Back under the Geant the weather was brewing up to a high voltage fit of temper over the summit. Amidst impending atmospheric violence the Geant was deleted from the sports plan. In a vortex of rising cloud the Gallaghers could just be seen making for the South Ridge. Self demolition was about to be added to their repertoire.

I breathed a sigh of relief. I could've done it anyway, being totally knackered. Sun stroked, I hadn't eaten or at least failed to hold anything down for the last five days. I persuaded myself I was in a bad way and started to wallow in a little self pity. Tony carried the contents of my rucksack and together with the now acclimatised Brady powered off into the distance. Steve kept me company.

At this point they say you call on reserves of strength, like a sort of expensive car with a spare tank. This is not true. You just get weaker and slower and more tired. Eventually you grind to a halt. I had reached the wobbling stage. I bumbled on keeping myself going by looking forward to the row we would have with the warden of the Torino for overcharging last night. Lovable types. Steve remarked how nice it was to do a solid route for a change. Am I starting to hallucinate already?

Joe Brennan

THE CEUNANT (A NEW MEMBERS VIEW)

When I walked through the door of the Crown on that fateful Wednesday evening in March, I was not surprised to see a bar that, given half the choice I would not normally step foot in unless it sold some wickedly tasty beer or I wanted a fight (I would hastily like to point out here, that I do prefer a good pint to a fight). Another observation that did not surprise me was that the room was full of tables and chairs, liberally scattered over a rather shabby red carpet. To add to these expected surroundings were the unfamiliar pictures recently bought from 'Athena ', hung majestically like huge great big (over the top or what) traditional oil paintings in gold guilt frames, waiting for someone to admire them. Keeping these company was the grandfather clock, the one thing in the pub that the bar staff should pay particular attention to. Now we have our full 20 minutes of drinking up time. (P.S. The Damb thing now even chimes since it's been fixed).

There was however, pouring out onto the pavement outside a very warm welcoming atmosphere, something that I would come to experience in all the pubs, places and dives where the Ceunant could be found. Little did I realise at this point, that this collection of dignified personnel would extract more trust out of me than the T.S.B. does from it's customers.

My first weekend where I might actually have to try and climb came in the following month of April. Hilary, James and myself were encouraged to drive 200+ miles (further than it is to my home in Whitley Bay) to a place that I had neither been to or heard of, Pembroke. We went straight to the pub, as we had no idea where the site was, and participated in a wee bit of throat lubricating. This might not of been the wisest of moves, not because of the gate being only 12 inches wider than the car but the fact James and Hilary had borrowed an unfamiliar tent and I a bivvy bag. I was fine, just crawl into the comfort of my doss bag protected from the elements in my bivvy and go to sleep, but not yet! A comment rose from the midnight air of " Where's the tent pegs ". I can't remember if this was a sweet female voice or a sweet male one, but it certainly wasn't all that sweet. So under the light of Udo's (pet name for my car) straining headlights we went about finding, cleaning and whittling twigs, branches, trees or any thing else that might help, including borrowed ice screws.

After the epic pitching session of the previous night I awoke to the prospect of eggs, beans or cheese on toast at Mrs Westons, which I was promised were her specialties. However it turns out that Mrs Weston only cooks her specialties anyway, thus relieving any doubts of the quality of food on the menu. After making the stodgy walk back to the field it was time for the

hardest task of the weekend, to find out where everybody (or anybody) was going to climb (this is still a problem that I have not yet fully overcome, whether I will do so in the future, I do not know). OK, so I end up following the last person out, that was to be expected as all three of us didn't know exactly what would be required for a day on the rock. Consequently last. Turn the ignition key, nothing, again nothing. Last night had cost more than a few hours less sleep, the battery was 'acieeeed' out, defunct, sewered (or is drained). Hilary at the wheel, James and myself pushing like there's no tomorrow (but there was, it turned out to be Sunday). Eventually it started and off we went to find the rest of the gang, not having a clue whether to turn right or left out of the gate, we headed for the only refuge available, Mrs W's. We stopped and asked a likely bunch of climbers if they had seen Steve Coughlan (at this point in time I was still struggling with the pronunciation of 'Ceunant') go past. Whether they did or not, does not really matter because they sent us off in the right direction, meeting Tony returning to see where we had got to, on the way. After all this, the weekend turned out to be a great success. The climbing and the sun all helped us to get hooked (on the sun of course).

Since that beautiful weekend I have been to this tropical headland (as it has been described to me on several occasions and by several different people) a further two times and each time it has been a complete washout. Including the time when I neglected to pack my borrowed bivvy away, under the false assurance that it was one hundred percent water proof. Only to find, when retiring for the night (in the pitch black of a moon less night and after a long day in the bar) that the head section had become a small water pillow. My first thought was 'oh no my sleeping bag' (or maybe the words were a little stronger than that) as that was also in there somewhere but as fortune goes I was quite lucky, a bump in my Karrimat had took it upon itself to act like a dam and the doss bag was only semi-damp. Thus allowing a relatively warm night in the car. Since this was written before the Christmas dinner I can only hope that the bad luck doesn't come in three's. (P.S. My luck was so bad this time that I didn't even get there as Graham S. (driver) fell ill thus no transport).

I have had to learn to expect some strange things since joining the club. Like the fact, that while playing pool you may, at any moment have your trousers pulled down around your ankles. This to a grown mature adult such as myself seems a rather strange way to go about putting off, a person about to make a vital shot. It seems far more practical to casually drop a piece of ice down their shirt (or trousers if this perversion still persists) guaranteeing a wobble of the shoulders thus increasing

the probability of a 'miss que'. Whereas the removal of the aforementioned clothing (if the victim remains cool) does not create any upper torso movement and thus no chance of a duff shot. The tactics for cheating must be right or else there is no point in trying and you might as well win with the skill available. Even if it is less fun.

Now back to the strange things. Bricking, rocking, stoning (not literally), loading up or whatever you want to call it, got me several times, non more so than the time in the Lakes or Esk to be more precise. (I hate to at this point give away the fact that I had two sunny weekends away) It was on a hot beautiful Saturday evening that Tony M. and myself were dashing back from Esk buttress to try and catch the last food order of the night down the pub. We were breaking into a run and the further we got the more sweat I seemed to be producing on my back. I originally convinced myself that it's only because I've a heavy sack on my back and it's hot, that it seems wetter than it should. But while running I couldn't stop myself from trying to figure out why it was and then it clicked, I had two full cans of lager in the bottom of the sack and all this movement up and down must of caused the can to burst. However, upon reaching the car and opening the sack what did I find (I know you all know what it was so I don't need to say it but I will), two bloody great big rock's, each weighing in at least half a tonne and I'd carried them both all of five miles. One Eventually managing to burst a can. I don't really mind all these fun and games but it's just impossible to get the culprit back at his own game. The only form of retribution is to get a new member in the same manner. So if you are watch out!

Well this has been only a small selection of the nice and horrible things that have happened to me since joining the Ceunant and I'm sure more will follow. In fact one of the worst is just coming to an end and I guess you think so too. If you thought this waffle was a load of crap please do not hesitate to write one of your own articles for the next issue.

Spiney Norman.

Ed

Great Ian, you're a gleaming example to all- if you can write about the interior decor of the Crown, and antics at the pool table-- ANYBODY can write ANYTHING about ANYWHERE !

Climbing Considerations for the United States of America.

The plunging dollar and cheap air flights have made U.S. a good venue for climbing this year.

Anybody considering climbing would be well advised to beg, borrow or buy a copy of John Harlin III Guides (3 volumes - East, Middle and West).

Sarah and I had also discovered a few pointers for the Cuenant crag-rats, climbing between V.S./E.1.

1. A 50mm rope is a must, a 160 ft pitch is the norm, a 170 ft pitch is not uncommon (no rope for the belay).
2. Moreso for the easier grade, larger than usual nuts will be needed, and more of them- By this I mean Friends 3 & 4, and Hexes 8-11. Sarah and I took the following rack;

Bunch of R.P.'s (rarely used).

Rocks on wires 1-7 twice.

Stoppers on string 6-8.

Hex's on string 4-10.

Friends (as many as you can get) $\frac{1}{4}, \frac{1}{2}, 1, 1\frac{1}{2}, 2, 3x2, 4x2$.

Slings for tying off knobs (Tuolumne Meadows and Needles).

3. American pitches tend to be far more sustained and frequently repetitious. A 160ft of 1 inch crack, although only being V.S. climbing, can prove very intimidating. The rack above gave me 4 runners which was about one every 40 ft (1 Friend $1\frac{1}{2}$ Friend Hex 4, Hex 5) Frequently route descriptions will mention nuts beyond standard rack.
4. Everybody seems to go to Yosemite, but there are other places to climb, as good and generally nicer to stay at. Our favourites are Needles- superb camping, free at Peppermint campground,- but do watch the climbing grades, 5.8/5.9 with 5.10C moves above the bolts can be a little unnerving (The Needles is to California what Yorkshire Limestone, especially Malham is to Britain - undergraded). Tahquitz /Suicide is well worth a visit, and the climbing is similar to English climbing, compared to most of the U.S. crags. Joshua Tree is also good, especially for the so called middle grade.
With exception there is very little climbing below 5.6(S/VS) on the West coast.
Most of the climbing is 5.9/5.11 (HVS/E3).

At \$ 1.90 to \$1 climbing gear is generally cheaper in the U.S. especially friends.

Charlie and Sarah.

Loose Bolt Comics

YOUR LEAD NEXT DEE.



IF YOU GIRLS'LL STEP ASIDE WE'LL JUST CLIMB THROUGH WHILE YOUR PIGGIES ARE DRYING.

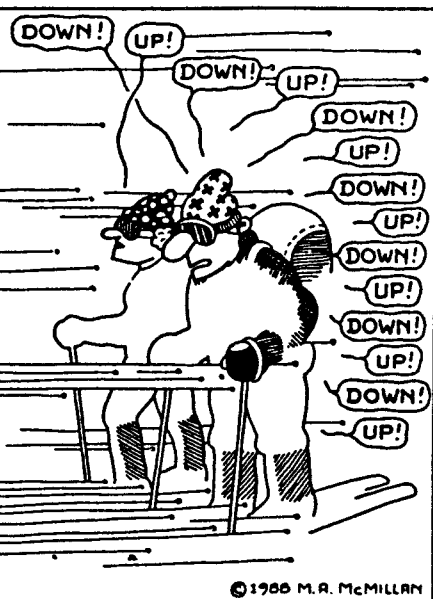
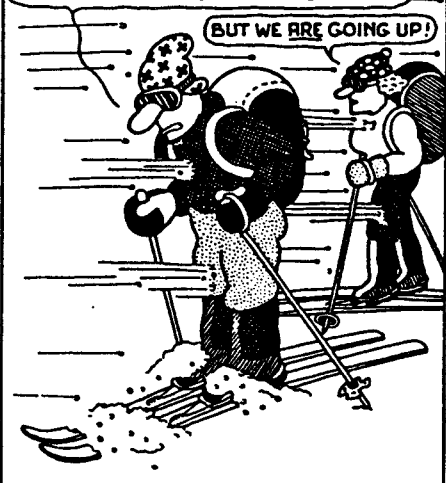


YOU COULD USE SOME DENTIL HYGIENE AS WELL!



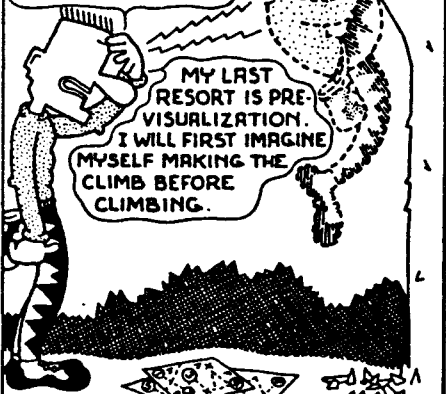
Loose Bolt Comics

IN THIS WHITE OUT IT SEEMS LIKE WE ARE GOING UP INSTEAD OF DOWN!



Loose Bolt Comics

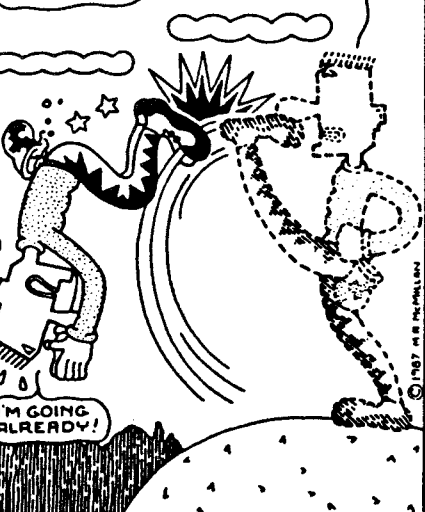
I CAN'T PUT THESE MOVES TOGETHER! I'VE DONE EXTENSIVE TRAINING! I HAVE ELABORATE SEQUENCE DIAGRAMS!



LOOKIN' PRETTY GOOD! I'LL REJOIN MYSELF NOW THAT I'VE DONE THE ROUTE... (IN MY MIND)



NOT SO FAST! GET DOWN THERE AND COME UP THE HARD WAY... LIKE I DID!



KARAKORUM EXPERIENCE

The Himalayan mountain range has been formed in exactly the same way as the world's other great mountain ranges - the Andes, Alps, Atlas, and even our own Caledonians. The difference between them is age, because the Himalayas are still rising and still forming, whereas the much older Caledonians have long since passed the stage of maturity and been denuded to a relatively gentle landscape.

The earth's crust is broken up into separate Tectonic plates which fit together like a jig-saw, and can move slowly over the molten rock of the earth's interior. The Himalayas mark the boundary between two such plates, which are colliding, so that the crustal rocks on top are being lifted up and crumpled into huge fold mountains. At the same time, molten rock from under the crust oozes and explodes its way to the surface and into the folds to form the hard volcanics.

The results of this tectonic activity is the creation of a chain of mountains stretching over 2000 miles W - E, taking in the Hindu Kush of Afghanistan, Pamirs of USSR, Karakorum of Pakistan, Kashmir of India, Tibet of China, and the lesser known Bhutan. It also marks the political boundary between China and the Indian subcontinent.

High in these mountains great glaciers have formed, which sculpture huge deep valleys, leaving high peaks vulnerable to the shattering effects of frost action. These peaks form some of the highest mountains of the world - K2 and Nanga Parbat in the Karakorum at the western end of the range, and Everest and Annapurna in Nepal on the eastern end.

All this background is to help understand why conditions are so unique in the Himalayas from the trekker and climber's point of view.

A few years ago, I trekked a little in Afghanistan's Hindu Kush, and this last Summer in the Karakorum.

We began trekking from Nagar - a days jeep ride up the Karakorum highway north and east of Gilgit, the main market town in that part of the mountains, situated where the silk route from China not far to the north meets the Indus valley from Skardu and the K2 range to the West, before continuing south to Islamabad. Nagar village is made up of simple mud-brick one or two roomed dwellings dispersed over the barely terraced slopes of the valley above the Hispar gorge. Nagar is so far totally untouched by tourism or trekkers. There are no hotels or rest houses, and no shops. Contrary to expectations, we found the people very welcoming, and our Nagar porters wonderful.

Negotiating porters is a simple business. Within minutes of arriving in the village, a team of expectant porters had appeared. We explained where we were going, how many porters we needed, then they set a price which we could take or leave, and chose the team amongst themselves. The next morning they turned up at 5am, took their loads - most of which were 25 kilos in hessian sacks - said prayers, and off we went.

Once in the mountains, it is a combination of the hugeness, severe sharpness and bare beauty all around which so majestically commands response. Adrenalin levels soar by simply being there, and never seem to wane. Numerous peaks tower sharply and invitingly at 18-20 thousand ft. Most have not been climbed and have no name.

Tectonically, the whole area is unstable. There are frequent earth tremors followed by landslides from the loose weathered peaks and scree slopes. The most frightening experience for me occurred at dusk one evening, when we were all tired and wanted to rest. The porters refused, and could not communicate why. We grudgingly followed, questioning the leadership. The porters finally stopped, and within $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour, just behind us came a heavy rumbling as the scree slope across which we had been walking gave way, and slid into the gorge. The porters know their mountains.

The sun shines hot and hard during the day, so the porters work in stages, beginning at 5am, and continuing until about 1 or 2pm, when it really is hot. Because of the intense heat and sun, the most important item of clothing is a wide brimmed sun hat. Trendy rock athlete and walking gear is ridiculously hot, and baggy thin cotton shirt and trousers are the only things bearable - in fact the Pakistani 'chhalvois chemise' has evolved to suit the climate perfectly. We set off looking very much like Victorian colonials, crossed with locals.

Warmer clothes are of course needed for the evenings at heights above 31500'.

The peaks are arid and lack surface water. The only water available to drink is glacier water, which is a suspension of micaceous rock flour - no doubt providing a valuable source of minerals to the body, but having drastic accompanying effects on the bowels! (or was it the dysentery or jardia?) But, because of the inevitable loss of fluids through intense heat and exercise, we had to force this stuff down at regular intervals, risking life and limb to fetch it by descending the gorge to the meltwater torrent below.

The arid landscape means that the vegetation is sparse, consisting of plants which although unidentifiable, display the usual characteristics of species adapted to dryness - small gnarled bushes, oily scented and water retaining plants, and plants with long roots to tap any dampness from underground. All in what is basically desert.

The brushwood bushes lower down the valley, and the dry roots further up, provide the only source of fuel for the porters. After a days walk they will collect the wood or roots, light a fire upon which a large flat stone is heated and used to cook chappattis - indigenous people, totally in tune with their surroundings, while we Western town mice clumsily mess with primuses, pots, pans, bowls, tins of this, packets of that, lots of rubbish to carry. Have we really thought this out?

The quality of walking varies, and some valleys are easier or more interesting than others. We followed the Garesha valley and glacier, which has the toughest walking that I have done. The footpath is well trodden to begin with because it is used by the Nagar gem hunters in search of emeralds, rubies, garnet and aquamarine in the metamorphosed rocks above. Although well trodden, it is very narrow and frighteningly dangerous, traversing steep unstable scree slopes above the cliff of the Garesha gorge. Upstream, away from the gem hunters haunts, the boulders increase in size and angularity, making progress slow. The glacier itself is coated and flanked with uneven blocky moraine.

The team which we accompanied aimed to climb some of those inviting unnamed peaks, and even paraglide off one or two, but the weather changed and the monsoon struck. Sue, myself and our porter had turned back before that, since Sue had fallen victim of exhaustion and altitude sickness, having walked for 11 hrs the previous day, with little to eat or drink. I'm glad we turned around when we did, it was a frightening experience, but a relief as she gained coordination with descent.

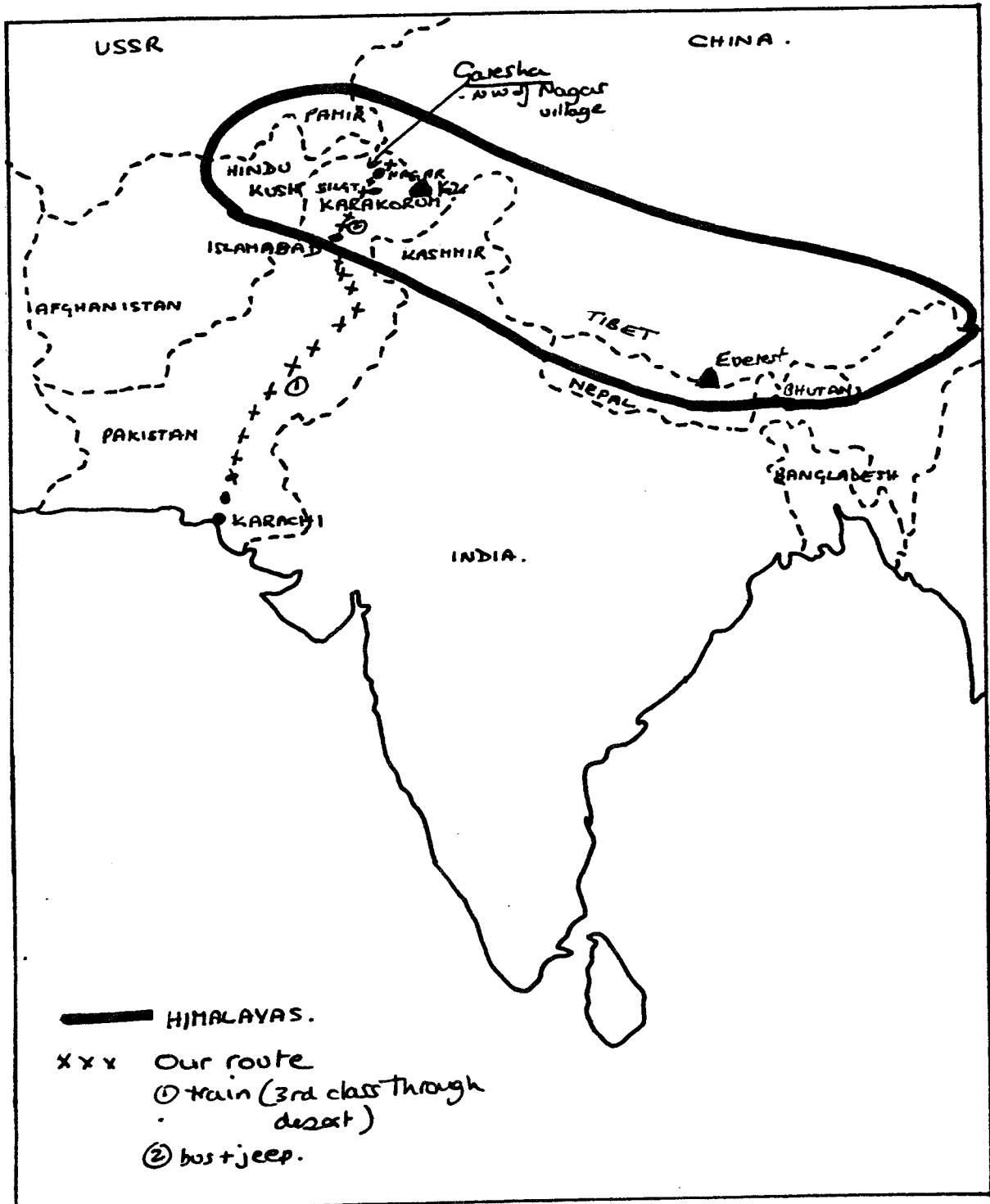
Sue made a rapid recovery in the home of Ali, our porter back in Nagar village. His family and friends made us very welcome, feeding and looking after us until Sue recovered and we could get a jeep back to Gilgit. The journey took us through a number of small villages. At each one our friendly hosts and fellow travellers from Nagar were searched for weapons. It was then that the rumours we had been hearing became a reality. Only a week or so previously there had been a massacre just south of Gilgit, when Shiite muslims from the northern Karakorum, including the formidable men of Nagar had joined up and moved south to meet the Sunnies moving from the southern part of the region to Gilgit. A massacre took place, and apparently thousands had been killed - a battle of religion and politics.

Once back in Gilgit, we made for the hospitality of the Hunza Inn (dry of course) then into the town to negotiate some Chinese silk, which comes into the Gilgit market from the northern border with China, and to sort out transport for the dreadful 24hr journey back down the dusty Karakorum highway to Islamabad - and the luxury of the British Embassy Club.

It was a worrying period when, shortly after our return, it was announced that the president had been killed. Pakistan closed down for 4 days national mourning.

An amazing place, not only for the trekking and climbing, but the culture, people, food, and politics. Pakistans descriptive keyword must be 'instability' at a variety of levels - tectonically, politically, and culturally.

HIMALAYAS



POSTCARD FROM PAKISTAN

It was in January that we formed the idea of travelling to Pakistan. Sue's lodger Tabussum would be in Rawalpindi and there was also a small BMC expedition travelling from Sheffield. We would be able to travel with the expedition.

Sporadic months of planning and preparation follow. This is mainly which medicines we need; the merits of iodine v sterotabs and 'are flea powder and nit shampoo really essential'. So it is inoculated in almost all extremities, that we set off, from Heathrow, with John and Jungle.

After a fairly uneventful flight, via Cairo and Dubai, we arrive in Karachi. From the air it looks like vast stretches of mud and water. Surprise, surprise, it is exactly so at ground level. We spend the first night, shopping for food, knee deep in floodwater (glad we had the jabs).

The next step is to travel the 1400 miles worth, to Rawalpindi/Islamabad. Although the flight costs only £40 we are prevented from flying because of excess expedition baggage. This is mainly rucksacks full of the entire range of John West fish products; they are one of the expedition's sponsors. We are not concerned because there is an excellent first class air conditioned train service. To cut a long story short, the form of transport we finally secure is a second class non-airconditioned train. I can only summarise 31 hours, in temperatures of over 100 degrees and humidity of 95% + as a 'character building' experience.

At last we arrive in Rawalpindi. The station porters carry two rucksacks on their heads; Sue and I can barely lift one between us!. Rawalpindi is lively, bustling and has a much brighter atmosphere than gloomy Karachi. The taxis are black and yellow Morris Minors which makes the place seem homely. The sounds are an assault of every car horn and hooter imaginable. Honking ability is clearly crucial to motoring competence over here.

In the next few days other members of the expedition arrive; Hascko, Val, Charlotte and Joe. Joe is travelling with us to Gilgit and then leaving to meet friends at Skardu. We also manage to join the British Embassy Club as we are 'part of a BMC expedition'. Not only is there a pool but alcohol is available. In our native dress of Shalwar Kameez, it is something of a culture shock entering this Marks and Spencer, country club setting.

The time comes to catch one of the most spectacular flights in the world (right past Nanga Parbat), to the mountain

settlement of Gilgit. At 4.00 am, in the airport, we learn that the flights are cancelled. I remain to be convinced that this 'mythical' flight exists. Everyone we met had their own stores of cancelled flights.

Never mind it's only 16 hours (?), by road, up the KaraKoram Highway. With our fishy baggage well stacked, on a rapidly acquired transit van, we set off. It is a spectacular journey up through the high, green terraced foothills to the even higher arid, rocky mountains (see Sheffield's Sue's article for technical details). However, the term 'highway' should be taken very loosely. The Pakistani army and their bulldozers are permanently digging and burrowing to keep the route open. Every few hours we are required to shamle off the van and sign our names, occupations and passport numbers in a variety of scruffy exercise books. For our occupations we became increasingly creative, lion tamer, midget stretcher, radish grater The various officials nod sagely at the entries, gratified that bureaucracy has been maintained.

Shortly before we left for the mountains, we learned that there had been major riots between the Sunni and Shiite Moslems. All Westerners had been evacuated and the whole of Northern Territory, closed for tourism. The numbers killed ranged from hundreds to thousands. Hopefully these problems, several weeks earlier, have now been resolved...?

That evening we stop to eat in Chilas. It is like a wild west, wooden ribbon village. The locals, sporting various guns, and manic, wild eyes are decidedly unwelcoming. We dub the eating house, the restaurant at the end of the universe. Sue says 'Thank God there's no alcohol!'

We finally arrive in Gilgit at 6.30 am (21 hours later). We've been awake for over 24 hours and the days are beginning to merge, timelessly. This really is the centre of the Karakorams; everyone passes through. Within a few days we have met some interesting characters. These include Steve Roseth (who runs Karakoram Experience), some friends of Joe's including Simon Yates, Canadian glaciologists, a variety of French and German trekkers and climbers and a world famous Japanese Himalayan photographer (whose name I can't remember). I have also learnt that my excellent guidebook, "Travellers Guide to Pakistan", is written by a man with one leg. This makes the trekking section of the book extremely suspect!

Over the next few days we travel up to the spectacular peaks at Passu. This is almost at the Chinese border and we have crossed Pakistan, from south to north, overland. After a few days in Karimabad, preparing porter loads, we head across rough country, by jeep, to Nagar; from where we will

start trekking. The Meer of Nagar, with whom we take tea, is a kindly old man. He thinks we are crackers to come to this area, when we could have gone to Switzerland.

After a night sleeping on the veranda of the rest house (the local magistrate decided to close it and move in himself) the time has come to walk. At 6 in the morning the local religious leader blesses the porters and us, in front of a curious audience of local children. From the high village we descend, through the steep, cultivated, terraced fields to the valley bottom. To cross the river we must use a rickety wooden hanging bridge. There is no handrail and it is suspended, swaying, at a steep uphill angle. I am concerned that, with my rucksack, I won't be able to swim. The others laugh that this is not a problem, because from this height, I wouldn't survive the fall.

After the bridge the arduous uphill ascent begins. The next interesting bit is that I developed altitude sickness, at 14,000 feet. It is essential that Sue and I return, with our porter Ali. That night camping in some stone shelters, the missing member of the expedition, Voytek from Poland arrives. He has narrowly missed us at all the places we had stayed. It was a good evening and their company was particularly welcome in view of the wild group of mountain gemstone hunters, who have set up camp nearby.

On arrival at Nagar, Ali takes us to his home. The whole village comes to see us and Sue and I hold court, sitting on a blanket, in the garden. After a night spent sleeping in the garden it is time to head back to civilisation.

In Islamabad, George, a diplomat, invites us to stay. He has a huge house with servants. From living on the breadline we are now in Five Star luxury. We hope to travel to Peshawar in a few days. This has a strong Afghan influence in view of the influx of Afghan refugees. However, that evening, at the club, the Americans present are urgently recalled to their embassy. Half an hour later the BBC World Service gives the news, to a stunned assembly, that President Zia and the American envoy have been killed in a plane crash. It is difficult to know how the nation will react and it is reassuring to be amongst the British community.

As a result of the tragedy, Pakistan closes down, to mourn. Unable to travel we relax at the Embassy Club for a few days. The highlight is the arrival of the Burgess twins and their two American climbing friends, on return from K2. They are excellent company and make our stay in Islamabad very entertaining.

It is finally time to leave. We know we'll have problems

with the flight from Karachi, because, although we have confirmed our flights, we have not been able to reconfirm them. There is little option but to go and hope for the best. At Karachi the Egyptian Air rep officiously refuses to let us aboard the plane (the next flight is 5 days later). However, 3 hours later and following excellently stage managed tears from Sue he reluctantly lets us through.

After a stop over in Cairo, a trip round the pyramids in the dark (and no they are not floodlit) we land at Heathrow. It is another culture shock - tranquility and carpets give the impression of a top hotel.

I haven't described the range of physical discomforts (stomach cramps, diahorrea, blisters, aches, falls, sickness, punctures, etc) that we endured. However they say that you enjoy Pakistan in retrospect. This is increasingly true and my friends reckon that I can now bore for my country, at Olympic standard. I really wouldn't have missed this adventure for the world.

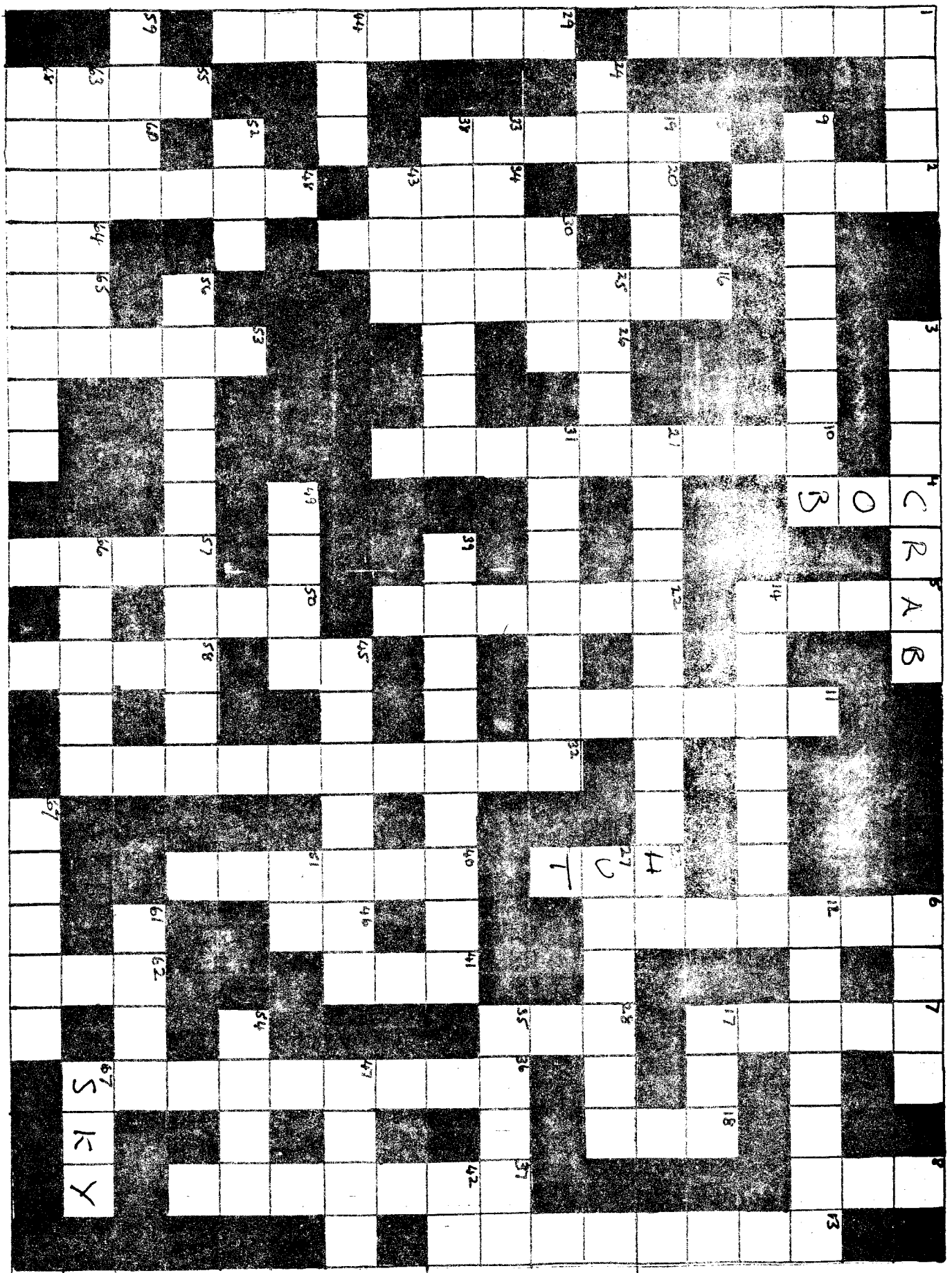
LONDON SUE
30 January 1989

PS. If you'd like to see the photos

Essential reading 'Shoppers Guide to the Karakoram'.
S. Robins.

ED: But Sue, you haven't said anything about the most important thing---
The T-R-E-K-K-I-N-G- remember?

The Crossword - (with love).



THE CEUNANT CROSSWORD.Clues Across

1. The clap, with single digital interior. 4
3. Almost for the sultan's pleasure, by the loch.- for safety. 7
6. Rock crustacean. 4
9. Chesty club member? 8
12. Condition of solo climber. 7
14. Most of girls name , with 4 down finish. 7
17. In twenty Anglesey routes. 3
19. Volcano. 4
21. Big name in Pembroke.
24. The rockers opponent and the climbers friend .3
25. The call of the mountains. 4
27. Irish rock group on eastern airline to perfect place. 6
30. Record in Switzerland. 3
31. Pet name of elder chairman. 7
33. The climber in 13 down gets one of these 4
35. One to make up a word. 5
38. Infinite repose. 7
39. Not a black valley. 4,5
42. Compass direction. 2
43. A backwards government training programme 3
44. Bruce was born here. 3
45. 99 cats were right to get up . 7
47. Cavers go this way. 4
49. Endless French track. 4
51. Ode to touch Nelson. 2
52. Sweet'n sticky. 3
54. Because it was this, he couldn't get under it. 4
56. Here's female French town at the end of the route. 10
59. Made of grit and limestone. 4
61. A mixed risc. 4
63. Ceunant call n
66. Locate the demons playground. 5
67. Island 3
68. Geometry down slope. 8
69. Regie climbed it. 5

Clues Down

1. A force on Welsh rock. 6
2. Let go the rope. 4
4. Bread. 3
5. Route up the bedding plane. 4
6. Can tune, maybe. 7
7. Fits the bow at St Govens 5
8. Used on 61 down. 3
10. In the garden of Eden, by the entrance. 9
11. Ivy clad at Tremadog. 6
13. Ritual payment for rock(climber). 8
15. National hero, local to lakeland. 6
16. Pioneer who began feeling bad, and ended questionably. 7
18. Close encounter on the Grochan. 3
20. French grade. 2
22. Here 's metal city in the South. 3,3
23. Refuge. 3
26. The only way to climb. 2
28. Shared by miners and climbers. 3
29. Two way look accounts for French overnight stop. 7
30. Illuminates 17 across. 5
- 32

..... PTO.....PTO.....PTO.....PTO..

Clues down

- 32. Describes an orgy on High Tor . 10
- 34. 2 grades in 1. 3
- 36. Short ~~w~~e cranial appendage . 4,5
- 37. Mountain and photographer. 6
- 40. Lies back to come down. 6
- 41. Hut on Ben. 3
- 46. See 51 across, explained by Freud. 2
- 48. The banker. 6
- 50. Winter sport . 3
- 53. Without friend in the Himalayas. 5
- 55 Lovers did it at Stoney. 4
- 57. Of Eden and Pickering. 4
- 58 Mouth from the south. 4
- 60. As 63 across. n
- 62. Need 8 down for this. 3
- 64. As 60
- 65. Name of former climbers. 2

This crossword is all about climbing, apart from a few fill-ins.

Apologies for anything which may be unethical in the crossword world, I'm not a crossword doer myself.

There is a prize for the 1st correct completed effort.

IMAGINE

Imagine, imagine a void, a drop of over 100ft - nothing to us climbers eh? Imagine you are facing inwards, away from the void, and that your feet are halfway over the edge, heels waving above the unknown. You are gripping a rail that runs out of your vision to either side, and imagine that you are scared, oh yes, very very scared. Imagine that there is something you want to do, and you want to do it very badly but this act goes against everything you know, it goes against all your emotion and completely disarms your common sense. The mere thought of it makes you sick and weak. Imagine

Imagine you feel the comforting tightness of your harness about your waist and thighs, you feel the weight and pull of the two ropes that drop down and disappear into the void beneath you. Imagine that fatal attraction that height has in slowly pulling you over the edge whilst at the same time the horror of falling helpless towards the seemingly eager ground causes you to want to get off and away from this place, God you want to be somewhere else, God you want to jump.

Suddenly, as if someone else is in control, you see your hands let go, you feel your body fall backwards and you see with sickening despair your feet slip away from the edge and down. You are watching from far away as this happens, it feels as if it has nothing to do with you, but you know it has everything to do with you. The ground rushes up, but curiously the jolt that you wait for is not that of body against ground, but you wait for your back to snap as the rope comes on, but it never does, instead you are whooshed across and up in one great triumphant arc on arc so full of adrenalin you could blow up with the sense of pure joy and love of life that is rushing into your head from every part of your body. God I did it.

Imagine a new person, Imagine you have grown!

Imagine your first bridge jump.

Pete Bursnall

DOGS AND THE ART OF ROUTE CLEANINGS

The lemonade was easy, just behind the counter. The astounding thing was the way in which she knocked down the hob-nobs from an upper shelf with a broom and caught it - Steve Davis and Viv Richards rolled into one! I paid up with "Diolchs" and strolled out; perhaps I should have asked her for some toilet rolls - Fatima Whitbread couldn't hit those on a good day they were so high up.

Sliding into the van, there was the pure silence of expectation; we started off and so did the dog - 'ROUCH-ROUCH' cacophanied round the metal walls, adding reverb! Ears still ringing we halted at a wide wild moorland lake; away in the distance the black arete strutted in defiance above a Roriamas worth of vegetation; was the fox still there I wondered?

The dog and its master shot away and skirted round the clear turquoise lake; no acid rain scientists today though - which poor pond were they testing today? Slogging up the slope they leave me behind; half the gear already sorted as I plop down at the top, why do we carry so much? "Just in case" - It's always that answer! Wire brush, grate brush even a sawn off yard brush. These boys mean business! No brillo pad though - were ethical! All in harness and draped with a tinkers cartfull of hardware I trip over the jumars - make as if you're enjoying the bilberries.

Duff ropes, old ropes and cut ropes form the ab point; 'never go first!' That's the best motto yet - (a) the ab might fail and (b) you're underneath your cleaning partner! Who went first - you guessed it. We begin with the yard brush, he's got it! The sheite goes everywhere it starts (literally) in your eyes, then your nose and finally those little gummy bits between your teeth; you dread whats happening to the rest of your body. Scratching for extra cleanliness each knuckle grazes off its skin, gradually grating - oh, such fun!

Where's the gear? Each nook, cranny and seam is scraped, broddled and blown at (remember to keep your eyes shut) to find that life saving R.P.O or friend 4 placement. Sometimes you get desperate, all kinds of inventiveness surface; no not drilled peg and thread placements, but a filed nut is ok! Then it hits you, a big bulging section, balder than a baby's bum and not much nicer to look at. Where's the gear here?? Do you try the moves; better not, it's decieving anyway! (he! he! believe that!). AH! Whats this sidepull like - balls it's simple with that - "pity" you say but in the back of your mind you're glad!

HEY! There's a big patch of grass; good, there might be a nice little ledge underneath this vertical lawn stuck on halfway up. This arete! Feeling it back with the dexterity of an elephant, it starts to form a kind of gigantic swiss roll! "Quick pull the ropes up!" - in case they catch on this ton of trundling turd on the way down. Stomping on the soil it peels off like a moveable treadmill. Sod it the sods snatched the coils out of my hand - SHIT!! Wait for the pull off as it plunges THANK CHRIST! only a slight jerk as the snag releases WHOOOMPH! It explodes on the vegetated slabs beneath and clears a stark new strip of rock (somebody will climb that in a few years) - 'I hope I didn't hit the fox'!

Jug back up the jumars for a bite and a swill; discover that your new rope is half cut through on that little sharp edge you missed, only to find that the biscuits in the top of your rucksack and the top of your rucksack has disappeared - where the hell is that dog??

I'd heard a lot about the "Dream":- "VS climbing in extreme situations", "a fall by either leader or second on the final pitch could cause problems", "the best climb of its grade in Wales."

Farles fixed up the ab. rope assuring James and myself and anyone else who was prepared to listen what a bomb proof block it was.

Start the ab. and you're hit by instant exposure, the enormous walls of Wen Zawn towering above you and below you down to the sea. 130ft and you arrive at the Wen ledges. It was the first time I'd been there and I felt unable to move. After a while I put a sling around a flake and tied into it. I felt a bit steadier then.

James came down and seemed suitably impressed. As the tide was in I took an arbitrary decision not to make a second ab. to the sea level ledges.

The Farles' had disappeared off down to the start of Wen but another party was doing Quartz Icicle so we were not completely alone.

James led off up the steep wall to the start of the traverse to the left and brought me up. In my enthusiasm to do pitch two in style I completely missed the protection peg and by the time I got to the hanging stance in Wen I was well frightened. James came across to join me not too worried by the poor protection I had left him and he was soon off again up a flake crack rising leftwards. I found this pitch desperate, not being able to work out whether to have my hands or my feet in the crackline. Towards the end of pitch 3 you have to climb down for 20ft or so to reach the stance in concrete chimney. At this point in the climb the great overhangs above and below the final pitch dominate the scene most impressively.

Arriving at the stance I suggested to James that we might need to be rescued from here but he seemed keen to continue (it was my lead) so off I went on the most sensational looking traverse line I'd ever seen.

First you traverse left on a steep slab under a roof. Clip the rusty peg and semi-layback down a strange 'fin' of rock to cross the line of 'T Rex'. Go up to a good spike and continue traversing first up, and then down, then up again and finally delicately down onto a slab perched above nothing. I moved up left on the slab to a roof, pulled left into a groove, clipped a protection peg and then bridged up in the groove. A steep pull out left and it was over. I'd done The Dream.

..... and by Ed Drummond.....

Palomino in the morning
as the sun rose higher.

They dashed, their manes on fire,
pounding their hooves on the rocks.

And smashed- we were climbing-
sank, broken, foaming.....

The wind lashed the back,
combing their matted hair,

Swollen green sea mares twenty hands high,
surrounded by herds

of nervous blue stallions,
snorting, champing, and trampling

us under, given the chance.
We stood by - a pitch apart-

watching the reins of our rope,
that led between the last grey overhang,
redden like a vein in the sinking sun.
And breathed again.

Their fire gone,
The back horses were drinking,
and we were thinking of a name...

Nothing had been forced- then the tide
turned, they surged, rearing-manes
smoking white-

Running, running
In the night towards us.

THIS IS A CLIMBING STORY . A STORY FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN PUSHING BACK THE FRONTIERS.

DAY 1.

You know what it's like. The Ceunant 'A' team arrive in Alicante and smoothly go into action like a well oiled machine -DRIP DRIP.....

Ian loses his pullover (we helped him).

Tony can't find his passport.

The batteries on Kates power wind are faulty.

Graham searches for the car hire document.

Sirch does the best he possibly can. He keeps quiet and in total control (like ZEN) whilst all about is in total chaos.

But where is our intrepid leader, Mr Steven Coughlan ? Ah Ha! He's outside, shirt off, bleaching his chest wig so that all the hairs are grey!

So we get sorted and 5 of us cram into the unlucky escort.(Wouldn't you be unlucky if 5 of us landed on your doorstep for a week). It's impossible, 6 into escort won't go. Ian picks up the short straw and buses to Moraria - our villa, our destiny.

"See you later,Ian".

"Adios, Hasta Luego" (Sirch's been swotting up).

"Don't stop at a bar you bastards".

AS IF

DAY 2,3&4.

Beautiful weather, rucsacks packed bulging with climbing gear - chalk bag topped up, water bottles full.

You know what it's like, for 3 days we don't even leave the villa. Why should we? It's beautifull:

- 3 bathrooms
- 4 bedrooms
- luxury lounge
- sun terrace
- a daily service maid (or so the brochure said)

and to top it all, our own private deep blue swimming pool.

We invent reasons not to leave - Hose pipe fights -Buttie noshing competitions. - underwater picnics - get Sirch soaked contest (this was fun). He successfully stayed dry for 20 hrs $43\frac{1}{2}$ mins, until 3 of us conned him, and he emmerges from his hidey hole. Arrrgh, he spies us and rushes off, but luck is on our side. He lands on a puddle, tumbles to the floor, and is immediately drowned by 3 gallons of water --"Oh my God, we're still in the living room, get them carpets outside".

I lied. There is one reason to leave the villa. Stand by the gate and watch the nightly ritual as we quietly slip away down town to the BAR.

Pool olympics. Diving over high piled sunbeds and into the pool. Only clean dives allowed, no touching or brushing the bar. No knickers in Tony's case, the pervert. You should see the photo's -Sirch reclining peacefully and Tony (privates dangling) flying over him. It looks pornographic. How can you, the average punter tell there is a pool to land in? Surely he's aiming for Sirch's xxxxxxxxxxxx.

DAY 5

Today we go climbing. But not Steve or Tony, for them the big B has beckoned.

THE BIG BENIDORM.

Luscious young females awaiting a good time. Bars open all night , full of luscious young females awaiting a good time. AARRRH!

That night the big B successfully lures the 'A' team away.

Will they return tonight?

Will they return tomorrow morning?

Will they ver return?

What will they return with?

Where will they have to visit on their return to England?

Of course they come back. Who else drives up the hill through a sleepy resort at 4am, tyres squealing, stereo putting rastas to shame, fireworks exploding as they are thrown from the window? Who else dives into the pool ,nudie swimming at that time of night? Who else jumps off the villa roof into the pool?

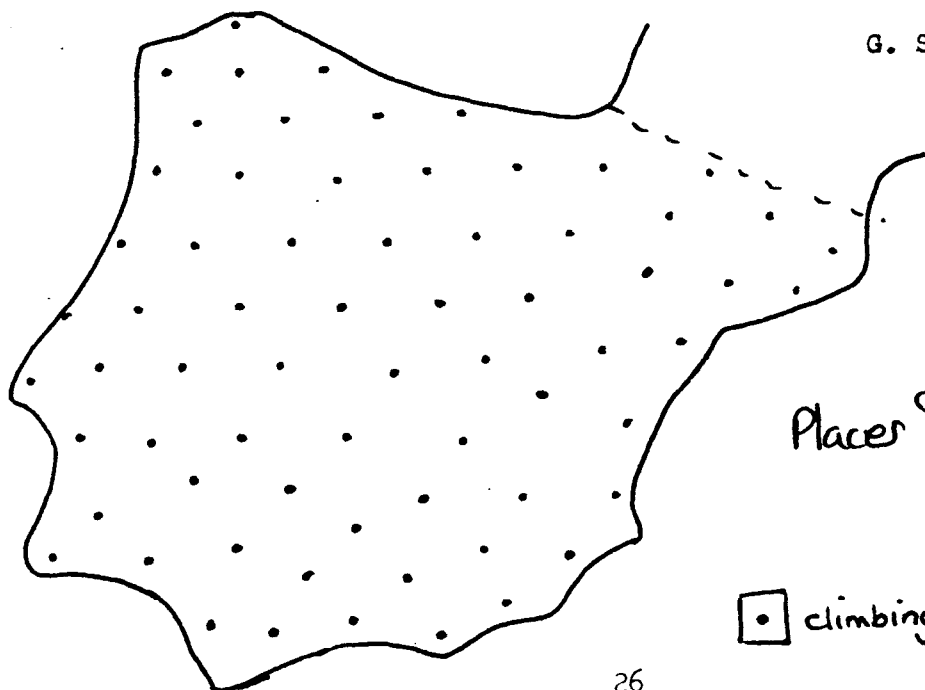
Needless to say, next morning the weather is beautiful, rucsacks are packed. The 'A' team sleeps on.

"Quiero un butifarra con ajo, Por favor."

ED:

SPAIN

G. SPENCELEY



Places to climb in
Spain.

□ • climbing place

RECENT TRAVELS OF THE CEUNANT

Even cars haven't been here!

The place the Ceunant would get banned from.

HEGEBES '88

The Old man Sue coined out of '88

on bikes on family - Casagran

Mont Blanc The Ceunant hard men tackle the Alps '88.

before 3 wires

USA with FILEMAN.

RICE JONES STILL HAVING A FROVING TIME.

Vol d'Ile La Plagne - Tany. Austria Easter?

The ATOM hit SPAIN 'Rocks, - what rocks?

ROBERT KENYA. Harrold team. DAN-JIN

HIMBAYAN HEATH FREN! Sue's guarantee you will get thin, get fit, dry out. TAN

MEXICO Jan 89. Spenceley has the guts to give up - go.

KILIMANJARO by Ceunant pioneer.

guess who goes to India to live on beach?

Ayres rock - Charlie Sarah saw the world.

ANTARCTIC - Simon Spenceley on a bike - to come!

Whit '88 Joe took up sailing "got lost."

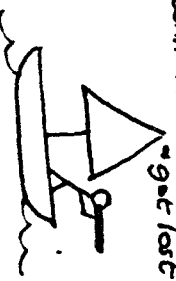
167

tanker

BARRELL REEF bathing. '88

AGO LAND

met ranga



MOUNT KENYA by Dan Slatcher

A couple of years back I'd had enough of working in a factory and decided to see some of the world. Tim Fryer was of the same mind and we thought of starting with a trip to Mount Kenya.

The elaborate research which normally goes into an expedition took nearly twenty minutes. We just bought some 'plane tickets and went.

We took a room in the New Kenya Lodge, a cheap hotel in Nairobi, which reminded me of the Lozells Road on a summer Saturday afternoon, with the addition of palm trees. Tim and I stayed there for about a week, getting to know the town; until a young Frenchman, whose name has left an indelible blank on my mind, walked into our hotel room. He was going to Mount Kenya the next day and we decided to go with him.

The three of us caught the bus early the next morning and arrived at the village of Naro Moru by mid-afternoon. From the bus stop we walked the half-mile to Naro Moru River Lodge, a fairly smart collection of chalets and bunkhouses next to a small river; which form one of the starting points for those tourists wishing to climb the mountain. The expedition checked into one of the bunkhouses which was expensive but there wasn't anywhere else and the lodge had a restaurant, and more importantly, a bar. All day on a dusty East African bus creates a fierce thirst that took a while and quite a lot of Tusker beer to satisfy. The bar was full of Neanderthal British soldiers who, I suspect, were in Kenya looking for the secret of fire. It transpired that they were "going on exercise with the Keenyan army" the next day. I doubt the Kenyan army has recovered yet.

The following morning saw us up early hitching along the road to the mountain, twenty-six kilometres away. There were no buses and hiring a jeep and driver was too expensive so we hitched, a journey that left us covered in such a thick layer of dust that I never did wash it all out of my shirt. We checked in at the park gates half way along the track and paid a pound a day for a five day stay. The three of us began walking up the track through the park until we heard an engine behind us. It was an empty school bus, going to collect its children from the roadhead. We climbed into the back and sat down. The bus had been converted from an old Isuzu lorry and was a shed on wheels. The noise was phenomenal on the bumpy road. There were two crates full of empty coke bottles on the floor which leapt into the air every time we hit a bump, which was frequently. The bench seats running down the sides of the bus decided to join in and it became safer to stand. The road has one or two interesting features such as bridges which are only just wide enough for buses and lorries and hairpin bends which cannot be taken in one go; you have to reverse almost over the edge of a precipice to get round. Eventually we arrived at the top, surrounded by smashed coke bottles and dislocated seats. We thanked the driver profusely, more for the experience than the ride, and went to find somewhere to sleep. We were at a place called the Met Station, this place was a large clearing with a bunkhouse for the porters. An open-sided kitchen stood on the other side of the glade and we cooked and slept there that night.

After paying a pound for the privilege of sleeping in the kitchen we started walking through the forest towards the head of the Teleki valley, our next stop. By midday we were halfway up a steep section of peat bog imaginatively named The Vertical Bog. It was no fun in the heat with a sixty pound rucksack and I didn't fancy going on. Fortunately neither did Tim so we retreated and hired a porter. Next morning we walked up quite easily with him. The porter hire charge was one pair of trainers.

The evening was spent cooking and relaxing outside Mackinder's hut. To avoid spending more money we slept outside, away from the hut. I awoke at dawn to find us surrounded by descendants of the Mau-Mau who were demanding camping fees with menaces. We paid up, not wanting to be ritually slaughtered and moved up the hill, with Anglo-Kenyan relations at an all time low.

Arriving at our final camp, we went into the Austrian hut. Five replicas of Arnold Schwarzenegger were sitting inside, with army ration boxes piled around them. More squaddies. As far as I could see they didn't have any necks. Their heads just grew out of their chests. One of them could speak "No smoking in here" I put it out. He stared at me. This guy had a degree in looking nasty. "Would you like a coffee?" he said. They were going to let us live.

They were army parachutists on holiday. Most of them had been in the Falklands war. I felt sorry for the Argentinians. It can't have been very nice having this lot after your blood.

They were very pleasant to us and gave us quite a lot of food; much needed as ours consisted entirely of baked beans and cabbage. Tim had assured me this would be adequate. (I can blame him as he lives a long way from me)

The two main peaks of Mount Kenya are across a glacier from the hut. The following morning we crossed this and approached the base of our climb, the Normal Route. The paratroopers had already reached a height of about two hundred feet on it and had got lost. Their boss was trying to climb Mackinder's Chimney. Unfortunately, he had got the wrong chimney and was attempting something which looked more like Stefan Glowacz's chimney. As we roped up he fell about thirty feet. We applauded loudly. He had his revenge on his second attempt, when he dislodged several lumps of rock the size of kerbstones; they broke up and we were sprayed with bits of rock. When a piece split the rim of my helmet we decided to overtake these people in a hurry, before one of us got hurt. We dumped our rucksacks and took only a goretex bivvy bag. We took alternate leads on the pitches until we caught the stone-throwers. The quality of the climbing we had done had been very poor, with much loose rock and the ledges buried under shale.

The paras had found the real chimney when we drew level with them. Their leader had climbed it and Tim took a line slightly to the right, onto the same stance. Some members of their party had great difficulty with the pitch until Tim and I showed them how to cheat.

It is received wisdom amongst mountaineers that, being on top of a seventeen thousand foot high mountain in a storm, wearing just a shirt and jumper, is not a good idea. As I looked around and saw the black clouds coming in I remembered this and pointed it out to Tim. It was obvious that we weren't going to get past Maggie's boys for a while so the decision was made to retreat.

We made it back to the hut just as the rain started. Not so the squaddies who spent most of the night on the hill and came back extremely wet and cold.

We were running low on food and enthusiasm. The prospect of white sand and warm sea on the coast was becoming very attractive. We left Mount Kenya for the coast the next day. On Lamu, an island just off North Kenyan coast, we ate lobster at a pound each and spent the days on beautiful deserted beaches. I

I did feel slight pangs of guilt at not pushing back the frontiers of our endurance but every time one of these pangs came on I looked at the Arab dhows sailing through the channel and thought "sod it".

IT WAS BETTER WITHOUT THE MEN.

It was all very casually arranged. With nothing much to do for a couple of weeks over the summer holiday, Sue and I decided to take our kids up to the Outer Hebrides for a back-packing holiday. Numerous doubtful murmurings from spouse, grandparents and "sensible" friends about the inadvisability of taking young children (ages 6, 8, 10 & 12) to remote regions where anything could happen were disregarded. Very loud murmurings from me about the numerical incidence of midges in Scotland during August were finally overcome by the purchase of several vast tubes of Jungle Jel and two packets of mosquito repellent to burn in the tent at night.

Emergency rations (four complete dried dinners) and emergency clothing (a pair of new trainers each) were eventually packed into 2 vast rucksacs and 4 smaller ones. I couldn't lift mine onto my back without help but seemed able to stagger a few paces and remain more or less upright once it was actually in place and strapped round my waist.

About one hour before leaving I decided that my dome tent was too heavy so everything was pulled out onto the living floor and my little green tent was put in instead: about half the weight and half the size and just big enough for a mature woman and two small daughters to kip in. Being obsessed with foot comfort (note the trainers already mentioned, which were never used once) I hastily crammed in some more pairs of socks, packed sacs and daughters into my trusty little Fiesta and went off to collect Sue. The car was already full.

Packed in Sue, two boys (noisy) and three more rucksacs (with difficulty), a box with some food in it and a large dog. The dog was for delivery to Liverpool before we could set off for Scotland. As soon as everything was packed in immovably we hastily banged the doors to hold it all inside and burnt off to the west. Deposited dog, received tips from Sue's dad for all the kids (must go there again) and burnt off to Glasgow.

Mick's directions for reaching Kilsyth were easy to follow and we arrived on the dot of eight o'clock for our first night's luxury rest. Admittedly, once we were all stretched out on the floor (and Mick in bed - the perfect host - since two ladies wanted his bed he gave it up to neither) there was no room to move but it was much cheaper than a hotel.

Next day we set off for Oban, left the trusty Fiesta in a car park and boarded a ferry as foot passengers for Barra. Five hours on the boat, no money to waste on burgers and chips and four children to entertain is not my idea of fun but the time passed eventually (with several firm statements of "clear off - I'm trying to sleep!") Barra was even less civilized than I had imagined: two shops at Castlebay and that was all. I must admit that my heart sank as we set off to walk about two miles to a cove that the map suggested would be idyllic and even provide fresh water. It was already 7pm and I do like to go to bed nice and early. Luckily a fish van stopped and offered us a lift just before young Peter flaked out and we were taken as far as Seal Bay, about a mile further than we had intended. Piling out, all stinking of fish, we walked a hundred yards to the sea. As we arrived at the perfect camp spot, I asked Sue what the liquid was which dripped from the bottom of her rucksac. One of the girls had sat on top of Sue's carton of milk while in the fish van..... Tents erected in minutes, Sue's lacy knickers pegged out on a guy rope after a swish in the sea, her sleeping bag (already smelling of rotting milk) put out to air we then rustled up a wonderful nosh of mince and mashed potatoes and packed the kids off to bed by 11pm.

It was, indeed, an idyllic spot. Enough wind to remove all midges and mosquitoes, a beautiful beach, some rocks to scramble on and a smooth, flat grassy camping place. No seals to be seen that day, however. That day we planned to get to S. Vistso we had to move on, somewhat reluctantly. After the kids had had a swim (but we were too busy - or too nesh) we set off. Brilliant map reading took us around the coastline, over some cliff tops and along two beaches, sheltering under some attractive bouldering rocks for lunch when it rained a bit. The second beach we came to was over a mile long and my idea of paradise - white, clean and totally devoid of people. We made the mistake of trying to walk along along the gorgeous beach instead of walking through the hills behind. Don't try walking on soft sand when carrying 50lbs or more on your back. Victoria was excited at finding a genuine message in a bottle and suspense mounted as we all read it. The let down came on realising it had only been written two days before and was only "a boring old chain letter". (Kate)

After 5½ miles of strenuous uphill and downhill and effortful beach tramping we came to the northern end of Barra from which a ferry left for South Uist the next morning. Easy camping again very sandy flats just 50 yards from the tiny jetty made for quick tent erection again. It was a good thing we were expert campers: a really hard gale

blew up in the night and certainly any one less brilliant and experienced than us would have lost their tents and been soaked.

Swift packing for the ferry took place the next morning when it stopped raining for half an hour. The tents dried in that short time, it was so windy. The ferry was a small boat with an enclosed cabin for maybe 16 people. (It's driver?, captain? went by the romantic name of Donald Campbell and had looks to match - Barbara Cartland would appreciate him). I had given my girls travel pills because although it was only a 20 minute crossing to South Uist the gale had not dropped and the waves were mountainous. It was great banging and slapping through the waves but I had to watch ahead all the way or I would have been seasick (I would have preferred to watch Donald Campbell). Young Tom, usually an excellent traveller, only just escaped being ill. We passed lots of basking seals on the many rocky islets.

D.C. handed us off the boat at South Uist with barely a flicker so I regretfully gave up on that short romance and we hoisted our packs and set off. With brilliant planning, the only bus to leave the ferry jetty goes about 40 minutes before the ferry gets in, so we had to walk. And walk. And walk. The road went west for perhaps a mile and then turned due north. Unfortunately the wind was belting straight down from the Arctic and bringing plenty of fine rain with it. My impressions of South Uist are not too good despite a lovely range of hills on our right and the map's promise of miles of paradisaical, empty white beaches on our left. This very dreary road not only carried very little traffic but no-one stopped when we stuck out our thumbs. It was also lined with dirty noisy roadworks. The kids were doing really well: Peter was only 6 at the time: but after 7½ miles we gave up and looked for a camping spot. Just then 2 saviours arrived in the shape of an English couple with a minibus who gave us a lift all the way to Benbecula. This is an eerie, watery place. We camped on top of a peaty hillock, woke at 5am and were ready at 6am to be picked up by the same couple and given a lift to catch the ferry for Harris.

An uneventful ferry journey via Skye took us to Tarbert on Harris where Sue led the way to a previously known campsite. It was fenced off and being crofted but being intrepid adventurers by now we set up our tents anyway. Sure enough a tough Scottish crofter arrived to turn us away but a few pleas later he was sharing his whisky with us, offering us a bag of freshly dug potatoes and saying we could stay. A true Heridean sunset illuminated the distant Cuillin ridge and lit the sky with pink and gold.

On Harris the wind dropped and the levels of Jungle Jel in the tubes also dropped. I ate standing up on the highest windiest knoll I could find and burnt chemicals in the tent for hours to destroy all blood sucking insects.

Our first day there we walked along a beautiful pathway with views of the blocky Torridan hills on the mainland. Eleven miles that day: well done young children. The following day we cycled 30 miles on hired bikes from the hairdressers (without brakes) along the coast down (and up) a road justifiably known as the Golden Road. Well done mature mothers. (It was 30 years since I'd been on a bike) We had sore bums the next day but it was worth it because the flowers were so profuse and beautiful.

Finally a bus trip to Stornaway on the last day through miles of dreary country just like Kinder top. There we had a pleasant trippers day and Sue taught us all how to whistle through our fingers.

Our final rising had to be at 5am again to catch the ferry for Skye, the bus to Fort William, another bus to Oban and the trusty Fiesta to Kilsyth. The kids took this travelling as well as they had coped with the walking and pack-carrying. The whole experience had been easy, exciting and really relaxing- just the women and kids.

P.S. PLEASE CAN I HAVE MY PHOTOS BACK SUE!