

FYLDE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1988

THE EDITOR BOWS OUT

THIS FOLKS, IS MY LAST EDITORIAL ON THE LAST NEWSLETTER I WILL PRODUCE BEFORE HANDING OVER TO MY SUCCESSOR, STEVE HALTON.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU ALL OUT THERE FOR READING THE NEWSLETTER, IF IN FACT THAT IS WHAT YOU DO WITH IT. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK ALL THE CONTRIBUTORS, OF WHOM THERE HAVE BEEN MANY. WITHOUT YOU THE NEWSLETTER WOULD BE A REALLY BORING AFFAIR.

IT'S GOOD TO SEE SO MUCH LITERARY TALENT IN THE CLUB. LONG MAY YOU CONTINUE TO SEND IN YOUR ARTICLES, INFO ETC. STEVE'S ADDRESS IS AT THE END OF THIS PIECE, HE'S ALSO A REGULAR ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS SO YOU CAN PASS ON YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS THERE.

STEVE HAS SOME GREAT NEW IDEAS FOR THE NEWSLETTER SO WE WILL HAVE TO LOOK FOWARD TO SEEING THE NEXT ONE IN THE NOT TO DISTANT FUTURE.

WELL, 1987 WAS A BRILLIANT YEAR FOR THE CLUB, THE YEAR OF THE BIG PIE, THE RETURN OF PSYCHO, MORE NEW ROUTES INCLUDING PAUL GREENLANDS AMAZING JOURNEY OUT OF THE TOP OF THE NICHE AT ALMSCLIFF, THE MALTA GUIDEBOOK, THE FIRST F.H.C. EXPEDITION TO THE HIMALAYAS. YOU COULD GO ON FOR HOURS! I'D LIKE TO WISH THE READERS A VERY HAPPY YEAR ON THE HILL IN 1988 AND WHO KNOWS WE COULD HAVE ANOTHER STACK OF FIRSTS TO CELEBRATE THIS TIME NEXT YEAR.

HAVE A GOOD ONE

CHEERS

MARTIN DALE.

INTRODUCING THE NEW EDITOR

WELL, THIS IS THE BIG TIME, THEY TELL ME, YOUR NEW NEWSLETTER EDITOR, I'M LEARNING TO READ AND WRITE FAST AND HOPE TO BE IN FULL PRODUCTION SOON.

WE ARE BEING PRODUCED IN A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT FORMAT NOW AND OUR NEW PRINTERS WANT US TO HAVE THE NEW NEWSLETTER IN A BOOKLET FORM. THIS IS A POSSIBILITY FOR THE FUTURE.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK MARTIN FOR HIS EXCELLENT WORK ON THE NEWSLETTER OVER THE LAST 3 YEARS, FOR HIS HARD WORK AND KEEPING HIS FINGER ON THE BUTTON ALL THE TIME AT EXACTLY THE RIGHT PLACES.

FINALLY CAN I SAY THERE IS A LIMIT OF 10,000 ARTICLES PER PERSON PER YEAR THAT CAN BE SUBMITTED TO THE NEWSLETTER!! SO COME ON DON'T BE SHY AND FILL THESE PAGES WITH INFO AND EPICS OF PAST AND PRESENT OR ANYTHING YOU WANT TO SEND IN.

PLEASE SEND ALL YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS ETC TO ;

STEVE HALTON

HOME TEL NO. BLACKPOOL 594922

15 SUNNY BANK AVE

WORK TEL NO. PRESTON 267236

BISPHAM

BLACKPOOL

NEW MEMBERS

THE FOLLOWING ARE WELCOMED AS INTRODUCTORY MEMBERS:-

DANIEL RATNER 64 RIBBY RD KIRKHAM PR4 2BB TEL: 687059
CLIVE C. BELL 40 BEECH AVE WARTON PR4 1BY TEL: 635306
BRITA M. WARHIRST FLAT 2A, 4 CECIL ST LYTHAM ST ANNES FY8 5NN TEL: 730969
NEIL SMETHURST 11 ROCHFORD AVE ANCHORSHOLME BLACKPOOL FY5 3PB TEL: 865982
NILS TREMEL 18 DENIS ST LANCASTER TEL: 0524 382733
AVRIL WHITTAKER 15 BROADWOOD WAY LYTHAM ST ANNES FY8 4PH TEL: 739116
DAVID KWIK 1 WIGEON CLOSE THORNTON FY5 2HN TEL: 865197

FULL MEMBERS

JOHN TREVORROW, JIM GWILLIAM.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

BILL MCRAE / ANN GOWARD : 3 TENBY AVE HEATON BOLTON
SIMON FENNA : 21 CHEQUERS RD CHORLTON CUM HARDY MANCHESTER TEL: 061 860 7637
THOMAS & CHRISTINE WALMSLEY : BROOKLYN STRICKENS LANE BARNACRE GARSTANG PRESTON PR31UD TEL: GARSTANG 6258
JOHN BLORE : C/O THE COMMON ROOM, ROSSALL SCHOOL FLEETWOOD FY7 8JW (HE SLEEPS ON THE COUCH!)
GLENN BROOKES : NOW A MAC LAD!! YES HE'S MOVED TO MACCLEESFIELD AT 4 NELSON ST MACCLEESFIELD SK11 6UN TEL: 0625 612914
ROGER BROOKES : NOW SORTING OUT THE RIGHTS OF WAY IN LEICESTER. 5 COMPTON RD LEICESTER LE3 TEL: 0533 8224801
PHIL CALEY :
DOUGLAS & DOROTHY BROWN : THE OLD VICARAGE HURST GREEN WHALLEY LANCS BB6 9QR TEL: STONEYHURST 710

HUT AVAILABILITY

MARCH 4/5 LANG
11/12 STAIR
11/12 LANG. (FAMILIES)
18/19 LANG.
25/26 STAIR
31ST(THURS) - 7TH APRIL(THURS) EASTER LANG.
APRIL 8/9 STAIR
15/16 LANG
22/23 STAIR
29/30/1ST MAY LANG
29/30/1ST MAY STAIR FAMILIES
MAY 6/7 STAIR
13/14 LANG
20/21 STAIR
27 - JUNE 2ND (WHIT) LANG

ALWAYS BOOK WITH JOHN WISEMAN BEFORE USING THE HUTS TEL: 862594
NUMBERED KEYS ARE AVAILABLE TO FULL MEMBERS, ON LOAN FROM JOHN.

SOCIALS.

2ND MARCH THE DOLOMITES 8-30 PM

SLIDE SHOW BY JOHN PARKINSON.

WALKING VIA FERRATAS WITH THE USUAL BRILLIANT SCENERY AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM A TALENTED CHAP.

6TH APRIL SLIDE COMPETITION 8-30 PM

TWO CATEGORIES AGAIN THIS YEAR, LANDSCAPE (VIEWS) AND ACTION. 3 SLIDES EACH FOR EACH CATEGORY. LETS SEE WHETHER YOUVE TAKEN ANY BETTER PICTURES THAN DAVE EARLE THIS LAST 12 MONTHS.

4TH MAY GASHERBRUM 4 - THE HIMALAYAS. 7-30 PM

SLIDES BY AL PHIZACKLEA.

BARROWS FAVOURATE SON RETURNS! LAST YEAR AL HAD A BIT OF A BRUSH WITH GASHERBRUM 4. HERES THE STORY! THE LAST SOCIAL OF THE SEASON - NOT TO BE MISSED.

BY SPECIAL REQUEST PLEASE BE PROMPT.

OUTDOOR MEETS.

6TH MARCH. COACH MEET. MEET LEADER: LUISE FORTUNE.
DOVEDALE DERBYSHIRE. TEL: FWD 876547

GREAT WALKING TERRITORY THIS AND ALSO PLENTY FOR THE CLIMBERS.

13/14TH MARCH. FAMILY WEEKEND LITTLE LANGDALE

STAIR OPEN FOR OTHER MEMBERS

13TH - 17TH MARCH CIC HUT, BEN NEVIS.

SUN NIGHT - THURS NIGHT MEET LEADER: KEVIN STEPHENS
TEL: 711824

6 PLACE, FIRST COME FIRST SERVED. THE ICE MEET TO GO ON! MIDWEEK ONLY.

26/27TH MARCH. TREHADOC - HOELWYNS HUT MEET.

MEET LEADER: MARK HARDING

TEL 52154

THE MEET ON WHICH ALL THE ROCK CLIMBERS SHAKE OFF THE WINTERS CHALK DUST AND HOPEFULLY PERFORM OUTDOORS FOR THE FIRST TIME OF THE NEW SEASON. LOADS OF GOOD WALKING ALSO ABOUNDS IN THIS VICINITY.

EASTER

1ST/4TH APRIL PEMBROKE MEET LEADER: MARTIN DALE
TEL: 33479

JOIN THE THROGS DOWN ON THE STEEP LIMESTONE! A TRULY RUDE AWAKENING. PROBABLY CAMPING AT BUTTYLADS.

1ST/4TH APRIL SCOTLAND MEET LEADER; DAVE EARLE
TEL: 890283

THE ONICH HUT HAS BEEN BOOKED FOR THE SCOTTISH SNOW N' ICE + WALKING ALTERNATIVE MEET.

16TH/17TH APRIL
LITTLE LANGDALE

INTRODUCTORY MEMBERS MEET

MEET LEADER: JOHN PARKER

TEL: 66996

WHO ARE ALL YOU PEOPLE WHO JOIN THIS CLUB? THIS MEET IS DESIGNED TO INTRODUCE YOU TO THE CLUB MEETS AND TO THE HUTS, AND TO MEET OTHER MEMBERS AND GO ON THE HILL. SO COME ON LETS SEE THIS ONE FULLY SUBSCRIBED WITH NO ROOM LEFT FOR US OLD TIMERS!

23RD/24TH APRIL GRINDLEFORD HUT DERBYSHIRE.

MEET LEADER: DAVE WOOD. TEL: 92 684969

THE EXCELLENT FALLCLIFFE COTTAGE IS THE VENUE FOR THIS MEET. SITUATED BELOW FROGGATT EDGE AND ONLY A MILE FROM THAT FAMOUS CAFE, IT IS ALSO GOOD WALKING TERRITORY.

NEW SYLLABUS TERRAIN EXCLUSIVE!!

APRIL 30TH/1ST/2ND MAY FAMILY WEEKEND STAIR.

LITTLE LANGDALE AVAILABLE FOR THE SPROGLESS.

30TH/1ST/2ND MAY.

THE GOWER.

MEET LEADER: DAVE WOOD

TEL: 92 684969

CAMPING MEET. A WEALTH OF EASY TO MID STANDARD ROCK CLIMBING CAN BE HAD ON THIS CLUB MEET FIRST. THERES ALSO GOOD COSTAL WALKING AND SOME NEW MODERN DESPERATES FOR THE HARD DINASOAR TYPES.

7TH/8TH MAY

INBHIRFHAOLAIN.

MEET LEADER: LUISE FORTUNE

HUT. GLEN ETIVE

TEL: 876547

WHERE THE? YES! ITS BONNIE SCOTLAND. HOPEFULLY EARLY ENOUGH TO MISS LAST YEARS HAZARD - THE HIDGE. ETIVE SLABS, THE COE FOR ROCK CLIMBING AND SOME BIG HILLS FOR HIKING UP. SHAME THE PUBS SO FAR AWAY.

14TH/15TH MAY WORKING WEEKEND LITTLE LANGDALE.

DONALD HAS GOT A HELL OF A LOT OF JOBS ON THE CAROS FOR THIS SPRING CLEAN WEEKEND. HOPEFULLY SOME OUTSIDE PAINTING IF THE WEATHERS FINE.

21ST/22ND MAY

CORRIS

MEET LEADER: JOHN WISEMAN

TEL: 826594

THE CLUBS ANNUAL TRIP TO CENTRAL WALES IS USUALLY WELL BOOKED IN ADVANCE SO STEP THIS WAY FOR CADER IDRIS, THE RHINOGS, CWM COWARCH ETC. GOOD PUB AT THE END OF THE LANE AS WELL!

28TH/29TH/30TH MAY WHIT.

CAIRNGORMS BIVI/CAMP.

MEET LEADER: MARTIN DALE

TEL: 33479

SHELTERSTONE, CREAGANDHUBLOCH? YES EITHER OF THESE TWO PLACES DEPENDING ON THE WEATHER. WHEREVER IT WILL BE ACHANGE FROM ARRAN.

ARRAN CAMPING

MEET LEADER: MICK TOLLEY.

YES THERE IS ALSO AN ARRAN MEET!!

TEL: PRESTON 713817

ADVERTS.

1 PAIR OF TERRODACTYLS SAME £10 EACH
1 SNOWDON MOULDINGS CURVER AXE LENGTH OR OFFERS

CONTACT: BARBARA CHARLESWORTH
TEL: (DAY) LYTHAM 733151 EXT 41164
(EVENINGS) 0942 815346

MOST OF THE GEAR THAT WAS FOR SALE IN THE LAST NEWSLETTER IS STILL FOR SALE
CONTACT: ROGER BROOKES, TEL: 727175 OR MARTIN DALE: TEL 33479

BINSTORES AND OTHER CAT FLAP ACTION.

YES! JOHNNY BINSTORES OLD TOILET IS NOW ON ITS SIDE IN THE CAR PARK AT LITTLE LANGDALE. IT RIVALS STAIRS MAGNIFICENT STORE SIZE (ITS IN TWO BITS) BUT UNFORTUNATELY LEAKES. NOT SO GOOD IF YOU GET CAUGHT OUTSIDE LITTLE LANGDALE WITHOUT A KEY.

DONALD DUCK HAS YET AGAIN BEEN WAVING HIS MAGIC WAND ABOUT AT LANGDALE. NEW SHELVING ABOVE THE SAFE IS SPROUTING AND MANY SIGNS TELL US NOT TO FLUSH STUFF DOWN THE BOG ETC. THE PLACE IS BEING REWIRED AT THE MOMENT AND IS DEFINATELEY LOOKING SPOT ON FOR SUMMER.

STAIR ON THE OTHER HAND IS LOOKING A BIT WORSE FOR WEAR ON THE OUTSIDE. SOMETHING THAT SHOULD BE RECTIFIIED ON COMING WORKING WEEKENDS, WEATHER PERMITING. INSIDE HOWEVER YOU WILL NOT LIE SLUMBERING WHILST THE HUT BURNS DOWN AROUND YOU THANKS TO THE NEW SMOKE DETECTORS. THE CAT FLAPS HAVE NOW ASSUMED THE SIZE OF FIRE DOORS AND SHOULD BE FUNCTIONAL BY SUMMER - AND THE SHOWERS? YES! THEY ARE FULLY OPERATIONAL.

LUNDY 1989.

FOR THOSE WISHING TO BOOK THEIR HOLIDAYS IN ADVANCE, LUNDY, OR SHOULD I SAY, THE BARN HAS BEEN BOOKED FOR THE WEEK 26TH AUGUST TO 3RD SEPTEMBER 1989. NO MEET LEADER AS YET, SO YOU CAN'T BOOK!! YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT.

SEAN SMITH RETURNS.

LOCK UP YOUR DAUGHTERS! SEANS BACK IN ONE PIECE AFTER HIS TRAVELS DOWN UNDER AND YOUVE GUESSED IT, HE HASNT CHANGED ONE BIT. GOOD TO HAVE YOU BACK SIKE.

THE LIBRARY

CLUB MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT THE CLUB DOES HAVE A LIBRARY CONTAINING MANY FINE MOUNTAINEERING BOOKS. IT IS HOPED TO INCLUDE AN UP TO DATE LIST OF BOOKS IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER. IF ANY MEMBERS HAVE ANY BOOKS, GUIDEBOOKS, MAPS ETC, THEY WISH TO DONATE, PLEASE CONTACT ANY MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE.

INDIANA IDDON

AS MANY OF YOU MAY HAVE READ IN THE PAGES OF THE LOCAL RAG, THE EVENING GAZETTE, HENRY IDDON HAS LANDED HIMSELF A PLACE ON THE OPERATION RALEIGH HENRY IS GOING ON A 3 MONTH TRIP TO ALASKA. REAL VASCO DE GAMA TERRITORY! DURING HIS STAY HE WILL EXPLORE UNCHARTERED WASTES AND DO SOME SCIENTIFIC WORK, THE AIM IS TO BUILD LEADERSHIP QUALITIIES. SOUNDS LIKE AN EXCUSE FOR A HOLIDAY TO ME! YOU'LL MISS YOUR BEER, HENRY. HENRY IS LOOKING FOR SPONSORS FOR HIS TRIP. FOR BEING JUST A POOR SHOP ASSISTANT IN THE ALPINE CENTRE, HE BARELY EARNS ENOUGH A WEEK TO ENABLE HIM TO AFFORD SHOES AND A DECENT MEAL LET ALONE A TRIP TO ALASKA. THE CLUB HAS CHIPPED IN £50 TO THE COST BUT HENRY STILL NEEDS ABOUT £1500. ANYONE WISHING TO SPONSOR HENRY SHOULD GIVE HIM A RING ON BLACKPOOL 53916. ANY AMOUNT WILL HELP - HOWEVER SMALL.

COOKER WANTED FOR STAIR.

STAIR IS IN NEED OF A NEW COOKER, SO IF YOU'RE JUST ABOUT TO THROW OUT YOUR OLD ONE OR IF YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO IS ABOUT TO - STOP THEM AND CONTACT THE HUT SEC OR ANY COMMITTEE MEMBER. ALSO REQUIRED FOR STAIR ARE SOME ENORMOUS HUGE BIG PANS OF ANY SIZE REALLY.

ATTENTION ALL CRAMPON USERS.

THIS YEAR THERE HAS BEEN PROBLEMS CONCERNING SALEWA CLASSIC CRAMPONS, THERE HAVE BEEN TWO RECORDED ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY THE FAILURE OF THESE CRAMPONS. IT IS NOT KNOWN WHETHER THE FAILURE IS DUE TO THE FAULTY MANUFACTURE OF A BATCH OF COMPONENTS OR INCORRECT FITMENT OR ADJUSTMENT, BUT THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE LUG HAD BROKEN OFF THE SADDLE-PIECE WHICH RETAINS THE CONNECTING BAR BETWEEN THE SOLE AND HEEL.

IF YOU OWN THIS TYPE OF CRAMPONS READ JANUARY '88 ISSUE OF HIGH MAGAZINE.

STOP PRESS. F.M.C. PRESENTS

HOT OFF THE PRESS NEWS. AN ILLUSTRATED LECTURE BY ANDY DUNHILL ON THE "HAGSHU EXPEDITION" IS TO BE HELD ON THE 27TH OF APRIL AT 7-30PM AT THE BISPHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE (NEXT TO THE LIBRARY) AND PROCEEDS ARE IN AID OF OUR HENRY'S OPERATION RALEIGH. TICKETS £1-50 AVAILABLE THROUGH HENRY OR ME.

THIS ONES GOING TO BE A BRILLIANT WEDNESDAY NIGHT!

GOOD CAFE.

THE PLANTERS CAFE, JUST BEFORE STAVELEY ON THE MAIN WINDERMERE ROAD (THE EX LITTLE CHEF) NOT ONLY SELLS EXTREMELY GOOD COFFEE BUT ALSO DISPLAYS A LARGE SELECTION OF PHOTO'S BY CLUB MEMBER, PETER HORSLEY. IT'S WELL WORTH A VISIT.

THE CLUB DINNER.

LAST YEARS CLUB DINNER WAS ANOTHER STORMING SUCCESS DESPITE OUR SECRETARY'S EARLY CLAIM TO MUG OF THE YEAR. THE OLD D.G. HAD ONLY SET FOR 70 PEOPLE INSTEAD OF 80 AND UNFORTUNATELY SOME MEMBERS HOT FOOTED IT TO AMBLESIDE FOR SOME ALTERNATIVE FOOD. OUR JOHN APOLOGISES PROFUSELY. IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN. THE VENUE HAS BEEN BOOKED AGAIN FOR THIS YEAR SO THRES SOMETHING TO LOOK FOWARD TO.

THE DISCO RAGED TIL 2-00 AM AND LAST ORDERS WERE AT 4-00 AM. NOT BAD EH? HERES A LIST OF TROPHY/PRIZE WINNERS.

FELL RACE : THE GOLDEN DUCK - MARTIN DALE.

BEST NEWSLETTER ARTICLE : MARTIN DALE

MUG OF THE YEAR : NEIL ROBINSON (ROBBO).

WHO MANAGED TO GET ON THE WRONG MOUNTAIN IN THE ALPS, AND ALSO SPENT A COLD NIGHT OUT 3 PITCHES BELOW THE TOP OF THE SOUTH FACE OF THE MIDI IN HIS T-SHIRT AND TIGHTS.

BIG RASBERRY! LOCKIN BOYS TAKE THE RAP.

AGM REPORT

THIS YEARS AGM WAS NOT THE USUAL STORMY SPARKING AFFAR, MORE LAID BACK THAN PREVIOUS AGM'S.

P.H.R. SET THE BALL ROLLING WITH A BIG RASBERRY. NEXT YEAR YOU WILL GET THE AGM MINUTES ABOUT TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT AS A LOT OF FOLKS FORGOT THEIRS INCLUDING PETE.

THE CHAIRMANS ADDRESS WAS FAIRLY RESTRAINED BEING VERY SIMILAR TO MY EDITORIAL ACTUALLY JOHNNY LOCKLEYS LOCK IN LADS TOOK THE RAP FOR SOME LATE NIGHT HUT NOISE. UNFORTUNATELY JOHNNY WASNT PRESENT TO COMMENT. HE WAS PROBABLY RE-FILLING

MARK HARDINGS GLASS WHOSE APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE DECLARED HE'D SEE US ALL IN THE RULE AFTERWARDS FOR A PINT. LUCKY BUGGER.

THE MEETING FLOWED ON TOWARDS THE BEER BREAK BEFORE THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS. HARDING PAID THE PRICE FOR NOT BEING PRESENT - HE WAS ELECTED CHAIRMAN UNAPPOSED.

NEW OFFICERS.

CHAIRMAN : MARK HARDING.

VICE CHAIRMAN : MARTIN DALE.

SECRETARY : JOHN PARKER.

TREASURER : PAUL TAYLOR

BOOKING SECRETARY : JOHN WISEMAN.

HUT CUSTODIAN LITTLE LANGDALE : DON NICHOL.

HUT CUSTODIAN STAIR : JOHN HICKMAN.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR : STEVE HALTON.

SOCIAL SECRETARY : LOUISE FORTUNE.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS : PETER ROSCOE

CHERRY EARLE.

DAVE WOOD.

MICK TOLLEY.

FOLLOWING THIS UNHOLY UPHEAVAL AND MORE BEER THE MEETING TRUCKED ON INTO FUTURE CLUB POLICY.

THE MAIN OUTCOME OF THIS IS THAT THE HUT FEES HAVE GONE UP! IT IS NOW £1-00 A NIGHT FOR MEMBERS, 50P FOR MEMBERS CHILDREN UNDER 16, AND £2-00 FOR MEMBERS GUESTS. OUTSIDE PARTY BOOKING RATES REMAIN THE SAME AND THE COMMITTEE HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE IT IF THEY WISH.

MICK TOLLEY BLAGGED A NEW CAVING ROPE OUT OF THE MEETING AND HENRY SUGGESTED THAT NOW THAT TV HAD BEEN ALLOWED INTO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS THE MEETING SHOULD ALLOW THE CAMERAS INTO THE AGM. A BIGGER CAR PARK FOR LITTLE LANGDALE WAS DISCUSSED. THE CLUB DINNER WAS BOOKED AND THE PORCH AT STAIR REARED ITS UGLY HEAD AGAIN. THE MEETING CLOSED AT A PRESENTABLE TIME FOR MORE BEER.

MARTIN DALE.

BMC EVENTS.

THE TWO BIG BMC EVENTS ARE UP AND COMING. FIRSTLY THE 1988 NATIONAL MOUNTAINEERING CONFERENCE 25/26TH MARCH AT BUXTON OPERA HOUSE. TICKETS ARE £7-50 EACH AND ARE ABARGIN WHEN YOU SEE WHAT YOU GET, REINHOLD MESSNER, PAT LITTLEJOHN, JOHN BARRY, LARRY GIBSON AND CLIFF JUMPER + OFF WITH THE EXPERT, RANDY LEAVITT FROM THE USA. ALSO IVE HEARD A RUMOUR THAT THE BMC HAVE NOW SCOOPED POSSIBLY THE WORLDS NO 1 ROCK JOCK AT THE MOMENT, STEFAN GLOWACZ. TICKETS FROM THE BMC OR DETAILS FROM THE EDITOR.

ALSO THERES THE ANNUAL DINNER AT THE MARQUIS OF GRANBY, BAFORD ON 16TH APRIL, £10 FOR THIS LOT INCLUDING THE DISCO AND NAT ALLEN AS GUEST SPEAKER. DETAILS AGAIN FROM THE ED.

TREKKING IN NEPAL.

HAVING ARRIVED A DAY LATE IN DELHI (COURTESY OF AIR INDIA) IN EARLY OCTOBER I MET UP WITH MARK PLANNER AND SPENT A WEEK IN DELHI GETTING USED TO THE HEAT FOOD AND SQUALOR, UNTILL ANDY AND ROGER ARRIVED FRESH FROM THEIR MAGNIFICENT EFFORTS IN THE KISHTWAR REGION OF INDIA.

MARK AND I THEN TRAVELLED BY TRAIN TO GORAKHPUR, THEN BY BUS INTO NEPAL AND THE SOUTHERN ANNAPURNA CITY OF POKHARA, AQUANTING OURSELFS WITH THE SALUBRIOUS

NEPALI BUSES ON THE WAY!

TREKKING ANTICLOCKWISE AROUND THE ANNAPURNAS OFFICIALLY STARTS AT DUMR'E, BUT IT IS NEARLY ALWAYS POSSIBLE TO GET A LIFT ON A LORRY OR JEEP TO BHOTE ODAR (ABOUT A DAYS TREK) TO MISS OUT THE BORING START. WE TREKKED SIX DAYS ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE ANNAPURNAS FOLLOWING THE VALLEY AROUND TO MANANG, THE VALLEY VARYING IN CONTOUR FROM A FANTASTIC STEEP NARROW GORGE TO AN INCREDIBLY BEUTIFULL FLAT BOTTOHED VALLEY. BUT ALL ALONG THE VALLEY IT IS TOO DEEP TO SEE THE BIG BOYS YET. ONLY WHEN YOU GET NEAR TO PISANG DOES ANNAPURNA II JUMP OUT AT YOU WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT, INCREDIBLE!

ON THE DAY WE REACHED PISANG WE TRAVELLED THROUGH OPEN RICE FIELDS INTO DARK DENSLY WOODED FOREST, THEN A STEEP CLIMB TO PISANG WALL (A HUGE ROCK BOWL ABOUT 1KM LONG AND 2000FT HIGH) INTO A BARREN WASTELAND WITH A FEW SHRUBS SCATTERED ABOUT HERE AND THERE. THE CHANGE IN TERRAIN WAS UNBELIEVABLE.

IN DEEP BUDIST COUNTRY NOW, UPPER PISANG IS A TIBETAN VILLAGE BUILT ON AHILLSIDE WHERE THE FRONT OF ONE HOUSE IS THE ROOF OF THE NEXT AND THE WHOLE PLACE IS JUST A MASS OF LADDERS. WE STAYED THE NIGHT THERE AND IN THE MORNING GOT AN AWESOME VIEW OF ANNAPURNA II, WHAT A SITUATION! MANANG WAS THE NEXT STOP, ANOTHER TIBETAN SETTLEMENT WITH REALLY GREAT LOCALS. I LIKE THE TIBETANS, THEY'R A RUM LOT AND VERY ENTERPRISING TRADERS.

IN MANANG WE DECIDED TO ACLIMATISE TO THE ALTITUDE (I COULDN'T EAT BUISCUITS AND WALK AT THE SAME TIME ANYMORE!) AND HAVE A REST, WHEN IT PROMPTLY SNOWED FOR 24HRS BLOCKING THE THRONG LA PASS TO JOHSON FOR 5 DAYS, (THE SAME STORM THAT CAUSED THE K2 PROBLEMS), SO WE DECIDED, BECAUSE OF MY TIME LIMIT, TO GO BACK TO POKHARA AND DO THE ANNAPURNA SANCTURY TREK. WE GOT BACK TO POKHARA IN JUST 4 DAYS, THANKS TO A GIRL CALLED CHICCA, TWO DRUNKEN PORTERS AND A JAPANESE MITSUBISHI CAR! A UNIQUE JOURNEY.

IN NEPAL THERE ARE PROBLEMS WITH FOREST LOSS (CAUSING ERROSION), OVERGRAZING AND BAD WATER SUPPLIES. ON THE WAY UP TO THE BASE CAMP WE STAYED AT KULDI GHAR WHERE THERE IS A CONSERVATION PROJECT, A SORT OF SELF HELP SCHEME RUN BY THE NEPALI THAT WAS REALLY GOOD TO SEE.

INTO THE ANNAPURNA BASE AND YOU CAN SEE WHY ITS CALLED A SANCTUARY, YOU ARE SURROUNDED BY ELEVEN PEAKS ALL OVER 20, 000FT HIGH, WE WERE COMPLETELEY GOB SMACKED. WE GOT UP AT 5-30AM TO GET THE PHOTO'S WITH MACHHAPUCHHARE (FISH TAIL MOUNTAIN) STILL LOOKING AS MAJESTIC AS EVER. BACK TO POKHARA AND THE BASE CAMP TREK WITH A SLIGHT DETOUR TOOK NINE DAYS.

AFTER THREE WEEKS OF TREKKING I DECIDED TO GO , TO KATHMANDU AND THEN CALCUTTA BEFORE GOING BACK TO DELHI. MARK WAS STILL RAREING TO GO AND TREKKED FROM POKHARA TO KATHMANDU AND THEN DID THE EVEREST BASE CAMP TREK.

TREKKING IN THE ANNAPURNA REGION COST US AROUND £2-50 EACH PER DAY AND EVEN IN THE HIGHER REGIONS THE DIET WAS SUPPRISINGLY VARIED. NEARLY ALL THE MEDICAL TREATMENT MUST BE SELF ADMINISTERED (AS I FOUND OUT WHEN I KNOCKED MYSELF SENSELESS ON A FALLEN TREE). HYGENE IN NEPAL IS NON EXISTANT AND ALL THE WATER MUST BE TREATED TO KILL THE BACTERIA BEFORE DRINKING. ANTI MALARIAL PILLS MUST BE TAKEN DAILY AND ALL THE INOCULATIONS TAKEN BEFOREHAND. STOMACH UPSETS AND DIARRHEA ARE THE MOST COMMON AILMENTS, GARDIA AND DISSENTRY CAN ALSO BE ENCOUNTERED. BUT ALL IN ALL TREKKING IN NEPAL MUST BE ONE OF THE BETTER WAYS OF GETTING FIT.

STEVE HALTON.

SUN SEA AND SAN MIGUEL.

IT WAS REALLY PISSING DOWN WHEN WE TOUCHED DOWN IN SUNNY PALMA. THE RAIN WAS ACTUALLY BOUNCING! WE SCUTTLED OVER THE TARMAC TO THE SHELTER OF THE TERMINAL WITH THE OTHER "YOUNG AT HEART TYPES". I WAS WONDERING HOW WOODSY HAD GOT SUCH A GOOD DEAL AND NOW I KNEW. IF WE WERE EXPECTED TO HANG AROUND WITH ALL THESE GERIATRICS, THE WEEK WOULD SOON DEGENERATE INTO A BINGO AND FLORAL/BIRDIE SONG SESSION. WE WOULDNT NEED TO GO SWIMMING TO GET WET!

GEORGE SNEERED FROM BENEATH HIS SHADES AND WALKMAN AS WE PASSED SIMON LE BONS YACHT. HE REMAINED COLD. WILLY HAD THANKFULLY FORGOT HIS BRIGHTEST SHIRT AND MAGNUM POINTED OUT THE LANDMARKS BETTER THAN THE CURIER. I PEERED OUT OF THE COACH WINDOW AT A GIRL WALKING ALONG THE ROAD SIDE WHOM I WORKED WITH FANCY

SEEING HER HERE! WE SOON SETTLED INTO OUR HOTEL AND GRABBED A SNACK BEFORE STEPPING OUT FOR OUR FIRS TASTE OF THE LOCAL NIGHT LIFE. MAGALUF ON FIRST AQUAINTANCE IS ABSOLUTE C**P! JUST LIKE BLACKPOOL. WE FOUGHT OFF ALL THE NIGHT CLUB SHARKS WHO FOUND YOU DOWN THE MAIN DRAG AND WENT OFF IN SEARCHN OF A SPANISH BAR. JUST BY BENNY HILLS BAR, WE FOUND ONE AND HIT THE SAN MIGUELS. MANY MORE LATER WE STAGGERED OUT AFTER WHAT MUST HAVE BEEN A LOCK IN, FAIRLY PLEASED WITH OURSELVES.

THE NEXT DAY WAS A BIT COOL AND DULL BUT DESPITE THIS THE POOL WAS SURROUNDED BY SLOBLIKE SUN SEEKERS. OURBALCONY PROVED AN EXCELLENT POSITION FOR SPOTTING THE MORE BLIMPABLE SPECIMENS. WERE THEY ALL GERMANS? WE NEVER GOT CLOSE ENOUGH TO TELL! THEY WERE BLOODY EARLY ALL THE SAME. WE SCOFFED OUR COPNTINENTAL BREAKFAST AND SET ABOUT FINDING A HIRE CAR. THIS PROVED DIFFICULT AT FIRST AS THE HIRE MEN DID NOT TAKE KINDLY TO HIRING OUT THEIR CARS TO FOUR BRITISH YOBS. GLENN AND WOODSY WERE SOON SUCCESSFULL AND WE ALL CLIMBED ABOARD A PANDA AND HEADED FOR THE HILLS.

ANYONE WHO KNOWS WOODSY KNOWS HIS STOMACH COMES FIRST SO WE WENT FOR A BEER AND TAPAS WITH THE LOCALS OF BUNYOLA, AN ABSOLUTE IYDILLIC VILLAGE, TYPICALLY SPANISH IN EVERY WAY. IN THE LATE AFTERNOON WE SNEAKED UP BESIDE THE DRY STREAM BED INTO THE CANYON THAT IS LA CUBIA, THE MOST POPULAR CLIFF ON THE ISLAND. A COLD WIND WHISTLED UP THE CANYON MAKING THE CLIMBING COLD WORK. WE DISPOSED WIOTH TWO ROUTES, ONE EACH. DAVE AND WOODSYS ROUTE PROVED THE EASIER AT ABOUT HVS WHILST OURS WAS A BIT OF A PUMP AND SUSTAINED, A HARD E1. BOLTS ARE PLENTYFULL SO THERE IS NO POINT IN TAKING ANY NUTS. AN ABSEIL DECENT AND WE SLIPPED BACK OUT TO THE CAR. THE FARMER HERE IS SUPPOSED TO TAKE POT SHOTS AT CLIMBERS SO WE TALKED IN WHISPERS, A TOTAL CONTRAST TO THE MAJORCAN LADS WE ENCOUNTERED LATER ON IN THE WEEK ON THE SAME CRAG.

THE NEXT DAY WE SET OFF EARLIER FOR VALLEMOSSA. A WONDERFULL CRAG WITH A MAGNIFICIENT VIEW DOWN TO THE PORT. AN ABSEIL DECENT GETS YOU DOWN TO THE ROUTES. IT WAS FREEZING ON TOP, BUT AS SOON AS WE GOT TO THE BOTTOM THE SUN CAME OUT, THE SHIRTS CAME OFF AND GEORGE DONNED THOSE FAMOUS SHADES, CLICKED HIS FINGERES AND STRUMMED HIS CHALK BAG. CLIMBING REALLY WELL, GLENN LED OFF UP A FAIRLY STIFF E1. DAVE AND DAVE SEIGED A ANOTHER LINE TO THE RIGHT WHICH PROVED A BIT STIFF AT E2 5C WITH A DEFINATE HARDER IMPASSE SECTION WHICH I FOUND IMPASSABLE HAVING BEEN RECRUITED TO LEAD IT. GLENN AND DAVE THEN ATTACKEDANOTHER STIFF LOOKING E1 WHILST I LOOKED AT A STERNER LINE UP THE ABSEIL WHICH HAD BEEN MOSTLY FREE. A LONG CRANK TO SLAM MY FINGERS IN THE MOST DEVIOUS LOOKING RAZOR ROCK FINGER JAM I HAVE EVER SEEN HAD ME RETREATING. "IM NOT STICKING ME DIGITS IN THERE"! WOODSY WAS SOON FOLLOWING THE CHALK DABS UP THE FULL BORE E2 5C, WHICH GLENN HAD LED PREVIOUSLY IN THE DARK. ANOTHER BRILLIANT DAY.

THE INEVITABLE DISCOVERY OF THE FUN PUB AND THE DISCO AND THE ONCOMING WEEKEND EVANTUALLY SLOWED US DOWN. WILLY DID NOT REALLY SEE EYE TO EYE WITH THE DISCO, BUT EVEN WITH HIS WELL KNOWN LIKING FOR HIS BED WE STILL USED TO BEAT HIM UP IN THE MORNING, EVEN AFTER 4AM SESSIONS. OUR HOLIDAY HAD BEEB PLANNED BRILLIANTLY BY WOODSY TO COINCIDE WITH A SCANDINAVIAN COURIER SCHOOL. THE PUBS WERE ABSOLUTELY FULL TO THE BRIM WITH SOME OF THE MOST BEUTIFULL WOMEN I HAVE EVER SEEN. I ACTUALLY TALKED TO ONE OF THEM ONCE! THE USUAL CASE! ONLY THE FAT ONES WERE INTERSSTED IN US, AND BY THE END OF THE TRIP EVEN THEY IGNORED US.

THESE LATE NIGHTS WERE TAKING THERE TOLL. THE DAY WE WENT TO ALARO, AFTER A DINNER TIME SESSION AT A PICTURESQUE LITTLE BAR, WE ONLY MANAGED ONE PITCH BEFORE IT WAS TIME TO GOC FOR MORE SAN MIGUEL AGAIN. FRIDAY NIGHT FOLLOWED, OR WAS IT SATURDAY? AND A PARTICULARLY MANIC SESSION DOWN BANANAS HAD US LICKING OUR WOUNDS. WE COULDNT FACE CLIMBING SO WE PACKED OUR GEAR TENTAVIVELY AND SET OFF ON A SIGHT SEEING TOUR UP THE WEST COAST.

THIS COAST IS A MUST, BREATHTAKING SCENERY, STEEP WINDING ROADS, CLIFFS EVERYWHERE. IT REALLY REVEALED THE TRUE POTENTIAL OF THE ISLAND AS A CLIMBING PARADISE. AS YET THE LOCALS HAVE ONLY SCRAPED THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG, DEVELOPING THE EASILY ACCESSABLE CLIFFS AND THOSE IN THE SHADE BECAUSE OF THE SUMMER HEAT. NEARLY EVERY SHADY OVERHANGING WALL BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD HAS A LINE OR TWO OF SHINY BOLTS GOING UP IT. SOME OF THESE ARE MIND BOGGLINGLY STEEP AND BLANK. WE CONTINUED OUR TOUR UP TO THE APPROACH TO THE ISLANDSA LARGEST, MOST DEVELOPED AND MOST IMPRESSIVE CLIFF ON THE SLOPES OF THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN, PUIG MAYOR. PARAGON IS AN INCREDIBLE LOOKING THING. UNFORTUNATELY EVENTHOUGH WE HAD RECOVERED A LITTLEBY THEN WE WERE DENIED THE RIGHT OF ACCESS BY THE SPANISH MILITARY WHO HAVE A BASE ON THE TOP OF PUIG MAYOR. NO MATTER HOW MUCH SHAKING OF ROPES ETC BY WOODSY INFRONT OF THE YOUNG UNIFORMED CHAPS NOSE WE COULD NOT MAKE

THEM UNDERSTAND THAT WE WANTED TO GO CLIMBING. MR WOOD HAD TO MAKE DO WITH KISSING THE DONKEY WHO STUCK ITS NOSE THROUGH THE CAR WINDOW FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD. AFTER CHECKING OUT THE TORRENTE DE PARAIS WHICH WERENT UP TO MUCH FOR CLIMBING, WE STOPPED FOR REFRESHMENTS BEFORE CONTINUING UP THE COAST TO ALCUDIA.

ANOTHER SESSION BANAS WHICH APPARENTLY GOT ME PERIOUSLY CLOSE TO A MENTION IN THE MUG OF THE YEAR STAKES FOR DANCING ALL NIGHT ON THIS PLINTH COME STAGE, I CANT REALLY REMEMBER. WE JUST HAD TO CURB ALL THIS ABUSE AND DO SOME CLIMBING. BACK WE WENT TO ALARO. THIS AMAIZING CRAG IS OVER 4 MILES LONG WITH AN AVERAGE HEIGHT OF 300FT, AND ONLY A DOZEN ROUTES! IT WAS A SUN TRAP THE OTHER DAY WE WERE THERE AND IT DIDNT DISAPOINT US THIS TIME. HE AND GLENN DECIDED TO TRY AND COMPLETE THE ROUTE WE GOT A PITCH UP THE OTHER DAY. THIS PROVED A TERRIBLE MISTAKE AS THE BOLTS DISAPPEARED AND ONLY THE ODD OLD PEG PROVIDED THE ONLY PROTECTION. THE ROCK TURNED AS BAD AS THE TOURISTS WHO RUN FOR COVER WHEN A TAPE I'D PUT ON DISLODGED, SOME NASTY LUMPS WILL TESTIFY TO. WE MANAGED THE ROUTE ABOUT E4 5C WE THOUGHT. WE'D HAVE BEEN BETTER ON ONE OF THOSE LINES OF SHINY NEW BOLTS WHICH STRETCHED SKYWARDS ON THE GREY AREAS OF ROCK TO OUR RIGHT.

WOODSY AND WONKER HAD FOUND AN EASY LINE WELL DOWN AND RIGHT. "GREAT " SHOUTED WOODSY. WE MET THEM IN THE BAR WHERE WE WERE TREATED TO SOME AMAZING LIQUERS BY SOME BRITS WHO I'D NEARLY KILLED EARLIER.

OUR LAST CLIMBING DAY WAS SPENT BACK AT LA GUBIA WITH THE VERY LOUD LOCALS. IT WAS PRETTY COLD SO WE ESCAPED ONTO PLANKS AND DID THREE ROUTES ONE ABOUT E1 AND THE OTHER E2 AND THE LAST E3 6A. THE BRILLIANT POCKETED LIMESTONE WE ENCOUNTERED ON ALL THE CRAGS MAKES THE CLIMBING VERY ENJOYABLE BUT BEWARE ANYONE CLIMBING THE EASIER GRADES, THIS MAY NOT BE THE PLACE FOR YOU. ALTHOUGH YOU CAN ALMOST CERTAINLY LEAVE YOUR RACK OF NUTS AND FRIENDS AT HOME, THE EASIEST ROUTES WE FOUND WERE HVS+. IF YOU CLIMB THE BIG NOS THERES STACKS AND MORE ROUTES GOING UP ALL THE TIHE - 3 ON THE AFTERNOON WE SPENT AT LA LUBIA. THE LOCALS ARE GENERALLY FRIENDLY AND SHIT HOT CLIMBERS. YOU MAY NEED THEIR ADVICE BECAUSE THERE ARE NO GUIDES AS YET.

WE LEFT VOWING TO RETURN SOON. THE NIGHT CLUB SHARK ALSO SAID HE'D SEE US NEXT YEAR AS WE DECLINED HIS LAST OFFER TO " COME TO BANANAS LADS, FREE SEX IN THE TOILETS! ".

SUMMARY : A TRIP TO MAJORCA IN EARLY NOVEMBER 1987, BY THE TEAM OF DAVE "MAGNUM" WOOD, DAVE "WILLY" CUNDY, GLENN "GEORGE MICHAEL" BROOKES, AND MARTIN "BANANAS " DALE.

WRITTEN BY MARTIN DALE.

BENIDORM 1987

"DONDE' ESTA ESCALADES DE MONTANISINO PAR FAVOR?" THE OLD WOMANS FACE REVEALED NO TRACE OF UNDERSTANDING. SHE SELECTED HER RIPEST ORANGES AND ACCEPTED OUR MONEY GREATFULLY.

THE MOUNTAIN PATH FOLLOWED AN INTERMEDIATE LINE FROM THE EDGE OF THE ORANGE GROVES TO THE SHARK FIN OF ROCK DOMINATING THE SKY LINE.

WITH BIG CRAGS DISTANCES ARE ALWAYS GREATER THAN INITIALLY EXPECTED. PLUG-CAMPANA WAS TO PROVE NO EXCEPTION. THE GAP INCREASED BETWEEN ANDY, THE FITTEST, AND THE REST WHOSE LIVERS AND HEADS WERE IN CONFLICT WITH OTHER INTERNAL ORGANS. SADLY SAN MIGUEL IS NO KINDER TO THE CONSTITUTION THAN BRITISH BEVERAGES. GLISTENING IN THE DISTANCE WERE THE SUNGLASSES AND T SHIRT OF DAVE (SATORIAL ELEGANCE ON THE CRAG) CUNDY.

IT BROKE THE DISCOMFORT OF THE WALK TO THINK OF THE DAYS THAT HAD PASSED AND THE TIME THAT LAY AHEAD. IT HAD HARDLY SEEMED LIKE THREE DAYS SINCE WE HAD SEEN OUR ILLUSTRIOUS TREASURER EMERGE FROM THE TOILET WITH INPARALLELLED URGENCY AND HASTENED DOWN THE AIRPORT CONCOURSE IN RESPONSE TO THE LAST FLIGHT CALL TO ALICANTE.

ON BOARD JOHN "HOMBRE" MICKMAN HAD ASSUMED THE Demeanour OF THOSE WHOSE PLEASURE IT WAS TO FLY FOR THE FIRST TIME. SENSING HIS MOMENT, PAUL LEANED ACROSS AND MENTIONED HOW NOISY THE PLANE HAD SEEMED TO BE ON TAKE OFF. THE COLOUR DRAINED FROM THE HOMBRE'S FACE. CONTORTING HIS JAW INTO A HALF SMILE,

HE LOOKED AROUND FOR RE-ASSURANCE. SEEING A FAMILIAR FACE, HOMBRE' BEGAN TO WONDER BY WHAT STRANGE COINCIDENCE HE HAD FOUND HIMSELF ON THE SAME FLIGHT AS HIS SAME YOUNG FEMALE TRAINEE CIVIL SERVANT.

"HOTEL LOS PINOS" ANNOUNCED THE COURIER. ANDY GRINNED AND JOHN WATCHED HIS YOUNG TRAINEE STEP IN THE COACH IN FRONT OF HIM. NOW SOME TEN MILES AND TWO THOUSAND FEET BELOW US HE WAS NO LONGER WONDERING BY WHAT STRANGE CO-INCIDENCE HE WAS SHARING THE SAME SWIMMING POOL AS HIS TRAINEE AND HER TWO FRIENDS.

AHEAD TOWERING OVER THE LANDSCAPE WAS A CRAG OF ENORMOUS PROPORTIONS. TWICE THE SIZE OF SCAPELL AND JUST AS AWESOME, ITS SOUTH WEST RIDGE STOOD OUT AGAINST THE SPAGHETTI WESTERN LANDSCAPE. WE CRAINED UPWARDS AT THE BOLD LADDERS AND COMPLEMENTED OURSELVES ON HAVING CHOSEN SUCH A GOOD REST DAY.

IN THE LITTLE VILLAGE OF FINERSTRAT, AT THE BEST COFFEE SHOP IN THE WORLD, COMPARISONS WERE MADE WITH THEIFACH - THE SCENE OF OUR INTRODUCTION TO SPANISH ROCK.

PERCHED ON THE PROMONTORY AT CAPE' (AND FEATURED IN MOUNTAIN 112), PERON-DE-IFACH HAD ABSORBED OUR DAYS EFFORTS. THE FIVE PITCHES OF DIEDRO UBSA (HVS 5B) HAD FALLEN TO THE JOINT LEADS OF ANDY BLAYLOCK AND SATORIAL DAVE. MEANWHILE ON THE WEST FACE THE SAN MIGUEL TEAM (TOM JOHN PAUL AND DAVE). HAD OVERCOME THE DIFFICULTIES OF PANY (H.S. 4B).

NEWS OF GOOD CRAGS SPREAD QUICKLY AND IT WAS ON THE DESCENT THAT WE CROSSED PATHS WITH RICK (ROCK AND RUN) GRAHAM AND HIS FRIEND. HAVING CAUGHT A CHEAPO FLIGHT, THEIR TWIN BED OPAL KADETTE WITH BALCONY WAS PROOF ENOUGH THAT YOU CAN GET TO SPAIN AND BACK ON THE STRING OF YOUR CHALK BAG IF YOU WANT TO.

IT MUST HAVE BEEN ON ABOUT THE FOURTH DAY THAT TOM KNOWLES BEGAN TO COMPLAIN OF BACK PAINS. HE HAD BEEN UNFORTUNATE TO BE SUPPORTING THE HOTEL BAR ON THE PREVIOUS NIGHT WHEN A GROOP OF SENIOR CITIZENS HAD RETURNED SOMEWHAT INTOXICATED. RECOGNISING THE PLIGHT OF ONE OF THE HERRIER OLD LADIES WHO WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY IN MAINTAINING HER BALANCE, TOM GALLANTLY PROFFERED HIS ASSISTANCE. OVER THE COURSE OF THE LAST TWENTY FOUR HOURS, TOM HAD COME DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO BECOMING THE ADOPTED MINDER OF THIS LIVELY BUNCH. THE PREVIOUS EVENING, LATE FOR DINNER, WE HAD SEEN HIM SIT IMPLACABLY THROUGH A DETAILED ANATOMICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE OLDER GENTLEMANS LATEST OPERATIONS.

RELIEVED HE HAD STRAINED A LESS SENSITIVE AREA OF HIS ANATOMY, TOM FOUND HIMSELF THE MOST COMFORTABLE SEAT IN THE FIAT. DESIGNED FOR FOUR NOW HOLDING SIX AND GEAR, WE ONCE AGAIN MODESTLY ACKNOWLEDGED THE CHEERS OF LOCALS, WHO FROM HANGING FROM THEIR BALCONIES WERE WELL IMPRESSED BY OUR CONTORTIONS. "HOMBRE' HICKMAN, LIMBS COMPRESSED INTO AN UNUSUAL SHAPE, REMEMBERED THAT HE HAD PROMISED TO SELL HIS COLLECTION OF ANCIENT MOACS AND HEX'S THE PREVIOUS DAY. DAUNTED BY THE PROSPECT OF YER MORE VERTICAL LIMESTONE, HOMBRE UNCOILED HIS GREAR BONES, MUTTERED SOMETHING ABOUT PILES OF CHOSS AND HEADED OFF IN THE GENERAL DIRECTION OF THE SWIMMING POOL. AND SO WE WERE FIVE.

TODAYS CRAG STOOD OUT ON THE HILLSIDE ON THE TOP OF A STONY TRACK MIDWAY BETWEEN BENIDORM AND CALPE'. IN ADDITION TO THE BOLT RENDERING, THE COMPACT ROCK HAD BEEN TREATED TO A DASH OF PAINT HERE AND THERE. REALISING THAT VISITORS WOULD HAVE OBVIOUS DIFICULTY IN UNDERSTANDING THAT ROUTES WERE COMPOSED OF A VETICAL SECTION OF BOLTS, A LOCAL SWISS CLIMBER HAD SPRAYED THE BOLTS WITH A SELECTION OF OUTRAGEOUS COLOURS.

IN AN ATTEMPT TO COMPETE WITH CRAG, SATORIAL DAVE HAD EMBARKED ON THE FIRST ROUTE. SHOUTING DOWNWARDS HE DESCRIBED HOW MUCH HARDER THIS WAS THAN THE SIERRA-DE-TOIX ROUTES (CLUB 2000 AND LUNE LLENE SA/B), TWO DAYS PREVIOUS. ANDY ON BELAY, SINGING MELODIOUSLY, LEANED BACK AND SURVEYED THE YELLOW ROUTE TO THE LEFT - GOOD E1. HITHERTO MOTIONLESS, TOM STOOD UP AND GAZED AT THE VERTICALITY. WITH A PAINED EXPRESSION HE PLACED HIS HAND ON HIS BACK AND WONDERED WHETHER THERE MIGHT NOT BE ONE OR TWO GOLF COURSES AROUND. NODDING HIS HEAD AS IF IN AFFIRMATION, HE SET OFF DOWN THE CRAG WITH STEADFAST INTREST. THE CLOUD OF DUST AND OCCASIONAL CLATTER OF HATAL ON ROCK TESTIFIED TO THE ENTHUSIASM WHICH TOM IMPARTED TO THE FIAT IN HIS HASTY DEPARTURE DOWN THE BOULDER STREWN TRACK.

OUT OF THE CLOUD OF DUST EMERGED ANOTHER FIAT CARRYING ANOTHER FIVE INTERESTED SPECTATORS. BARELY MANAGING TO DISGUISE THEIR REACTION TO DAVES BAD TASTE T-SHIRT AND TIGHTS, THEY ANNOUNCED THEMSELVES AS THE LOCAL HARDMEN. IN CAREFULLY MEASURED ENGLISH, THE MOST ACTIVE OF THE BUNCH LAMENTED ABOUT THE LOSS OF HIS CLIMBING PARTNERS THROUGH MARRIAGE OR INJURY. TO HIS RIGHT HIS SMILING FRIEND

CASUALLY RESTED HIS PLASTERED LEG AGAINST A BOULDER. WALKING UP TO THE FOOT OF THE CRAG THE MAIN MAN INSPECTED THE BRIGHTEST ROUTE AND RAN HIS FINGER ALONG THE ROCK. DISAPPOINTMENT SPREAD ACROSS HIS FACE AS HE BLEW THE CHALK FROM HIS FINGERS. "NO NEED CHALK ON THIS ROUTE", HE SAID. NO ONE DOUBTED HIS WISDOM. AFTER ALL ON AN E3+ IN HOT SUNSHINE WHO WOULD WANT TO USE CHALK?

HE SEEMED TO BE GENERALLY APPROVING OF OUR PRESENCE AND SENSING OUR INTREST, HE AGREED TO PROVIDE US WITH TOPOS OF THE PUIG CAMPANA IF WE COULD FIND OUR WAY TO THE FISH MARKER IN BENIDORMS SUPERMARKET, HIS PLACE OF WORK. A TIME WAS DULY ARRANGED AND THE FIVE DEPARTED. AFTER TICKING THE YELLOW ROUTE SO DID WE.

IT HAD NOT TAKEN LONG FOR THE EVENINGS ENTERTAINMENT TO DEVELOP ALONG PREDICTABLE LINES. THIS INVARIABLY INVOLVED A VISIT TO THE LOCAL BAR FOLLOWED BY A CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF THE BARS AND STREETS OF OLD BENIDORM TOWN

THE INHABITANTS OF THE LOCAL BAR APPEARED TO BE PRACTISING FOR THE SUMMER SEASON. THE THIRD NIGHT OF OUR PRESENCE HAD SEEN AN IMPROMPTU BRAWL. TONIGHT, THE RESIDENT LUNATIC WAS DEMONSTRATING HIS SKILL AT EXPLODING LIVE BULLETS WITH THE BARMANS HAMMER. OUR IMPENDING DEPARTURE WAS FORESTALLED BY THE ENTREATIES OF THE BARMAN WHOSE COPIOUS QUANTITIES OF FREE WINE PROMOTED A MORE RELAXED ATMOSPHERE.

THE ALCOHOLIC REFRESHMENT HAD LEFT ITS MARK AND IN THE FOLLOWING MORNING IT TOOK LONGER THEN NORMAL TO SQUEEZE OURSELVES INTO THE FIAT. PAUSING TO EXAMINE THE DROP OVER THE MASCARAT GORGE, SCENE OF PETE GOMERSALLS JUMP (CLIMBER JAN 88), WE DECIDED TO OUR EFFORTS BETWEEN SIERRA-DE-TOIX AND THE PENON-DE-IFACH. DAVE CUNDY AND PAUL TAYLOR TACKLED MORE VS'S AND HVS'S WITH ENTHUSIASM. MEANWHILE LEADING A GIBBERING DAVE WOOD UP "PAVLOS MAGICOS", ANDY FOUND HOW EASILY SPANISH GRADE IV COULD BECOME HVS PUSHING E1. WE REMEMBERED THE RUMOUR THAT "VIA LUES NOCTURNES", THE SEA TRAVERSE GIVEN GRADE V WAS APPROACHING E3 6A IN ITS UPPER REACHES.

THE FINAL DAY DAWNED BLUE AND WARM. JOHN INSPECTED HIS FAVOURITE MOACS, CLEANED HIS BOOTS AND SETTLED DOWN FOR A LONG DAY BY THE POOL. HIS TWO CIVIL SERVANT FRIENDS, INTERESTED TO FIND OUT WHAT CLIMBING IS ALL ABOUT ACCOMPANIED THE BOYS TO SIERRA-DE-TOIX OESTE. ROUNDING THE BEND RETURNING FROM A BRIEF VISIT TO CALPE', THEY COULD SEE A LARGE FIGURE SILHOUETTED AGAINST THE AFTERNOON SUN. "COME ON YOU BUGGER. PULL ON THAT ROPE". HIGHER ON THE CRAG A SMALLER GAUDILY CLAD SHAPE, COULD BE SEEN STAINING AT THE ROPE, MUTTERING OBSCENITIES. THE BOYS WERE SORTING OUT THEIR APPROACH TO "VIA PYRAMIDE".

ELSEWHERE ON THE CRAG, ANDY WAS CHECKING OUT A POSSIBLE VARIATION ON VIA YOYABA (E2?). OVERCOMING THE BOULDER PROBLEM START, HE WATCHED DAVE CUNDY DO BATTLE WITH THE CAVE SECTION AND SANG HIMSELF UP AND DOWN THE CRAG.

THERE WAS LOTS OF SINGING ON THE WAY BACK AND EVERYONE SEEMED GLAD TO HAVE BEEN OUT THERE. I KNOW I WAS.

DAVE WOOD.