



The caving team trip. Otter Hole Chepstow

Ed's bit

Welcome to 2007 (yes I know its been 2007 for a while now, sorry). As I type this its early February and Im convinced that I can see something resembling Daffodils poking through the border of what used to be a lawn but now looks more like a paddy field. No such thing as global warming though honest but if winter continues on in this way can I interest anyone in a pair of ice axes and crampons one careful owner no serious offer refused etc. etc.

A big thank you to John Wiseman for doing a sterling job of the "what's on" its saved me a huge headache as I can be guaranteed to forget something at the very least.

The next issue of the newsletter is hopefully going to go to press just after Easter and if all goes to plan should be in colour (at least partially) so if anyone has pictures they would like putting in please can I have them as soon as possible (I'll wait for those on the Hot Euro Rock trip to get back).

Finally for those who haven't heard about it all ready Henry Iddon has a project to photograph Lake District summits at night. His web site is at www.spots-of-time.co.uk and is well worth a browse.

Tony.

RAB (Rag and Bone) a Cautionary Tale

In May I bought a RAB Latok Alpine jacket (£120) made from the latest and greatest eVENT (treat like Ecoli) fabric. I didn't need it until August and a 2hr downpour. I would have been better in a paper bag, I was soaked. Back to the shop it went (Mountain Factor in Ambleside) they sent it to RAB who replied that the hood leaked and did I use any hair preparation!! me, with my head of skin! The shop replaced it with a Patagonia jacket, which works fine. The upshot of all this is DO-NOT buy RAB but DO try Mountain Factor of Ambleside first when you next shop for gear.

Clive

France 07

The trip to Vallouise in the Ecrin, France will be on the first two weeks of July. It will cost 30 Euros pppn. Half board, bring your own sleeping bag. If you are interested let me have your £65 deposit and we can get the show on the road. We can sort out transport later.

The area is good for walking, VFing, climbing and soaking up the rays. So why not join us for the fun.

Clive

For sale

Karrimor Alpiniste 55L Rucksack £20 LES
WARD 01772 683681

Loads a cavin'

From my club caving log, here's the trips I have recorded in the last year :

Month	What	People
Dec 2005	Nettle Pot (UGH!)	6
	Large Pot	4
	Wretched Rabbit to Easter Grotto	7
	Valley Entrance - Toyland	5
	Lancaster to Link	5
Jan	Digging and Bolting Aven in Notts 2 Green Tape	5
	Simpsons with Martins extra trousers and Stuart Gascoyne's suit	6
Feb	Thistle & Runscar at Ribblehead	6
	Harddrawkin	3
	Low Douk (Wa mug awarded)	2
March	MEET. Unbelievably Cold! Pool Sink to Wretched Rabbit Various (ie can't remember)	9 8
	Lost Johns	4
	County Pot	5
	Notts 2, Oliver Lloyd	5
April	Link to Serendipity	3
	Otter Hole	9
Sept	Notts 2 - Paul's 50 th trip	6
	Marble Steps	2
	Notts	6
Oct	Notts 2 - Oliver Lloyd to Haywaggon	3
	Digging in Circles in Notts 2 Green tape	3
	MEET : Lanc to County & Top Sink to Lanc Rift & Long Kin West	9 5
Nov	Magnetometer	3
	Aquamole - twice	6
	Lost Johns	5
Dec	Lanc Hole to Graveyard	6
	Lost Johns	3
	Wizzards Chasm	4
Jan 2007	County - explore Trident Series	4
	Notts 2 - Inlet 5 to new passage	3
	Bar Pot to Whitsun series (Wa mug retained)	3

What's the caving bunch been up to ?

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly the 10 hour over the tide trip into the fabulous Otter Hole in the Wye Valley. Awesome formations and the mud (fight) was the best ever. Beyond belief folks. An excited big team of 9 ? went down here at the end of July well organized by Dave Cundy. Unfortunately Martin Bennett couldn't make it – but we all txt'd him afterwards to let him know what he'd missed.

Again there's been about 7 regular attenders – think we've even acquired a imminent new club member Andy Holmes who's shockingly keen and has also held the coveted 'I've been scared "Wa" mug for most of the year. Andy was introduced by Paul "I followed Steve thru Nettle Pot" Reid, who provided one of the highlights of the year by allowing us to trick him into caving one evening for his 50th birthday – bottle of champagne in Notts 2.

Glenn has had his act together too and been Mr Calm and sorted underground. 10/10

We've had a great time – as ever. We've been bolting and digging for the first time (both a total waste of time). We've bumped into Frank and Joe a few times – often strangely in the pub for closing time yarns on a week-day evening.

Inevitably we've had many occasions of "did this first with Mick" etc – which is sometimes difficult - but we've not let it get to us – we had a great time together and we don't want to forget it.

So, once again caving has been just brilliant – lots to do, great mates, getting totally frozen, mud, water, dangling off ropes, beer, breakfasts, taking the piss out each other, knowing you're with mates when it's getting too scary, laughter. What's all about eh ?

Oh and yeah .. there was Stuart's orange suit. Made it all worthwhile.

Simon Fenna
Le Chef de Speliology

Once again, a massive event for SROC. Some no shows which has a bit of an impact on the catering budget and the amount of nosh bought in; but still, a full hut, lots of ale and wine consumed and wonderful sunshine for the event!

Venues for orienteering are more limited in the North Lakes than the south, but Stair is a much more "user-friendly" hut than Little Langdale for a large team with lots of cars. One of the more obvious venues is Whinlatter Forest; ready-made you might think with a cafe, car-parking (alas not free), nice bogs and a permanent course. However, I've always thought it a bit steep and rough to use for FMC and didn't want to give the punters a bad experience of the sport, but last year Sue and I went to have a look and felt that most of the usual suspects were becoming experienced enough to cope with it.

The sun shone and despite my ankle injury Sue and I managed to get all the controls out with about twenty minutes to spare. A proper job this time; full size control kites, numbers on the top of the cane and Sportident electronic punching. Unfortunately the battery pack on the mini-printer wasn't working so competitors' split times couldn't be produced as they finished. We had to wait until I had some mains power back at the hut.

I managed to tell most people that I'd made a mistake with the information on the map, but for those whom I didn't here is the apology. The vast majority of O maps use a 5 metre contour interval. This is International Orienteering Federation standard. However, in extremely flat areas 2.5m is sometimes used to highlight detail and shape that would be lost with a 5m interval. RARELY, and I mean RARELY, 10 metres is used if the terrain is exceptionally steep and using 5m would mean that the map is all brown lines very close to one another. So, when I counted the contours on the course I didn't spot (until too late and I'd printed everything) the 10 m interval. This means that the 110m climb indicated needs to be doubled to 220! A lot of climb in 3.6km!! John Hickman's time was pretty impressive, and anything around the hour

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mark was pretty good too!

It was a great effort by everyone who came along and it's very pleasing to see so many people having a go, and so competitively as well.

Thanks go to:

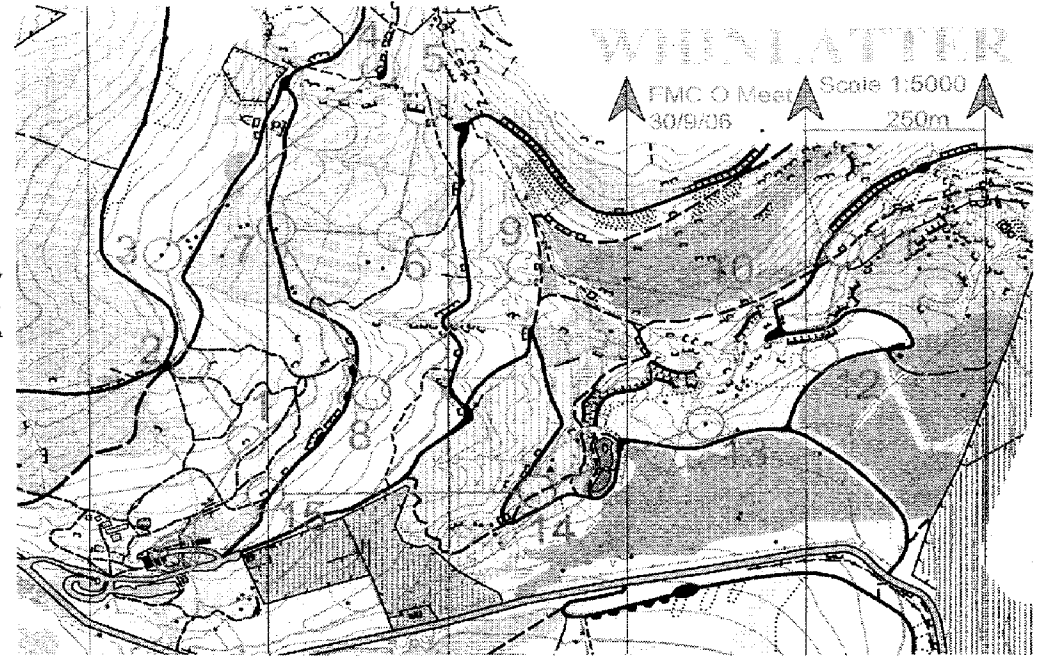
Jenny Tolley and Liz Hird for contributions to the great feed

Steve Wrigley and John Hickman for collecting the controls

West Cumberland Orienteering Club for the use of their digitised map

South Ribble Orienteering Club for the use of the equipment, with a special mention to an SROC member, Steve Mclean for the electronic stuff

Forest Enterprise for the loan of their forest



O Meet Results

1	John Hickman	47.04
2	Steve Wrigley	61.47
3	John & June Wiseman	65.56
4	Andy Dunhill	66.56
5	Claire Addy	70.13
6	Chris Thistlethwaite	75.33
7	Liam Gaston & Drew Hird	75.38
8	Adrian Clifford	81.08
9	Caroline Webb	83.17
10	Liz Hird & Jennie Tolley	103.58
11	Clive Bell & Kevan Ebrell	145.56
12	John & Elaine Hamlin	163.06

Mike & Carole Penn-missed 5 and 6 150.22

Les Ward-retired

Marie-Angeles Solera-missed 5 91.31

FMC O Meet 30/9/06

Long 3.580 km / 110 m

Start - Path Junction

1. (210) Crag, 1m, foot
2. (208) Hill, NE side
3. (212) Southern Boulder, 1m, N side
4. (211) Crag, 3m, foot
5. (215) Crag 4m, foot
6. (202) Stream
7. (201) Boulder 1m, N side
8. (214) Reentrant
9. (216) Spur, S side
10. (213) Gully, E end
11. (209) Crag, 3m foot
12. (206) Thicket, E side
13. (203) Boulder, 1m, N side
14. (207) Between the Hills
15. (205) Crag foot

Navigate 180 m to finish

FMC O Meet 30/9/06				
Long	3.580	110		
▷		↘/y		
1 210	mm	1	L	
2 208	○		σ	
3 212	↓ ▲	1/1	○	
4 211	mm	3	L	
5 215	mm	4	L	
6 202	⊞			
7 201	▲	1/1	○	
8 214	∩			
9 216	⊞		Q	
10 213	∧		—	
11 209	mm	3	L	
12 206	⊞		○	
13 203	▲	1/1	○	
14 207	○ ○		—	
15 205	mm		L	
○ — 180 — ⊞				

THE ROYAL ARCHES

I can't recall quite how many years it is since I first thought of climbing in California, but I remember which route it was that first fired my imagination. Not for me the multi-day privations, pain, aid climbing, hard graft, fear, elation and sheer grandeur of the big walls of El Cap and Half Dome (as described by Fenna, Wrigley and Evans [but not Peel!] and Brookes and Wood), but rather the intricacies and delights of a one day free climb – The Royal Arches.

It's a sixteen pitch route up the slabby south facing walls left of Washington Column in the Yosemite Valley. When Rob and I asked could we join Woody's proposed trip to "the Golden West" last September this route was uppermost in my thoughts. Arriving in the valley in late August



Robin on Shagadelic

we found temperatures of 95 degrees and for two days we had to wait until late afternoon to find shade for climbing. We moved up to Tuolumne Meadows where the nights were cool for sleeping and the days perfect for climbing and much fun was had by all.

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For me the Royal Arches still beckoned – I didn't want to have finally got this close and missed out on it after all those years. I could tell not everyone was keen on accompanying me back to the cauldron of the valley for a "big" route but a bit of judicious partner manoeuvring one evening round the campfire saw me and Dave Cundy creeping out in the dead of night (well, 5.00 am) to start the route at first light in order to be well up it before the sun came round.



The plan worked well in this regard. Having parked on the Awahnee Hotel car park about 20 yards from the foot of

DaveCundy,committedonSouthCrack,StatelyPleasureDome

the cliff we located the initial chimney pitch within 5 minutes. Only a 5.6 pitch it felt awkward, unprotected and slippery in the cold grey dawn. The sacks, full of EVERYTHING THAT MIGHT POSSIBLY BE NEEDED and more besides(!) came next, then Dave. There followed a hundred yards or so of fouguing along a brush covered ledge system to the foot of the first pitch proper. Too late Dave remembered, as we moved together across the terraces, somewhere in the midst of it was a 5.7 pitch. He was committed on it by the time he realised, hooked a sling on a spike, hung his sack off it and, effectively soloing, completed the pitch.

Now fully awake we could begin in earnest. Pitch after pitch of solid granite, including the "Bear Hug" pitch, followed without any real problems with route finding. At 10.00 am when we were about half way up the face the sun came out and we expected to fry. Nothing of the sort – by sheer luck we had arrived at a part of the wall where the next four

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pitches were in a series of huge West facing corners so we stayed out of the sun till lunchtime after which only six or seven pitches remained. These included the infamous pendulum pitch which Dave, finding a fixed rope in place, despatched with aplomb.

As we ate lunch we became aware of a team below, catching up fast. It turned out to be a local named Ed and a girlfriend up for the weekend from San Diego – he very capable; she very decorative! They'd moved together (simul-climbed) the whole way in about 3 hours. They passed us two pitches from the top where I think we'd got a bit off route. Back on course I led the last pitch – the notorious "Traverse into The Jungle". The smoothest slippiest slab I've ever encountered, it has no holds whatsoever and after a bolt at the start no gear for 100 feet. What's more at that time of day in late August the rock was almost too hot to touch and anywhere the angle eased at all it was covered in thousands of tiny pine needles – not much of an aid to friction! Once swept away the rock beneath provided sufficient grip and the route was in the bag. After the heat and discomfort of the final few pitches the unroping spot could not be more contrasting or welcoming. It consists of a shady glade complete with an icy spring – not drinkable but pints were poured over heads and feet as all four of us shook hands on a fantastic route, took off the gear and changed our shoes.

But this is just the top. Now we had to get down and this is where the appearance of Ed and Claudia and his local knowledge proved to be a mixed blessing. There's an abseil route down the cliff from here it and we had a topo for this descent and intended to take it, having read about the extremely complex route finding of the "walk-off". We asked Ed "where are the first rap bolts?" "Just there" he replied "but you don't want 'em". He advised that the ab route was poorly equipped and difficult to follow in rock and undergrowth not always solid. "Follow me" he said. So we did, for what seemed hours of alternating good path, no path, bushwhacking, hairy solo traversing over huge drops and most of it uphill with many false

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Postcard from America

Equipped and prepared for every extremity,
The FMC set off for Yosemite.
Each Fylde member was known as Nob,
Pretty confusing for our mate Rob.

We all met up by the Frisco Bay
And set off for climbing the very next day
The campsite attendant scratching her head
Said "Are you with Wood?" "I am Wood " he said

We climbed the "Grack" to get a bit fitter,
This Glacial Point climb has "an awesome Splitter!"
At "Five Open Books" we climbed "Munginella"
Me and Rob and another Fella!

We went to Tuolomne on the morra
And did "Great White Book," an off width horra
To Pywlack Dome we went without fearing
and "Zee Tree" succumbed to run out and smearing

You may think we are past it and relics
But on Medlicot Dome we cruised "shagadelic"
Rob, Martin and Cess went off on their Marches
While me and Cundy did the "The Royal Arches"

Me, Dave and Hal went to do "Aqua Knobby" -
Not on knobs - after all it's our hobby!
Rob and Cess climbed "Cathedral" on Sunday
While I achieved little with my mate Dave Cundy

Dave had bottled it on "South Crack" before,
He dragged us back as he wanted some more.
This time he led it with some panache,
But not exactly what you'd call in a flash!

On Fairview Dome we did "Regular Route"-
It's 12 great pitches and a classic to boot.
Thus we ended our Tuolomne innings
And went to Lake Tahoe for new beginnings.

Family Meet.

July 2006.

This was the first time since the resurrection of the family meets that we've held a meet at Langdale.

Unfortunately it coincided with the roof work.

Fortunately we had great weather.

Activities are still fairly limited with the children so we took our bikes, Ed's pull along and Jess' bike seat.

Friends joined us on Friday night. Including their nine-week-old on her first night away from home. We barbecued under the scaffolding and the children eventually went to bed at eleven o'clock.

All hopes of a 'lie in' disappeared when Ed got up at six o'clock.

Ed and I sat watching the mist clear and deer wandering across the fields.

(Apparently these are Father Christmas's reindeer.)

Once the rest of the family were up and breakfasted we headed over to Grizedale.

After a play on the play area we set off on the bikes in the general direction of a pub lunch in Satterthwaite. Andy had the better deal as Eddie can help by peddling his tag along, (*although doesn't!*) whilst Jess just sits in her seat shouting encouragement. After lunch we followed the road to Bogle Crag and set off up in to the forest. Jess had earlier been in charge of the trail map, which was now missing. (Ok – I lost it.)

As both children were getting tired we decided to head back to the visitors centre for ice-lollies. Andy chose the most direct route. Probably un-rideable without the children!

On the drive back to Langdale they both fell asleep so we parked up at the Three Shires, wound all the windows down and sat in the beer garden having a pint.

Tea was a fish supper from Ambleside, which we ate at the top of Kirkstone pass.

Both children were up early on Sunday so we went out on the bikes to Hodge close.

On the way back Andy decided to try and cycle through the ford. Without Eddie but with the tag along still attached. He fell in, quite spectacularly. With an audience!

When we returned Chris, Rach, Isla and Dan had arrived. (Chris was up the scaffolding painting the chimney. Very dedicated.)

After an early lunch we sauntered over to Windermere with a plan to go on a boat.

Having looked at the crowds in Ambleside and Bowness we drove down to Lakeside and went on a short cruise.

We ended the weekend with tea at the Britannia in Elterwater. The 'kids platter' cost more than the adult sandwiches and consisted of half a round of sandwiches and a packet of crisps for £4.50!!!

Back to the cottage and a communal shower for the children. Plus a chance for them to play that great game 'cleaning the shower walls'.

Pyjama's on; loaded in to the cars and carried to their beds once they got home exhausted.

Liz Hird.

Rhyd-Ddu meet September 2006

Like the Corris meet this attracted record low numbers just June and I (is it us or is it Wales!), This was a shame as the weather was near perfect and the meet coincided with Gala weekend on the Welsh Highland Railway which runs past the house.

The railway terminates at Rhyd-Dhu but they are working to restore the line as far as Beddgelert and then on down the Aberglaslyn to Portmadog. The Gala Weekend brought steam, trains up to Rhyd-Ddu then a train on towards Beddgelert to see the track as far as it goes. The loco doing that was a 100+ year old steam train whose first job when it was bought new 100+ years ago was to haul the ballast wagons for the construction of this original railway. What a grand site, a pity that the engineering skills and the willingness to take financial risks have been lost to British companies. All the new trains on British railways have to be bought from foreign companies.

We arrived on the Friday night to find the house hot, noisy and smelly. The previous visitors a week or so previously had left the storage heaters on – in a period of hot weather! - But they had switched off the fridge and left the door open as per instructions. Unfortunately they had left a packet of mince in the freezer compartment, which despite its plastic wrapping and being in a sealed plastic bag it fair hummed, as did the flies. Into the bin outside with it and all the doors open, then to tackle the dormitory door which was repeating the opening notes of Beethoven's 5th Symphony over and over again – I think it was a low battery warning noise for the automatic fire door closures, one on each door, a safety device that seems to be a death trap for children, as no child would have the strength to pull the door open to get out. Anyway I found a hidden compartment to remove the battery, my first plan being to use a hammer having been thwarted – no hammer.

Saturday was a brilliant day so we added an extra summit to our route eventually ending up on top of Snowdon having walked from the hut. The top was busy, all having to have done some walking as the trains were stopping on the shoulder above Clogwyn as the café was being demolished. Some were expiring before the summit while others had to shout into their phones to tell the world they had reached the very top. It was nice to see that so many were enjoying a great view, and that they had to walk at least a little to get it. We left to take a different way back.

Sunday we headed to Moel Hebog then on to Moel yr Ogorf where we encountered that time of year when flying ants swarm. We were used to ones in our garden swarming in early summer when they emerge and fly higher and higher into the sky attracting the birds for a snack. These were different they covered the ground they flew about landing on us, they did not bite but they were a nuisance. June unzipped a banana for lunch and in a fraction of a second it had turned black. We had to find a windy spot to stop, which was difficult as it was calm and sunny.

Monday started fine so the Nantlle ridge beckoned, again a walk from the hut, there were patches of low cloud but we did the ridge in the clear with good views in all directions, it was on our return that the cloud covered us. All the way along there were flying ants getting in our hair, down our shirts and so on. There was a bit more breeze so we could seek out the windy bits, a minor irritation only as they did not bite.

For those who have not been to Rhyd-Ddu the hut is spacious, when new it would have been the home of a better off family. There are three upstairs dormitories with 5 or 6 bunk beds plus a members dormitory. All the usual facilities are there including an effective drying room. It is an entertaining area for walking, with dramatic hills on the doorstep, and there is climbing nearby and Tremadog not far away.

John

Northumberland 06

The end of September and seven soles ventured up to Preston (Northumberland). 40 miles north of Newcastle just off the A1. Andy D. was officer in charge and found a good bunkhouse at Chathill with all mod. cons. And just about in walking distance of a pub, although we didn't visit it this time.

On Friday we took the scenic route over the A686. I have never seen so many pheasants both squashed and walking, few flying. On Saturday our walkers tackled The Cheviot, 2676ft and a long gentle walk up with a magnificent view from the top, so they tell us. We saw each other and the inside of a cloud. Later we met up with the climbing team and did some quaffing in a pub on the coast. Sunday's weather was not good which meant a visit to Lindisfarn Castle on Holy Island and an early departure.

This is a beautiful part of the country, which not many people visit. There are therefore no queues or crowds. The walking is good and interesting and the climbers

reported good crags although only single pitches. The only drawback this time was the weather, just like the Lakes.

Why not come with us next year and do somewhere different.

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trails – and he “knew” the way!

All this takes you over Washington Column (beautiful views of North Dome and Half Dome) and thence into the so called North Dome Gully, a big wide scree and scrub slope descending 3,000 feet to the valley floor. Even here the route finding isn't always straightforward and there's the odd bit of down climbing or abseiling. We finally got to the valley floor hot and thirsty at 5.00 pm. Fifteen minutes later we'd collected the car, bought bottles of cold beer and what I thought was lemonade and were sat on a log dangling our feet in the river and quenching raging thirsts with cold cold drinks. A GREAT day out, another “50 Classic Climbs of N America” tick and an ambition achieved.

It wasn't until I was back at the car after the feet in the river experience and whilst downing my third bottle of cold lemonade that I began to wonder why it was called Mike's HARD Lemonade. Reading the label I found it was 5% abv – I'd been guzzling alcopops! And had now had three and Dave wasn't insured to drive the car. This didn't stop us having some beer in Yosemite Village where we'd gone to meet Caroline, Robin and Martin D who'd walked from Tuolumne via Half Dome and Hal, Dave and Mike who hadn't. I can only sum up by repeating that for me this was one of the great days out – the type that can only be had when you tick off something that's been on the list for many many years on a wonderful day in the company of someone who's clearly enjoying it as much as you are. Remarkably another such followed later in the same trip, but that's another story.

Martin Bennett

Italy 2007

Following last years successful trip to the Dolomites Les Ward is planning a return visit . He's booked with Collets as last year from 7th to the 14th August. Anyone interested should contact him on 01772 683681

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