

Tony Jarratt's Caving Log

Volume 5, 1992-1994

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VIETNAM Quảng Bình Major discovery	Hang Vom 1/4/92 Paul, Carl, Rupert, Simon, Noddy	7h 40m	Chay River	<i>See below</i>
	<p>Dany, Pete and Nhung went back down to Phong Nha to get the correct stove fuel. The rest of us swam into Hang Vom, with two sets of survey kit as far as the impressive and unscaleable c.10m daylight shaft. From here Rupert, Nod and Simon continued upstream to explore and survey at least another kilometre of huge and sporting river cave with lots of swimming sections and climbs over boulders.</p> <p>Carl, Paul and I doffed our wetsuits and wearing shorts and T-shirts followed the huge, previously explored dry passage entering on the LH side at the daylight shaft. We passed through massive galleries and chambers with spectacular gours, flowstone and bosses to reach an incredibly wide chamber (c.100m diameter) with an enormous stalagmite boss in the centre – one of the world’s largest. This area was named Confucian Chamber and it took 400m of surveying to close a loop around it! The floor was composed of ancient gours and dunes of sand and a dry streamway showed that there would be a good flow of water here in wet weather. A hairy climb in one corner led to some 20 metres of well-decorated passage, closing down. In another place a 30-40 m wide gallery with a flat sandy floor bored off for 120m to a static pool. Here I stopped, not having my lifejacket but Carl and Paul swam through (15m) to find the passage continuing bigger than before. They surveyed another 640m – still going – huge, well-decorated and draughting. Meanwhile I had a kip in Confucian Chamber and climbed the mega boss. This is one of the most spectacular chambers and indeed caves I have ever seen. The dry sections are like a desert at night!</p> <p>Some of the formations in this series are amongst the largest known at present. Paul and Carl then returned and we met up with the others back at the daylight shaft before the long, tiring and gnat-infested swim back to the entrance. Here we were met by Kháng who guided us through the jungle back to the bivouac. In our absence he and Tiem had levelled off the site, spread it with large leaves and got the tea water on – bloody good blokes. Yet another great day’s caving.</p> <p>Chicken supreme and rice for supper followed by a lousy night’s sleep to wake feeling like shit!</p>			
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình Major discovery	Hang Vom 2/4/92 Paul, (Ned, Simon, Rupert)	7h 50m	Chay River	<i>See below</i>
	<p>Following the now standard swim in to the daylight shaft, Paul and I carried on to the dry series leaving Nod, Simon and Rupert to push on upstream (for about another kilometre)</p> <p>We passed the static pool to continue pushing and surveying from the last survey station. A side passage near here was briefly looked at and followed down a clean washed pebble slope to a deep pool where we left it for another day – (later pushed by Howard and Co for some 700m).</p> <p>Then followed one of the best trips of our lives as we ambled along a huge, dry, sand floored tunnel with some spectacular old formations:- shields, huge pine cone stalagmites, bosses etc. This passage was some 20m wide on average and deathly quiet. The steady draught and presence of bats led us to believe that we were heading for another entrance and surely enough, after 1.7km of gobsmacking caving we turned a corner to see daylight streaming in from a hole in the LH wall. We cautiously climbed up the snail shell covered boulder slope, keeping a wary eye out for snakes, to emerge at the base of a huge cliff in the middle of the jungle. Thinking that we were fairly close to the bivouac site we shouted and screamed – to no avail, it later being apparent from the survey notes that we were probably in the next “valley” and a large limestone hill lay between us and the camp. As it would have been virtually impossible to find our way back through the forest we returned through the awesome dry series, Brobdingnag, to meet the others at the daylight shaft before once again having to put up with the long swim out.</p> <p>Back to the “Betty Ford Clinic” to meet Pete, Howard and Bob with the bad news that Mick had been taken to Đông Hói hospital with suspected Typhoid.</p>			
Pages 3 and 4				
VIETNAM Quảng Bình Major discovery	Hang Vom 3-4/4/92 Rupert, Pete, Paul (Howard, Bob) (Dany, Deb)	32h 40m	Chay River	<i>See below</i>

Entered the cave at 10.05 on Friday morning. The day was spent in assisting Howard and Paul to photograph the cave from the entrance to the Big Buddha formation in the dry series. Hopefully a lot of excellent photos will be the result of this project. While modelling for a snap near the daylight shaft I noticed a potential passage hidden in the shadow on the RH side (looking upstream) wall. This was later pushed by Howard and Bob for some 600m to where it oxbowed back into the main river passage further upstream. After the photo session Bob and Howard left the cave while the rest of us set up camp in the sandy passage below Big Buddha. This is a superb site – a huge flat floored, sandy chamber with only the occasional drip of water to disturb the almost overpowering silence. We cooked up a curry and pasta followed by apple flakes, “lead weight” cake and custard. This was followed by coffee, fags and an hour’s book reading before settling down in my bivvi bag (on my wetsuit) for a warm and dream-filled sleep. My Alpinex suit and sleeping bag liner were perfect for this. Rupert got up for a piss at one stage to find a 4” long poisonous centipede inside his inner sleeping bag! Luckily it was squashed flat. We also saw amblypyssi on this trip.

Up at 8am for soup and noodle breakfast followed by “snack attacks”. Wet suits and life jackets were donned and we set off upstream for another push. After 2 kms of fairly hard going and boulder piles and across lakes we reached the last survey point. From here we explored and surveyed a further 865m including “Pooh Bear’s Swims” – one of the longest lakes in the system. We eventually halted at another big lake. In a huge chamber just before this I climbed some 80m up boulder slopes and gours to where the roof and flowstone met and a large jumping spider dissuaded me from hanging about. Meanwhile the others pushed and surveyed some 500m of dry inlet passage on the other side of the river which later became an advance bivouac site for pushing the far reaches of the cave. On the way back over the boulder piles in the collapse doline Rupert unknowingly stood on an, almost certainly poisonous, snake which fortunately bugged off in disgust. Rupert and Vietnamese animal life do not live in harmony! (Hang Vom is 9th longest cave in Asia – 17/12/92)

Met by Minh and Tiem at the entrance for the trek back to the bivouac site in the dark. Tiem was so pissed that at one point we had to guide him, and also avoid his waving revolver! An amazing trip.

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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	Hang Phong Nha 5/4/92 Paul, Rup, Pete, Khwang, Minh, Nhrọng, a tourist	10m	Phong Nha	Quick boat ride into entrance (in Khwang’s motor boat!) on way back from the Chay River to show Minh the cave. The rest of the day was spent festering, beer drinking, palying football with the locals (who cheated and won!) etc. Kho Phu (soup) in one of the pubs, a huge meal in our residence then off to Khwang’s place for fish soup and lots more beer. Folk songs by Khwang and 58 yr old Huan and modern stuff from Minh helped the night along. We ignored the “curfew”, gotwell pissed and subsequently got Xiang Xiaou (Chinese beer) hangovers.
VIETNAM Quảng Bình	6/4/92 Paul, Rupert, Pete and I travelled to Đông Hối on the bus to relieve Carl, Nod and Simon at the hospital where Mick was beginning to recover. It is a large but badly dilapidated place with few facilities and little hygiene. Sad to see, this place desperately needs foreign aid.			
VIETNAM Quảng Bình	7/4/92 Đông Hối. It was arranged with the British Embassy for Mick to travel home. The Chief Consultant joined us in the ward for beer and fags! Back to Phong Nha that evening.			
VIETNAM Quảng Bình	8/4/92 Returned to Đông Hối to say farewell to Mick and pick up two Russian jeeps and drivers and a 4WD minibus. We then spent most of the rest of the day travelling in these to the villages of Quy Hóa in the district of Minh Hóa over some very rough roads and a couple of hand-hauled ferry crossings. Much of the scenery consisted of forest covered limestone towers and was superb. In the village – a bit like a wild west town – we were accommodated in the People’s Committee Meeting Room / Guest House. Real luxury – beds, mosquito mets and a generator!			

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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	9/4/92 Paul, Nod, Rupert, Pete, Simon, My, 2 others and 1 to Tân Hóa area. This involved a jeep ride and 4-5 km walk across paddy fields and two rivers to reach an area of limestone towers with various caves and sinks. The high level dry cave of Hang La Ken II was surveyed for 250m to a second entrance by Rup, Simon and Noddy. Paul and Pete looked at the short and grotty sink of Hang Song. Pete and I were then led by a local to Hang Hung Ton - a large entrance with a stream entering. Pete swam in amongst large logs and boulders for about 30m. It was still going but likely to emerge at the other side of the limestone tower. A bloody long walk in hot sun for little reward. This river seems to pop in and out of the limestone towers though there could be some potential further downstream. On the way back we stopped for a cooling swim in the river and spent an hour or so in a local’s house drinking tea while hundreds of kids crowded around. We were glad when the jeep driver eventually returned!			
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	Hang Bán Cỏ 10/4/92 Pete	45m	Quy Hóa	A walk across some 800m of paddy fields from the village led to a limestone tower area with a dry sink entrance. In flood the fairly roomy entrance must take quite a lot of water. The passage unfortunately soon degenerated to a 2m high muddy phreatic tube. We surveyed this for 144m before conditions got wetter. Hoping for an improvement we followed another 30m or so of low, wet tube to a duck where we called it a day. The passage continued but a lack of draught did not bode for big extensions. All of the cave which we visited had been previously explored as evidenced by numerals and graffiti on the walls. Peculiar scratch marks in the mud indicated the presence of some fairly large animal. The name meant "Table Cave".
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	Hang Khai 10/4/92 Pete, guide, security man and about 100 kids!	30m	Quy Hóa	Tiger Cave. Followed by hordes of screaming kids we were led to this cave in another tower on the far side of the village. A dry and partially quarried entrance led to about 100m of well explored and vandalised phreatic maze with a few poor formations and lots of bats. Much graffiti. There was not draught or obvious way on. Pete and I found it to be a great refuge from the claustrophobic attentions of all the bloody kids – some of whom got a long way in without lights and one of whom had a live bat on a bit of string, like a conker! Two uninspiring caves in a not particularly promising area but nevertheless and interesting walk round the village. In the evening Bob and I gate crashed a local's party and got rigid with drink while teaching them Mendip songs!
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	11/4/92 Left Quy Hóa and drove back down the track to Tuyên Hóa, reaching there at lunchtime. Another meeting room was used for accommodation. In the afternoon a posh motor boat was hired to take us to three known caves. The supposedly large river cave that Dany, Bob, Howard, Deb and Rupert went to look at did not materialise. They were pissed off! Our two caves were found but yielded little of interest:-			
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	Hang Minh Cam Hang Minh Cam II 11/4/92 Carl, Pete, Paul, Noddy, Simon, Minh, My, locals	55m 30m	Minh Cam	Named after the area, Hang Minh Cam was a very large, dry entrance just above the Hanoi to Saigon railway line. The 20m high by 15m wide tunnel was followed for c.100m to a bank of ascending gours with a low stoop beyond leading to two c.30m long passages. One of these had been dug out by the locals for some 15m to an impassable (for me) squeeze. This had almost certainly been passed by local kids and the passage is supposed to enlarge but the lack of draught and airless feel of the place make this highly unlikely. The whole cave was well populated by bats and stank of guano. A disappointing result after the initial enormous entrance. Hang Minh Cam II (named by us) is a couple of hundred metres along the track and is a resurgence. The entrance led to some 10m of canal ending in a 0.8m wide tube which was not pushed due to the large amount of bats flying through it! This is obviously a bat roosting site and it was particularly unnerving being dive bombed by the creatures, There is potential here for a reasonable amount of cave as a huge limestone tower rises immediately behind this
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				site. Not a very successful day's caving. We got fed up waiting for our non-existent motor boat and hired a crew of five kids to take us back down river in their motor boat. It cost the price of three litres of fuel. An entertaining ride.
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	12/4/92 Back to Phong Nha / Son Trach in the bus, having a superb sea food meal en route. Spent the rest of the day packing kit ready for the morrow's Ho Chi Minh Trail epic. We also received some bad news. It seems that the previous day a party of tourists from Bô Trach had entered Hang Phong Nha to take photographs. They had climbed up onto some large stalagmites using a bamboo or rattan ladder when one of the formations collapsed, killing two of them and seriously injuring the others.			
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	13/4/92 A large team boarded a shagged out Russian 6 wheel drive lorry for the long haul up the Ho Chi Minh Trail – a desperately rugged track leading into Laos. Despite the water filled oil drum mounted over the cab there were numerous stops to allow the radiator to cool down and top up the system. At 14 kms a couple of us left the Trail and followed Du, our policeman and guide, into the jungle to look for a resurgence cave. It soon became obvious that this was not the one we had been told about and judging by the small size of the stream was unlikely to have been significant so we returned to the track. Two kilometres further up the trail we found the correct path and followed this for some 500m into the valley where the impressive entrance to the resurgence cave of Hang Chá Ang was found (Cave of the Chá Ang River). This is the same river that eventually folws through the Phong Nha system and there is great potential here for another large system heading up into the hills towards the Laos border. The path to the cave involved a couple of paddles across the river and at one point I had to walk through a 100m or so of leechy jungle in bare feet! Not one bite though.			
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình <i>discovery</i>	Hang Chá Ang 13-14/4/92 My, Minh, Du, Carl, Howard, Paul, Vui, Luân, Thuộc, Thuận (porters)	19 hr	Chá Ang River	<i>See below</i>
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	<p>On reaching the impressive entrance we immediately set up a bivouac on the sandbanks just inside. This is a perfect camp site and an excellent base for work in this area. After a fine meal of “Chilli con Dany” Howard, Carl and I put on wetsuits and lifejackets (and fins for me) and set off through the huge lake which filled the passage just beyond our camp, surveying as we went. Paul was feeling ill so he had a look at the dry chambers and passages behind the bivouac site. The Vietnamese contingent went to bed! After a couple of hours surveying basically a 300m long lake in a passage 15m across by 10m high the walls suddenly closed in to a 0.8m tube 6m long ending in a grotty little static sump pool!! It was also obvious that the river emerged from a huge, deep sump on the RH side of the passage. So ended a potentially classic through trip to the upstream sink on the other side of the massive limestone tower in which this cave is situated. It was a great little caving trip though. On our way back to the bivouac we had a look around the dry upper levels finding lots of large bats, a big toad, remains of fireplaces and a liana rope hanging from an inaccessible stalactite. It was assumed that this part of the cave had been well explored by the locals and it had also been a bat, swift or birds' nest collecting area.</p> <p>Back in camp we ate unpleasant green oranges with custard and drank plenty of tea, Carl and I then sat up nattering and sipping rice vodka reminding me of when Phil Romford and I bivouacked I na cave in Crete.</p> <p>Woke at 6 am after an excellent night's sleep – undisturbed by the noise of the river or passing “civet cats” which, judging by the paw prints regularly crossed the sandbanks here. Our four young porters turned up to fish in the entrance lake. Tea and pancakes for breakfast before setting off for a horrific walk in the jungle.</p>			
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	14/4/92 Guided by Vui and Luân, Howard, Minh and I set off to look for the sink to the Hang Chá Ang system. The lads hacked a way through leech infested, jungle covered lapiaz to reach a minor path climbing up and around the hill. This was followed for a km or so before the way on down into the valley beyond could not be found. We gave up and fought our way back to the cave where I found that at last I had been well and truly bitten by a couple of leeches.			
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình <i>discovery</i>	Hang Chá Ang 14-15/4/92 As above plus Ha,	18 ½ hr	Chá Ang River	<i>See below</i>
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	Tinh and their father			
	<p>Back to camp to find that Carl and Paul had found another entrance to the cave which led after 100m of swimming back into the main streamway on the far side of the lake from the bivouac site. Carl and I then looked at a couple of dry entrances near the sumped resurgence a hundred metres or so round the cliff to the NE. One of these led through about 100m of attractive dry and wet passage back to the camp. There were some fine waterworn rock sculptures and glistening gour pools. The way out through the resurgence sump could be seen as a possible free dive due to the daylight shining in through the water.</p> <p>Back at camp Paul, Howard, Carl and I then surveyed the high level passages before tucking into soup and corned beef hash. We then drew up a prospective set of rules for guides and tourists in Hang Phong Nha. Hopefully these will help prevent tragedies like that of 11/4/92.</p> <p>A rice vodka session with Du and Minh finished the day off.</p> <p>Woke at 7am for a pancake and "lead weight cake" breakfast. Our two new young guides, Ha and Tinh arrived with their father. Paul, still feeling ill, then set off with My for the long walk back down the Trail to Phong Nha while Minh, Carl, Howard, the guides and I set off into the jungle in another attempt to reach the Hung Thờng area and the river sink. After some 3 hrs of desperate scrambling over much the same route as the previous day we managed to get down into the valley and reach a large cave entrance with the upper Chá Ang River entering.</p> <p>Howard, Minh, Ha and Tinh set off on another desperate trek upstream to locate a supposed resurgence cave.</p>			

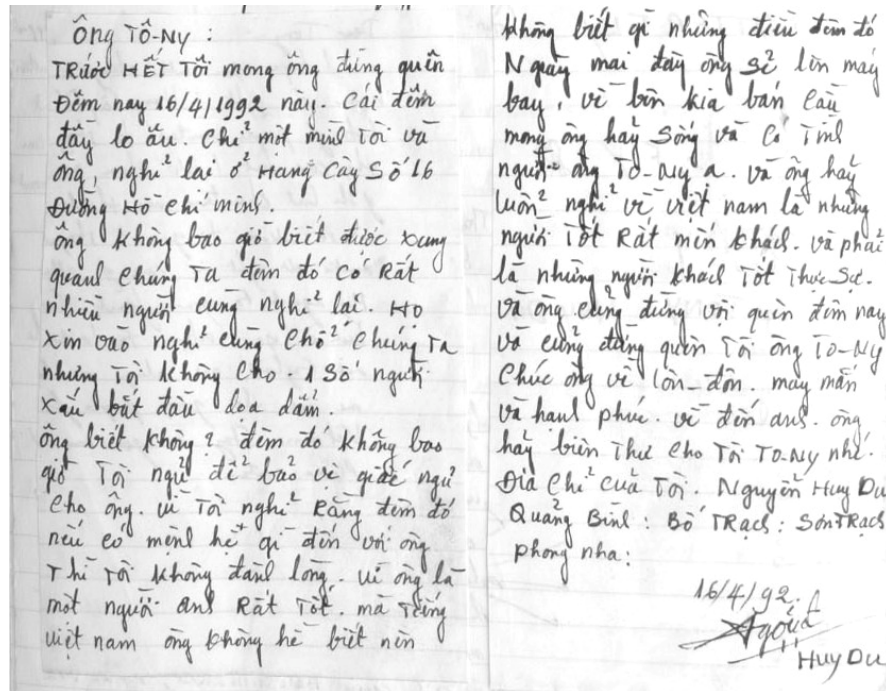
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VIETNAM Quáng Bính <i>discovery</i>	Upper Hang Chá Ang 15/4/92 Carl	1h 20m	Hung Thờng	<i>See below</i>
	<p>Carl and I decided to explore the cave where the Chá Ang River sank. Some 50m of swimming across the entrance lake led to a stream passage and a couple of sumps below a flooded boulder ruckle. This part of the cave is in a state of collapse with many entrances through boulders, mainly on the RH side (looking downstream). Finding no passable way on we exited the cave through one of the ruckle entrances on the RH side to emerge in a large collapse doline where the river ran under the boulders in the floor. We surveyed across this into another section of proper cave with a large, tunnel like entrance. A swim across a small lake led to a sump with a dry high level passage above. 100m of relatively small but attractive phreatic tubes led to a short section of streamway entered via a duck. Both up and downstream were sumped. The only obvious way on was followed by Carl through a hading rift to reach a chamber where further progress was hampered by a 4' long black snake wriggling across the floor. Carl returned rather rapidly and I went in for a look but the snake had gone. We called it a day and returned via the first section of cave to meet the others who had found several potentially interest caves up river.</p> <p>The followed a desperate few hours attempting to get back to camp through the jungle. At one point we got thoroughly lost and were preparing ourselves for a night out without food, drink, sleeping bags or mosquito nets! Eventually the correct route was luckily found and we staggered back to Hang Chá Ang just as it was getting dark. We were much relieved and a lot wiser as to the guiding abilities of small Vietnamese boys!</p>			

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VIETNAM Quáng Bính	Hang Chá Ang 15-16/4/92 Howard, Carl, Minh, Ha, Du, Tinh, and father	15h 50m	Chá Ang River	While we prepared an evening meal of curry and rice the Vietnamese contingent played cards. After an early night we rose at 7am and decided that due to my infected foot (caused by a combination of excema and a cut inflicted while barefoot river crossing) we would leave the area, Carl, Howard and Minh walking back to Phong Nha while Du and I looked after the kit and bivouacked in a cave near the 16km point on the Ho Chi Minh Trail
VIETNAM Quáng Bính	Hang Cày Sò 16 16-17/4/92 Du (2 locals)	Hours!	Cày Sò 16	<i>See below</i>
	<p>On the Trail we stopped briefly at the wood cutters' camp at the 16km point. These people spend all their time chiselling small pieces of dark wood out of larger white lumps. This wood burns with a fragrant aroma and I gather it is used by the Chinese in religious rites (?). It is extremely expensive but I managed to obtain a couple of bits for 2,000 dong (about 25p). I had intended to bivvy down at the side of the Trail near the wood carvers' hut but Du decided that because of the possibility of being</p>			

attacked or robbed we would be better off sleeping in a cave / rock shelter on the far side of the Chá Ang River. This was a beautiful spot, full of butterflies on their way downstream and obviously often used by the many travellers passing along the Trail. This being “bandit” country, Du is armed with a machete and well-used bayonet (a souvenir from his 3 yrs army service in Kampuchea). It seems that many people on the Trail carry Kalashnikovs, rifles and revolvers and murder and robbery are not unknown. A single foreigner could be an attractive target – especially with a great pile of rucksacks! I was in safe hands with Du as he had obviously seen lots of action, having a bullet through his ankle and a shrapnel head wound in Kampuchea. He still wakes up with nightmares. He is 31 with three kids and a really nice bloke. We waited all day for any passing truck to hitch a lift on but none appeared so we dosed for the night under the light of a full moon. Having just been told that bandits machine gunned 8 people only 11 km up the Trail in January, it was somewhat worrying to see about thirty ratten carrying lads arrive on the Trail at dusk. They wanted to camp in the cave but Du told them to bugger off and they apparently threatened him. Unknown to me he spent the night on guard in case they attempted to pinch the equipment.



Dear Mr Tony, I hope you will always remember our night in Hang Cay Sò 16 on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Lots of people wanted to stay in the cave but I told them “no”. Some of the bad characters were threatening us so unknown to you I stayed awake all night in case of attack. My regards to your family and good luck on your return to London and England. Always remember me and the friendly people of Vietnam. Stay as you are. Please write. Huy Du.

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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	17/4/92 Awoke at 6 am – still alive! Breakfasted on tea, fried eggs, remains of yesterday’s chicken supreme, shrimp fritters (prawn crackers) and Vietnamese noodle and pig fat soup with rice! The latter was provided by a bomb collector and his son who were mates of Du and paid us a visit to share breakfasts. At 10.30 Du and I took all the kit up to the Trail and spent some time with the wood carvers. We bought “vodka” off them which put a better complexion on the wait for the truck. At 2pm it finally arrived and we set off back, pausing to load up five bombs and some artillery shells. Back to Phong Nha about 5 pm for food and lots of beer. Got horribly pissed and honked, to the amusement of the locals.
VIETNAM Quảng Bình	18/4/92 Festered, drank gallons of tea, suffered from hangover and squits, drew up surveys and prepared for the evening leaving party. For this the driver had prepared a cold feast of lemon beef, fish, soup, noodles, rice, prawn crackers and local “poppodoms”. We bought over 120 bottles of beer, some “vodka” and pop, etc. All the men from the Committee, the security and boatmen and a few others turned up. Loads of toasts were drunk, fireworks exploded, songs sung. An outdoor disco was held and Khwang once again proved himself to be the star of the show. Apart from being a great dancer he also sang and played percussion with chopsticks on pots and pans.
VIETNAM Quảng Bình	19/4/92 Packed up and after saying our goodbyes to the superb people of Phong Nha/Son Trach we boarded the bus for Đông Hói. Here we went straight to a relatively plush guest house on the beach. Dragonflies, ghekkos and bullet like beetles plagued the place. We had a refreshing dip in the South

	China Sea from a practically deserted beach. One day this will be a real tourist trap.			
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VIETNAM Quảng Bình	20/4/92 Meeting with the President of Quảng Bình province and the Peoples' Committee to discuss the results of the expedition. All then back to the guest house for a tasty free lunch. The rest of the day was spent in the sea of various bars. Ended up drinking snake "vodka" and getting tired and emotional!			
VIETNAM Quảng Bình	21/4/92 St. George's Day. My celebrated this by decorating the bus with a bunch of flowers. Drove to Thanh Hóa where we stayed in a rat infested hotel with superb food. (Over 28 km of passage found this year. Area total 36 km 1990-92. Hang Vom 15 km+)			
VIETNAM	22/4/92 To Hanoi, arriving at lunchtime. The next few days were spent shopping, eating, drinking and packing. A seminar was given for the University big wigs. On 25 th we flew from Hanoi to Bangkok for a weeks R&R in Thailand – beautiful country but not a patch on Vietnam. In conclusion this was the experience of a lifetime. The friendliness and hospitality of the people is exceptional – more so when their history of antagonism by foreign powers is considered. My thanks go to Howard and Debbie and the lads from Hanoi University who spent so much time in organizing the trip.			
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 6/5/92 Trev Hughes, John Attwood, Robin Gray, Martin Riddell	2 hr	Priddy	In my absence Trev, John, Martin, Andy, Robin et al had dug and brought to surface 328 bags of spoil. A new windlass had been built onto the headframe and the dig had become wider and deeper if not longer. Tonight 32 more bags of spoil were removed to the surface. Back to normality!
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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 10/5/92 Martin Riddell	1h 35m	Priddy	Dug and filled about 20 bags at the end and moved another load of bags up the passage to the top of the underground shaft.
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 11/5/92 Jon Attwood	2 hr	Priddy	Hauled all bags from the bottom towards the entrance. Left at least 30 bags at bottom of entrance shaft. Hard work but a useful job.
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 13/5/92 Trev Hughes (Jon Attwood)	1h 55m	Priddy	A planned S.R.T. trip to Twin Titties failed so we returned to Stock Hill. 66 bags of spoil were hauled to surface – a record? These will be emptied out tomorrow by Trevor and the bags hung up to dry in the forthcoming heat wave! Dave Yeandle and Steve Redwood also recovered lots of bags from the Cuthbert's II dig for use here.
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 15/5/92 Trev Hughes (Jake)	2h 25m	Priddy	Some 40 or so bags were filled at the end and stacked ready for removal. At one point a 3' long roof slab dropped on me, hurting my right arm and grazing my right leg. It could have been worse! Trev drilled and banged the big floor slab about half way down. Jake turned up on the surface to visit the site. A good morning's work.
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 17/5/92 Trev, Jon Attwood, Steve Redwood, (Rachael (Swindon/Sweden), Keith Savory, Jake)	2hr	Priddy	The bang of 15/5/92 had completely demolished the floor slab giving us a wide and deep incline down to the working face. Trev and the others then spent some time clearing the debris to surface. I dug a few bag loads at the end before assisting the others. The surface team bugged off early leaving the four of us to haul to the shaft and out. A total of 50 bags were eventually removed to surface. Another good afternoon's work. The next major job is to install a long dragway.
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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 20/5/92 Tony Boycott, Steve Redwood, Chris Tozer	2h 20m	Priddy	31 loads to surface. I went down early and dug at the end then later assisted the others hauling bags out. Because of the superb weather at the moment the dig and surface are dry. Very pleasant
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave	3 ½ hr	Priddy	In the morning I spent a couple of hours filling

	22/5/92 Dave Bell (OUCC/MNRC)			and shifting bags at the bottom. In the Hunter's at lunchtime I persuaded Dave to come for a look. The two of us filled all the remaining bags and broke up a couple of hefty rocks. There is probably over 80 loads to come out. The terminal passage appears to be taking a 90° turn to the right. Another good day.
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 26/5/92 Martin Riddell, Rich Blake, (Quackers)	1h 40m	Priddy	Bag shifting throughout the cave. 50 loads were hauled to surface – Quackers being surface winchman for the afternoon. There are still many bags to come out so that will be the project for Wednesday night. Once they are cleared we can start to assess the possibilities of a skip or dragway from the bottom to the mineshaft.

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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 27/5/92 Terry Matthews (Charterhouse AC), Steve Redwood, Chris Tozer, Tony Boycott	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	In the morning I emptied the 50 bags and camouflaged the spoil heap with garden rubbish. In the evening we hauled loads of bags back to the shaft bottom and got 35 out to surface – 30 of these were tipped. Tony laid a split one slab plaster charge on the first constriction below the shaft in order to make life easier for the installation of a skipway. 2,350 large and small loads out to date!
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 31/5/92 Alex, Trev Hughes, Pete Rose	1 ½ hr	Priddy	86 bags to surface! Trev and I dug a few from the end and also cleared rock debris from the bang of Wednesday. Martin Riddell had also filled a dozen or so bags during the week. The cave passage is not turning right as suspected but is carrying on straight down the dip. It could go on like this for ever!!
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 1/6/92 Rich Blake, Trev	2h 10m	Priddy	2 loads to surface. Much of the time was spent in filling about 60 bags at the bottom to clear the steeply angled passage of infilling in order to assess possibilities of a drag way. Most of these bags were transferred to various ledges back towards the entrance. Atrociously wet weather put us off returning in the afternoon. (All of yesterday's spoil emptied out). 2,438
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 3/6/92 Trev, Andy Hutchings (Martin R), Robin Gray, (Jake)	3 ½ hr	Priddy	In the afternoon Trev and I filled all available bags (c.40) at the end and moved a few towards the entrance. A short length of steel ladder was taken down to assist in getting out from the working face! In the evening we hauled bags – a total of 87 loads to surface, Jake and Martin valiantly winching. Bloody hard work. Trev and I emptied these on the following day and tidied up the site. 2,525 out.

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Bristol	The Northern Foul Water Interceptor 4/6/92 Rich West, Jeff Price, Babs Williams, Graham Johnson, Nick Cornwell-Smith, Mike Dewdney-York, Richard Wealde and mate (guides)	1h 10m	Bristol	Jeff had organised this visit to this almost completed storm/sewer tunnel leading from the Portway to the Feeder Road area. We entered from the Portway end and followed the 3-4 metre diameter blasted tunnel, past a 60m shaft to surface in Clifton, to the working face at 1600m. Here there were 3 or 4 miners cleared debris from the last bang. The drilling rig was out of operation at present and also one of the huge spoil trucks was derailed near the entrance entailing much hard work by the workmen to get it back on the track – especially as it was fully loaded. There was little of great interest in the
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				tunnel but one of the more notable things was the three red laser beams aimed at the working face to enable the tunnel to be driven along the correct line. Most of the tunnel which we visited had been driven through the limestone but there were no obvious natural cavities, despite its passing right below the main Avon Gorge caves near the "tennis courts" i.e. Mercavity and Hades Caves. Worth a visit but only once.
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 8/6/92 Trev, Jake, Rich	3h 25m	Priddy	29 bags to surface. In the morning Trev, Rich and I filled bags at the end and hauled towards the surface. After a lunchtime session in the Hunter's (interspersed with Vietnam photos by a Western Daily Press photographer) we continued to dig and haul. Jake, not having been underground at the dig since December, was suitably impressed. Yet another very good day's work interspersed with fag and beer breaks. 2554 loads out.

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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 10/6/92 Trev, Pete Hellier, Robin Gray, Andy Sanders, (Jake, Martin R) (visitors:-Ivor and Dot Gibbons)	2h 40m	Priddy	Another record – 107 bags to surface! I went down early and dug and filled bags at the end. For the rest of the evening Pete dug and the rest of us hauled the bags out. The dig seems to be getting more vertical. The more we dig the more we realise how ancient this system is. I can't think of anywhere else like this on Mendip.
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 11/6/92 Quackers	1 hr	Priddy	Martin Riddell and Jon (COMSAC) had been down the cave and also emptied the bags in the morning. In the evening Quackers and I went down to dig but were confronted by a foot deep puddle and relatively bad air. The puddle was caused by a small water inlet breached by Pete on Wednesday. Combined with my sceptic foot and the awkwardness of hauling/stacking bags this put us both off and after filling about 15 bags we called it a day and retired to the pub. The dig desperately needs a drag way.
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 14/6/92 Rich Blake, Jake, Chris Lloyd (Vancouver Island CEG)	2h 35m	Priddy	In the morning Rich and I attempted to dig and bail at the end but gave up due to the amount of water. An hour or so was then wasted at the Belfry trying to make up piping for the pump as our hose had been taken down St. Cuthberts! In the afternoon we returned to the cave where Chris and Rich removed the mud ledge near the bottom. Some fifty or so sacks were then hauled along the cave to the shaft bottom and 5 loads taken out to surface. Another section of steel ladder was left at the end. There is now plenty to do for the Wednesday night team. (2,666 loads out to date.) [Jake, John, Rich etc. picked up and delivered conveyor belting to the dig one 16/6/92 and removed another 53 loads – total so far:- 2719]

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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 17/6/92 Trev, Andy Sanders, Rob Gray, Pete Bolt, Rich Blake	2h 5m	Priddy	Installation of some of the conveyor belting delivered on the previous night, after we had emptied all the bags on the surface. The longest length was taken down and after being thrown over the edge of the final drop it instantly settled itself to the correct shape! Trev then proceeded to bolt it into the rock floor and before long we had a perfect dragway. The puddle in the dig was
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				<p>baled into 5 gallon plastic drums and easily hauled up this to be tipped into the mineshaft. A large number of bags were then filled and hauled back up the passage, Robin and Andy having installed another piece of conveyor belt in the tight section which made things a lot easier. Pete Bolt also appeared and aided by a passing Rich Blake took several photographs. Handlines and better hauling ropes now need to be installed as the belting, though even better than expected as dragway, could prove fatal if one slipped on it and did a "Cresta Run" to the bottom! We can now bash on at the bottom with relative ease.</p>
Somerset	<p>Stock Hill Mine Cave Welsh's Green Swallet 19/6/92 1) Trev, Rich Blake 2) Rich, Jake</p>	2h 20m 2 hr	Priddy Milton	<p>24 loads out. We took down a 14' section of lightweight rigid "ladder" which was installed with a scaffold bar at the end. We then dug and hauled and also installed another section of conveyor belting on the ladder over the mineshaft. The surface area was tidied up and camouflaged. Trev went back in the afternoon to bolt down the conveyor belt. A good little session.</p> <p>After lunch Rich, Jake and I resumed work at the end of Welsh's. Conditions were fairly dry and relatively clean. Rich dug at the end while Jake and I hauled the skip back and hid the spoil in gaps above the mud walls. About 12-15 loads were hauled back and "lost". It seems that from now on it is a case of digging out washed in spoil from the floor as most of the roof slab debris has been removed. A good inward draught is encouraging though the dig is as squalid as ever. All in all a good day's work.</p>

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Somerset	<p>Stock Hill Mine Cave 21/6/92 Trev, Robin, Chris Lloyd, Kev Gurner, Nick Gymer (Rachel Hale SSS)</p>	2 ¾ h	Priddy	<p>69 loads to surface, following much hauling up the conveyor belting. A fast descent on this is now known as "riding the rubber" and is quite exciting – especially on the 14' pot! The cave was roughly measured. The first half of the entrance shaft is 8m followed by 16m of passage – a total of 24m (c.70'). The dig was also emptied of water and we filled and hauled a lot more bags. At the base of the shaft the walls seem to be closing in and the way on seems to be straight ahead under a rock ledge. Trevor also bolted down the central section of belting. Another good shift. (TOTAL:- 2812)</p>
Somerset	<p>Stock Hill Mine Cave 22/6/92 Rich, Trev</p>	2h 5m	Priddy	<p>2 loads out. Much of the time was spent hauling to the bottom of the entrance shaft and bagging up at the bottom. Some large boulders and slabs were broken up and the apparently solid floor seen yesterday is only large rocks which have to be removed. It now seems that the way on is back down in the floor as the "horizontal" section was dug out to reveal a solid wall. (On 23/6/92 Jake, Rich, Chris and Snablet removed another 50 loads to surface – total 2864)</p>

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Somerset	<p>Stock Hill Mine Cave 24/6/92 Andy Sanders, Steve Redwood</p>	1h 50m	Priddy	<p>Andy and I emptied the fifty bags brought out yesterday then went to the end of the cave to dig. Steve arrived and two loads of water were removed. We then struggled to dig and remove to surface 21 loads. Total now is 2885. Still going</p>
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				down!
Somerset	26/6/92 Met George Cornes in the Hunter's. He is 82 yrs old and was the discoverer of Lancaster Hole and Oxford Pot. A great and sprightly character.			
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 28/6/92 Andy Sanders, trev (Robin Gray)	2h 35m	Priddy	26 loads to surface. We also dug at least thirty bags from the end and Trev demolished and bagged two or three large boulders. On arrival there was some 25 gallons of water in the dig which was hauled out and poured down the mineshaft. Very hot weather created a strong draught from the mineshaft. The dig is still going on down vertically and some of the infill is very gravelly. It is hoped that the boulder obstruction has been the casue of the mud blockage but I am not convinced.
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 29/6/92 Alone (Visitor: Dudley Herbert)	2hr	Priddy	Emptied yesterday's bags and filled another thirty or so at the end. We are now in a relatively narrow vertical rift, the supposed "boulder ruckle" probably being non-existant! About 12 ½ gallons of water had seeped in overnight and this was bailed into drums ready for disposal. More ater was seeping in as I dug down. Only time will tell what happens next.
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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 1/7/92 Andy Sanders, Brian Murliss (MCG), Chris Tozer, Steve Redwood, Trev, Pete Hellier (Robin Gray, Jake, Rich Blake)	1h 5m	Priddy	70 loads out. Somr thirty gallons of water was dumped in the mineshaft. All bags were emptied. It seems that the end is not a rift but a pile of large boulders as at first thought. Keep on diggin'. Total loads to surface so far – 2981.
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 2/7/92 Rich Blake (Vince)	1h 5m	Priddy	Afternoon trip not helped by three pints of Butcombe and a foot or so of water at the bottom. A new wrecking bar was taken down and one large boulder prised out of the floor and eventually broken up and hauled painfully to surface in 3 loads. Wet, muddy and pissed off we were assisted by a passing Vince to get the bags out then buggered off home. 2984 to date.
Somerset	5/7/92 Mac, Eleanor West and I joined Richard Thomas (my brother-in-law) on a flight over the Cheddar catchment in his Cessna. The entrances of Wigmore, Bowery Corner etc were noted and a good view of the Gorge obtained.			
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 6/7/92 Alone (visitors, Nigel Taylor, Paul	2h 25m	Priddy	Trev, Robin Gray and Andy Sanders had spent the previous afternoon breaking and bagging rock at the end. Due to excess of water and lack of air I was only able to fill eight or so bags here, with mud and rock from the narrow vertical rift. I also filled a dozen or so bags in the mineshaft dig with deads from the blocked level and mud. There are probably about 30 loads ready to go out on Wednesday.
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Somerset	Rushy Ground Swallet 6/7/92 Rich Blake	20m	Chewton Mendip	Following an afternoon dip in the Mineries where Rich and I practised diving with Quacker's assistance, the two of us visited this new Wessex cave. A well designed entrance leads to a superb phreatic chamber with some fine helictites and other formations. From here there are a couple of smaller ways on, both dropping down to a lower level. Calcited bones amid 2-3 ft columns are the attraction in the LH passage while to the right there is a superb display of helictites. The lowest level of this very

				<p>short system obviously floods to the roof and looks a difficult dig. A nice little find and very well decorated but unfortunately showing little prospect for extension. At least it does show the cave possibilities in this hitherto rarely examined area. Nice on Tusker.</p> <p>Attborough (Red Quar) Swallet was looked at on the way back to the pub. The Cotham lads have dug out the entrance and are preparing to put in concrete pipes, though large banks of slumping grey mud could present a problem.</p>
Somerset	<p>Stock Hill Mine Cave 8/7/92 (Jake, Vince, Rich) Andy S, Trev, Robin, Tony Boycott, Brian</p>	1h 20m	Priddy	<p>51 bags and 12 drums of water to surface – 60 gallons. All the bags in the cave and bottom of mineshaft were removed. There was only a 6” puddle in the mineshaft but no further digging was attempted. Trevor drilled a series of holes in the ledges at the bottom of the cave dig and smashed off some twenty bags of rock which is stacked ready for removal. All loads taken out to surface were tipped. Tonight we were so efficient that six of us had to go to the pub early as there was nothing left to do! (3035 loads out)</p>
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Gloucester-shire	<p>Slaughter Stream Cave 13/7/92 Phil Romford, Rich Blake</p>	3h 10m	Joyford	<i>See below</i>
	<p>Following the first and enjoyable but relatively quiet Cavers’ Fair, the three of us stayed on for a Monday trip to this newly discovered cave system. The Gloucester lads had kindly lent us a key and left the two entrance pitches rigged, which we later detackled. We entered via the tremendous excavation of Wet Sink with its amazing drystone shoring and fixed ladder to reach the streamway below a fine 40’ pot. From Cross Stream Junction we went to Zurree Aven where we climbed the attractive waterfalls to the dry Graveyard. From here we walked through some fine passages to reach the larger Chunnel and beyond, the sandy crawls of The 3 Deserts. A rarely used oxbow passage was then followed to emerge in the large and attractive Flow Choke Passage which we followed to its end at a heavily calcited choke which is an obvious place to bang through to gain lots more passage beyond. We then returned, avoiding the oxbow and checked out passages on the RH side trying to find the connection to the streamway. One of these was followed through fine walking size tunnels, past a dog’s footprints in the mud, to the dog itself – or rather its rotted skeleton at the Dog’s Grave. Here we realised this was not the connection so returned to the entrance series via the Three Deserts and the Chunnel, pausing to crawl up a couple of unpleasant crawls on the way. We deladdered the pitches and dropped the kit and key off at Cliff Seymour’s house nearby. An excellent (if rather hungover) trip in a fine cave system with lots of potential. Richard was not at his best and confessed to even stumbling while crawling! Another trip here to look at the rest of this fine cave is on the cards.</p>			
Somerset	<p>Shute Shelve Cavern 14/7/92 Cliff Dockerill & S (ACG), Brian Prew, Rich Blake</p>	1hr	Axbridge	<i>See below</i>
	<p>An evening trip to this new Axbridge Caving Group find on the hillside between Axbridge and Shute Shelve. This cave was found earlier this year after only one weekend’s digging by the Axbridge lads in an old ochre working in the woods. A sandy crawl leads to an impressive decorated chamber with a corkscrew squeeze in the floor leading to a very large and impressive phreatic passage going steeply down dip – about half the size of the upper part of the Gorge in G.B. Cave or bigger than, but similar to, NHASA Gallery in Manor Farm Swallet. There is little in the way of formations apart from a few fine white stalactites and stalagmites but there are some interesting crystals and red flowstones. Both the end of the 30’ wide main passage and a parallel, smaller passage are eminently diggable and I am sure that there is lots more to find. It is very difficult to figure out if this was once a major sink or resurgence (I think it is the latter) but it is certainly extremely ancient and was once a very important water route. Digging will almost definitely reveal more of the secrets of this fascinating system. Is it the “lost cave of Axbridge” – as big as Axbridge Square? This is possible but</p>			

	the ochre miners of 70 years ago do not seem to have entered the second and third chambers. There is a lot more to come from this very important site. Our thanks to Cliff, Geoff and the others for the tourist trip and survey.			
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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 15/7/92 (Vince, Jake) Arthur Spain (MCG), Andy Sanders, Pete Hellier, Tony Boycott, Trev Hughes	2h 40m	Priddy	18 bags and twenty four drums of water were hauled to surface. Another twelve drums of water were tipped down the mineshaft, which Trevor tested with fluorescein as he left. Our big problem tonight was the large amount of water in the dig due to the recent rain and lack of bailing at the weekend. Once the water was removed a dozen or so bags were filled from the bottom and from the descending tube just above it. This is becoming a difficult dig. (3053 loads out to date)
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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 16/7/92 Alone	1h 35m	Priddy	Filled up four drums of water at the bottom. This is not, so far, coloured by fluorescein so there is some hope that the shaft does not connect with the dig. It was still too wet to dig at the bottom so I concentrated on the small tube above, filling about eight bags. This is developing into a rift but looks a bit too small for comfortable digging. I'm beginning to think I need a change of scenery!
Somerset	Denny's Hole 20/7/92 Alone		Compton Bishop	Jane and I walked the horseshoe route over Wavering Down and Crook Peak in foul, wet weather. I popped into the entrance of this cave but decided not to investigate further due to lack of caving clothing and a decent light.
Somerset	Welsh's Green Swallet 21/7/92 Jake, Andy Sanders	2 hr	Milton	Cave reasonably dry. Jake and Andy dug about 15 loads at the end and I dragged the skips back and bagged/heaped up the spoil. I gather it was fairly unpleasant digging and that another three or four trips will get us to potentially new open passage.
Somerset <i>Minor discovery</i>	Tusker's Folly 22/7/92 Jake	1 hr	Priddy	Following a tip by Brian Prewer we went down for a look at the end of this neglected dig. A descending, relatively solid passage was blocked by a few loose boulders and the general approach is somewhat unstable. Using a short length of rope we had soon removed enough rocks to enable me to squeeze down into a tiny chamber with a choked "bedding" passage leading off. Total extension about 15-20'. Lack of light forced a retreat but a return here is necessary. We could be on to a good thing with a bit of careful digging.
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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 22/7/92 Trev, Sean Morgan (MEG), Snab, Robin Gray	2 hr	Priddy	19 bags to surface. Most of the time was spent hauling some thirty or so drums of water to the mineshaft (which we still hope does not connect with the dig though I suspect there might be a hint of green in the water!) Snab and I then dug a few bags of crap until I felt a great thirst coming on and left the cave with Sean. Snab, Trev and Robin continued digging and filled another dozen or so bags. The way on is caveable but the water problems will doubtless be a pain in the arse. We need several teams a week to keep this under control. (Trev also hauled out 66 bags while I was in Cuba).
Somerset <i>Minor</i>	Tusker's Folly 24/7/92	1h 50m	Priddy	I continued with the new dig at the end while Martin tidied up the dangerously loose boulders

<i>discovery</i>	Martin Grass			at its entrance. Luckily there was just enough room in the new small chamber to stack all of the boulders, mud and gravel removed from the dig. Just as I removed the final obstructing boulder my light failed and I had to use a lamp lowered to me by Martin – a repeat performance of the last trip down here! I managed to squeeze into another 6’ or so of passage but was unable to clearly see the way ahead. It seems to be a boulder floored, descending, solid crawl with a draught. A bit more digging should see us into this with relative ease. Looks good.
Somerset <i>Minor discovery</i>	Tuska’s Folly 26/7/92 Jim Rand, Tony Boycott	1h 25m	Priddy	Having found out that Jim was digging/shoring this site I thought it was only fair to invite him on the big breakthrough trip (!) After the pub the three of us went down with me in the lead to dig, Jim to pass stuff up to the loose area, and Tony to “lose” the spoil. I worked hard at the end to uproot boulders and remove a calcite false floor (or roof!) and side wall. Eventually I was able to gain another 5’ or so to see the open passage beyond blocked by a seeming collapse from the LH wall. We then called it a day and and buggered off out. This place still has lots of promise but needs much more clearing and shoring work to make it feasible. At least we tried!! 25’ of passage so far.
Page 31				
Somerset	White Pit 29/7/92 Phil Romford, Tim Large, Martin Grass (Blitz, Chris Castle, Andy Sparrow)	40m	Priddy	Assisted the White Pit team with their dig following a bang by Tim – 5 minutes to clear. Several loads of rocks out to surface. Good draught, partially blocked descending bedding plane leading on and all in all very promising.
CUBA Matanzas	La Gruta 2/8/92 Martin and Glenys Grass, Jane, Eduardo, Amarillis, barman, etc	20m	Varadero	Whilst holidaying in Cuba, on the sand covered limestone peninsular north of Varadero, we came across this cave. It is probably 20m long, phreatic and roomy, possibly littoral but seemingly a fragment of a normal cave system and with one extremely important feature – it has a bar! Above it is a fine Cuban restaurant (La Compana – the Belfry!!) and the whole area resembles a British landscaped garden – which it was until the revolution (American owned – not British). A pleasant time was spent here drinking Moquitos – rum, lime juice, bitter, mint, soda water. The barman was a character. We have plans to return here to take photos – including one of the BEC sticker now adorning the fridge!
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CUBA Matanzas	Cueva de Cepero/Saturno 3/8/92 Jane, Glenys, Martin, “Pepe” (sea diver and guide) lots of local kids	1h 10m	Varadero	The aim of this visit was for Jane to do her first cave dive! “Pepe”, one of the hotel divers led us to the cave a few miles the other side of Varadero. A large thatched hut at the side of the road was used to park our borrowed car in and the cave was immediately adjacent, in the thick scrub. A concrete path and steps led down into the large collapse doline and formation filled chamber below. A 25m deep pool at the bottom is used by the local kids as a swimming pool and there were lots of young girls and lads diving off the tall stalagmites into the crystal clear, cool water. One youth specialised in a desperate 8m

				free climb into the roof where he hung from the curtains and dropped in. Swiftlets darted about the chamber and there was much guano in evidence – both bird and human – the latter of which I trod in! While Jane and Martin took turns to dive into the flooded passages below I had a brief look round some of the dry parts, finding little of interest and several other sump pools. As I felt somewhat ill I didn't make any great efforts to explore properly and the heat and piles of crap everywhere did not encourage this anyway. Most of the cave seems to lie underwater and is probably not very extensive. An entertaining hour was had by all and Jane can now get a mention in the CDG Review and CTS.
Somerset	Cuevas de Bellamar 5/8/92 Martin, Glenys, Jane, Eduardo (tourist guide), Heriberto (cave guide) (+ tourists)	45m	Matanzas	<i>See below</i>
<p>We left Varadero for a couple of days for touring / shopping in Havana – our guide being Eduardo and driver “Watchet”. This included a visit to the incredible Tropicana cabaret and the searching out of cave postage stamps for Ray Mansfield and myself. A visit was also paid to the H.Q. of the Sociedad Espeleológica de Cuba where we met Franko, one of the lads who visited England 2 ½ years ago.</p> <p>From here we drove back via the Cuevas de Bellamar, one of Cuba's most famous show caves. Here Eduardo chatted up one of the guides, Heriberto, who after giving us the guided tour offered to let us see more of the unlit part of the cave and to show us other caves in a couple of days time. The entrance to Bellamar is exactly like a London city public conveniences – a flight of steps dropping down between tiled ceramic walls. A tiny hole above these was the original entrance to the system which was discovered in February 1861. The steps lead into a large and well decorated (though somewhat discoloured and vandalized) chamber with a couple of phreatic tunnels leading off. From here, Gothic Hall, we followed the 173m long Confessional Gallery with its myriads of crystals, stalactites, and helictites – all past their best due to former tourists and the use of smokey burning torches. The Fountain of Youth and Lovers' Fountain were passed (small gour pools) and Tiger's Gorge reached, a narrowing of the passage. Near here an airshaft has been sunk from the surface to aid in ventilation of this very warm cave. We now had to progress with the aid of Martin's torch as the show cave lights were not working beyond this point – the Ladies' Room. This section was some 84m long and included the Hidden Gallery and Snow Room – the latter having better preserved formations than the first part of the cave. It is a pity that this system has been so well used as its formations are still fairly spectacular. It must have been a magnificent sight when first entered. There is little in the way of concrete paths throughout the cave and few of the formations are protected. The limestone is of a curious consistency and is probably an old coral reef. Fossils are numerous. Worth a visit. (Ref:- Guide to Varadero, pp.31-35)</p>				
Page 34				
CUBA Matanzas	Cueva de Ambrioso 6/8/92 Martin, Glenys, Jane	40m	Varadero	<i>See below</i>
<p>Further up the peninsular from Club Varadero, on Hicacos P.... is a low limestone hill, La Caseta. This contains a fascinating small cave system with a walk in entrance right by the roadside. It is a labyrinthine system of phreatic tunnels and chambers in a horizontal bed of presumably reef limestone with scores of phreatic roof and floor pockets – many of the former reaching the surface a few feet above and acting as skylights, a light hardly being required to explore the three or four hundred feet of cave. Lots of large active bats; much cockroach infested guano and the occasional hanging tree roots give a real “Temple of Doom” atmosphere! Its main claim to fame are the 50 or so black and red pictographs on the walls and ceilings throughout the cave. These were “discovered” in 1961 and are thought to date from aboriginal, Spanish occupation and Negro slave times. It seems obvious that most of the intricate geometric designs were painted by the Pre-Columbian Indians and two of these have appeared on Cuban postage stamps of 1970. (Ref:p.38 Guide to Varadero, by Antonio Núñez Jiménez). These pictographs are exceptionally well preserved and only a limited amount of modern graffiti despoils the walls of the cave. This is remarkable considering its proximity to Cuba's major tourist resort and its easy access – the old iron protective gate now lying on the floor.</p>				

More huge hotels are being built very close by and the situation is bound to deteriorate. Some protection should be urgently given to this fascinating cave before it is ruined forever. It is also obviously an important bat habitat and probably unique in its situation near the end of this 18.6 kilometre limestone peninsular and its elevation of only a few feet above sea level.

A shallow but lengthy rock shelter near Cueva del Pirata was also looked at. A couple of photographs consisting of groups of small red circles were noticed in now inaccessible places on the ceiling. A striking two metre high column of eroded limestone and some pastel coloured stalagmite remains were also seen. Other small shelters were noted nearby, one of which we drove into in the car!

Fascinating area with extremely interesting caves. There is one more to visit here but it is only open after 9 pm – the Cueva del Pirata – containing a cabaret bar. We will return!

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CUBA Matanzas	Cuevas de Bellamar 7/8/92 Heriberto Iglesias, Martin (small girl, guide, tourists)	2h 50m	Matanzas	<i>See below</i>
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We turned up here in the morning for the promised caving trip with Heriberto. We lent him a Zoom lamp and he wore it with the rest of his gear – boots, socks, and swimming trunks! He took us first into the major series of passages in the opposite direction to the show cave, which we entered by climbing over a 12' high steel gate as his key didn't work. This is basically a series of roomy, parallel phreatic tunnels with lots of breakdown and thousands of helictites. An electric cable runs through it and it was once part of the tourist route but is badly vandalized. There is some superb bright red mud and several of the banks of calcite have been mined out to spread on the floor in other areas where stalagmites have been transplanted for the tourists – one of these being covered in graffiti. Several hundred feet of passages were visited.

We then returned to the show cave and followed it to our previous stopping point. From here two ways led on so we took the "dry" route first. A crawl through a pool led to a long stooping/crawling passage full of the ubiquitous helictites – and hard work in places as I was only dressed in shorts and T-shirt. After several grovels through muddy pools we eventually popped up in a large dry passage with some fantastic formations – pillars, bosses, helictites, etc. This was well worth the effort to see and is rarely visited so is still in relatively good condition. We then returned to the junction and followed the other passage – again for several hundred feet to a climb up and a squeeze into a pool. We now realised why Heriberto was so scantily dressed as a neck deep duck had to be passed. Once through this we reached a continuation of the pool where Heriberto asked us if Zoom lamps were waterproof, we assuming that he had got it damp in the duck. On being told it was okay he promptly disappeared into a 10' long sump! A small crawl led over the top which Martin got through and I went through the sump, swallowing some of it on the way. Beyond was limited airspace and a crawl over a superb floor of huge, transparent calcite crystals – unique as far as I know. This was the end so we returned to the dry passage – Martin through the sump and me through the crawl. Following a leisurely stroll out through the show cave with a little black girl, Janet, we partook of a few bottles of cerveza at the Bar Estalactitas. A great trip with an excellent bloke.

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CUBA Matanzas	Cueva del Pirata 7/8/92 Martin, Glenys, Jane + c.200 others!	1 ½ hr	Varadero	This must rate as one of the most novel uses for a cave yet. This large, c.2.3m high phreatic chamber is equipped with a round stage, area for a band, dressing room, toilets and bar and functions as a cabaret! It is an absolutely perfect size for this with an entrance easily accessible and in the main tourist resort of Cuba. A ten U.S. dollar access fee permits one to enter and join in the fun. We arrived just in time for the hour and a half show – singers, a comedian and lots of very scantily clad dancing girl. All very professional and despite the expensive drinks, well worth paying to see. The chamber itself I assume to be a drained "blue hole" system, similar to Cueva de Ambrosio and with lots of phreatic roof hollows. There is little else in the way of natural adornment.
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CUBA Matanzas	Cueva del Hombre Muerto 8/8/92		Varadero	Following a search for this once religiously important cave we eventually found it near some locals' houses adjacent to the canal at the start of
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	(Martin, Jane)			town. Unfortunately it is only about 15' long and full of rubbish including several old leg irons with boots on! That must be a first, anyway. It is supposedly the cave where an Italian hermit died and where his body was preserved. He was then considered a saint and the cave became a pilgrimage site. Not worth visiting.
CUBA Matanzas	Cueva Champiñon (Jarrito) 11/8/92 Martin	1 hr	Matanzas	<i>See below</i>
<p>After a chat with Heriberto at Cueva de Bellamar we were guided to the entrance of this large cave only a few hundred metres (1.2km) back down the road towards Matanzas on the west side. An overgrown track led down through a blasted out cutting for about 100m to a large part artificial, part natural entrance with open gates. After a chamber a short tunnel section with open steel gates led to a very large phreatic bore tube heading straight unto the hill. This cave, it seems has been until recently mined for its guano deposits and the floor has been cut down a metre or more so that vehicles could be driven a long way into the cave. Derelict steel “telegraph” poles and various bits of metal work were still in situ. It is possible that the name refers to mushroom cultivation which may have also taken place here but we were unable to establish this. Not far beyond the entrance a c.15m mined shaft led to the surface (with the skull and bones of horses on the floor below). About 100m further on the passage widened to a roomy chamber where three c. 0.6m holes in the ceiling, in a triangular pattern, had apparently been drilled in from the surface – possibly to admit light and ventilation to this area – the effect being like three spotlights shining into the darkness of the cave. Just beyond here the roadway stopped and we explored a hundred metres or so of large and well decorated passages ending in either pools or low crawls. Throughout the cave are many high level tubes, which we did not climb into, and several large side passages, most of which we explored to their ends. Almost all of these lower passages seem to have been excavated for their guano content and it is quite possible that this is a histoplasmosis cave. If Martin collapses in a few days time we will know! Being similar to the Box Stone Mines this cave is rather grotty but still has some fine formations, including helictites and must have been spectacular at one time. There must have also been a large bat population in residence but this has dropped to just a few bats now due to much human visitation and interference (the entrance smelling strongly of smoke due to locals building bonfires in it). A peculiar cave and yet another of the “collecotrs’ items” of Matanzas province. Left Heriberto with a Zoom lamp which he is delighted with. He is now the best equipped show cave guide in Cuba!</p>				
Pages 38, 39 and 40				
CUBA Matanzas	Cueva Grande de Santa Catalina 12/8/92 Martin, Dr. Ercilio Vento Canosa, Dr. Juan Pedro Ortega Santiago	2h 20m	Varadero	<i>See below</i>
<p>Following a week of abortive phone calls – most to a wrong number, Martin eventually contacted Ercilio. He is “second in command” of the Sociedad Espeliogica de Cuba, is a forensic doctor and lives in Matanzas city. We arrived at his house at 9.00am and looked around his collection of medical books, caving books, human skulls, a pickled baby, the skeleton of an Arawak baby who died of syphilis etc. When Martin made a flippant remark about mummies Ercilio rushed to a tall cabinet and opened it to reveal the full sized mummy of an early woman settler found in a local cemetery! It seems we had found the Cuban version of Oliver Cromwell Lloyd. We then loaded Ercilio and his young doctor amigo Juan into the car and set off back down the Varadero road to visit the Cueva Grande de Santa Catalina, near the international airport. Situated some 8m above sea level, about 1km inland from the sea and in the dense tropical bush covering a vast limestone plain, this important phreatic system is some 8 km long. It seems that most of this length is packed into a small space as the system is a complicated labyrinth of superbly decorated chambers, all interconnecting and sandwiched between two stratas of rock. It is generally very easy going and the vast variety of mushroom like formations, gour pools, helictites, etc etc, though generally dry, some of the finest in Cuba. Varied water levels have influenced calcite deposits in this system. Ercilio and his colleagues have been studying this magnificent cave for many years – so enthusiastically in fact that around 1969 they had to explore around with guns as the system was a hiding place for counter revolutionaries!</p> <p>The cave is reached from the main Varadero-Matanzas road up a rough track leading to a few wooden houses. We parked here and walked along rough tracks through the bush for a KM or so until</p>				

the Cubans eventually found the well hidden entrance. It would have been virtually impossible for Martin and I to have found it on our own. Having a large amount of entrance the cave was not locked as expected. A series of roomy entrances and arches with lots of stalactite, roots and creepers led into the system, which has four interconnected “blocks” of passages. We first looked at the area containing the famous “mushroom” stalagmites – presumably formed when the cave was partly flooded and up to 2m or more in height. Ercilio led us through parts of all four blocks where a great array of varied formations exists – cave pearls and helictites were particularly numerous. The cave has been inhabited by Arawak Indians, runaway Negro slaves and counter revolutionaries at various times. Small, black Indian pictographs apparently marked routes through the system – as do modern, red, sprayed on arrows (pure vandalism by a tourist concern). The Negros left camp fires and the guerrillas built walls of broken stal and rocks to block off sections of the cave. There is a certain amount of rubbish left by infrequent modern visitors but the only permanent inhabitants now are the animals and insects which infest the cave. A few bats were noted and in one part of the cave which we did not visit we were told that the temperature is over 40° due to the amount of bats and insects inhabiting one chamber. Cockroaches, white “beetles”, amblypysi, cave crickets and “hermit” crabs were seen also but the most numerous and spectacular cave dweller is the Tarantula. For an Arachnaphobe like myself this at first came as a bit of a shock as 2”-4” diameter spiders were regularly encountered and put on a good speed when disturbed. At least they kept to the floor and being big, black and hairy stood out well against the sand and guano floor. I think we saw at least twenty of these beasties and I soon became used to them. Many formations and creatures were photographed.

A couple of kilometres of the system were visited before our time ran out and we left the cave after a most entertaining trip. Just to add the final touch Martin and I nearly stepped on a Cuban Boa snake on the track back to the car. It was sunbathing and was a good 3” thick and at least 4 ft long but rapidly disappeared before the Cubans could catch it. After giving the locals some of our caving gear and rope we took them home, photographed their new Section motorbike and sidecar (all sections of the S.S. de C. get one of these paid for by the government) and headed back to the hotel, and, eventually England. A great holiday with eight “collectors’ item” caves thrown in. Cuba is a fascinating country with spectacular caves and extremely friendly, helpful and hospitable people. It is essential though to be based in a hotel as food is virtually unobtainable outside – dollars being the only currency to obtain goods in and not usually available to Cubans. Though almost everyone we met speaks highly of Fidel Castro (a s.s. de Cuba member!) and is loyal to the communist government, we would not be at all surprised if they soon get fed up with the present state of affairs. One way or another it seems that Fidel will have to go. Then, perhaps, Cuban’s 6,000 cavers will be able to get fuel and food and carry on with their pastime with greater ease.

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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 17/8/92 Alone	1h 5m	Priddy	The bottom of the c. 25’ pitch was full of water, at least 6’ deep so no digging was possible in the “inlet” here. The mineshaft was relatively dry so I filled a dozen or so bags with liquid mud and left them for the Wednesday nighters to pull out. It looks like we will have to concentrate on the mineshaft dig until the water in the natural dig either drains away or we obtain a powerful pump.
Somerset	Flower Pot 20/8/92 Graham Johnson	40m	Priddy	First visit to this re-opened cave since 13/7/75! After I had failed to find the entrance (wrong field!), Jake came across it in the valley in the field nearer the farm. Not having a ladder it was a bit of a struggle traversing up and down the new concrete tubes. The cave had not changed beyond – still muddy and relatively small but extremely interesting. It reminded me a lot of upper Dallimore’s Cave. Various dig dits were looked at and most passages fully explored. One or two places look quite interesting and deserve some concerted digging. After a look at Wig’s survey it would seem that the passage straight on from the entrance crawl is the best bet in the hope that it may by-pass the complicated right hand series. The Wessex have done some work in here recently but appear to have given up. There is a lot of potential here given its

				proximity to the Bowery Corner and Lodmore Swallet areas.
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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 21/8/92 Trev Hughes	3 ½ hr	Priddy	In the morning we shifted the dozen or so bags at the mineshaft dig up to the base of the entrance shaft and also bailed out 10 gallons of water which was tipped down the natural dig – a case of role reversal! After lunch another dozen or so bags were filled here and taken to the entrance shaft. We also rescued digging gear from the gradually flooding natural dig and removed about twenty bags up to the ledge. 4 bags removed to surface. (Total so far 3123 loads out). Most of the spoil removed from the mineshaft was chocolate like clay resulting from bailing operations. We are now back down to rocks which will make life easier, though the shaft is becoming narrower. (Trev removed 36 more loads later – TOTAL 3159)
WALES Glamorgan	Dan-yr-Ogof Tunnel (Cathedral) Cave 23/8/92 Jane, Rich West, Phil Romford and hordes of British and foreign cave rescuers	20m 1hr	Abercrave	These two trips took place at the opening ceremony of “Rescon 92” – the international cave rescue conference. Most of the delegates had a free, self-guided trip around Dan-yr-Ogof showcave followed by wine and a buffet in the terminal chamber of Tunnel Cave. This was a superb event apart from the poor acoustics when the officials gave the opening speeches. The event terminated with the turning on of the two waterfalls and the accompaniment of piped organ music. All a bit over the top but certainly a novelty.
WALES Glamorgan	Ogof Ffynnon Ddu 24/8/92 Ian? Chris Williams (victim), Kath Lewis, Harvey Lomas and about 30 others!	25m	Penwyllt	While sitting peacefully in my “shop” outside the SWCC cottage I was called upon to assist in the rescue of an unconscious 12 year old lad from Arette Chamber in OFD. I jumped in the rescue Land Rover with Jopo and Ian and was whisked up to the top entrance. Ian and I took in the Little Dragon, comforts and first aid boxes and met a large team of international cave rescuers at the top of the pitch. Their practice rescue had turned into the real thing and they were just at the point of hauling the now conscious lad over the edge. He was taken out of the stretcher and was able to walk out unaided. A short, swift and successful operation!
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WALES Glamorgan	Ogof Ffynnon Ddu 25/8/92 Phil, Rich, Bob Makin, Keith Lewis, Jim (CRO), Mark (New Zealand), Andy, Bob, Bob+1 (SWCRO), Phil Buckberry	1h 35m	Penwyllt	Demonstration of the SWCRO floating stretcher in OFD I streamway. The victim, Andy, was strapped in and we floated him up and down a short section of the streamway in high water conditions. The stretcher performs admirably and is ideal for use in this system. It will float in only three inches of water. It is easy to see how cavers can get washed away in high water conditions as the force of the stream today was almost powerful enough to sweep one’s feet away.
WALES Glamorgan	Drove across to Porth-yr-Ogof to watch the Welsh section of CDG demonstrate sump rescue techniques in the pool below the resurgence. Foul weather destroyed any enthusiasm for a trip in the cave!			

WALES Glamorgan	Ogof Ffynnon Ddu 28/8/92 Tim Large, Martin Grass, Dany, Jim Roberts (Derbs), Pete Allright, Pat Hall, Harvey Lomas, Jon Lister, Cardy, Tony Boycott, Alison, Hazel, Michaela, Phil Buckleberry + 35 other cave rescuers.	3 ¼ hr	Penwyllt	International cave rescue practice. Two “victims” were put in stretchers in Lowe’s Passage, OFD I and were carried out in dribs and drabs as far as the Bolt Traverse. Everything went well and the MRO contingent received a few praiseworthy comments. We left the practice early in order to pack up and head for home after a superb and very boozy week, in good company but in atrociously wet weather. It was great to meet the international delegates and establish some good contacts for future trips abroad.
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Somerset	31/8/92 Vince Simmonds and I spent an hour or so clearing mud and rock from “Yoh Gurt Pot” – a new Tuska Morrison Hymac dig near Lamb Leer. The excavator, driven by Dave Gibbons (whose land it is) – has revealed a 15-20’ deep circular pot in limestone with two too tight rifts at the bottom. Work continues.			
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 2/9/92 (Tony Boycott, Chris Tozer) Pete Hellier, Brian Murliss, Ivan Sanford	1h 5m	Priddy	44 bags to surface. Both the mineshaft and natural passage were flooded so it was decided to “put the dig to bed” for the foreseeable future. All ladders and digging kit above water were hauled back to the bottom of the entrance shaft for storage, the bags were emptied and an early night in the pub was indulged in (Total out – 3203 loads)
Somerset	4/9/92 Assisted Tuska, Quackers and another Wessex man to transport and fix a steel grate gate to the new concrete entrance pipes of Compton Martin Ochre Mine. Lousy weather.			
Somerset	Swildon’s Hole 4/9/92 Alone	1 ¼ hr	Priddy	Solo tourist trip as far as Sump 2 to take advantage of the wet weather conditions. I had the whole cave practically all to myself – lovely. Looked at various nooks and crannies and digs – nothing very interesting. Thoroughly enjoyable little trip.
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Somerset	Gough’s Cave Cox’s Cave / Waterfall Cave 7/9/92 Dany Bradshaw, Nguyen Xuan Truong + tourists and guides	½ hr ¼ hr	Cheddar	Tourist trip for Truong who has come over from Vietnam for the BCRA Conference and a holiday. After a tour round Glastonbury, Westhay peat centre, Wilkin’s cider farm at Mudgeley and the Trotter’s pub we ended up in Cheddar and managed to scrounge a free trip for the three of us around the caves. New items to see since I last visited are in Cox’s, the connection to Waterfall (Pavey’s Cave) and the weird, Tolkein-esque figures. Good for the tourist trade no doubt but in general fairly naff. I think Truong was impressed though, especially with the capitalistic possibilities of tourism.
Somerset	Hallowe’en Rift 9/9/92 Vince, (Jake), Ivan	2h 20m	Wookey Hole	A new Wednesday night dig! Jake and Vince have been working here in the up-dip passage at the bottom of the entrance rift and had dug in about 15’. Ivan and I arrived first and commenced clearing the dry mud/cave earth from a partly choked rift at the furthest point. On the arrival of the other two the spoil was hauled out to surface by Jake – at least twenty skiploads being removed. The way on is a low, choked bedding plane with an attractively decorated ceiling. There seems to be a draught but the way on is not obvious. This area is yet another part of the vast bedding plane which forms the cave system. There are no signs of archaeological remains in the infill despite the proximity of the cave to surface.

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Somerset	Hallowe'en Rift 10/9/92 Alone	1 ¾ hr	Wookey Hole	Continued with the dry dig near the entrance shafts. Several large rocks were removed from the loose clay infill and a couple of metres of progress made. Future work here will probably be "up dip" and a small, well decorated way on can be seen. This, at the moment, is a pleasant and dry dig but it won't last!!
Yorkshire	14/9/92 Post BCRA conference. Stayed at the Hill Inn on Sunday night and on Monday Jane, John Riley, the three dogs and I went for a stroll. We visited the entrances of Great Douk Cave, Little Douk Pot, Middle Washfold Caves, P97a, P97 etc. Nice weather for a change.			
Somerset	White Pit 16/9/92 Andy Sparrow, Gonzo, Pete Bolt (Tim Large, Bournemouth Bob, Joc, Bob's missus)	1h 35m	Priddy	Assisted with hauling from the bedding plane at the bottom of the shaft. Several loads of collapsed clay and rock wall were removed before digging could commence at the face. Pete Bolt took photographs. The ceiling of the ongoing bedding plane is scalloped and clean washed – very attractive. There would seem to be lots of work to do here before a breakthrough will be made.
Somerset <i>Dive</i>	Stock Hill Mine Cave 21/9/92 Alone	40m	Priddy	A dive here was necessary to recover my large crowbar and sledge hammer from the bottom of the natural dig – some 15' down! After first forgetting my mask I had another go and successfully dived down for the tools and a bag of digging bags. These were all taken out to surface and also three skips were removed and delivered to the White Pit Dig. This trip may have seen the largest amount of lead ever down this particular mine! This was also an encouraging practice cave dive and kit familiarisation.

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Somerset	White Pit 21/9/92 Alone	1 ¼ hr	Priddy	Borrowed kit from Richard Masters and went on a solo digging trip. Eight skips/buckets were filled ready for the next hauling team. I dug about 4' into the bedding plane, following the draught. Looks good but as previously stated, a fair bit of clearing will need to be done. Easy but sticky digging with lots of rocks embedded in clay. It looks as if this is the project for the foreseeable future!
Somerset	Wigmore Swallet 23/9/92 Vince, Jake, Rich Blake, Ivan Sanford	1 ½ hr	Red Quar	Considering the recent rainy weather the cave was surprisingly and disappointingly dry. In "Don't Feed the Ambulance" I spotted an aven in the roof with my trusty FX5 lamp. This will need maypoling to reach as bolts could be unsafe in this rock. I then joined the others in Drake's Hall where Vince and Rich's 50' roof extension was being examined. This is a horribly loose dug aven leading to a suicidal roof choke. The lads are convinced of its worth but I am not so sure. A great bit of digging though! I then restarted the dig at the end of Drake's Hall as it is likely to lead to further continuations of the huge rift. Digging is easy in mud and rocks. The recent floods have cleaned up the Wigmore streamway to reveal its fine selection of different coloured rocks – including purple ones!
Somerset	White Pit 25/9/92 Alone	1 ½ hr	Priddy	Solo Friday evening digging trip. Seven or eight skip loads were filled with mud and rocks – some fallen from the walls. I then dug down dip in the bedding plane and heaved out a couple of large

				rocks. Taking Andy Sparrow's tip I had a poke off to the right where there was a slightly larger airspace. Sure enough this was easily dug into a tiny, decorated chamber with a strong draught. I feel that this is a part of a phreatic tube of some sort and will undoubtedly be the easiest way to dig. I suspect a breakthrough is not far away as the site has a "feel" of nearby open passage. I wore a genuine "Goon Suit" for the first time in many years and I still think they are the best ever digging clothes.
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Somerset	Wigmore Swallet 28/9/92 Struan McDonald (WCC)	2h 20m	Red Quar	To the dig at the end of Drake's Hall where we removed some 5' of sticky infill before calling it a day at a boulder stuck in mud. The potential here is not as good as I thought – or at least not as easy. Our time may be better spent on other sites. Struan struggled a bit in the tighter sections of the cave but seemed to enjoy it in the long run. Farner Booth told us that during the recent murder investigations police divers investigated the sump at the bottom of All Eights Mine finding nothing but animal bones. In the afternoon Struan, Jake, John Attwood and I took an Ivan made steel lid to Nettle Hole, the depression of which is half filled with fresh cow shit! Some work will need to be done here to put lids on both entrances.
Somerset	White Pit 30/9/92 Trev, Tim, Phil, Estelle, Andy Sparrow, Wormhole, Brian Murless, Rich Lewis, Tony Watt, Chris Tozer, Chris Castle	¼ hr	Priddy	Large turnout for what is a 5 man dig! I went down early and drilled three shotholes ready for Tim to bang the two rocks which were in the way. Black space can be seen beyond the furthest rock which is blocking a superb phreatic roof tube. Looks extremely promising. Tim later banged these boulders. In the meantime a large number of skiploads of spoil were hauled to the surface. I got fed up standing around getting cold so bugged off home for a wash then off to the pub.

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Somerset	White Pit 1/10/92 Andy Sparrow, Trev Hughes, Davey Lennard	2h 10m	Priddy	Over 40 skip loads were removed from the dig and the area around the base of the entrance shaft. Tim's bang of the previous night had done an excellent job on the two offending boulders and both were smashed up and mostly removed. There is no open way on at the end as had hoped except for a small, arched area of bedding with tiny decorations and a fine draught. A lot more digging will need to be done to progress here. The floor needs dropping a couple of feet all the way in – hopefully down to bedrock. Still a very promising site. In the afternoon Jake, Davey, Trev and I tidied up nearly all the surface digging equipment at Stock Hill Mine Cave and transported it to the Belfry. A good day.
Somerset	Winford Redding Pits 7/10/92 Vince Simmonds	35m	Winford	Having a sore neck following a drunken fall downstairs after the BEC dinner, I was pleased to be offered this trip by Vince on my recuperating afternoon off. Known locally as the "Redding Pits" and off a lane of the same name these workings are fairly extensive (c.1000') and very loose in places. They would seem to be part of

				the once large ochre mines owned by the Winford Red Co which closed down in the sixties. The series of passages which we explored have been surveyed by Chris Proctor and I believe a survey exists in an MCG Jnl or Nsltr. Much of this series is roomy, walking passage with collapses necessitating the odd stoop or crawl in places. There are several fine pit props left standing in places but these look like they won't be there too much longer. One bat was seen asleep and much guano noted throughout the mine. Nothing left in the way of artefacts apart from sections of corrugated iron. Worht one visit if only to get covered in bright red mud!
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Somerset	Flower Pot 7/10/92 Trev, Andy Sanders, Vince, Estelle	1 hr	Priddy	18 sacks of mud were removed from the entrance passage to the surface. This is the start of a "new" Wednesday night dig at the end of the entrance passage. It seems that the Wessex have recently had a go here but gave up when it got too small. If nothing else we are at least tidying up the cave! Now we are aware of the Wigmore underground river there could be much to be gained from digging sites like this and Bowery Corner Swallet – all are probable inlets downstream from the present terminal sump. Once again this is a real shitty dig.
Somerset	8/10/92 Still recuperating, I took the afternoon off and had a drive round North Hill looking at various sites likely to give access to the "main drain". Nothing of great interest noted apart from what we know already. At Stock Hill Mine Cave I spent some time camouflaging the spoil heap and at Bowery Corner Swallet I tidied the entrance area up and dug a large amount of sloppy mud out of the pit leading to the lower culvert, which was practically choked up. This should allow water flow to proceed as normal – this site looking like it could rear its ugly head in the near future!			

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Somerset <i>Minor discovery</i>	White Pit 12/10/92 Alone	40m	Priddy	<i>See below</i>
	Still suffering from a trapped nerve I got pissed off sitting around and went down White Pit to see if I could add to the spoil dug at the end by Tim, Trev, Estelle and Robin yesterday. They had cleaned much of the terminal tube but had also gone in about 4' to the right – along the choked bedding plane. As the lower dig had a puddle in I continued working here and within about 20 mins had opened up a hole into open passage – "beckoning darkness" and strong draught. As soon as I had cleared enough sticky mud and stones from the hole I managed to get into the small, clean washed chamber beyond. Some 5' square by 2' high it is part of the dipping bedding plane and has a clean, scalloped and relatively solid ceiling. The floor and upper end are of loose stones and will probably present great problems when we come to dig it out. Small stones dropped through holes in the floor fell at least 10' and the powerful draught seems to either originate from or disappear into this area – it is difficult to tell with the present atmospheric conditions and no fags to test the draught! Feeling that I had done enough for one day I headed for the pub. It may still be better to completely clear the original part of the bedding plane in the hope of entering more solid passage beyond this new section. I feel that this will soon be a major Mendip cave.			
Somerset	White Pit 14/10/92 Phil, Tim, Andy Sanders, Dig Hadilov , Chris Tozer, Brian Murland, Pete Hellier, Andy Sparrow, Angie Garwood and bloke	1 hr	Priddy	Phil and Andy had a look at the new bit and pulled a few rocks out before continuing digging out the clay filled bedding plane. Over 50 loads hauled out to surface in pissing rain.

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Somerset	White Pit 15/10/92 Alone	1h 40m	Priddy	Dug for a while in the new, clean-washed section and filled several skips with rocks including two new skips which I had cut to shape earlier. The
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				way on would definitely seem to be in the floor beneath the boulders and digging here is a bit like Russian Roulette! I then moved on to the dig at the bottom of the phreatic tube which unfortunately had a 2" deep puddle in it. The narrow rift to the right at the end was poked at with a crowbar to reveal that it is actually one side of a roomy phreatic tube which can be relatively easily cleared. I dug here until I got too wet and cold to continue. This is the obvious way on and will need a lot of cleaning but draughts strongly. It runs parallel with the open section of bedding plane just above and may by-pass the loose section.
Somerset <i>discovery</i>	Attborough Swallet Wigmore Swallet 18/10/92 Andy Sanders, Mike, Dave (Cotham CG)	25m 1h 50m	Red Quar	<i>See below</i>
<p>The Cotham have done an excellent job on re-opening and piping Attborough (or Red Quar) Swallet and have re-entered the partly flooded rift, some 20' long. They have also found a small decorated chamber in the roof which I did not look at. The end of the main passage is a choked, narrow rift and it was thought that a bang might open it up a bit. I laid two large sticks of Gelamex at the sides of two cemented in boulders and connected it with 1m Cordtex and a No.8 det. Fired eventually from the surface by using an FX5 battery as my shot firer refused to work. This is an excellent site and will hopefully yield a good section of stream passage down to the Wigmore streamway.</p> <p>We then all trooped off down Wigmore with a lifeline and assorted climbing kit so that I could have a crack at the aven above D.F.T.A. which I recently spotted using my FX5 main beam. Andy lifelined me and I climbed up the LH side on to the large perched boulders some 30' with no obvious passable way on. Feeling very exposed I managed to bash another peg into the mud wall and scrambled back down again to the others, having to leave both pegs and two karabiners in place – an expensive bit of new passage! It is a shame that this rather pleasant aven does not go up into the theoretical big stuff above as it would have been much safer than Vince and Richard's horrific aven dig in Drake's Hall. The climb was christened Milk Tray Aven after a comment by Mike – "and all because the lady loves Milk Tray". It also sums up the chocolate like mud coating. At least it's another bit of Wigmore crossed off. Cave dry.</p>				
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Somerset	White Pit 19/10/92 Jake	1h 25m	Priddy	Jake dug in the clean RH passage while I continued on at the end of the main dig (in the footsteps of Tim, Trev, Butch and four visiting German folkies of the previous day!) A dozen or so bags and buckets were filled and six skips hauled to surface. The clean dig collapses regularly and the dirty dig is filthy, wet and very promising. Jake seemed to be impressed despite the total lack of draught.
Somerset	21/10/92 White Pit:- Trev, Brian Murliss, Chris Tozer, Andy Sparrow, Tim Large, Rich Lewis, Andy Sanders, Pete Hellier, Gonzo. I hauled at surface. At least 50 loads out. Still looking good. Lowered one bucket covered in cow shit to the disgust of those below.			
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SCOTLAND Sutherland <i>discovery</i>	Uamh an Coire Domhain 24/10/92 Nick Williams, Alan Butcher, Goon, Macolm McConville, Martin Hayes, Kevin Duke, Dave Stiles, Jim Salvona, Derek and Liz Ellis, Sandy, Dick Grindley, Bob Mehew (Jane)	1h 15m	Inchnadamph	<i>See below</i>
GSG Dinner day. A host of us trooped up the Traligill valley in superb weather conditions – sun,				

snow on the hills, mild and calm – to look at a collapse(?) recently found by Tim Lawson and others (?) but not dug. It was located in the side of a large depression just “downstream” of Cuil Dubh Sink. An open 10’ deep hole against one solid limestone wall and one loose boulder wall led to a choke with an apparently large open void below. Everyone set to and cleared loads of boulders and grass from the hole until Malcolm McConville was able to squeeze his way down into a sloping chamber some 30’ across and 5’ high at about 60° with a floor of loose rock and gravel scree. This gradually got lower and Malcolm had to dig his way along – the spoil being passed out and stacked in the sides. Martin and Goon took over the digging and progressed along a relatively horizontal section for some 15’ or so. At this point I had a go and managed to squeeze through into a roomier cross passage with evidence of having had a stream through it. The “downstream” bit became immediately choked but I followed the “upstream” section steeply up about 20’ of almost vertical scree slope, pushing the gravel aside as I went. I popped out into the top of another roomy, inclined chamber with another 20’ scree slope heading downwards and a low rumbling sound which I at first took to be the noise of an airplane as I assumed I had nearly reached the surface. After a while I realised that it was, in fact, the Cuil Dubh stream rushing past below the chamber floor. Martin joined me and a few rocks were removed from a short section of passage leading to a c.10’ climb in solid rock leading to the streamway below. I went a few feet downstream in a passage some 5’ wide by 2-3’ high until I decided it was too wet in dry grotts and let the wet-suited Martin push on ahead. He followed the passage for some 80-90 feet – stooping and walking size – to a low but diveable sump. Upstream closed down to a boulder choke almost immediately but there may be a diggable way above, as there may be from the top of the 10’ pitch in the downstream direction. As my lamp bracket had now dropped off I headed out to the sun and most of the assembled went in for a look. A most successful bit of digging and hopefully this short section of streamway will yield more of the missing system feeding Cnoc nan Uamh System. Walked back down the valley briefly looking at various sites and failing to find Inclined Rift Cave. A great day.

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SCOTLAND Sutherland	25/10/92 Another day of superb weather. I persuaded Malcolm Stewart to have a dive in Waterfall Rising so Murdo McLeod, Liz, Jane and I accompanied him to the site and watched him insert most of himself into the sump. It was flowing strongly and he could not get round a bend about 6’ in without a fair amount of gravel clearing. Beyond this area it is clean washed and probably passable. We may have another look in the Spring.
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SCOTLAND Dumfriesshire	Harelawhill Mine 26/10/92 (2 local lads)	25m	Penton	As we were driving south via Langholm I decided to have a look at this impressive limestone mine written up in the latest Descent (108). With some 2km of generally 10m wide, inclined passage it is well worth a visit – like a modern version of the Dudley limestone workings it was in use until the 1960s. There is evidence of small natural passages in the workings. Other interesting items include trams and tramwheels, railway lines, cardboard gelignite boxes, old drill bits etc. A small piece of rail was salvaged for Cheg. As I first walked in to one of the large, square entrances I heard voices and soon met a couple of lads staggering up the incline with an extremely dim torch – nearly an MRO rescue mission! Well worth a visit for anyone crossing the Scottish border in this area.
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Somerset	Welsh’s Green Swallet 28/10/92 Jake, Vince	1h 35m	Milton	Vince and Jake had been steadily working away here “worrying” the roof slabs at the end and damming the stream when drilling. Lengths of detonator cord inserted in drill holes were effectively bringing down hefty chunks of the roof and the way on could be seen as well as a strong outward draught. We went down to lay possibly the last charge and to hopefully get into new stuff if the previous charge had done enough damage. Much debris was cleared and hauled back to the lower aven. The way on was still too tight so it was drilled and banged. Jake could see
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				a "hands and knees" size passage going on for at least 8 feet. Looks good for a breakthrough tomorrow. I also spent some time building a rock fence around a superb bunch of selenite (?) crystals just downstream of the major roof inlet. Cave as mucky and wet as usual but still a surprisingly pleasant trip. (The following day Jake, Vince and Murray Knapp broke through into about 150 ft of caveable passage – in one place 15' wide – with dagger like selenite crystals, straws, "cave ice" etc. This ends in a loose boulder jamb which should be easily passed with the aid of short scaffold poles. It looks like we are on to another good system!)
Somerset	White Pit 29/10/92 Alone	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	Filled up ten skips – mostly with rock derived from the "clean washed" dig. I continued digging here but just down dip of the choked pothole which now had lots of large rocks in it, brought down by Trev and Co the previous night. By digging on down the bedding it may just be possible to drop down in the floor beyond the loose bit. Otherwise we will have to dig the choked pot and shore up the back wall. Strong, steady draught entering the aforementioned choked pot.
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Somerset <i>discovery</i>	Welsh's Green Swallet 30/10/92 Jake, Vince, Rich Blake	2 hr	Milton	<i>See below</i>
	<p>Pushing trip at the end of the 150' found yesterday. The new stuff is very attractive with lots of straws, a fine set of red stalactites/curtains and a profusion of large selenite crystals protruding from the ubiquitous grey mud banks. One of the latter is indeed like the tip of a diving knife and nearly ½" thick. A 40' long inlet leads to a tiny chamber with a fine piece of thin calcite false floor.*</p> <p>At the end of the new section a roof collapse blocked the way on. Jake inserted scaffold poles below a couple of huge slabs and then knocked out the keystone. The other slabs did not come down so he pushed the wet squeeze beneath to emerge in another section of "hands and knees" passage with the usual mud walls. This was followed comfortably for 70' or so to another collapse which was dug until Rich was able to squeeze below it for some 10' until it needed the floor digging to progress further. It was left for another day and we returned to the surface clearing various tools and junk from the old dig on the way. The future here will entail more work but it is still promising – the cave draughting strongly outwards. Another nice find. I have now been on two discovery trips in one week but 650 miles apart!</p> <p>* Tested by John Eyre, Camborne School of Mines and found to be a prismatic form of selenite (gypsum). These are normally rhomboid.</p>			
Somerset	White Pit 2/11/92 Andy Sparrow, Trev Hughes	3h 20m	Priddy	At least 25 skip loads of rock were hauled to surface – mainly by Trevor. The clean washed "chamber" – now christened "Klingons on the Starboard Bow" by Tim Large was attacked with vigour. Large hanging blocks were prised down and then smashed up for removal. The inflowing draught was very impressive and created a very cold atmosphere. There is still a large amount of hard work to be done here before we break into the guaranteed system below.
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Somerset <i>discovery</i>	White Pit 4/11/92 pm. Alone eve Vince, Rich, Trev, Tim, Estelle, Andy Sparrow, Andy	2h 20m 1h 50m	Priddy	<i>See below</i>

	Saunders, Pete Hellier			
<p>In the afternoon I broke up boulders and dug in the clean washed, blocked pothole – throwing the debris up into the bedding plane and keeping a wary eye on the huge loose rocks in the roof! The boulders broke up easily and I had soon dropped the floor by 2-3 feet, with black voids opening up on all sides. The pot soon took on a circular form with a rift at the back, under the loose area where I stacked a heap of spoil. After over 2 hours work the pot was some 6’ deep and the last few rocks were prised out to reveal a wide, low bedding plane below. This descends with the dip and is bordered by loose rocks. There are now two open, unentered holes into this area, one on each side of the pot. Feeling very satisfied after a lot of hard work I retired for my tea and to phone up the lads in readiness for the evening session.</p> <p>I arrived to find Tim, Vince, Rich, Andy Sanders and Andy Sparrow already down and digging furiously to clear the way in. A few skiploads were hauled to surface then the message came back that Tim was into a large chamber. We dropped everything and the other eight of us followed him in. This chamber lay on the up dip side of the LH breakthrough and was some 30’ long with the LH wall made up of masses of loose rock, presumably going up to the surface. It was surprisingly horizontal with lots of scattered straws and pure white stalactites and a rubble floor. It was named “Talus Four” due to the loose rock and the forbidden planet shown on Star Trek that night!</p> <p>After sitting for a while to admire the chamber I went back to the pot to start digging the two prospective down dip passages where the strong draught disappeared. The one on the LH side was later continued by Andy Sparrow who got in about 20’ to a choke. The RH hole led to a blocked phreatic tube with a mud floor. This could be the main way on and will receive a concentrated effort soon.</p> <p>Meanwhile, back in Talus Four the others had dug through rocks under one of the walls to reveal a second, larger chamber – again very well decorated. The word came back and we joined them as they pushed another choked section into the best find of the night – some 60’ of walking size phreatic / breakdown tunnel ending in a diggable choke and decorated along one wall with a great profusion of some of the finest, pure white or glass-like formations on Mendip! Perfect stalactites, straws and flowstones presented a superb site – rather like Bat Passage in G.B. Cavern. I found a small nest of cave pearls in the floor and there must surely be others. This passage will be taped and photographed as soon as possible.</p> <p>This is a superb discovery but the general consensus is that it is only an old upper level and that the main route is down the dip. Time will tell. Some tidying up was done as we jubilantly left the cave to celebrate with a bottle of champagne which I had fortuitously brought along! It was good to tell the landowner, Edward Masters, of the new find in the Hunter’s that night and to organise a trip for him. There is a great amount of work to be done here now, not least on the problems of general access without smashing the place up.</p>				

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Somerset	White Pit 5/11/92 Alone	1 hr	Priddy	A swift trip to the best decorated part of the extension where I started taping back from the present end towards the entrance. The red tape was pegged down with large, orange, plastic tent pegs and looked good. I had just enough tape to the last two of the three chambers. A nice place to be in alone.
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Somerset	White Pit 6/11/92 Rich Blake, Andy Sanders, Tuska, Mark Holden (WCC), Graham Bromley	2 ¼ hr	Priddy	Rich and I filled several skips full of rocks but did not haul them out. Andy joined us as we were digging out the bottom of the 8’ pot in order to reach the phreatic tube previously noticed. After a couple of hours of hard work we reached and opened up the entrance to this body sized tube only to find it was apparently blocked by mud banks after about 15 ft. Tuska and Co passed by on their way to a photographic trip (Andy Sparrow and Chris Castle had dug at the end of the pretty stuff earlier in the day and Robin Gray, Shaun Morgan and Estelle had also been down on a photographic trip).
Somerset	White Pit 8/11/92 Tony Boycott, Tim Large, Pete Hellier, Anthony Butcher, Phil	3 ½ hr	Priddy	<i>See below</i>

	Romford, Martin Grass			
	<p>I took Tony on a tourist trip to the end dig. He was suitably impressed. We then continued with the dry dig started by Andy & Co on Saturday. They had dug a trench in sand for some 20' to an area of large, embedded boulders. We managed to move a few of these and stack them in the decorated chamber but eventually they became too large to shift without either chemical persuasion or a lot of hammer work. The way on appears to be at a lower level but this is blocked by the boulders. There is a slight draught. After nearly three hours here we packed it in and went back to see how the others were getting on at the down dip dig below the 10' pot. They had cleared some 20' of steeply dipping bedding to a solid T-junction. The way to the left was boulder blocked but to the right led to a small low area partly blocked by rocks and emitting a howling draught. I cleared a few out but could not get through into man sized passage. A lot more clearing will need to be done here before we get into the major cave which almost certainly lies below.</p> <p>A good couple of dozen skips of boulders were also removed from the entrance passage. Another good afternoon's work.</p>			

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Somerset	White Pit 9/11/92 a.m. Phil Romford, Rich Blake, Andy Sparrow, Jim Hanwell, Brian Prewer, Edward Merten, Dave Causer, Chris Hawkes p.m. Jake, Vince, Rich, Trev	2h 40m 2h 5m	Priddy	<p>I went over first to dig in the phreatic area below the 10' pot. Rich joined me and we cleared out a few rocks until Phil and Andy appeared. We then hauled out several skiploads of rock to the surface. When the "old age pensioners" arrived everyone except Richard went on a tourist trip to the decorated chambers – mainly for the benefit of the landowner, Edward Masters. All were suitably impressed, especially Edward and Brian and Phil took several photos. I left the mob and joined Rich back at the lower dig and we worked on until lunchtime loomed up.</p> <p>In the afternoon the "unemployed" team returned to the fray and nearly 60 skiploads of rock were hauled out before boredom set in and we headed on into the cave – Jake and Rich on a tourist trip to the pretties and the rest of us to the lower dig. A fair bit of work was done on the dig before time and stacking space ran out. Lots and lots of rock to come out of here and plenty of toil to keep everyone occupied for the foreseeable future. A bloody good day's caving.</p>
Somerset	White Pit 10/11/92 Rich, Butch, Steve Redwood, Gonzo	2h 10m	Priddy	About 30 skip loads of debris removed to surface from the entrance slope. It is now nearly empty – well it was until we filled it with rocks from the slope below the 10' pot! Butch, Gonzo and Steve had a tourist trip.

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Somerset	White Pit 11/11/92 Ank (PCG), John Christie, Estelle Sandford, Tony Boycott, Chris Castle, Trev Hughes, Andy Farrant (UBSS), Andy Sanders, Pete Hellier, Andy Sparrow	2 ¼ hr	Priddy	80 skip loads to surface, mostly from the bottom of the first pot, the lower bedding plane ramp and the passage beyond, christened temporarily the second pot. For the first hour or so I concentrated on building a heavy duty drystone wall in the loose area at the bottom of the entrance shaft and starting another wall opposite this. Andy Farrant went to look at the sediments and passage development and Ank and John had a tourist trip to the pretties. Just as we left a large part of the talus slope in the first chamber collapsed, narrowly missing TonyB and temporarily blocking the route to the chambers. Lots more work to be done.
Somerset	White Pit 16/11/92 Jane, Trev Hughes	2 hr	Priddy	I took Jane on a tourist trip to the pretties while Trev continued digging in the "2 nd pot". I took a few photos of the formations and one of Jane underground – a rare sight! We then returned to Trevor and Jane left the cave while we continued

				hauling talus debris up the slope to the foot of the "1 st pot". The main way on seems to be straight down in the floor and there are indications of the roof of another bedding plane (?) appearing. Several tons of debris needs to be removed from this area though. On the way out one skip load was hauled to surface.
Somerset	White Pit 23/11/92 Alone	3h 35m	Priddy	Following a week of cold/flu I was about ready for a caving trip! I continued digging in the "2 nd pot" until I reached a solid floor about 8' down from the lip of the bedding plane above. A clean washed but stone filled dipping bedding plane passage led on at the bottom. As most of the spoil consisted of small rocks and mud I put it all in sacks and poly bags, each of which was stoppered ready for removal. I must have filled at least 40 of these. A few larger rocks were dragged out to the base of the "1 st Pot". I was able to squeeze into the new descending bedding plane for a few feet to pull out loose stones but a lot more clearing of spoil at the "2 nd Pot" will make further progress here a lot easier. Phil, Tim and Co. have started a rock and concrete wall above the "1 st Pot" which will hopefully hold up the ominous looking boulders in the ceiling. The cave was quite wet and the gurgling and dripping noises of tiny streams was quite fascinating. Lots more work to do here but it looks more promising by the minute.

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Somerset	White Pit 25/11/92 p.m. Rich Blake Eve. Andy Sp., Andy S., Nick Hawkes, Brian M, Chris Tozer, Pete Hellier	1 ½ hr 1h 35m	Priddy	The 40 or so bags filled on Monday at the bottom of the "2 nd Pot" were hauled up by Richard to the base of the "1 st Pot". I dodged the stones at the bottom and also dug out the inlet (?) passage opposite the top of the "2 nd Pot" for some 6' to where it became too small. This is possibly another, smaller bedding plane and may be worth digging. In the evening we hauled all the bags to the pool and several were transferred into skips and hauled to surface. A large amount of stones of assorted sizes were passed hand to hand as far as the bottom of the "1 st Pot", so much so that we created a fair sized chamber below the "2 nd Pot". Another good day's work despite the foul weather.
Somerset	White Pit 26/11/92 Trev Hughes	1h 40m	Priddy	Another 40 or so bags were filled and stacked at the bottom of the "2 nd Pot". We now need another good hauling session to clear the tons of spoil which is becoming embarassingly in the way.

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Somerset	White Pit 29/11/92 Trev Hughes, Chris Castle	2h 5m	Priddy	Cleared a few loads from the bottom of the "1 st Pot" and then hauled out at least 40 sacks from the base of the "2 nd Pot". After a small amount of digging by Trev in the RH passage at the bottom he opened up an almost passable phreatic tube heading down dip into possible blackness! Looks good for a breakthrough soon. Tomorrow will perhaps yield something interesting.
Somerset <i>discovery</i>	White Pit 30/11/92 Trev, Rich Blake,	5h 35m	Priddy	<i>See below</i>

	Andy Sparrow			
	<p>At least another 30 bag loads were hauled from the “2nd Pot” and lots moved outwards from the “1st Pot”. The descending tube was intersected by a dig from the slope, just below its entrance, by which time Andy had pushed on through a small phreatic tube for about 15’ to a partial blockage of rocks and the way on visible beyond. Then ensued a frenzy of digging with me at the front madly dragging out embedded rocks as I slowly crawled forwards. After some 30’ of this very hard work I was stopped by two large, calcited boulders. With the aid of Rich and a small crowbar these were eventually dislodged and I pushed through into the open passage beyond – unfortunately having a pink flowstone covered floor with a tiny stream flowing over it and disappearing down the passage. On squeezing through I found myself at the top of a steep calcite slope in a roomy phreatic tube which dropped immediately into a well decorated pothole some 30’ deep, Coffee Pot. Rich joined me and several awkward rocks were removed from the squeeze and cast into the depths with a satisfying series of crunches. Andy was despatched back to the pots to collect the hauling rope and the 4’ crowbar was wedged across the pot as a temporary belay. Using the rope as a psychological aid I free climbed down the beautiful calcite covered walls which belled out at the bottom to some 8’ wide by 15’ long. Below the pot was a c.20’ deep rift with several large and dangerously loose boulders at its head. These were trundled into the hole and the rift free climbed down to a floor of boulders with the way on probably buried below. Many of these rocks had fresh scars indicating a (relatively) recent collapse. The the RH side of the pot bottom a large opening gave access to a long and c.50’ high chamber with a boulder floor and a couple of attractive areas of white flowstone high up on the walls. A goodly spray of water descended from the ceiling – possibly from the tiny streamway noted by Trevor halfway along the crawl to the head of Coffee Pot. Having done enough for one day and being exhausted, filthy and damp we returned slowly to the surface pausing for coffee and whisky at the “2nd Pot”. We had hoped to leave open passage for Tim, Phil and Co to look at but this was not to be. They will no doubt be pissed off! An excellent day’s work with its just rewards. We now need to bolt Coffee Pot, dig out the floor of the crawl and completely clear the “2nd Pot” area as well as hosing it all down. The dig at the end could be a long term job but we might be lucky. The high chamber – Masters Hall – needs a good look at and may have to be bolted to check for high level leads. It would seem that we are on a fault line and there is a distinct possibility of further pitches dropping straight down to the unknown reaches of the Swildon’s streamway. Time will tell.</p>			

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Somerset <i>discovery</i>	White Pit 1/12/92 Andy Sparrow, Chris Castle, Robin Brown	2h 20m	Priddy	<i>See below</i>
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	<p>Andy was going down to bolt Coffee Pot so I joined him with intentions of clearing gravel from the final crawl. On reaching this, the last section was found to be an inch deep pool which has added an element of misery to the trip! Andy put in one 8 mill bolt and I found a natural back up belay so we tied on a rope and slid down for another look at the end. Yesterday Andy had noticed a possible high level route and he climbed up some 20’ into this while I had a look in Masters Hall. There are a couple of possible climbs here which will need a rope to aid in getting back down. Suddenly there was a scream of joy from Andy and a sodding great bang as he hurled a boulder down a virgin, apparently 50’ deep pitch. I scrambled up to join him and was amazed to look out over a very wide pitch / chamber with a phreatic roof tube possibly leading upwards to further passage – maybe the decorated parts of the cave (Talus IV). On the far side of the pitch an attractive bank of flowstone glistened with running water – another small stream entering the system. Not having enough rope of SRT kit there was little else we could do apart from Andy putting in a bolt ready for tomorrow. Chris and Robin came down for a look and I headed out, moving various offending rocks and building another drystone wall near the entrance on the way.</p> <p>Judging by the size of this new pitch we have hit the jackpot. There must be a very big system awaiting us with the possibility of a fine vertical system down to the streamway. Andy is delighted as he had prophesied exactly this happening and so fat it is al coming true just as he imagined it. Roll on tomorrow.</p>			
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Somerset	<p>2/12/92 White Pit. A.Sparrow, T.Large, P.Romford, C.Tozer, B.Murliss, C.Castle, P.Hellier, T.Hughes, Estelle: - underground. Vince, Rich Blake and me at surface. AS, TL, PR, CT, BM and CC later followed by PH went to the bottom where Andy abseiled the new pitch to a choked floor at c.50’ in a large chamber. Some fine nests of cave pearls were noted and Brian also traversed in the roof into a few feet of choked passage. One of the climbs in Masters Hall was also done. Meanwhile the rest of us hauled out about 70 loads of rock and mud – about 2/3 of the remaining spoil. Our great hopes of yesterday were not fulfilled but once the floor choke is removed I am sure we will be off again!</p>			
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Somerset	White Pit Swildon's Hole 3/12/92 Trevor Hughes	2hr 20m	Priddy	I had decided to do a quick tourist trip down the new pitch in White Pit followed by a wash off in the almost flooded Swildon's Hole and was just about to leave when Trevor arrived. In White Pit I bagged up a few loads of rock at the "2 nd Pot" then we carried on down using SRT kit. The new pitch is very attractive with a superb flowstone slope all down one side and shimmering with the small stream flowing over it. At its base this turns into a slope of small gours with several mint imperial sized cave pearls – superb but vulnerable. Some digging was done at the base of the pot in loose rocks and gravel and following the flowstone downwards – this indicating that the infill has occurred since the calcite deposits formed. Having decided that this dig will be a long term job we headed out to the durface and drove across to Swildons for a refreshing wet trip to the top of the Twenty Foot Pot. 50p well spent and cheaper than the launderette. An excellent afternoon's caving.
Somerset	Wigmore Swallet 6/12/92 Pete Bolt	1 hr	Red Quar	Ross White has recently pre-empted Pete Bolt by pushing downstream through three more short sumps into open, narrow, going passage. Keith Savory has plans to dive upstream and has taken his gear down in preparation. Pete intends to dive downstream (with Keith?) next weekend so this trip was to get two of his bottles as far into the cave as possible considering the flood conditions following some 2-3 weeks of steady rain. Pete unfortunately was dressed in a furry suit and TSA oversuit, not quite realising how wet and cold the cave gets. To add insult to injury his FX2 lamp failed to work! In high water conditions we managed to get the bottles to the alcove just below "Ghandi's Pyre" where Pete gave up. I went on to the head of Blackbird Pot, which looked impressively wet, before retreating to the surface with a cold, wet and lightless Pete. This is a magnificently sporting trip in really wet weather and the whole cave is cleaning up nicely.
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Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 9/12/92 Alone	¼ hr	Priddy	Swift trip to assess the ater levels in the mineshaft and natural passage. In the shaft it was some 3' or so above the top of the short level at the base of the shaft. In the natural passage the water level lay some 4' below the horizontal scaffold pole – about 25' above the bottom of the dug pitch. This meant that the two water levels are at about the same height and could be connected – however tentatively. I removed the aluminium "ladder" from the dig before it became submerged. Not much hope of a sudden breakthrough by the water I am afraid. The surface landscaping has mellowed in nicely.
Somerset	White Pit 9/12/92 Phil R, Andy Saunders, Andy Sparrow, Brian M, Chris T, Rich B, Pete H, Estelle Sandford	2 hr	Priddy	At least 50 skip loads of spoil were hauled from the bottom of the first slope to surface. This has cleared all the available debris from above the 1 st Pot (now officially named!) and the spoil further down can hopefully be lost underground. Andy "Eyebrow" and Estelle had a tourist trip to the bottom.

Somerset	White Pit 10/12/92 Rich Blake	1 ½ hr	Priddy	25 kg of dry readymix cement was taken down and the bottom of the large drystone wall below the entrance shaft was pointed up. A scaffold pole was also cemented in place to assist in holding back the talus slope. We then spent some time bagging and hauling spoil from the base of the 1 st Pot to enable access to Talus 4 to be regained. Much stabilisation and concreting needs to be done now to hold back various areas of the talus cone. Another useful session.
Somerset <i>discovery</i>	White Pit 11/12/92 Alone	2h 40m	Priddy	After filling a few skips and bags at the 1 st Pot I carried on to the dig at the end of Talus 4, beyond the “Pretties”. Hammering the large embedded boulders failed to produce any useful results so I dug on down into the floor between them just to make some working space. Suddenly the solid wall ahead gave out to reveal a low airspace full of clay and boulders. After a lot of hard graft prising out and stacking the slimy rocks I managed to squeeze down into some 10’ of passage with one solid wall and a solid roof – the other wall being comprised of debris, boulders and broken red stalagmites. I was unable to move much loose rock in this crawl and as time was running out I gave up. This is now a two or three thin men dig but looks quite promising, the way ahead being a low tube with an apparently sandy floor and a distinct draught.
Somerset	White Pit 13/12/92 Tony Boycott, Trev Hughes	2 hr	Priddy	Dug at the end – beyond “The Pretties”. After a lot of rock passing I managed to turn round in the crawl and face head first down the passage. Despite the draught there was unfortunately no obvious way on without a lot more work. Tony and I bet Trevor that this passage will end up at the top of the 50’ Prophecy Pot – to the tune of four pints! I brought out an old piece of stalagmite.
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Somerset	White Pit 14/12/92 Rich Blake	1h 20m	Priddy	In the morning Rich and I transported several fertiliser bags full of sand and stone dust from Les Williams’ house at Yoxter to the entrance of White Pit. After a pub lunch we returned to the case and used up ½ bag of cement to mortar the wall below the entrance pitch and to add a couple of rocks to the wall at the top of the 1 st Pot. Lots more yet to do.
Somerset	White Pit 16/12/92 Brian Murliss, Chris Tozer, Andy Sanders	20m	Priddy	44 skips of spoil to surface from base of 2 nd Pot and above.
Somerset	Welsh’s Green Swallet 17/12/92 Rich Blake	2h 5m	Milton	Despite the recently wet conditions the cave was not particularly wetter than normal. Finding no ladder on the first pitch I had to free climb the entrance shaft and use that ladder in the cave. We went straight to the end and Rich inserted himself in the grotty, little and half-submerged crawl where he somehow managed to drill two 6” shotholes. I then passed him a metre of Pentaflex and a No.8 det. He laid the cord charge in the shotholes and we retired a few feet up the passage to fire it. Then commenced the steady and monotonous crawl back to the surface – literally “brightened up” by my FX5 lamp which

				revealed the very attractive orange, yellow and grey colours in the cave to the full. It is hoped that this bang will give the lads enough room to work on the loose slabs ahead.
Somerset	White Pit 20/12/92 Rob Harper, Trev Hughes, Tim Large, Phil Romford	3h 35m	Priddy	We surveyed the whole cave in one go so that Trev can draw it up ready for further work over the Christmas holiday. Met hungover Tim and Phil creating a sunken path in Talus IV. From later overheard comments it seems that they do not appreciate the cementing work that Rich and I did in the entrance. We couldn't give a shit – at least we got down and did it! It is a real shame that the overbearing attitude of these two part-time diggers is putting a shadow on this otherwise excellent piece of digging and exploration. The cave is 600' long and 155' deep. The Talus IV passage promises much, being on the strike. The lower series goes down dip and also has great potential. Watch this space.....

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Somerset	21/12/92 Rich Blake and I took the new lid made by Ivan Sanford over to Ubley Warren Pot – it fitted perfectly. One bolt hole was drilled – three to go. We then collected more sand from Les Williams and took a couple of steel shackles to Wigmore Swallet entrance in preparation for repairing the lid hinges. It was too cold to go down Welsh's Green Swallet.			
Somerset	White Pit 23/12/92 Trev, Chris Tozer, Brian Murliss, Phil, Vince, Rich Blake, Pete Hellier, Estelle, Rich Lewis	1h 55m	Priddy	Rich B, Vince and I went to the end of Talus IV and Vince dug at the end until stopped by a couple of awkwardly sized boulders. Phil and Co dug at the end of the main passage – moving loads of rocks but not making significant progress. We all moved out and shifted several bags of boulders from Pot 2 to surface. Several Acres also went out. Thence to the pub for a pre-Christmas Eve piss up.
Somerset	24/12/92 Trev Hughes, Rich Blake, Poppy, Peter and I did a surface survey of White Pit tying it in to the B.M. on my front wall.			
Somerset	White Pit 26/11/92 Alone	1h 20m	Priddy	Firstly to Priddy Green to watch the Morris Men and the Mendip Hunt and borrow Trev's Bosch drill. Then to White Pit where I drilled several c.8mm holes in the loose boulders at the dig at the end of Talus IV. In one of the holes I inserted a No.8 detonator and fired it from near the Pretties. Because I had also stitch drilled the rock I got an excellent result – the boulder being in several parts. As there was very little in the way of fumes I inserted another 2 No.8 dets, wired in parallel into the remaining lumps and successfully fired these before retiring to the Hunter's. This seems to be a cheap and useful technique for removing offensive, small boulders.

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Somerset	White Pit 27/12/92 Ivan Sanford	2h 5m	Priddy	Four No.8 dets were used separately in shotholes to buck up the boulders at the dig beyond Talus IV. I was then able to get in and assess the potential. It doesn't look very hopeful though when we have dug out the sand floor we may have a better idea as to what is there. Ivan had a solo tourist trip around all of the cave.
Somerset	29/12/92 Assisted Trev Hughes with a surface survey and Nick Williams with a Molephone radio location of Welsh's Green Swallet. Trevor plotted the straight line course of the survey on the ground and levelled along it. Nick eventually received the signal from Ros Bateman and Ivan Sanford at the second dam in the cave – a few metres from the end. Also present were Murray Knapp, Estelle			

Sandford and Graham Johnson. (Vince and Rich Blake are due to bang the cave this evening). The radio location point is only a couple of metres from the plotted survey point – an excellent result. The cave is heading directly for Walcombe Hanging – the deep valley behind Wells – and must drop steeply very soon or it would be resurging here! A good afternoon's work in clear but freezing conditions. (At a supposed 29m below us, Roz and Ivan could distinctly hear us jumping up and down on the surface as if it was in an upstairs room!)

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Somerset	White Pit 30/12/92 Chris Castle, Pete Hellier	2 ¼ hr	Priddy	I went down first and looked around in the first part of Talus IV for possible routes towards Twin Titties Swallet. Collapsing boulders in the talus cone soon deterred me of this. At the dig beyond “the Pretties” I was joined by Pete, and later, Chris. We moved rocks and sand for a while but there was no obvious way on. We then moved on to the dig just above (where Phil and Co dug last week) and shifted a few boulders, rocks and pebbles. A long term dig. It's time to move to the lower series!
Somerset	Welsh's Green Swallet 31/12/92 Rich Blake, Vince Simmonds	1h 55m	Milton	Last trip of this very successful year – let's hope it's an omen! Rich cleared, drilled and laid a small charge at the end, in horrific conditions. Vince and I passed rocks back and the drill etc, forward. Wet, cold, full of grit and with assorted light pox we left the cave until next year. WE will all be very pleased when this one is finished.
Somerset <i>discovery</i>	White Pit 4/1/93 Rich Blake, Trev Hughes	3 hr	Priddy	I first went down alone and after filling a few bags with rocks at the 2 nd Pot I continued to the dig below Coffee Pot, where I was not impressed. Uninspired by suicidal digging I went up into Masters Hall and for want of anything better to do started free climbing the rift at the far end. This was relatively easy and I was soon on an attractively decorated ledge some 30' up. Here I admired some small crystal-lined pools whilst waiting for Trev and Rich. They were soon to be heard so I requested the lengths of SRT rope which had been left at the 2 nd Pot. These soon appeared and were thrown up to me. I found a superb thread belay on the ledge and set off upwards again, lifelined from below. At about 60' I reached another ledge and the end of the available line. Rich climbed to the ledge and the two ropes used were then tied together as one abseil line of c.60' belayed at the top to a second superb thread belay. From the second ledge I climbed another 15' or so in a tight rift to where it became too narrow for further progress, though draughting. There are some fine formations in this aven and a couple of too tight inlets. Rich and I then abseiled down and spent some time digging below Coffee Pot and at the bottom of the superb Prophecy Pot – both to no avail. At 1 pm we jacked it in and headed for the pub. This cave has now run out of easy option digs. I consider Trevor's favourite dig below Coffee Pot to be extremely dangerous., the huge rocks to be removed holding up the floor of Masters Chamber above! The bottom dig will not be easy either but may still be the best bet. (Aven later pushed for c.20' more by Pete Bolt)

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Somerset	Welsh's Green Swallet	1h 35m	Milton	High and cold water conditions. Straight to the end where Rich attempted to push the way on.
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	6/1/93 Vince, Rich			Several rocks were dragged back but the excess of water ensured that the dam kept filling very rapidly and had to be continually drained. Eventually we gave up – the end needing drilling and banging but in drier conditions to avoid totally fucking the drill. There is only some 3-4’ of rock keeping us from open passage but it seems that another bang is needed. Vince had a look and noted that the roof is rising and that inlet water heard ahead seems to be dropping or falling over boulders. The squeeze leading to the end “chamber” appears to be desperate but I have yet to do it. I look forward to the occasion! (Later pushed by Rich and Vince for 15’ to another slab blockage!)
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Somerset	Wigmore Swallet 8/1/93 Rich Blake, Vince	1h 40m	Red Quar	Down to Yeo Pot to recover 4 x 28 cu.ft bottles and a couple of tackle sacks of diving gear left by Vince, Ross and Trebor following Ross’s successful recent dive through the 62m long Downstream Sump 7. The cave was decidedly damp and we all got very wet and cold. Dragging this amount of kit out is quite a struggle and hard on the equipment but is all part of the effort to push on in this potentially major system. Total of visits to date:- 180 Time U/G:-307h 20m (On 21/1/93 Ross and Trebor passed 5m Sump 8 and 10m Sump 9 to several hundred feet of big streamway ending in a 30’ pitch!)
Somerset	Stock Hill Mine Cave 11/1/93 Alone	25m	Priddy	Recovered most of the short lengths of scaffold pole and the extenders from the bottom of the entrance shaft. Hauled them out and took them to White Pit ready for the shoring of the dig below Masters Hall. The water level in the natural pitch was some 15’ below the scaffold bar – i.e. at the level of the phreatic tube on the far wall. This indicates that the water does drain away and work will resume here in the summer.
Somerset	White Pit 13/1/93 Ivan, Andy Sandford, Estelle, Brian Murliss, Chris Tozer, Pete Hellier	2 ½ hr	Priddy	All the scaffold and extenders from Stock Hill Mine Cave were taken down to the dig below Masters Hall and most were put in place to help prevent a collapse of the floor of this chamber. On the way down about ten loads of rock were hauled up from the 2 nd Pot. This area is now cleared and the sections of conveyor belt were dragged up to the 1 st Pot. At the dig it is apparent that the phreatic rift leading straight ahead connects with the potential way on. The plan is to clear this to give us a safer route to the “working face” than the present unstable pit. A good night’s work.

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Somerset	Sandpit Hole 14/1/93 Alone		Priddy	Took advantage of one beautiful afternoon amongst scores of dreadful ones to walk the White Pit / Sandpit Hole area and to look in the entrance of the several animal dens (badger?) in the sides of this impressive collapse. An interesting digging project could be undertaken here, but where would we start? Noticed an infilled collapse (?) two fields up from Ebborways Farm towards Pen Hill Mast – this may be worth a look in snowy and frosty conditions.
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Somerset	White Pit 17/1/93 Tim Large, Trev, Rich Blake, Jake, Estelle	2 ½ hr	Priddy	One long scaffold pole was taken down to the Masters Hall dig and wedged in. a couple of hours digging and stabilizing was done here and the two avens in Masters Hall were re-climbed and surveyed – the higher one at 120' above the floor!! There were no obvious open ways on but there are a couple of potential dig sites. Jake bottomed the cave and brought the long crowbar to the dig. On the way out we removed the calcited rocks at the end of the pool above Coffee Pot.
Somerset	White Pit 18/1/93 Dig Hartilow (MCG) Alastair Prior	1 ½ hr	Priddy	Tourist trip for Dig and Alastair to both Talus IV and Prophecy Pot – alastair having some trouble with the “squeeze” above Coffee Pot. I did a modicum of digging below Masters Hall. The visitors were well impressed and a nice time was had by all.
Somerset	G.B. Cavern 21/1/93 Mike Di Tonto (Potomac Speleological Club)	1 ½ hr	Charterhouse	Took this visiting U.S. caver on a tourist trip around G.B. doing a round trip and avoiding the Ladder Dig Extension as Mike weighed 220 lbs, is 6' 2", is a lousy climber abd as he admitted, “a big fat motherfucker”. On the way out I climbed up to the blockage of old cars in the base of the 1968 collapse. The cave was very wet but the lake at the bottom was only some 30' long. A pleasant fester which I think Mike enjoyed despite his having to use a ladder on all the little climbs.
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Somerset	White Pit 24/1/93 Trev, (Tim, Phil)	2 ¼ hr	Priddy	We dug in the boulder choke below Masters Hall until it became so dodgy that we decided to leave it to settle for a few days. If it dropped on anyone they would be flattened instantly. I do not like this dig at all! There is a 4' or so deep gap in the floor and a tiny stream trickling in. At least we managed to shift a fair amount of boulders and spoil. In the meantime Tim and Phil dug at the end of Talus IV.
Somerset	Wookey Hole Cave 25/1/93 Mike Di Tonto (PSG) (+ guide)	20m	Wookey Hole	After a pleasant spell of “bushwhacking” around the Ebbor Gorge area we went for a quick tourist trip through the showcave accompanied by a pleasant lady guide. I was not over impressed with the relatively new and excessive amount of lighting in the cave – apart from in the 9 th Chamber where the beddings in the walls are very distinct.
Somerset	White Pit 27/1/93 Brian Murliss, Chris Tozer, Estelle (Tim, Phil)	1h 20m	Priddy	Concreting session at the 1 st Pot. Phi and Tim's wall was brought up to the ceiling of hanging boulders. Life was not made easy by dropping the bag of cement down the entrance shaft and by three of the four of us doing the walling running out of light!
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Somerset	Wigmore Swallet 29/1/93 Vince, Rich, Jake	1h 25m	Red Quar	Very pleasant and very damp trip down to the bottom of Yeo Pot to retrieve four empty diving bottles, and a large Daleswear tackle bag belonging to Ross and Trebor. This lot was all relatively easily dragged out to surface. All the mud in the cave which is near a stream is being cleared out – why wasn't it cleared before we broke in? The river stinks of cow shit, as does the surface where we park the cars. At the bottom of the entrance shaft the waterfall is still digging out

				a potential passage which I must have a good look at some time. Nice, refreshing trip.
Somerset	White Pit 31/1/93 Tim Large, Trev Hughes	1 ½ hr	Priddy	Tim dug at the end of Talus IV while Trev dug in the boulders below Masters Hall. I turned up later on to continue the walling operation above the 1 st Pot and was joined by Tim who assisted. A 6' length of angle iron was concreted in and three feet or so of walling cemented into position. There is still a lot of work to be done here to make this area completely slump-free.
Somerset	White Pit 1/2/93 Alone	1h 55m	Priddy	Continued with the walling project above the 1 st Pot. About half a bag of cement was used and a good amount of wall built up. I also partly tidied up the site, removing various bits of wood.
Somerset	White Pit 3/2/93 Rich Blake (Trev Hughes) (visitor – Dany)	1 ½ hr	Priddy	Afternoon shift to continue with the wall building and general clearing up of the entrance area. It is all beginning to come together now and another couple of working trips should see it finished.
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Somerset	White Pit 4/2/93 Ray Mansfield, Fred Davies, Nick Williams, Franco OHaviani (Italy)	3 hr	Priddy	I led the other three on a tourist trip to the end of Talus IV, where Tim's bang fumes of the previous night were very obvious, then on down the pitches to the bottom. They were suitably impressed by the formations and sporting nature of the cave. They then went on to Swildon's Hole for a wash while I continued with the walling project – this time immediately below the entrance shaft where a possible slump could occur. About a third of the work here was completed. (Franco preferred Swildon's!) (Fred noticed CO ₂ in Prophecy Pot see p.109)
Somerset	White Pit 7/2/93 Trev Hughes (Tim, Phil)	2h 10m	Priddy	Trev helped me by lowering a few rocks down the entrance shaft and taking a couple of photos. He then departed for the bottom to continue with his snaps. Tim and Phil had already gone to their dig at the end of Talus IV. I carried on alone and finished off the cementing of the steps / spoil wall at the base of the entrance shaft. I then filled up a few skips of mud and left everything to settle. Tim and Phil's dig needs more work and they locked Trevor in the cave!
Somerset	White Pit 8/2/93 John Buxton, Rich Blake (surface visitor Vin Garbutt)	1h 40m	Priddy	A tourist trip to the end of Talus IV and to the top of Prophecy Pot for 61 year old, "ex-oxygen" cave diver John Buxton. Despite it being his first real "caving" trip – as opposed to cave diving – in about 20 years he coped well and was favourably impressed. Rich had a look at Tim and Phil's dig and reported it to be sand choked at the end but quite promising. I took a couple of photos in Talus IV and on the way out of the cave laid a few more cemented rocks on the talus slope wall. Several skip loads of mud were also hauled out. Good trip.
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Somerset	White Pit 10/2/93 Alone	2h 20m	Priddy	Another skip load of cement was made up and a bit more wall erected. I then started to clear the immediate area of mud and bailed the pool into the 1 st Pot. Several skiploads of mud and stones were filled and also half a dozen or so bags. They were stacked ready for hauling out. This is a big mud filled phreatic passage and even if it connects with the known lower cave it should be

				dug anyway to help in understanding the development of this system.
Somerset <i>Minor discovery</i>	White Pit 12/2/93 Andy Dennis, Chris Castle	2 ½ hr	Priddy	Andy went on a self-guided tourist trip while I continued digging in the muddy phreatic tube above the 1 st Pot. Several skips and bags were filled and progress along this large passage was good. Chris Castle turned up and progress became even better as he dug out the floor behind me. At the cross passage I dug straight on into the vertical mud wall just to see if there was any possible – probably mud filled – way on directly down dip. In only a couple of feet my theory was vindicated as an open (!) passage revealed. By clearing rocks I was able to enter some 5' of low, arched passage with a clean washed ceiling and a few straws – destroyed as I went forward. Another 5' or so went on ahead but too low and possibly calcited up. There were indications of a slight draught. This is obviously the top of an almost completely filled, walking size phreatic bore tube going straight down the dip. It may be the original route to the top of Prophecy Pot or it may go somewhere completely different. Time will tell.
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Somerset	White Pit 14/2/93 Trev Hughes, Zot, Marcel Dijkstra (UBSS) Annelet Lykles	2 ¾ hr	Priddy	Zot and the Dutch visitors did the standard tourist trip to the Pretties and Prophecy Pot while Trev and I dug in the phreatic tube. I dug in front while Trev widened the passage behind me. Lots of large, waterworn rock and about fifty bags of soil was removed and stacked ready for hauling out. 22 loads hauled to surface.
Somerset <i>rescue</i>	Swildon's Hole 14/2/93 Conrad (victim), Zot, Prew, Marcel Dijkstra, Dany, Butch	40m	Priddy	Following the above trip I showered and sat down with guests and coffee. This was the sign for a call from Prew and we were soon removing a Scout leader (!) from the cave who couldn't climb the 20' Pot. On the way I went through the new wet entrance to the "Dry Way".
Somerset	White Pit 15/2/93 Rich Blake, Chris Castle (Rich, Trev)	2 ¼ hr	Priddy	In the morning we hauled out all the skips and sacks – it seemed like hundreds but there must have been at least fifty – this means we had yesterday filled more than I noted above. By this time it was nearly lunchtime so Rich filled up half a dozen skips while I did a bit more concreting in the talus slope wall. In the afternoon six more skips were made at the Belfry and delivered to the cave ready for use tomorrow.
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Somerset	White Pit 16/2/93 Vince, Rich Blake	1h 40m	Priddy	Eight loads to surface. A bit more wall cementing was done and another sixteen or so loads filled from the end of the dig. A temporary dam was made of bags of mud to stop the dig getting too wet. Vince, doing his shift at the end, pulled out a large boulder to reveal more open spaces ahead and up to the right. It looks good for an early break through into something and the passage ahead seems to be clean washed. There is a definite draught.
Somerset <i>discovery</i>	White Pit 17/2/93 Vince, Rich, Ivan, (Brian, Chris Tozer,	2h 40m	Priddy	Much digging in the phreatic tube. At least 50 skiploads went out to the surface – most hauled by Brian and Chris who arrived just at the wrong time! Vince concentrated on dragging out and

	Estelle) Dave Gibbons, Les Williams, Mark Helmore, Chris Castle, Phil Romford, Pete Hellier, Trevor			<p>beating up enormous boulders (which he pretended were the women in the tax office!!) and Rich, Ivan and I helped the debris on its way out. Trev and Pete surveyed 80' of passage in the small aven series of Masters Hall, Phil and Chris Castle dug at the end of Talus IV and Mark, Les and Dave Gibbons did a tourist trip.</p> <p>Back in the phreatic tube Vince had cleared enough at the end to enter a well decorated grotto with a roomy inlet passage on the right some 10' long. Calcite cemented boulders in the floor of this small chamber blocked the potential way but after some hammer and crowbar work we managed to engineer a view down into possibly another 10' or so of open, descending passage. One large slab will need to go before we can gain access to this. A bloody good night's work by all concerned.</p>
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Somerset	White Pit 18/2/93 Rich Blake	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	<p>Unproductive evening trying to move / hammer a couple of large boulders blocking the way on in the dig. Stitch drilling and chiselling failed due to the massive calcite nature of the boulders. Eleven skips were filled as we widened the entrance to the grotto. A double bang is needed here to remove these rocks. (One boulder removed by Vince and Rich on 19/2/93) (Vince, Rich and Brian Hansford destroyed and removed the biggest boulder on 20/2/93 helped by Trev and a thief "Kev Williams")</p>
Somerset <i>discovery</i>	White Pit 21/2/93 Vince, Trev, Rich Blake	2h 50m	Priddy	<p>Continued digging in what is now provisionally called "The Waist of Thyme". Some 36 skiploads were hauled out in total. At one point another large calcite boulder prevented access to the open passage beyond so I went back home for the "makings" and after Vince had drilled the holes a detonator / cord charge was fired to smash up the boulder. A few minutes later we rished back to the spot and despite the rapidly diminishing bang fumes Vince lugged out the bits of shattered rock and I passed them back for loading. He soon had a passable way in and squeezed through into a superbly decorated small chamber – the formations being at least as good as anything in Talus IV. I joined him and after a quick look around we concentrated on enlarging the way in so Trevor could have a look. Rich, for some reason "having his arse in his head", declined to see the new bit. Loads more huge rocks were hauled out dragged back for "beasting" before being loaded in the skips. The way on seems to be either down in the floor or directly under the magnificent flowstone / stalactite cascade on the far wall of the grotto. To avoid damaging the formations we must try the former. An excellent reward so far for the work put in and hopefully there will be lots more.</p>

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Somerset	White Pit 22/2/93 Alone	3 ½ hr	Priddy	<p>Solo digging trip. I concentrated on clearing out the floor of the passage as far as the decorated chamber. Lots of digging bags were filled and a great number of rocks removed. Most of this was either stacked in situ or hauled up to the start of</p>
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				the passage. A few photos were taken in the decorated chamber. Just before the final squeeze into this chamber, whilst digging out the floor, I opened up a wide, open bedding plane a couple of inches high. By digging out the muddy floor we may be able to by pass the formations. Life was made more pleasant by the addition of a flask of hot coffee and Havana Club rum! (On 21/2/93 Trebor MacDonald and Pete Bolt reached a boulder choke 30' beyond the previously undescended 25' pitch in Wigmore Swallet. Their "sherpa", a certain British / Australian with a knowledge of French and calling himself "Kev Williams" chickened out at Santa's Grotto and left for the surface. He then walked to the Belfry to steal the hut fees before getting a lift back to Wigmore where he stole Trebor's car! It was not a good day for the cave divers!!)
Somerset	White Pit 24/2/93 Estelle, Trev, Ivan, Andy Sparrow, Pete Hellier, (Tim and Phil)	1h 25m	Priddy	66 skiploads to surface – all available spoil cleared out of the dig. Estelle, Ivan, Pete, Andy, Phil and Tim all went in to look at the formations. Phil and Tim went off to bang their dig in Talus IV. From the entrance a red glow could be seen in the sky which is not normally noticeable. I assumed it was the lights of Weston-Super-Mare but it seems that the trees and scrub above Jacob's Ladder in Cheddar Gorge were ablaze.
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Somerset	White Pit 26/2/93 Alone	2h 25m	Priddy	11 skips filled and a few rocks removed from the dig. As this was a post-Hunter's lunchtime dig I fell asleep at one point! Dig very muddy due to recent rain and overflowing of dam. The bedding plane looks good and draughts well but will need lots of hard work.
Somerset	White Pit 1/3/93 Trev Hughes	3h 55m	Priddy	13 skips to surface. 12 skips and about thirty bag loads more then filled at the dig in the bedding plane in "Waist of Thyme". A selection of assorted rocks were also removed and stacked ready for hauling out. With much digging the way on along this bedding plane will be quite roomy but at present a couple of large boulders are in the way. Fresh water was taken down to clean up some of the muddied formations. A hauling rope is needed for the new skipway along to the working face.
Somerset	White Pit 3/3/93 Trev, Pete H, Ivan, Andy Sanders, Martin Ellis (SMCC) (Phil, Tim)	2h 25m	Priddy	c.40 skiploads out. Trevor stitch drilled one of the huge rocks at the end and it was later hammered into submission – fracturing everywhere except along the drill holes! Martin joined Tim and Phil on their dig and thus did half a tourist trip. The rest of us hauled, pushed and pulled the skips out to surface and cleared the twenty or so bags of spoil at the dig back to the entrance slope ready for the next hauling session. The bedding definitely goes back into the decorated chamber but it is hoped that by sticking to the LH side we may be able to by pass this. Lots to do here still. Cold, very strong draught whistling into the cave.
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Somerset	White Pit	3 ¾ hr	Priddy	20 skiploads out, hauled up by Trev. WE then

	5/3/93 Trev (Vistor – Ivan)			dragged about twenty loads back from the face and filled another twenty or so. Several large rocks were smashed up and dragged out. At the end of the now 10' long bedding plane dig we can see to the right into the end of the grotto. If we carry on digging straight on we should soon be able to by-pass the formations. Digging is sticky but relatively easy. Most of the rocks coming out are actually large slabs of calcite up to 8" thick – probably an ancient floor. Work continues.
Somerset	7/3/93 – To Snake Pit Hole to watch Vince, Rich and Jake in their digging attempt to find the entrance to this blocked up cave dig. No luck yet but they seem to be in the right place.			
Somerset	Swildon's Hole 8/3/93 John Buxton	2h 10m	Priddy	A leisurely trip for the benefit of John who had not been down the cave for about 30 years. He was actually wearing the same caving boots that he wore on the weekend of Sept 13/14 th 1958 when he and Oliver Wells passed Sump 4! We ambled down as far as Sump 1 admiring the scenery and noting all the changes that had taken place since the 1968 flood. Met Chris Castle and Kim? – the new Cheddar Adventure Caving guide on the "20" on the way out. A pleasant trip.
Somerset	White Pit 9/3/93 Rich Blake, Chris Castle, Martin Ellis, Andy Sanders, Estelle, Alison (?)	2h 20m	Priddy	At least 30 skiploads to surface following a major hauling effort from the working face. A bit of digging was also done and it is now obvious that the bedding plane does continue on down dip and will almost certainly by-pass the grotto. Andy, Estelle and Alison arrived for a quick tourist trip "down cave" before joining us on the dig. There is still a great heap of skips and bags ready for tomorrow night's session.

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Somerset	White Pit 10/3/93 Ivan, Andy Sandford, Estelle, Pete Hellier, Martin Ellis	2h 25m	Priddy	Over 40 skiploads out. Andy and I concentrated on digging and after shifting some twenty or so bags full we broke into an open, decorated but tiny airspace heading down from the RH side. The draught increased considerably and we are assuming that this connects with the far end of the grotto. The clay infill has changed from brown to red and it would seem that a stream has flowed through this area in the past. A huge boulder will have to be removed before we can progress further.
Somerset	White Pit 12/3/93 Alone	1h 50m	Priddy	Stitch drilled the large boulder in the dig (1 ½ holes) in a vain attempt to break it up. A lot more work is needed on this rock! Several bags were filled and smaller rocks pulled out.
Somerset	White Pit 14/3/93 Trev Hughes, Andy Dennis, Alex Gee (Hades CC) Matt Tuck, Vince Simmonds	3h 40m	Priddy	At least 50 skiploads out to surface and another twenty or so either ready to go up or scattered along the passage to the dig. Vince concentrated on drilling, digging and boulder bashing at the end. The crawl into the grotto was partly trenched out. Matt and Alex also did a tourist trip round the cave. A lot of bloody great rocks still need to be broken up before we decide the best route to continue. An excellent afternoon's work.

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Somerset	White Pit 15/3/93 Matt Tuck, Chris Castle	3hr	Priddy	1 skip out. Lots of bags were filled at the end and dragged to shaft bottom. The still offending boulder was stitch drilled and bashed a bit more and is gradually getting smaller (Trev went down
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				in the afternoon to smack it some more). The possible way on to the left is well blocked with clay and calcite blocks.
Somerset	White Pit 17/3/93 John Riley (BEC/Hill Inn) Trev Hughes	2 hr	Priddy	6 skips out. Took John on a tourist trip to Talus IV and the head of Coffee Pot. I went down to the boulder dig to retrieve Trevor's hammer. We then went back to help Trev at the dig and haul back the vast heap of rock left by him after his solo rock smashing trip on 15/3/93. He had also filled a load of bags at the end and these were stacked in the first "chamber". There is a huge amount to be hauled out which will give the evenings team plenty to do! (15 loads out later hauled by Andy Sanders, Ivan, Andy Sparrow, Grant and Alison (Sydney USS))
Somerset	White Pit 21/3/93 Alone	2h 10m	Priddy	Dug in the left hand side at the end of Waist of Thyme. Huge calcite slabs buried haphazardly in clay totally block this passage. We are digging across the strike of the bedding plane, which may not be the correct way on but where there does seem to have been a level of phreatic development illustrated by partial, horizontal roof tubes and ledges. A dozen or so bags were filled and masses of rock removed. This was all stacked ready for a mega hauling session on Wednesday. On arriving back at home I was accosted by Alex Gee and Andy Dennis and informed of a potential rescue at Swildons Hole. A group of Crawley Scouts were overdue from a Round Trip and had been down eight hours. As Andy and Alex walked across the fields they met the scouts just coming out after having failed to drain the last Trouble. They were all knackered but okay.
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Somerset	White Pit 22/3/93 (Trev)	2 ½ hr	Priddy	I went down alone and dug at the end for an hour filling about eight bags and moving back a heap of smashed rock. Upon dragging a skip back to the bottom of the entrance shaft it was apparent that Trevor had arrived. He decided to haul up a few skips and one and a half hours later had winched up 43 loads! This magnificent effort almost cleared the base of the shaft but there is still plenty further down for the Wednesday night team. Trev later went down and broke up various rocks.
Somerset <i>rescue</i>	Eastwater Cavern 23-24/3/93 Tony Simmonds (rescuee) Mike Quartermaine, Dany Bradshaw, Mac, Tim Large, Joc Large, Rich Blake, Andy Sparrow, John Attwood, Steve Redwood, Bob Cork, Bob? (Doncaster), Rob Harper, Fred Davies, Butch (Prew, Zot, Rich West, Jim Hanwell)	4 ½ hr	Priddy	I received a call from Prew around 9.15 pm and went of a brief search for rescuers, standing some by at the Hunter's. As the two cavers were reported about 3 hrs overdue we assumed them to be lost and at 9.40 Dany and I went in for a quick search carrying the Molephone. I went via the Woggle Press / Boulder Chamber and Dany via the Upper Traverse. We met up at the head of the Canyon and having found no-one reported to surface. I then went on ahead to check the Twin Verticals (no ladder) and Dolphin Pot route where I heard them shouting at the bottom of the chimney (Dolphon Pot proper). Tony had fallen about 10' off the climb up and badly broken his arm / wrist and bruised all his left side. Mike had stayed with him to check on his condition and mend his lamp, by which time he thought it too late to go out for help as at least two people on

				<p>the surface should have reported them late. This was probably a mistake as they had a long, and for Tony, agonizing wait. On hearing of the damage I shouted back to Dany to phone the surface with details and free climbed down to them (there was no handline). Despite his injuries Tony was in good spirits. Meanwhile, on the surface there was a problem in getting sufficient rescuers due to it being a Tuesday night and a “flu epidemic”. Eventually Mac and Bob arrived with splints, Entonox, 1st Aid etc and after I had rigged the climb with Mike’s antique ladder the kit was lowered. Bob and Dany then administered Temgeric and Entonox and pulled Tony’s arm back into shape, putting a couple of neoprene splints (and one on his lower leg for good measure). He was put in the “Baby Bouncer” and the slow process of evacuation started. He was hauled / pushed up the Pot and helped himself as well as he could all the way. With constant drags on the Entonox he was hauled up the Canyon on an excellent running pulley system rigged by Andy. It was thought prudent to obtain the stretcher which Fred and Butch got down with difficulty – luckily this was not needed. Baker’s Chimney (proper) was rigged but it was decided to try to get hom through the “Woggle Press” as he was now doped up enough to be making good progress. With a bit of hauling and some superb work on his own accord he luckily got through and was soon on his way through the Ruckle and out of the cave at about 2.15 am. (4 ½ hours since Dany and I entered). Most of this rescue went well despite several delays for kit and personnel. I dread to think what would happen on a similar or worse accident in the depths of West End Series!</p>
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Somerset	White Pit 24/3/93 Pete Hellier, Alison and Grant (SUSS) Greg Villers +2	2h 25m	Priddy	c.12 loads to surface. I did a small amount of digging at the end and after Pete had given Greg and his mates a tourist trip we concentrated on hauling bags and rock back to the base of the entrance shaft.
Somerset	White Pit 25/3/93 Alone	2 hr	Priddy	Dug on the RH side at the end of Waist of Thyme heading towards, and under, the grotto. About ten bags were filled and a large amount of rock dragged out. The sudden interception of the grotto draught was very noticeable as I opened up a calcite block and boulder filled hole in the floor with nice big spaces showing that is the best way on at present. It is obvious that water has flowed down here as it is spotlessly clean. We now need to trench out the floor leading to this hole to enable it to be cleared easily and more safely, there being a fair amount of partly calcited “hanging death” above it. Two hours well spent.
Somerset	White Pit 28/3/93 Andy Dennis, Andy Legg (MNRC)	3 ¼ hr	Priddy	c.12 loads to surface. During the next couple of hours a large amount of spoil was dug and hauled back from the “below grotto” dig to the base of the entrance shaft. Andy Legg had a solo tourist / detackling trip to Talus IV and Prophecy Pot and was impressed. We made about 4’ depth in the dig which entailed cramp inducing contortions to

				work and needs a lot more spoil getting out before it is comfortable. The left hand wall is vertical and solid rock and there has definitely been water flow here. The way on seems to be under the line of the cascade in the grotto above. Another good session.
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Somerset <i>discovery</i>	White Pit 29/3/93 Tim Large	3 ½ hr	Priddy	<i>See below</i>
<p>1 load to surface. We then concentrated on the dig below the grotto and after a couple of hours of acrobatic digging and pulling out rocks from a dodgy boulder ruckle Tim opened up a passable way through. Taking a chance with the boulders he squeezed through into some 15' of roomy, solid phreatic tube with a rift / window at the end revealing a view into further open passage. Half an hour's digging got us into this continuation and we were amazed to be walking down an inclined, scalloped and clean washed tube heading steadily down the dip. I took the lead and was almost immediately brought up by a 12' deep pot in the floor with a 15' long canal or sump at the bottom. Continuing over this we soon reached a complete choke at a reasonably well decorated section of passage. This will have to be dug despite the lack of draught. After the pool has been investigated we can dump the spoil into it. There was a waterline some 4' above the present level. Three small side passages were noted in the extension on the RH side going in. The onset of both "The Lurgi" and Hunter's lunchtime brought exploration to an end. A large, ancient stalagmite boss was recovered from the boulder ruckle and taken home. A good morning! (In the afternoon Rich Blake and Trev Hughes surveyed the extension). [On 30/3/93 Vince, assisted by Nicky Simmonds and Estelle, dived in the pool to confirm there was no underwater passage. 20 skips were hauled to surface]. [On 31/3/93 the Wednesday night team removed another 60 skip loads to surface and Trevor commenced excavating upwards in the rift leading to Prophecy Pot – this being directly under the pool in The Waist of Thyme and only about 6' away. He made 2' of progress. According to the survey The Waist of Thyme is directly over the Coffee Pot alignment and everything seems to be trending back to the suicidal dig below Masters Hall! We can only hope that the end of "Thyme" will provide a way on.]</p>				

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Somerset	White Pit 4/4/93 Trailer (Swindon SS), Andy Sparrow, Tim Francis, Charlie Allison, Ralph + 4 (MCG)	3h 25m	Priddy	40 skiploads to surface as payment for the MCG tourist trip – about 20 loads left to come out. The MCG split into two parties and laddered the lower series and visited the pretties. They were all impressed by the cave and its formations. Meanwhile Andy Trailer and I dug at the end of the new extension to "The Waist of Thyme". It is an almost complete clay and sand choke which should keep us going for some time yet though digging is easy. A couple of feet of progress was made but the way on will not be obvious without the total clearing of the passage. We could distinctly hear the MCG below – probably through a tiny, clean washed outlet passage on the RH side.
Somerset	White Pit 6/4/93 Alone	2 hr	Priddy	Dug at the end of "Thyme" making about 3' of progress in sandy clay with sandstone, rounded pebbles in it. We need to install a drag skip system here as there is a great deal of clay to be removed.
Somerset	White Pit 7/4/93 Estelle and brother, Pete Hellier, Brian Murliss, Chris Tozer	1h 40m	Priddy	18 loads to surface – that's the finish of hauling!! Estelle and her brother dug at Waist of Thyme. Pete, Brian and Chris in the mud choked rift near the boulder dig below Coffee Pot and myself in the muddy crawl below 2 nd Pot. I cleared a few feet out but was not dressed or in the mood for a filthy muddy squeeze and left it to help at the "Thyme" dig. A dragging skip was taken down here and proved to be very useful, several loads of clay being dragged out and stacked. This is going to be a slow and steady dig and we may soon have to use the "12' Pot" as a stacking area.

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Somerset	White Pit 11/4/93 Trev Hughes, Mike Ford (Cotham CG), Maurice Hervias (Wessex CC), Andy Sparrow, Pete + Alison Moody (WCC)	2h 20m	Priddy	My 80 th trip in this cave. Maurice went to Talus IV with Mike to take stereo photos, Trev went to the bottom of Coffee Pot to dig upwards and I went to "Thyme" where I found the pool 5' deep (6" below high water mark) and the dig partly flooded. I managed to bail most of it into the tiny hole on the right and it rushed on down open passage for some distance. I also opened up another tiny hole further down to drain the terminal puddle. I could hear Trevor below and suddenly there was a great "whooshing" noise and I rushed back to see the last of the pool water draining into the floor – down below Trevor was getting wet! Pete and Alison also appeared, on a tourist trip with Andy. I soon got too wet and cold and left the cave. The connection between "Thyme" and the lower passages is now imminent and will be very useful for spoil disposal. In the terminal dig in "Thyme" we need to try and get into the open crawlway on the right. Still plenty of promise.
Somerset	Swildon's Hole 12/4/93 Brian Prewer, James Cobbett Snr, James Cobbett Jnr	2 hr	Priddy	A trip with two James Cobbetts! This was a tourist trip for 14 yr old "Jamesito" who had previously been to the top of the twenty. On this trip we went to Sump 2 and back in a practically empty cave. All very pleasant and refreshing.
Somerset	White Pit 14/4/93 Pete Hellier	2h 10m	Priddy	Pete and I dug in "Thyme" and made about 4' of progress through very sticky clay and sand to a point where the 2' diameter tube appears to bear to the right – exactly the direction that is needed to intersect the adjacent, open bedding passage. The dig ideally needs three men so as to be able to drag the skip back to the lip of the 12' pot (nee pool!) for dumping. Space, becoming limited and until Trevor opens up the route from below we will have to keep tipping here. (On 18/4/93 Andy Dennis, Alex Gee, and Andy Legg dug here and almost made a breakthrough into a small decorated chamber)

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Somerset	Mossy Grottoes Nancy Camel's Hole 15/4/93 Alone	5m	Croscombe	A lunchtime caving trip to these two short but interesting sites. The Grottoes are tiny tufa caves and Nancy Camel's Hole is a roomy phreatic passage ending in a diggable clay choke. One bat was noted in residence. There is no sign of the lake of bubbling cow shit mentioned in "Complete Caves". This area has a "feel" of having more cave potential than is at first apparent.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole (II) 15/4/93 Vince Simmons, Rich Blake	50m	Priddy	Assisted the lads with their dig. They have a boulder filled rift or pot, the loose rock being just too large to haul out through a narrow section. Using No.8 detonators and Pentaflex these were drilled, banged and removed to surface. A fair amount of crap fell down the hole so digging (in an awkward upside down position) continues. This would appear to be not the same place as the old MNRC dig although it must be very close. It is obviously a cave and not mined as the limestone (not conglomerate as in "Complete Caves") shows signs of phreatic development. There are some small but colourful formations, a

				strong outward draught and probably a resident bat in the entrance despite all the activity. Ivan has built a superb triangular steel lid for the entrance and a walled spoil heap is now a prominent feature. Rich has planted some thirty hawthorn plants around the entrance but they won't be useful camouflage for at least three years! I suspect there may soon be enquiries from the Forestry Commission!!
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Somerset <i>rescue</i>	East Twin Swallet 16/4/93 Andy Sparrow, Fred Davies, Rich Blake, 4 victims (Rich West, Dany, Prew, Jim Hanwell)	5m	Burrington	Call out at 17:10 at the shop – four youngsters 1½ hour overdue from a supposed Lionel's Hole trip. Andy checked it out but the duck had clean water so it was assumed they were lost in the Spar Pot section of East Twin. When Andy and Fred went to look this was indeed the case and the lost ones were found quickly and escorted to the surface. Rich and I giving them a hand up in the entrance climbs.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole (II) 16/4/93 Vince, Rich	1 ¼ hr	Priddy	Vince drilled and fired a ½ m Pentaflex, 1 x No.8 det charge to remove a lump in the wall of the rift. We then dragged a few skips out until a supposedly solid boulder half way down started to move. Rich and Vince went off to get an Acro while I dug at the bottom and shifted a good pile of rock and mud. When they returned and propped the boulder the spoil was dragged out and I laid a charge of 2 small Gelamex sticks, ¼ metre of Pentaflex and a No.8 det. on a large boulder at the bottom. After firing this we buggered off to the pub!
Somerset <i>Minor discovery</i>	White Pit 19/4/93 Andy Legg (MNRC)	2h 25m	Priddy	Continued with the Waist of Thyme dig. A small decorated airspace could be seen and about an hour's awkward digging saw me into it after breaking up a stalagmite floor from below. A well decorated and roomy phreatic rift led off to the right for some 10' until it was blocked with clay. The potential way on is down dip to the left where there is a tiny airspace for some 6' or so but a lot of digging will need to be done to get along the tube. Unfortunately a fine crystal pool was destroyed during the squeeze into the open passage.

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole (II) 21/4/93 Rich, Vince, Ivan, Jake	40m	Priddy	2 No.8 detonators, 2 slabs plaster and 2m Pentaflex used in anger to continue destroying the large boulders in the bottom of the dig. This first bang, using cord only, did a good enough job and some large lumps of rock were removed but a lot was left. Having a flat drill battery we resorted to a 2 slab plaster charge and then had to go to the pub as the fumes were obviously not going to clear in a hurry.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole (II) 23/4/93 Rich, Vince, Jake	40m	Priddy	The last bang had done a superb job – demolishing half of the boulder. Lots of skips were dragged out and eventually another small charge (1 x No.8 detonator and 1m cord) was used to sort out the rest. The whole of the boulder was then removed leaving "open" passage partially blocked with mud-covered rocks, bits of broken bottle, etc. This indicated flooding from (probably) the Wheel Pit stream which Vince swears he can hear in the distance.

				The cave was draughting strongly outwards and I tested Wheel Pit with cigarette smoke – it draughted inwards. Another few digging trips here should at least get us into something and establish the best way on. Very interesting. (On 24/4/93 Rich and Vince dug until they could see into a “standing size” chamber.
Somerset <i>discovery</i>	Snake Pit Hole (II) 25/4/93 Rich, Vince, Jake, Estelle	2h 5m	Priddy	Two holes were drilled in rocks blocking the way ahead and fired with a metre of cord and a No.8 det. When the fumes cleared Rich and Vince filled up a few skips which were hauled out until enough room was made for Rich to squeeze into a roomy passage where he was surprised to find several buckets and digging tools! We had re-discovered the passages of the last MNRC dig some 20 years before – the original way in which was noted in the roof. Some 40’ or so of muddy but reasonably sized cave was inspected and two possible digs at the end noted. It was the general opinion that the best hope lay in continuing on in the floor of the new entrance climb where there were open airspaces and a good draught. The MNRC had not been into this area so it was thought to be worth a bash. After a fag break we carried on digging and hauling skips out to surface. This passage seems to be a phreatic bedding plane with an infill of red mud, sand and waterworn stones indicating that it may have been an old streambed. There was no sound of the Wheel Pit stream and this may have been wishful thinking. A good afternoon’s work. An old mahher shaft with the initials MNRS burned into it was taken out for cleaning up and presenting to the MNRC.
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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole (II) 28/4/93 (Rich, Vince) Ivan, Jake	1h 55m	Priddy	More digging at the bottom of the new entrance rift where the phreaticly eroded and mud filled bedding plane at the bottom appears to go in both directions and draughts strongly. Ten or so skiploads were hauled out and a large rock removed. It is intended to bang off the ledge halfway down the rift to assist in skip hauling.
SCOTLAND Sutherland <i>Discovery</i>	Uamh a’ Bhrisdeadh-Duile 1/5/93 Julian Walford, Tony Boycott	2h 40m	Inchnadamph	Out intentions were to drill and blast along the inclined rift until we reached the audible streamway. After the first bang I went in to clear it and decided to squeeze up the tight rift above. This went relatively easily and after 15’ I entered some 20’ of easier going passage above the rift. The only potential way on was behind a pile of collapsed boulders. I then returned and we used two slabs of plaster to try and enlarge the squeeze enough for Tony to pass. A good start
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SCOTLAND Sutherland	Uamh a’ Bhrisdeadh-Duile Cnoc nan Uamh System 2/5/93 Tony Boycott, Rich Blake, Tav	4hr 35m	Inchnadamph	Tony again failed to pass the squeeze so Rich Tav and I squeezed in and after vainly attempting to get along the too tight rift below the end we started digging straight ahead in a fill of peaty mud. As we progressed along the peaty crawl the noise of the stream ahead gradually increased which was much needed inspiration in the foul dig – the mud getting wetter and stickier as we manhandled it laboriously back to the chamber. After some 15’ or so we had all had enough

				being exhausted, cramped, wet and cold and decided to jack it in until the following day, despite the imminent (?) possibility of a breakthrough. A skip would be useful to drag the shite back. The crawl was named "Death by Chocolate" due to the nature of the fill! We were then rejoined by Tony and we all did a quick trip to the top sump in Cnoc nan Uamh and out via the waterslide. A good day but bloody hard work. Let's hope it pays off.
SCOTLAND Sutherland <i>Discoveries</i> (2)	Uamh a' Bhrisdeadh-Duile Tree Hole 3/5/93 1) Rich Blake, Tav 2) as above + (Tony Boycott)	1 ½ hr 1 hr	Inchnadamph	Following three pints of Murphy's in Lochinver, and despite poor weather and malaise we eventually got underground. We took a plastic skip with us and Rich went in first to fill it. After about ½ hr of foul and awkward digging Rich suddenly broke through into clean, open thrust plane passage with the main stream pouring into a downstream sump below. Upstream we puched on for about 250' into an attractive sloping streamway, reminiscent of the Upper Traverse in Eastwater Cavern and some 30' high in places. At one point a very loose choke was passed into the last, and most attractive section of streamway ending in a duck and probablt sump. There are a couple of potential digs to reach the surface at this point. Feeling very chuffed with ourselves we headed out for a fag before going off the bang the downstream choke in Tree Hole. Water conditions were low so we were able to get to the end without too many problems. While Rich went back for the bang I had a close look at the horrendous choke and spotted a possible way through. A dodgy and bloody tight squeeze between loose boulders led up into big, open thrust plane passage – much like the extension in this cave that we found two years ago. This was followed for some 60' or so to a definite sump pool. A few upper level passages brought the total length to about 100'. Rich noted that "the twat who said it needed banging didn't know what he was on about!" I replied that I was the only one ever to go there!! At Tav's suggestion this extension is now called "Twat's Temple". With some 400' of new cave we were suitably smug and retired to the Inch for the traditional celebratory beer.....

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SCOTLAND Sutherland	Uamh an Coire Domhain 4/5/93 Nick Williams, Julian Walford	1h 40m	Inchnadamph	<i>See below</i>
	Julian and Nick had been working on reopening this cave which had been blocked by winter floods. The entrance shaft was now a huge gaping crater and the first chamber was choked with inwashed boulders. A sandbag-lined dig was the key to re-entry and this was attached with vigour. Julian managed to move a boulder and squeeze through into a horrifically loose area with holes in the floor being the way on. I had a look and managed to break through just before Julian's squeeze to give a much safer way in. We were now in the main cave passage found last October but instead of the clean washed shingle banks it was now full of inwashed sand, mud and rock. I managed to dig my way up the slope to the "2 nd Chamber" only to find it almost full to the roof with the way on to the stream passage totally choked. At this point I left to relieve Nick, who was our safety man beyond the loose breakthrough point. He and Julian then continued digging but failed to find a way through. A hell of a lot of work will be needed here to regain entry to the very promising streamway and sump beyond. I also had a walk up to Cuil Dubh sink where a lot of water disappears underground. The			

small, dug cave above it was totally choked. Walked back via the main Traligill valley.

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SCOTLAND Sutherland	Uamh an Tartair / Uamh Mhor 5/5/93 Tony, Tav, Estelle	20m	Elphin	Evening walk over the top to look at the entrance of Uamh Cul Eoghain while the others explored. We then went on to do a quick trip in Uamh an Tartair which I left via a slimy, hairy climb out of Uamh Mhor. Walked back to the hut via the fish farm track.
SCOTLAND Sutherland	Uamh a' Bhrisdeadh-Duile Lower Traligill Cave (Waterfall Rising) 6/5/93 1) Rich, Tav, Pete Mulholland 2) as above + Peter Glanville, Jake, Estelle, Nick Williams	2h 35m 1 ½ hr	Inchnadamph	Our aim was to do a grade 5 survey of the new find and get Pete to dive the upstream sump. Unfortunately he failed to pass the horizontal section of squeeze so we cancelled the dive. Rich, Tav and I went on to the end and after a quick fag started the survey. After about a dozen legs Tav dropped Tony Boycott's Suunto compass and clinometer down the main stream sink in the crawl leading back to the main rift. They were unrecoverable so we carried on doing a sketch and tape survey. About 120 metres of acve was measured and this would appear to be very close to the new section of downstream Tree Hole. The two sumps could be one! We left the cave, thankfully, with all the digging gear and will not return this holiday! WE then went to Lower Traligill Cave where Pete struggled into the downstream sump and pushed it for some 25m – still open and descending. Part of the upper series was also visited. Next stop was Waterfall Rising where Pete was inserted into the sump and spent a long time digging underwater while the rest of us fought off the midges. Meanwhile Pete Glanville and Malcolm Stewart were diving the Traligill Main Rising – mainly to recover a line reel and lamp which they had dropped! A day of cock ups and minor successes! Back to the Inch to recover. Total length of extension is 108 metres, total length of cave 119 metres.

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SCOTLAND Sutherland	Tree Hole 7/5/93 Rich	40m	Inchnadamph	After a late start Rich and I went for a surface recce over part of Blar nam Fiadhag, not finding anything of interest but enjoying the superb weather. We then briefly visited Jake and Estelle who were sporadically digging in the ice cold Waterfall Rising. On to Tree Hole where Rich did some novel digging by standing under the waterfall in the extensions of two years ago and hammering off flakes so he could get his head up into the apparently open passage beyond. After a lot of work, and a gashed leg caused by a stray rock, he gained a view of some 3' of passage and a 4" high sump pool! We left the cave in disgust, noticing that just before the squeeze into the extension a lot of water sank on the LH side – a possible source for the waterfall which may not be a separate main streamway after all. Today the underground River Traligill swallowed a chisel! Back to Waterfall Rising followed by a session in the Inch.
SCOTLAND Sutherland	Allt nan Uamh Stream Cave Bear Cave	¼ hr	Allt nan Uamh	Nipped into ANUS to retrieve fish box parts and scaffolding to shore the dig. A skip was removed from Bear Cave and then, after a brief look at the

	Damoclean Cave 8/5/93 1) Julian 2) Julian, Tav, Nick, Tony	1 hr		partially collapsed “Hole 4 Dig” we headed uphill to Domoclean Dig. This is a superbly positioned site with views over the Allt nan Uamh, Bone Caves and as far as Suilven. Most of the day was spent digging here with Nick doing a couple of bangs to remove large boulders in the Glenbain sized entrance. Loads of spoil was skipped out of the 15’ long dig to the surface where sunbathing and beer drinking was the order of the day. Left the site well “gravelled” for next year’s session. Another great week in Sutherland.
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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 10/5/93 Jake, Rich, Estelle, Vince	2 hr	Priddy	Generally spoil shifting from Vince and Ivan’s mid week session. Some 20 or so skip loads were hauled out to a midge infested surface. The two prospective digs at the bottom of the entrance rift don’t look so good so we are now working at the LH passage in the old MNRC section of cave.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 11/5/93 As above	35m	Priddy	A ½ m Cordtex / 1 No.8 det charge was laid on the ledge halfway down the entrance rift. This removed the obstruction making it easier for skip hauling. I then laid 2 slabs of plaster, a 0.3m Cordtex and 1 x No.8 det charge between two rocks at the prospective dig on the LH side near the end of the “MNRC Passage”. The fumes did not disperse until we made use of a “fire bucket” – by which time it was essential to go to the pub!
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 12/5/93 As above + Ivan	2 hr	Priddy	53 skiploads to surface. The last bang had done a superb job on the two boulders and we were soon digging along an almost totally mud filled phreatic passage apparently being the “upstream” continuation of the main MNRC dig. Ivan and I dug this until an interesting looking black space appeared ahead. Following a cider and fag break Jake and Vince had a go and removed more mud to find a layer of fine sandy deposits with a black sediment in it. Below this Jake suddenly found a 21 3/8” long by 1” wide wrought iron, tempered “crowbar”. This was obviously not an MNRC tool but belonged to a lead miner (with the initials W.A. as we later found engraved on the tool). Our prize was carted off to the pub for cleaning and passing around the masses. An excellent discovery – presumably the passages beyond are large enough to use a flat crowbar with relative ease and may yield another blocked entrance to the cave.

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole (II) Attborough Swallet 14/5/93 Rich Blake	1h 25m 40m	Priddy Red Quar	<i>See below</i>
	Laid a Pentaflex and No.8 det charge in two drilled holes in boulders blocking the route in “crowbar” passage. Fired this from the surface then drove across to Attborough Swallet to at last do the bang job for the Cotham lads. The interesting and fairly complicated series of phreatic, Wigmore-like upper level passages was followed through reasonably decorated chambers and areas of scaffold shoring to the dig site. Unfortunately the rock which had to be removed was now underwater! Having failed to complete our aims we made up for it by laying a 2 slab Gelamex charge and 1 no.8 det on a large boulder blocking a mud filled passage where the stream used to sink below the entrance shaft. The CCG lads have done an excellent digging job in this cave and deserve a big breakthrough. Back to Snake Pit Hole to clear a small amount of debris from the last bang. A few bags load of mud and rock were dug out before the remains of the boulders were again drilled (3 shotholes) and a 1m			

Pentaflex and 1 No.8 det charge fired. How the hell the miner's bar got in here I do not know! A fair amount more digging needs to be done before we can assess the proper way on.

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole (II) 17/5/93 1) Alone 2) Jake, Estelle	2h 55m	Priddy	Morning, solo trip to continue with the "crowbar passage" dif left by Jake and Estelle looking promising. I filled 16 bags with infill and dragged it back to the chamber ready for hauling out. After some 4' or so of digging I was able to squeeze under a phreatic arch to see the passage continuing as a phreatic tube, half full of mud, for another 10' or so. This will need digging out but is now obviously the original stream inlet leading from the surface and can wait for the time being. There was now only one obvious way to dig – the muddy "downstream" passage left by the MNRC. There are two possible ways on here and I filled a dozen or so sacks with spoil from both sites. Straight ahead is mud filled and very narrow and the low phreatic tube to the right ends in a boulder and sand choke going upwards. It may both an inlet and outlet – only further digging will yield the correct route to take. This area will now be pursued as the most likely to get us into the system which must exist below. After lunch I drove over to Greendown to admire the gaping entrance of Clay Hole – Tuska's latest Hymac dig. A c.8' square passage drops straight into a pool of water. There is much baling and digging to be done here, a major task. Good luck to them. Back to Snake Pit for an evening's bag hauling. 54 assorted bags and skip loads were hauled to surface.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 18/5/93 Rich, Jake, Estelle	1h 40m	Priddy	Rich eventually removed the offending boulders in the RH dig at the bottom while I dug in the "crowbar" passage until I hit solid rock just below the mud – later confirmed by Jake. Estelle dug at a potential site opposite the way in to the old streamway. This was later backfilled as it had every chance of undermining the extremely dodgy roof! I then took over from Rich and dug out a few more rocks and bags of wet sand. There is a fair pile of bags ready for hauling to surface. How did the miner's crowbar get in? Possibly through the MNRC route?

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 19/5/93 Jake, Estelle, Ivan, Rich, Pete Hellier, Andy Sanders, (visitor:- Sean Morgan)	50m	Priddy	43 loads to surface. I dug at the bottom for a while in a sand filled, apparently upward trending passage. Pulling my head out of the hole for a breather I was startled by a loud thud as a very heavy, skip sized boulder took up the space where my head had been – a close call indeed! Having also forgotten my boots I had enough and went to the surface to help dumo the spoil bags, this job occupying all of us until pub time.
Devon	Rocky Acres "Pot" Rocky Acres Cave 24/5/93 Alone	35m	Kingsteignton	On a day off's drive around Devon, Jane and I called in to the Old Rydon Mill for lunch followed by a quick banging job for the Peters Glanville and Rose in their new dig in the vertical rift above and to the side of Rocky Acres Cave. I have called this "Rocky Acres Pot" as it is obviously part of the same complex of small solutional passages in this area, though the diggers may have another name for it. About 15'

				<p>down a 12" long, c ¾ inch diameter shothole had been drilled. This I filled with three lengths of Pentaflex 80 detonating cord with a short length of Pentaflex attached. 2 slabs of Gelamex were wedged in a crack below this and connected to the shothole charge with ½ m Pentaflex. This was fired – noisily – from the surface and was later looked at to find that it had done an excellent job. There is a good pile of spoil for the lads to shift.</p> <p>I then had a brief and sweaty trundle down the cave to check on progress over the last two years. It is considerably deeper and longer now with the way on being a too tight solutional rift. This is being actively banged and still looks a very good proposition. A good weekend of drilling and blasting at both sites is now needed. The garden gnome is still in residence above the cave entrance but the tea and wad van was totally absent!</p>
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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 26/5/93 Jake, Estelle, Rich, Ivan	2hr	Priddy	About 25 loads to surface. I dug at the bottom, RH passage while Estelle dug straight on in the rift. I was able to hear the hauling team in the "main chamber" above so there is an obvious and useful connection to be made here. There is a horrifically large "head crusher" of a boulder stuck into the ceiling with wet sand. I intend to bang this down as it is too dangerous to pry down. The outside hauling team were plagued with midges.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 27/5/93 Jake	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	Afternoon trip with the aim of banging down the boulder in the roof of the RH bottom dig. Before we did this we cleared out the "straight on" dig as much as we could. A phreatic roof pendant stretches halfway across a mud filled, impassable rift. After a dozen or so bags were filled Jake also spotted a potential route high up in the rift – draughting outwards and full of loose boulders. Some of these were crowbarred out. It was then decided to bang both the pendant and the large boulders blocking the higher route instead of our original choice. 2 slabs of Gelamex were laid between the boulders and one on the pendant. These were connected with ½ metre of Pentaflex and fired with a No.8 det from the surface. Sounded good. It looks like we may now concentrate on this dig for a while in the hope that we can find our way out of the maze by following the draught.
Somerset	30/5/93 Jake, Trebor and I removed the shear-legs from White Pit and transported them back to Bowery Corner Swallet where they were duly erected. This looks like the start of another few years of bloody misery.....			
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 2/6/93 Jake, Estelle, Ivan, Rich, Vince	2 hr	Priddy	40 loads to surface. The last bang has done a good job and several large boulders were brought down, broken up and removed. By the end of the session it was apparent that the "main dig" had closed down to almost solid rock with only tiny mud filled rifts going on. It may be possible to dig in the floor back from the working face but before we attempt this we will have a go at the RH "sand passage" dig.

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 4/6/93 Alone	35m	Priddy	0.3m 80 “shilling” Pentaflex, 1 x No.8 det inserted into the loose roof boulder in “sand passage” dig. Fired from surface. A couple of bags of mud were filled and dragged to the bottom of the entrance rift.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 7/6/93 Alone (Visitor:- Nigel Taylor)	1h 20m	Priddy	Spent some time clearing the huge heap of broken rock left from Nick William’s bangs at the weekend. There is a vast amount of rocks and spoil bags to haul out. I then prised a very large boulder off the wall and after drilling a 14mm shothole I inserted a short length of 80” and Pentaflex with one No.8 det. This was fired from the surface where Nigel Taylor was taking photos. The end looks quite promising with an apparent mud and rock filled passage leading on. The LH wall seems to be right on the conglomerate.limestone boundary.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 8/6/93 Jake, Estelle, Rich	1 ½ hr	Priddy	The boulder banged yesterday had been converted to handy lumps, as had another rock laid on top of the charge as an experiment. All of the available mud and rock – a vast amount – was bagged or sent loose back to the base of the entrance rift in readiness for hauling out tomorrow night. Another large boulder was unearthed by Rich and this was banged with exactly the same charge as yesterday. There seems to be a thick layer of clay below these boulders which may have been the way on and the site is looking more promising and much roomier than before. It was far more dreadful on the surface where the midges were a real bastard. The spoil heap was also camouflaged with garden rubbish.

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 10/6/93 Vince, Rich	1h 5m	Priddy	A few bags had been removed the previous night but most of the spoil still awaited hauling out. We dug at the end removing a large amount of loose rocks and filling a few bags. This was all dumped in the “main chamber” where there is now little room to move! The way on has tiny airspaces and a supposed draught.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 13/6/93 Trev Hughes	2 hr	Priddy	Emptied all the bags lying on the surface then went to the end dig and filled up at least 20 more. These, and loads of rocks were chucked into the “main chamber” ready for removal. There are a couple of large boulders in the way which may have to be banged.
Somerset <i>Discovery</i>	White Pit 14/6/93 Andy Sparrow, Trev Hughes	1h 10m	Priddy	An entertaining and potentially fatal trip! Andy and I went first to the end of Waist of Thyme where Andy dug for a while at the “upstream” end. Trevor arrived and hauled the crap back. I then suddenly noticed that I was breathing heavily, as were the others. We decided that the air was bad and quitted the dig. The “40 Backs” pitch leading from Waist of Thyme to Prophecy Pot had been bolted and was rigged with a rope though no-one had actually been all the way down it due to overhanging mud banks. I decided to have a look and abseiled down to find it wide open so I completed the first descent to the lower level and was then joined by Trev and Andy. It was now obvious that we were still in bad air and that the whole of the cave was apparently full of

				CO ₂ – possibly forced upwards from the unentered Swildon's-Wookey streamway below. We then had a bit of a struggle to free climb out of Coffee Pot and the entrance series – panting all the way and with the classic symptom of rising panic! It was good to get out into fresh air. I personally feel that we only just made it and that the place is too dangerous for further visits at present until the draught returns. I felt shaky and off colour for some time afterwards.
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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 15/6/93 Jake, Rich, Estelle, Vince	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	55 loads to surface. Vince took a shift at the dig face and filled a fair few bags, mostly with sticky clay. I later joined him and a large boulder was unearthed and parked in “Sand Passage”. There is a lot of black, seemingly organic material in the infill which may be the result of mining activities.
Somerset	White Pit (Snake Pit Hole) 16/6/93 1) Tony Boycott 2) Jake, Estelle, Vince, Rich, Ivan, Tony Boycott, Pete Hellier	½ hr	Priddy	Tony and I checked out White Pit using candles. His went out in the terminal dig of Waist of Thyme. Mine stayed alight at the bottom of the 40 Backs. There seems to have been a change of air conditions following heavy rain – or were we suffering from too much exposure to the gas in Waist of Thyme on Monday? Snake Pit:- 40 loads of mainly red, sticky mud out. Midges galore! I am working on fixing Mike Boon with a Wigmore trip!
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 18/6/93 Rich Blake	1 hr	Priddy	Rich dug out a few bag loads of wet clay and then drilled two 14 mm shot holes in a couple of large boulders. He laid a double Pentaflex 80 charge with ½ m of Pentaflex connecting it. This latter was tamped onto a third boulder between the other two. Fired from surface. Cave very wet and sticky.

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 20/6/93 Trev, (Quackers)	½ hr	Priddy	Trev went down first and “beasted” a large boulder which had dropped off the LH wall and was noted by the lads on their clearing up trip of the previous day. He then drilled a couple of 14mm shotholes which I loaded with 2 x 80 Pentaflex and ½ m Pentaflex fired with 1 x No.8 det. from the surface. Quackers looked after the cars.
Somerset	(mineshaft) - ST56705285 Mineshaft Mineshaft All Eights Mine 21/6/93 Trev Hughes, (Quackers)	45m	Eaker Hill	<i>See below</i>

In the morning Trev and I went for a sunny walk all around Eaker Hill Farm area noting much evidence of mining activity including one open shaft – marked on the 1:25000 map as Trial Shaft (dis). Little else of speleological interest was noted. After lunch we returned with Quackers and loads of tackle to descend this and the three shafts at All Eights. Trevor plumped for the Eaker Hill Farm shaft and after lowering three ladders he descended – almost vomiting from the stench of dead sheep – to a pile of rotting animal corpses at a depth of 61 ft. There were no side passages. At All Eights we laddered the two small shafts by belaying to the Land Rover. I bottomed the first one at 22 feet to a blockage and only a tiny side passage. The second was 24 feet deep and led to small stopes some 15’ long on both sides and a blocked way on in the floor. Both these shafts showed no signs of shotholes and both had smoke marked walls. The second bore signs of pick/chisel marks in the clay and had very good examples of slickensides.

Our final descent was of All Eights Mine itself following a considerable amount of gardening at the top. Quackers rigged it with my 11 mm Bluewater rope and Trevor descended first using my rig. When he returned I went down for a look – my last visit being in 1977. The ca.25° long stope was noticed and the impressive formations admired and photographed. The water was lower than on my previous visit. This time we descended via the quare shaft. This is a superb shaft and excellent SRT pitch. A good day out. N.B. In the morning we also visited the entrances of Rushey Ground Swallet and Clay Hole.

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 22/6/93 Rich Blake	1h 25m	Priddy	A good 20 bags were filled at the end and stacked ready for removal. A large boulder in the floor will probably need to be drilled and banged. We are still descending with the dip.
Somerset	White Pit 23/6/93 Steve Ellis, Robin Gray, Pete Hellier, Trev Hughes	1h 50m	Priddy	<i>See below</i>

CO₂ detecting trip using Draeger tubes supplied by Nick Williams. Steve had used these before in the Forest of Dean and was au fait with the techniques employed so kindly offered to assist. The pressure was steady at 988 millibars. Readings were taken as follows:-

1) Spoil bank at end of Waist of Thyme	2% CO ₂
2) Corner in dig before squeeze up to end rift	2% CO ₂
3) Near ceiling level in centre of end rift	2.5% CO ₂
4) End of rift (current dig)	3.0% CO ₂
5) Junction of climb below Coffee Pot/Masters Hall/40 Backs	2.0% CO ₂
6) Masters Hall	2.0% CO ₂
7) Base of Coffee Pot	2.0% CO ₂
8) Bottom of 2 nd Pot	2.0% CO ₂
9) Bottom of 1 st Pot	2.0 % CO ₂
10) Talus IV	2.0% CO ₂

This indicates an unpleasant amount of CO₂ at this time but seemingly not as bad as on 14/6/93 as we were not panting half as much as on that trip. The fact that a cigarette lighter would just light may show that there is not a lack of oxygen. A carbide lamp and candle also stayed alight throughout the trip. To reach the lower level we also “abseiled” down the 40 Backs pitch which is cleaning up slowly. Trev and Pete had a look at Pete’s dig off Masters Hall which now needs drilling and banging. Steve was suitably impressed with the cave, deposits and formations but not with the foul air. A new steel lid made by Ivan was also delivered to the site. Pleasant and useful trip – to be repeated in falling barometric conditions.

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 27/6/93 Jake, Estelle	1h 40m	Priddy	Hauling session on a gloriously sunny and hot afternoon – at least it was wet and cold underground! 70 loads were dragged to surface from the “main chamber” and the dig. About five or six loads of rock were left underground as we ran out of time. A useful trip.
Somerset	Read’s Cavern 28/6/93 June and George McLucas (Cave Exp. Gr. Of S.Australia)	1h 10m	Burrington	June and George were visiting Mendip doing a bit of caving and looking at prehistoric sites. June is an artist and wanted to draw a cave scene so I suggested Read’s Cavern as a scenic entrance site with the added interest of its “Celtic” past. We drove to the entrance in the Landrover and then had a ramble around the main chamber. I came out of the now awkward and slippery dry entrance before going back in the wet entrance to help June do her charcoal drawing by shining my lamp on her drawing board. It took her about 40 mins to do a drawing of the entrance passage looking out. Very atmospheric. I also cleared up a few beer cans from around the cave. June very kindly gave me the sketch.

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Somerset	White Pit 29/6/93 Trev	1h 10m	Priddy	Trevor wanted a bang job doing at Pete Hellier's dig above the near side of Masters Hall. From the smaller climb an ascending crawl and squeeze lead to a small chamber with an open but too narrow rift leading on and possibly down. Trev drilled two deep 14 mm shotholes which I then loaded with a double "80/-" charge on ½ m Pentaflex. This was fired, noisily, from the bottom of Coffee Pot and we hastened out lest the fumes caught up with us via an aven and voice connection to the crawl above Coffee Pot. They didn't. The cave was draughting fairly strongly outwards but we still got short of breath in the Coffee Pot area.
Somerset	30/6/93 Jake and I walked from Wigmore to Tor Hole and back via the valley and woods below Red Quar noting little of interest. Tor Hole Swallet would not be an easy dig! We also threw burning paper down All Eights Mine just for the hell of it.			
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 30/6/93 Jake, Estelle, Alex Gee	1h 50m	Priddy	c.35 loads out, hauled by Jake, Alex and Estelle, while I dug off to the LH side at the bottom in an easily removed clay, sand, gravel and boulder fill. This phreatic passage may be either an alcove, an inlet or the way on. We need to remove a great deal more fill before we can be sure of the correct route to follow.
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 5/7/93 Trev Hughes	4 hr	Priddy	<i>See below</i>
<p>Jake, Snablet and friends had recently been on a promising dig in Southbank and this was originally to have been our destination today. Jake never turned up so Trev and I went on down to the draughting hole below Blackwall Tunnel that is likely to give us an easier way into the Chamber of Horrors. This dig hasn't been touched for some years but is now an ideal site for Bosch drill technology! Four 4" lengths of "80/-" inserted. These were all connected with Pentaflex and the lot fired (with an immense shock wave, echo and vibration) from the head of Lolley Pot. We then thrutched our way to the surface after a very satisfying trip. The route has become polished and seemed fractionally easier than I remembered it. It is still a bloody hard trip and it's a long way from Blackwall Tunnel to the end of Southbank – a place I have yet to visit. The cave was very dry but there were no indications of bad air.</p>				
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JAMAICA St. Ann	Runaway Bay Caves/Green Grotto 8/7/93 Martin Grass, guides, tourists and "Cave Man"	1 hr	Runaway Bay	<i>See below</i>
<p>Martin and Glenys Grass and Jane and I were on our annual, free Caribbean holiday – this time staying for the first week at the Jamaica Jamaica hotel on the north coast. About 5 minutes drive away are the country's most famous show caves – some 5,000' long and not 7 miles as stated by the guides! The system is situated in reef limestones(?) near the coast and is a labyrinthine phreatic system with many roof pockets and open sky lights – very similar to Cueva de Ambrosio in Cuba. The flat mud floor has been well trodden by thousands of tourists but there is still a healthy bat (rat bat in local patois) population. Inside the roomy entrance a variety of souvenir stalls sells the usual junk.</p> <p>After each paying 75 Jamaican dollars (about £2) we followed our guide through a series of roomy phreatic tunnels and chambers with some dry and partly eroded stalagmite formations. Lots of "mind your head" notices were interspersed with plaques bearing information on bits of Jamaican history, most irrelevant to the cave! A huge plaited ships rope lay on the floor as a decoration come Ariadne's Thread as did several living fig tree roots meandering along the passages. After a few hundred feet we came out into an open collapse area which we crossed to another entrance. This was the Green Grotto where we descended a flight of concrete steps for some 75' or so to a static underground lake where a couple of young and beautiful European girls were swimming – one topless. Not what you normally expect in a show cave! Here Martin and I joined the guide and two black American ladies for a rubber dinghy ride on the lake – Martin swimming back to shore in the warm water. (The girls had by now been joined by a lecherous Rasta man!).</p>				

Back up the steps and through a parallel series of chambers in the main cave to the chamber (and underground bar) near the entrance where we received a complimentary drink of rum punch and were entertained by the “Cave Man”. He is a guitar playing Rasta who sang half a dozen Bob Marley songs to the accompaniment of an outmoded, portable electronic backing system. He also sold T-shirts and hand coloured postcards bearing the legend “Cave Man Sing Marley”. A mini light show complemented this extravaganza but the overall shitty smell of the cave detracted from the event! All in all a rather tatty show cave but with some impressive skylights and “jungle views”, a good guide and full marks for entertainment value. A definite collector’s item!!

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JAMAICA St. Mary Portland	“Noël Coward’s Cave” Nonsuch Cave 12/7/93 1x Martin 2x Martin, Glenys, Jane and lady guide	10m	Port Maria Port Antonio	(Out of sequence entry) <i>See below</i>
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On a visit to the home of the late Noel Coward – Firefly – the guide showed us a 15m diameter phreatic hole in the lawn between the old swimming pool and Noel’s grave. This was 1.5m deep to a 3.5m long section of low phreatic passage full of stones and rubbish. It may be diggable. There is a legend that it once ran from the adjacent cottage, supposedly a pirate’s, down to the sea several hundred feet below. This is highly unlikely. (Not listed in Jamaica Underground). We carried on on the long drive to Port Antonio where we got a cooling Red Stripe before heading into the hills to see the small but attractive show cave at Nonsuch, some 3 miles south west of the town. The cave was discovered by a farmer looking for a lost animal and is situated in the beautiful, arboretum like gardens of Athenny house. It has also been called Athenny Cave. Our guide on our trip was a young and very pregnant local girl who was understandably not over energetic! The cave consisted of a series of attractive, dry and clean chambers leading for some 250 feet to an excavated exit. There are some good formations and plenty of bats which fly all around the visitor and are easy to observe in the electric lighting. J\$110 for access – about £3.00. There were also supposedly Arawak beads, etc found in a niche near the entrance. An expensive but worthwhile trip if only to show the possibilities of what could exist in this relatively untouched area.

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JAMAICA St. Ann	Thatchfield New Cave Thatchfield Old Cave 9/7/92 MArtin	1h 35m 15m	Thatchfield	<i>See below</i>
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(These caves are also known collectively as Thatchfield Great Cave). From Jamaica we drove up into the “cockpit” like country near Brown’s Town from where the Bill led to the village of Philadelphia and a minor road/track to the hamlet of Thatchfield. We parked near the Light Hole Sink and followed a path between the sub tropical forest and alpine like fields where cows grazed down to the lower entrances situated at the base of a cliff in dense undergrowth. Thatchfield New Cave starts with a low entrance, where we kept a wary eye out for nasties, leading to a well decorated and dry, large passage with a superb view into the bottom of the Light Hole Sink – a 150’ daylight shaft. Here grotesque formations were silhouetted against the sunbeams pouring down this magnificent phreatic dome pit as scores of Ratbats circled its walls. From here a hands and knees section over insect infested bat guano led to the enormous Great Gallery, some 60 feet in diameter, which we followed gently downwards for some 3,000 feet to the edge of the 150 foot deep Pit. This pitch has several ledges but was not descended due to the vast amounts of bat shit encrusting its walls. The huge, phreatic bore tube of Great Gallery is superbly decorated with ancient, dry formations partly eroded by the ammonic atmosphere of this bat infested system. The noise of thousands of these fruit eating bats sounds like a distant roaring river and their guano is inches deep in places which makes the going somewhat sticky at times. Cave crickets abound and an amblypsid and several black beetles were noted. Part way down the equally vast North Passage was followed to its termination in a grotto with some fine helictites. By the time we reached the Pit we were bemerched with bat shit and sweating profusely in the almost oppressive heat of the cave. After a fag and water break we struggled back uphill to the entrance and the blazing sunshine. The cave is 4,600’ long. We next visited the adjacent Thatchfield Old Cave - some 600’ long and very similar to the first part of the New Cave to which it is connected by a tight squeeze which we did not attempt. It contains thousands of dry and rotten but still spectacular formations and the novelty of, besides many bats, a flock of swiftlets circling round in the entrance passage. The entrance series of both caves contain

evidence of infrequent local visitation – empty bottles, bits of tyre and a “Molotov Cocktail” Jamaican caving light. There is little sign of vandalism.

A most impressive and fascinating system showing the potential for huge caves in Jamaica. There must be a lot more in this area but the dense bush precludes easy exploration. It is difficult to see how this system fits into the local geomorphology. It was obviously formed a very long time ago when the phreatic water levels were many hundreds of feet higher. Could it even have been a resurgence? Well worth a visit.

Sweaty and knackered we called it a day and on the way back to Runaway Bay stopped for a Red Stripe at a typically grotty little bar in Philadelphia – Jenny’s Bar. A dip in the hotel swimming pool ended a good day and washed off the cattle ticks of which Martin and I had inherited half a dozen each. These nasty little, multilegged beasts had to be removed with Gleny’s tweezers – a hazardous procedure for removing those that had reached the testicles!

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<p>JAMAICA Trelawney</p>	<p>Arawak Cave (Braco Cave) 14/7/93 Martin, Rasta guide (Lawrence?)</p>	<p>10m</p>	<p>Rio Bueno</p>	<p>(out of sequence entry) (On 12th and 14th we attempted to find Avisfield Cave in St. Ann parish but for once could not find a convenient local to point it out or give us permission to cross farm land to its possible location).</p> <p>Near Rio Bueno, on the road from Runaway Bay to Montego Bay, we spotted a large notice advertising Arawak Cave. We parked up by the entrance and a Rasta man rushed over from his bar on the opposite side of the road to guide us around this short but impressive cave which he is beginning to develop for passing tourists. This is an enterprising feature of Jamaica which was apparent in several places and in my opinion is all for the good. It appears that this cave is the Braco Cave of Jamaica Underground – stated to be a “chamber some 40 ft wide and 25 ft high (with) a lighthouse in the roof”. This description fits Arawak Cave which is only lit by natural light entering along with massive fig tree roots through the large lighthouse. These roots are the home of termites – one of the tourist features which our Rasta guide pointed out along with bits of English and Arawak pottery and a piece of Glasgow made clay pipe stem from colonial times. These artifacts were probably not found in the cave. He also pointed out and “bongo played” various old, dry formations and concluded the brief tour by running barefoot round the walls and throwing himself onto a couple of fig tree roots some 20’ above the floor where he hung by his hands doing acrobatics!!</p> <p>Full points for innovation in yet another collectors item of Caribbean cave exploitation! It would be interesting to return to this cave with proper equipment and see where it goes. The Rasta man is keen to explore/develop it further as it is in a prime site for a show cave. I left him with an old copy of “The Speleologist” to encourage him further.</p>
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<p>JAMAICA Trelawney</p>	<p>Quashies River Cave 13/7/93 Martin, James “Buddy” Anderson, Randal “Jack” Campbell, Donald Williams (Ulster Springs Police), Devon Campbell</p>	<p>1h 40m</p>	<p>Ulster Spring</p>	<p><i>See below</i></p>
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Following a long drive from Runaway Bay through spectacular karst scenery on the edge of the Cockpit Country we reached the large village of Ulster Spring. My main ambition on this holiday was to descend as far as possible into this renowned system – explored by Mike Boon and friends in the sixties – and we theoretically had enough 9mm Bluewater rope and SRT kit to do the trip if the river was not too high. I fear though, that Martin was not as enthusiastic as I was and was a bit worried about our lack of back up in this fairly remote area.

On arrival in the village I thought it would be a good idea to contact the local police to inform them of our intentions and get permission / a guide to visit the cave. The policeman in charge, “Buddy” was fairly amazed to see “whiteys” in the interior and warned us of possible robbery by locals. He was so concerned that another policeman, Jack, (armed with a revolver), a guide (Donald) and himself all accompanied us to the cave where a young local, Devon, joined the throng! We had driven a couple of miles from the police station down into the sink area and parked the car near a collection of smallholdings. A ten minute walk down a track led to the huge doline in which lay the two entrances to the dry and wet sections of the cave. Buddy and Martin stayed at the top while Jack, Donald, Devon and I scrambled down some 80-100’ of vertical path and ancient, rusted ladder to the floor of the doline, Devon clutching a basket with which to collect bat guano for fertilizer. From the base of the climb a short walk and scramble over boulders led to the impressive dry section of cave. We then returned to the car to get our caving equipment.

A 100’ rope was rigged down the doline and we all got down to the dry cave, Balcony Passage. We followed this spectacular passage to the edge of the 35’ pitch where we turned back, taking photos en route. The stream passage was then followed to the First Waterfall (12’) which I rigged with a short length of Bluewater and abseiled down alongside the roaring waterfall to a short swim and wade using another length of rope tied on the first as a safety precaution. I went as far as the lip of the Second Waterfall and gazed longingly at the huge streamway beyond before having a look at the dry and well decorated side passage which chokes below the doline. I then rejoined the others after some prattling about on the rope which had pulled across and was hanging over a ledge. I couldn’t hear Martin’s warning shouts due to the noise of the water but luckily managed to prussik up Ok and swing across to the pitch head.

We al then explored the dry Tangerine Passage as far as the “bucket” pitches. There were plenty of bats in this section and white crabs and a large frog were observed. This was all of the cave that we could do in the circumstances but perhaps a return can be made sometime in the future. Devon had apparently been down several of the pitches on ladder with a couple of English cavers.

All then retired to a pub (restaurant) in Abertstown where we bought the lads a meal of chicken, rice and “mannish water” soup washed down with Red Stripe. An entertaining day out if nothing else and a novelty to cave with a black plain clothes policeman carrying a revolver stuck down his trousers”

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JAMAICA Westmoreland	Negril Sea Caves 15/7/93 Martin		Negril	Martin and I investigated some of the short sea caves on the headland at the south end of the nudist beach of the Grand Lido Hotel. Not of great interest but even here we were pursued by two locals in a boat trying to sell us stuff!
JAMAICA Hanover	Cousins Cove Cave 1 (Ron’s Rock Top Cave) 17/7/93 Martin, Ron and four kids	1h 5m	Green Island	<i>See below</i>

We had spotted road signs near Green Island advertising “Ron’s Rock Top Cave” and “Ratbat manure for sale”. It was apparent that this is Cousins Cove Cave 1 in Jamaica Underground. We drove up a grassy track fighting off small boys and arrived in an overgrown quarry with a cave entrance in the cliff. Here we met entrepreneur Ron who is in the process of opening up the cave for tourists and doing a bit of bat shit mining and selling on the side. He was happy to give us a guided tour so equipped with all our Zoom lamps we all trooped off into the bat infested system leaving Jane with the car and a talkative local youth. Ron persuaded his kids that the Molotov Cocktail torch was unnecessary! This cave was worked extensively for guano between 1944 and 1960 and possibly hundreds of tons has been removed to a depth of several feet. We first visited the dry, humid and extensive east branch which has many dry but attractive formations and at least 1,000’ of complicated passage. A lighthole entrance and large phreatic chambers were visited. The smallest lad was deaf and dumb but was a good caver and despite a lack of light he ran about all over the cave and climbed barefooted with ease. The walls were covered in places with names and tally marks showing how many bags of guano had been extracted. In one chamber near the entrance a midden of shells was noted which may have been food for the miners or even Arawak Indian inhabitants.

The west branch of the cave, King Street, is a long phreatic bore tube with many bats and flooded some way in. The guano flooded lake was avoided like the plague so we did not get to the end of this

series. Vast amounts of small flies added to the nastiness of this area.
 This is a very extensive and interesting cave system with several passages leading to crystal clear pools which look eminently diveable. The water table is obviously very close to the surface here and may be at sea level. We later left Ron some boots, old clothes and a Zoom lamp so that he can get on with making a tourist footpath through the cave and install electric lighting. It will be interesting to see how he has progressed in a couple of year's time.
 Back at the entrance we rescued Jane and were accosted by a Ganja man who seemed very keen for us to photograph his huge marijuana plants! We declined. We gave Ron and the kids a heap of International Cave stickers which were later seen stuck all over the signs to the cave and various buildings. Several photos of these typically Jamaican "signpaintings" were taken. A good morning's entertainment.

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JAMAICA Hanover	Clifton Cave 19/7/93 Martin, Mark Johnson, Percival Mackenzie	45m	Clifton	<i>See below</i>
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Martin and I drove up the Cave River valley to the east of Negril hoping to find the 200' deep Devil's Hole but unable to find any locals who knew of its existence. One chap offered to show us an extensive horizontal cave which may not be in Jamaica Underground but we unfortunately did not take him up on this – maybe in the future. We then drove down to Ginger Hill and back up over the cockpit type hills to Lucca. From here a minor road was followed to the village of Clifton where we found an old fellow who organized his grandson and friend to show us the local cave situated in a gully near the Clifton Basic School. A path down through the bush was cleared by machete and arming the lads with Zoom lamps we entered the system through one of the numerous entrances in the gully wall. A nearby entrance is the resurgence for the small stream which flows through the supposedly 245' long cave. The system consists of a labyrinth of phreatic passages, generally walking size but including a long sandy crawl which the lads happily squirmed along in their best shorts and T-shirts getting fairly well caked with mud. The passages were very confusing and no obvious sump or stream inlet was noticed. An old tyre and much flood debris indicated a major sink not far away. There were plenty of bats, cockroaches, peculiar flat-shelled snails, millipedes, crickets and freshwater crayfish in the cave. One bat failed to notice my presence and dive-bombed into my helmet with a hefty bang! After taking some photos and having a good look around we left the cave by another entrance and spent the next hour or so with several locals trying to break into our hire car to get the ignition key out of the boot! Martin got more and more worried as Machetes, hammers, screwdrivers and a sardine can opener were applied to all the doors, locks and windows with the only result being bent bodywork and bugged locks! In the end a quarterlight was prised out and shattered and I remembered the interior boot catch just before that got prised open with a machete! Eventually everyone was tipped and "hot" Guinness and cold Red Stripe drunk in the local bar before we escaped back to the hotel.

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Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 26/7/93 Trev Hughes, Jake	1h 20m	Priddy	The Morton's Pot dig is apparently looking very promising so the three of us went down to the head of the 380' Way in wet conditions to clear the silt out of Glyn Bolt's steel dams in preparation for installing pipes to divert the stream into the Traverse in times of high water. This was accomplished successfully but the pipes were the wrong size to attach to the dams. Some bits of steel pipe will be needed as connectors. A good ten tackle bag loads of spoil were removed
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Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 28/7/93 1) Jake, Snablet 2) Jake, Pete Hellier, Vince, Estelle, Barbara (South African SA)	1 ¾ hr 1h 50m	Priddy	<i>See below</i>
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We took down three sections of short steel tube and plastic pipe (fabricated by Trevor that morning) which was attached to the dams and fire hose with Jubilee clips. This successfully diverted the stream down the Traverse. We then went to the dig at Morton's Pot – very impressive since the recent work by Jake, Vince, Ivan and Co. They have progressed a good 10' from the previous end and have done

some magnificent cemented shoring in Morton's Pot itself. The end was a 3" deep puddle and somewhat unpleasant but several bags of spoil were filled and hauled back – much of this having been swept in in the recent floods. This evening we hope to continue with digging and spoil hauling. In the evening a larger team returned to the dig and some 18 bags of spoil were filled and painfully dragged back to a dumping space at the head of the 380' Way. Barbera, a visitor from Cape Town, worked hard on the spoil hauling – a novelty in her caving career as was the cave itself! After an hour or so the very wet nature of the dig put off Pete, Jake and Estelle and they headed out for the pub. Vince and I took Barbera on a tourist round trip through the Upper and Lower Traverses, the Canyon, Boulder Chamber and out via the Woggle Press. She was suitably impressed and knackered. (In the meantime, Snablet, Ivan and Mike Barnes had gone to Blackwall Tunnel carrying diving weights and with the intention of giving Mike a taste of the West End Series in preparation for a dive at the end. They reported that the bang of 5/7/93 had done a superb job and that a large descending route now went in for several feet to a bulge of rock beyond which lay the Chamber of Horrors. One more bang should see it open for traffic and cut some 40 minutes of awkward passages off a South Bank trip.)

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Somerset	30/7/93 Jake and I drilled two piddly holes in the concrete capping of the recently piped Barrow Rake Swallet on Pen Hill before the charge in the Bosch battery failed. This is the latest promising Tusker dig.			
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 1/8/93 Trev Hughes, Davey Lennard	1h 50m	Priddy	To Morton's Pot where I dug in a foot deep puddle and filled about 15 sacks. Davey and Trev hauled them up and the three of us later dragged seven of them to the head of the 380' Way where they were emptied. The way on would seem to be in the floor, following the attractive, scalloped vadose trench although there is some bedding development on the LH side. Not the best place to dig when it is wet so we may leave it to dry out a bit.
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 2/8/93 Trev, Davey, Snablet, Paul Evans, Dave (Cotham CG)	3h 40m	Priddy	Paul, Snablet and Dave went to the potential bypass dig in Blackwall Tunnel and laid a four slab plaster charge on the knob of rock preventing access to the Chamber of Horrors. They attempted to fire the charge from the top of Lolley Pot but unfortunately the FX3 and Zoom batteries used were not powerful enough and so a misfire ensued. They left the charge in situ and joined us at Hard Rain Aven. (Charge successfully fired with a Bosch battery on 4/8/93 by Snablet, Vince and Jake). Trev and I took Davey on a round trip via Boulder Chamber, Canyon, Twin Verticals (pull through abseil), Thirteen Pots, Muddy Oxbow, Harris's Passage, Hard Rain Aven, Dolphin Pot and back out via Boulder Chamber. At Hard Rain we climbed to the top and after much farting about Trev drilled four 15 mill shotholes and laid a quadruple charge of 80 Pentaflex and cord. As the old bang wire was broken in several places I went back down to the 35' Pitch and threaded more of the wire through to Davey, up on the main ledge. I also had a good look round in the parallel areas to the side of Hard Rain. When Snablet and Co appeared I went on up to the Canyon to await the bang. This occurred as a sharp crack and the brief sound of falling rocks but the location could not be found. We all then left the cave after an excellent if only partially successful trip.

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 4/8/93 Trev, Martin Grass, Estelle	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	59 loads to surface, about twenty of these of which I dug from the end. I get the impression that we are digging through a phreatically eroded boulder ruckle with a sand and stones infill.
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				Digging was surprisingly dry, easy and relatively pleasant! A good one man site/ There is no audible indication of the Wheel Pit stream in this cave.
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 5/8/93 Jake, Estelle	1h 35m	Priddy	As I was wet-suited I got the job of digging at the end. While Jake and Estelle hauled the bags out to the top of Morton's Pot I removed a 6" layer of "chocolate sauce" and around 20 odd bags of gravel and stones. The way on seems to be to the left where a fist sized rift in the roof contains clean washed, loose pebbles and a slight draught. Development has now changed to across the bedding rather than straight down it. Jake added a couple of feet to his spoil wall in the Pot using wet cement which we brought down with us. Another 6" will finish off this wall and then the idea is to backfill the upstream passage at the base of the Pot. A good evening's work.
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 6/8/93 Estelle	1 ½ hr	Priddy	We took down two 4'+ sections of c.8" diameter plastic pipe to be laid upstream at the bottom of Morton's Pot to enable backfilling to take place. (One of these pipes knocked a large boulder out of the entrance shoring – which badly needs repairing.) At the dig several full bags were hauled up to the bottom of the Pot and then I dug and filled another 12+. There is a good draught.
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Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 8/8/93 Jake, Alex Gee, Trev, Davey	2h 10m	Priddy	The large heap of bags at the bottom of Morton's Pot was hauled up and dragged back along the 380' Way where they were emptied. I dug another 20+ bags fill from the end. Digging is easy now and the passage is heading down the dip with plenty of room to manoeuvre. A superb dig and guaranteed to go!
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 9/8/93 Alone	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	Solo digging trip. Cave dry on entering but with a fair sized stream on exit. Over 20 bags filled and stacked at the dig. Trevor and Davey are going down in the afternoon to haul them out as far as possible. (Vince and Jake also cleared bags on Tues)
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 11/8/93 Trev, Estelle, Alex	1h 40m	Priddy	On arrival at the dig face there was found to be a foot deep pool so digging was decidedly unpleasant and ground to a halt after about a dozen bags had been filled. These were hauled out. The gravel slope between Morton's Pot and the dig was also attacked before it all gets washed in. Dry weather is now needed before we work here again.
Somerset	Ham Hole 12/8/93 Alone		Croscombe	Lunchtime trip. Spent some time vainly looking for the entrance in Ham Woods. I eventually spotted the cliff, high up on the LH side and at the foot of this a roomy entrance led to some 20' or so of pleasant phreatic passage in conglomerate to a mud bank partially blocking the way on. As the cave is obviously very well used by Brock I did not attempt to crawl past this to the terminal ruckle and top entrance. The cave has a similarity to Nancy Camel's Hole in the next valley to the south,
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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 12/8/93 Alone	55m	Priddy	Solo trip to fill about ten bags and dig out a few rocks. The dig is still (relatively) dry and pleasant. The main way on is not yet obvious.

Somerset	White Pit 13/8/93 John and Jo King, Tony Boycott	1h 25m	Priddy	Jo and I went to the end of Waist of Thyme on a tourist/digging trip to find that the place is still riddled with CO ₂ and that Andy Sparrow's dig is a "waste of time". We lowered a tackle bag of bang, drill and batteries down the 40 Backs to Tony and John who had gone on a blasting/tourist trip to Pete Hellier's dig above Masters Hall. Unfortunately Tony couldn't get through the squeeze before the dig and they had to drag all the kit out via Coffee Pot. In the meantime Jo and I visited Talus IV where she photographed the pretties. My FX5 had run out by this time. We all met up back at the 1 st Pot and John then had a swift trip to the pretties. All in all a bit of a balls up! The farmer has removed the spoil heap!! Very impressive. (Meanwhile:- Jake and Vince finished off the Morton's Pot spoil wall in Eastwater Cavern and Alex Gee and Estelle dug in Snake Pit Hole. Later, in the pub, I sold lots of copies of Wig and my new edition of Mendip Underground – a tremendously satisfying task after some 27 years of digging on Mendip – despite the fact that Wig has done 99% of the work [with Tony Knibbs] and that my name was spelt wrong on the cover!!)
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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 16/8/93 Trev, Davey, Sean Chaffey	2h 20m	Priddy	48 loads to surface. We are still going downwards at the end in what appears to be an inclined rift with phreatically eroded perched boulders – the whole issue plugged up with sand, clay and waterworn rocks. Digging is easy. 48 loads to surface. We are still going downwards at the end in what appears to be an inclined rift with phreatically eroded perched boulders – the whole issue plugged up with sand, clay and waterworn rocks. Digging is easy.
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 18/8/93 Estelle, Jake, Trev, Alex Gee, Pete Hellier	1h 30m	Priddy	A dozen bags were dragged back from the dig which was unfortunately still a factor so deep in water so little work could be done here. The main reason of the trip was to have a lull in the all-day boozing of Priddy Fair Day! Following our exit this continued – to good effect.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 20/8/93 Martin Grass, Jake, Hugh (LUCC), Stephen (UBSS)	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	40 loads out. Jake dug at the end, I filled the bags and the others hauled them out. Jake got down to a narrow rift and cross joint filled with soft mud. This may require bang to progress further unless there is a way on at a higher level which we have missed. On the way out I had to gently move a bat who decided to sit down in the line of the hauling rope! How do they get into the cave?
Somerset	Barrow Rake Swallet 22/8/93 Jake, Estelle, Alex Gee	1h 5m	Priddy	Assisted the team with their dig at this promising site below Pen Hill. At the bottom of the 25' deep concrete entrance shaft (which Alex free-fell down the previous day!) is an infilled rift. The spoil has much rotted vegetation in it giving off masses of CO ₂ . This is removed from the dig by the use of a Honda generator and household vacuum cleaner (!) – courtesy of Mike Thompson who is dig sponsor and benefactor. Tuska Morrison provided the Hymac excavating team and Stephen Gibbons, who recently bought the ground, allowed access.

				This afternoon we spent some five hours at the site taking it in turns to dig and haul skips. A large amount of clay was removed and dumped. It is hoped that the exposed dig sides will not slump during our forthcoming trip to Scotland.
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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 23/8/93 Alone	2 hr	Priddy	Filled at least twenty bags and dug out lots of large and small rocks. The right hand wall is now composed of scalloped, fossiliferous limestone while the left hand wall is a mass of boulders held together with mud. The way on seems to be along the dip and digging is relatively easy.
SCOTLAND Sutherland <i>discovery</i>	Uamha à Brisdeadh-Duille Inclined Rift Cave 26/8/93 Robin Taviner (WCC) Alex Gee	40m 30m	Inchnadamph	I went into U.a.B-D first in dry grotts to find a freshly disembowelled rabbit (wildcat prey?) in the entrance which I later removed to the surface. The “40’ Squeeze” and “Death by Chocolate” were somewhat cleaner than in May due to the recent constant rain but were still wet and shitty. The main stream was also much higher than before and had been at least another 6’ above the downstream sump pool. I had to crawl in the water to reach the “Compass Sucker” choke only to find the crawl through to the final section of cave sumped and the stream flowing along the by pass (Eastwater). This made the diving of the upstream sump a doubtful proposition unless it could be done from the Tree Hole side. On my return I met Tav and Alex (who had amazingly passed the 40” squeeze with relative ease) doing a quick visit up to the flooded crawl. Being wet, cold, muddy and midge plagued I hastily walked up the valley to Inclined Rift Cave looking at possible dig sites en route. In Inclined Rift Cave I pushed a squeeze at the end by going up and down the fault plane to reach a small “chamber” with some fine columns blocking a view into a further, very well decorated area which I did not want to pass for fear of damaging the formations. I strongly suspect that no-one had pushed this far before so I am claiming some 30’ of new passage here! Tav then appeared and carefully squeezed past the formations into the next chamber where the thrust plane closed down (about another 30’ of cave). It is likely that if pushed this cave would only connect with the decorated, known parts of Lower Trailigill Cave and not the divers’ extensions. Jake and Estelle turned up from their dig above Cnon nam Uamh so we all headed back down the valley in clouds of midges and drizzle to warm up in Nicky Brook’s café. Why did we come here in August?

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SCOTLAND Sutherland	27/8/93 Following boozy sessions in the Wheelhouse Bar, Lochinver and the Inch, Alex and I progressed to Waterfall Rising where I persuaded him to spend some 40 minutes digging underwater in only slightly warmer conditions than in May. He was very impressed and could see on over gravel banks for some distance. The others had another look at a prospective dig near the Alt Bar only to find it of little promise. Weather and midges bad.			
SCOTLAND Sutherland <i>dive</i>	Waterfall Rising 28/8/93 Alex, Mike O’Driscoll	20m	Inchnadamph	The three of us took turns digging in the sump, Alex for 40 mins, Mike and I for 30 mins and 20 mins respectively. About 8’ of progress was made making the underwater cave now some 15-20’ long and looking excellent for further progress. The compacted boulder and gravel

				<p>floor is easy to dig by using a crowbar or entrenching tool and dragging armfuls of spoil back to the entrance where it is swept into the Traligill River. The only real problem here is the coldness of the water and, in August, the billions of man-eating midges at the Glenbain Cottage changing area! We then went to Jimmy Crook's in Lochinver to fill the six diving bottles for £5.00 – very cheap! The day was finished off with an hour or so of trench digging at the rapidly expanding new GSG cottage. A good day's work in much better weather with fine views, less midges and even some warmth.</p>
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<p>SCOTLAND Sutherland</p>	<p>Damoclean Dig 29/8/93 Julian Walford, Alex, Nick Williams (WCC), (Jake, Estelle, Tav)</p>	<p>2 ½ hr</p>	<p>Allt nan Uamh</p>	<p>Squally, windier weather at last got rid of the fucking midges. Julian, and later Nick, had been working on this dig earlier in the week and had moved lots of spoil. Heaps more was removed and stream-swallowing holes began to appear in the floor. Unfortunately several collapses of the RH wall occurred creating more spoil but also revealing large airspaces behind – obviously an unhealthy boulder choke which though draughting strongly seems to be too dangerous to enter. Before packing in we brought down lots of large boulders from the roof and walls and left the place to consolidate over the winter. I think the best way of working this place is to follow the back wall straight down and shore up the sides with large boulders. Not an easy job. A short and generally unproductive flying visit to Assynt, largely spoilt by midges and high water conditions but also generating enthusiasm for the next trip.</p>
<p>Somerset</p>	<p>Barrow Rake Swallet 1/9/93 Jake</p>	<p>¾ hr</p>	<p>Priddy</p>	<p>20 skiploads to surface. Jake did most of the digging while I hauled from surface, sunbathed and nursed my bad cold. Jake opened up the top of a narrow, choked rift. CO₂ within 6' of the surface to start with but Mike Thompson's vacuum cleaner soon sorted it out.</p>

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<p>Somerset</p>	<p>Eastwater Cavern 2/9/93 Jake</p>	<p>1h 40m</p>	<p>Priddy</p>	<p>To Morton's Pot dig where I filled 30 bags with spoil, all of which were dragged back to the bottom of the Pot by Jake. The puddle was very much in evidence but soon got soaked up in the spoil and carted out giving us a tolerably dry working face. Another nice pothole has been cleared out and the way in is still down the dip.</p>
<p>Somerset</p>	<p>Eastwater Cavern 3/9/93 Jake</p>	<p>1 ½ hr</p>	<p>Priddy</p>	<p>Jake filled 21 bags and I hauled them back to the base of Morton's Pot. A hauling session to empty them all is now desperately needed.</p>
<p>Somerset</p>	<p>Attborough Swallet 5/9/93 Trev Hughes, Paul, Dave, Roger Marsh, Nigel, Richard (Cotham CG)</p>	<p>3h 25m</p>	<p>Red Quar</p>	<p><i>See below</i></p>
<p>The Cotham lads had recently discovered several hundreds of feet of large chamber and streamways from a dig at the foot of the entrance shaft – and in the process having the honour of being the first team to put the new Mendip Underground out of date! They wanted the place surveyed so Trev and I offered to do it and have a tourist trip at the same time. From the previously flooded rift they have dug down some 20' or so to reach the head of a large stream passage in Red Marl. After some 50' this gets lower and about 30' further enters the side of a</p>				

large, inclined chamber/stream passage about 100' long and up to 15' high floored with large sandstone cobbles. There are some fine examples of boxwork throughout this section. From the foot of the chamber the combined streams can be followed for some 30' to a gravel choke. A parallel, muddy tube some 90' long leads to the terminal dig and a short crawl halfway up the main chamber connects back to the first section of streamway. The top of the main chamber ends in a horrific boulder choke.

There are a few small formations in places but the main interest of the cave lies in its size and formation in the Marl beds – all very similar to Wigmore Swallet with which it is hydrologically connected. Paul and Dave dug at the end and opened up another 10' or so of tube to a narrow section then pushed an inlet near the breakthrough point to within a few feet of the upper series of the cave. This could provide an entertaining round trip. I dug out a few feet of the terminal streamway but this will be a long job. Trev opened up the connection from the chamber to the entrance streamway We surveyed most of the extension, missing out the last 30' of filthy tube and the entrance dig. We will complete it another day and also survey the upper series.

This is a most interesting discovery and well deserved by the lads, who have worked bloody hard at this site over the last couple of years. It will doubtless encourage further work in the Red Quar / Wigmore area which obviously contains a major system of passages feeding upstream Wigmore Swallet.

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole Brimble Pit Swallet 6/9/93 1) John Ashton (YKS) 2) Alone	1 hr 10m	Priddy Westbury	1) The spoil bags from the end were dragged back to the bottom of the entrance rift, as were another five filled at the dig. Two slabs of plaster and 0.5m Pentaflex were fired with a No.8 detonator on the loose boulders and solid ledge at the dig face. Some bastard had smashed off the lock and damaged the concrete capping. Obviously not a caver this twatt(s) must be one of the vast horde of utter fucking idiots infesting Mendip at this moment in time. 2) I then took the opportunity to visit Willy Stanton's impressive dig at Brimble Pit. He has stone-lined the sides of the depression and built foot-holds all the way down a spectacularly waterworn, roomy, c.70' deep shaft in calcite between conglomerate walls. At the base of this a very short section of presently dry streamway leads off. This is a fairly promising looking site that needs a good banging job, though where it is likely to go is a moot point. Another classic Willy dig. A couple of large black Great Crested newts were spotted underground. Worth a visit.
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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 8/9/93 Alone	1h 10m	Priddy	The bang had done a good job. I had no empty bags so loads of rock and clay was heaped up on the ledge above the dig. It is now possible to poke a crowbar in various directions without touching rock! As the boulders in the ceiling were becoming unsupported I left the cave to stabilise itself. In the meantime Jake, Ivan, Davey, Vince and Estelle hauled 53 full bags out of Eastwater Cavern 380' Way Dig.
Somerset	White Pit 14/9/93 Dan (Sheffield USS) and Emma	1hr	Priddy	Tourist trip for these two young Derbyshire cavers. We visited Talus IV and Waist of Thyme. They were both very impressed. There are still high CO ₂ levels in the cave despite recent heavy rain.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 15/9/93 Alone (visitors:-Prew & Brenda)	½ hr	Priddy	Nipped down to bang the large boulder which Vince and Co yesterday found to have fallen out of the ceiling as prophesied on 8/9/93! I used 2 slabs plaster, ½ m Pentaflex and 1 No.8 Det. Fired from surface. I also emptied out the few bags remaining from the clearing trip of the previous night.

Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 17/9/93 Alone	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	Cave dry. A foot deep puddle in the dig was soon mopped up with spoil and some 20 or so bags were filled. A tiny, potentially open cross rift I the ceiling draughts well and the hollow sound when digging could be an indication that we are on the verge of a breakthrough. (On 18/9/93 Vince and Snablet visited the Blackwall Tunnel by-pass dig and fired a charge of 2 slabs plaster, 1 m Pentaflex and a No.8 det on the last bit of wall preventing access to Chamber of Horrors.)
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CHANNEL ISLANDS Alderney	Fort Albert fortifications 19/9/93 Martin Grass, Ian (RN) Pat (Bristol Aeroplane – Flying Club)		St. Anne	Glenys Grass and Pat flew us to Alderney from Bristol Airport in a Piper Saratoga light airplane. After a 1 hour flight we landed in superb weather on this very attractive island. We walked into St. Annes to hire mountain bikes then headed for Fort Albert – a Victorian coastal fortress with concrete German additions dating from their invasion of the island during the last war. Various tunnels and “underground” passages lie beneath the Fort and one of these was visited. It led down two flights of steps to a collapsed gun emplacement and several storerooms. A dug tunnel, held up by massive but collapsing wooden shoring timbers, led after a dodgy bit of crawling to an opening into the dry moat and to a sealed entrance to the interior of the fort. There must be literally hundreds more of these “subterranea” on the island.
Devon	Rocky Acres Cave(s) 20/9/93 1x Alone 2x Pete Glanville (visitors Mike and Angie Glanville, Jane)	1h 10m	Kingsteignton	Just before lunch I went down the Cave (as opposed to the Pot above) and drilled one shothole in the LH wall of the terminal dig. A 0.5m Pentaflex charge was laid with one slab of Gelatine on the RH wall. This was fired from the entrance with a No.8 detonator. After lunch at the Rydon, and a visit to Bill Tollice’s house, we returned to Rocky Acres to meet the Family Glanville who were on a flying visit. Pete and I went down to clear the large amount of rubble from the very effective morning’s bang and I then laid a charge of 0.5, Pentaflex to two separate slabs of Gelatine in order to demolish a rock and make it easier to work at the end. This was also fired with a No.8 det. Rocky Acres Pot was also briefly looked at but I did not have time to bang it. It is now a matter of the Peters Glanville and Rose clearing the spoil and reporting on what is ahead.

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Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 22/9/93 Pete Hellier, Andy Sanford	1h 50m	Priddy	The twenty two bags filled on 17/9 were dragged to the bottom of Morton’s Pot and a further 30 odd bags filled and also dragged to Morton’s ready for a major hauling session. The dig is still looking good with lots of large, polished cobbles in the fill. This was followed by a session in the pub with my “cousin” Geoffrey Thomas and my original caving partner of the mid sixties, Steve Shepstone! Both are now, like me, in the outdoor leisure business.
Somerset	Shute Shelve Cavern 24/9/93	1h 25m	Axbridge	Tom Chapman wanted a banging job doing at the end of the low, scalloped tube on the LH side of

	Jake			the main chamber (looking in). First we looked at the dig at the far end of the cave where the continuation of the main passage/chamber is blocked by boulders and sand. A lot of spoil has been shifted here but there is still a vast amount of work to be done. In the tube I struggled to the end where I could get my legs down a rift just too tight to pass but with a probable open tube below. After a lot of prating about with the drill and an uncharged heavy battery (!) I got in ½ a shothole. This was packed with the end of a 1m length of Pentaflex and the other end inserted in one slab of Gelamex. The charge was fired from the entrance to the passage. On the way out we visited Pit Prop Passage and had a good look round the first chamber on the off chance of finding prehistoric wall engravings (a theory I had) to no avail. Several bats were in residence and hundreds of tiny flies. In the woods, near the cave entrance a large buzzard was seen. Superb cave and a pleasant afternoon's work.
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Yorkshire	(Hunt Pot) (Hull Pot) Gatekirk Cave 27/9/93 (Jane) alone	- - ½ hr	Penyghent Penyghent Brunts car	Jane and I walked up Penyghent in reasonable weather – the last of the Three Peaks for both of us! The impressive entrances of Hunt and Hull Pots were visited – the former being a very attractive place and the latter more awe-inspiring. In the afternoon I visited Gatekirk Cave and was very impressed by the first few hundred feet of stream passage. This unfortunately degenerates to flat out crawling in the stream so I didn't push it but got equally wet and muddy in the fairly extensive East Bedding Series. Nice formations and well worth a visit. Stayed with John and Sue Riley at the Old Hill Inn.
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 29/9/93 Jake, Estelle, Pete Hellier, Andy Sandford	1h 50m	Priddy	40 bags of crap hauled out from the bottom of Morton's Pot to halfway up the 380' Way. Bloody hard work. Jake dug at the end and reports that the LH wall is undercutting and that the passage will have to be dug about 4 feet vertically. Still looks good.
Somerset	Attborough Swallet 30/9/93 Jake, Estelle	1h 20m	Red Quar	<i>See below</i>
	<p>The Cotham lads are now digging at the end of the "main streamway", below the large chamber and had reached a narrow rift in marl which needed widening with explosives. They asked me if I would do it and so following a day of continual heavy rain, Jake, Estelle and I (the latter two not having been in the cave) went to do the job. At the entrance it was obvious that it was going to be a wet trip as a large stream was sinking near the pipes and roaring away below. The climb down the first fixed ladder was enlivened by the large stream which poured on down the excavated pit into the lower series. I went down first and was accompanied by lots of large stones and gravel, as was Estelle. When Jake came down a whole lot more shifted, including at least one large boulder – which nearly trapped the Bosch drill – effectively sealing us into the cave! Luckily the CCG had pushed a crawl from here up to the upper series, which could be used as an escape route. The streamway was now in full flow and very impressive as it rushed on to join a lesser stream coming down the main chamber. Water spurted in from various inlets throughout the cave and the whole lot poured on down to the dig, rolling cobbles along as it went. Judging by the foam on the roof conditions had been worse earlier in the day. At the dig I managed to sit in the stream and drill four shotholes before placing a 2 metre Cordtex charge with one No.8 det. and firing it (noisily) from the main chamber. A visit to the parallel tube was cancelled due to the outward draught bringing back bang fumes. The interesting "flood exit" crawl was then followed to the upper series and included a tight 8' high "aven" which proved interesting – especially to Estelle who is well padded in the bum region!</p> <p>Back out via the awkward upper series after an excellent and very damp little trip. This is going to be a Mendip classic and would be a fantastic trip if connected to Wigmore Swallet.</p>			

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Somerset	Attborough Swallet 3/10/93 Trev Hughes, Mike O'Driscoll (GSG) (visitors Brian Hansford)	2h 35m	Red Quar	This was a banging, digging, surveying and tourist trip for Mike. I went down first and gardened the first climb, getting rid of the heap of boulders which had collapsed on the last trip. After re-opening this easy way in I continued to the streamway dig and cleared the small amount of spoil from the last bang. I then drilled four 4" deep shotholes and inserted 2m of Pentaflex which was attached to 1 No.8 det. Trev and Mike meanwhile cleared the large cobbles from the approach. Leaving the charge unfired we all then continued on along the filthily muddy parallel crawl to Trev's last survey point. He and Mike surveyed on down the crawl while I went to the bitter end and spent some time digging mud and stones from the flooded crawlway. A short drop seems to lie ahead and the sound of the main stream was clearly audible some distance in front. With a digging bar and possible bang this dig should go and will almost certainly by pass the streamwy dig. It is a decidedly grotty spot! A return was then made to the active cave where a much needed shower was taken under the 6' waterfall, a reasonable sized stream flowing through the cave today but nowhere near as mush as on the last trip. The bang was then fired and the survey continued from the first crawl into Cotham Hall up to the surface. There now only remains the upper series to survey and the "flood exit" crawl. An enjoyable and useful trip. Mike was impressed.
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WALES Breconshire	Ogof Agen Allwedd/Ogof Gam 4/10/93 Mike O'Driscoll, Jake, Brian Hansford, Nick Williams	2h 35m	Llangattock	Banging trip to the aven at the end of Midnight Passage where a large slab held up even more large slabs! We were all a bit wrecked following BEC dinner weekend but got to the site in about an hour. I laid three separate slabs of plaster on the sides of the slab connected with 1.5 metres of Pentaflex. This was fired, noisily, from about 100' up the passage and after a fag break we staggered back out of the cave. My kit was well up to scratch for this trip – new Mac suit, new Helly Hanson furry suit, FX5 and the first trip for the WODI – an excellent bit of kit which can be easily carried or dragged through the cave. We couldn't be bothered with visiting any other parts of the system. Met Martyn Farr in the car park and had a natter.
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Somerset	6/10/93 Jake, Mike O'Driscoll and I investigated several swallets and shakeholes in Stock Hill Forest, halfway between Snake Pit Hole and Attborough Swallet. Two very large swallets were seen to be taking large streams and one of these was partly cleared of brushwood and timber to reveal the stream sinking easily in the bottom of an orange/yellow mud collapse. A lot of work will need to be done here to open up the cave which certainly lies below. There is every chance that the large amount of water sinking in this area reaches Wigmore via the unknown streamway between there and Attborough Swallet. Further work in the latter cave will be extremely interesting as there should be many major inlets entering from the west. This cave and "His Lordship's Hole" were taking a great deal of water – hardly surprising in the atrociously wet weather we are having at present.			
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 6/10/93 Mike O'Driscoll, Pete Hellier, Alex Gee,	1hr	Priddy	10 loads out. The last bang had effectively smashed up the boulder but had also helped in loosening up the mass of large boulders in the ceiling. They were judged to be far too unstable

	Estelle, Jake			to leave in place and so we brought one down with a crowbar – the other being well wedged and needing a dose of bangto sort it out. The cave was particularly wet and muddy and after removing the small amount of spoil we gratefully departed to the Hunter's to eat Jake's 29 th birthday cake.
Somerset	Attborough Swallet 8/10/93 Mike, Guy (London University)	1 hr	Red Quar	Tourist trip for the lads and another “four shothole, 2m cord and 1 No.8 det” trip for me. Paul and Dave had been down on the previous day and built a sandbag dam below the 2m waterfall which effectively sent most of the main stream down into the muddy parallel crawl, thus making the streamway dig much drier – a good job in the circumstances as a vast amount of water was entering the cave. They had also dug out a 6' long section of streamway to the left of the terminal rift dig and the spoil from this formed a dam which meant the dig itself was almost bone dry and very comfortable to work in. The charge was set and fired and this may just be the last one needed. The new streamway dig undoubtedly bypasses this site but also looks like a banging job. Good trip, much enjoyed by the lads.
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Somerset	Attborough Swallet 10/10/93 Alex Gee, Trev Hughes	3h 10m	Red Quar	I went to the streamway dig to lay and fire yet another four hole, 2m cord and 1 No.8 det charge – hopefully the last. Trev and Alex helped me in with the kit then went back to the iron ladder via the “escape route” to continue with the survey. I later met them in the upper series and helped them survey out of the “escape route” back to the streamway. These passages are a real “collector's item”. Back at the dig I found the charge to have a done a good job and some spoil was removed. The way on seems to be a partly choked bedding plane and much digging is now needed to open the place up. The stream could be heard roaring on ahead in the distance. It's now up to the Cotham lads to clear themselves a way in. The cave seems to be heading to the right hand side of the adjacent farmhouse i.e. down Tor Hole valley. A drastic change of direction is needed to bring it in line for Wigmore Swallet.
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern Attborough Swallet 11/10/93 1) Rich Blake 2) Rich Blake, Dave, Jim (CCG)	1h 10m 1h 5m	Priddy Red Quar	In the morning Rich and I went to Morton's Pot in the hope of digging onwards despite the wet conditions and the fact that Jake had found the dig to be sumped at the weekend. The dams and pipes were working well and no water was flowing down the 380' Way. At the head of the new canyon below Morton's Pot though, we hit the sump, only a couple of feet shallower than at the weekend. The main reason for this is the large stream pouring in from a previously unnoticed hole on the LH side – obviously the water being diverted by the pipes into the Upper Traverse! Not to be outdone we filled and stacked a few bags of loose stuff from below this inlet then went to the Upper Traverse to look at the pipes. These will need to be extended to take the water down the Traverse towards Primrose Path – hopefully a job for tomorrow night. Having plenty of time before lunch we then

				drove across to Attborough Swallet so that Rich could see the new bits. On arrival we found a couple of Cotham lads already digging at the end of the streamway so spent an hour helping them haul back spoil. As we left for the pub they seemed to be on the verge of breaking through to a possible 15' pitch. We left them to it but on returning in the afternoon found that they had gone home so presumably no big breakthrough. Not a wasted day but fairly uninspiring. (Paul and Dave from the Cotham Caving Group were met in the pub that evening. They had got into about 50 feet of new stuff including a 10' free climbable pitch and with a diggable way on. Work continues.
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Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 13/10/93 Ivn Sanford, Rich Blake	1h 5m	Priddy	We took down four x 15' lengths of c.2" flexible hose and a selection of bits of plastic waste pipe and Jubilee clips in order to extend the length of the four diversion pipes taking the main stream into the Upper Traverse. These were attached and worked amazingly well, the whole flow now disappearing down another floor canyon just before the tight section of the Traverse. Unfortunately this hasn't solved the problem as I found out on visiting the (recently sumped!) area below Morton's Pot where the new inlet was still pouring in. At least the dumped spoil will not be carried back to the dig and the redistribution of the stream may open something up. We now need to extend the outflow pipes even further along the Traverse until the water flows down into Primrose Path and Primrose Pot. A trip down, and photos of the latter in flood would be well worth while!
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Somerset	Eastwater Cavern Attborough Swallet 18/10/93 Rich Blake	1h 55m 40m	Priddy Red Quar	a.m. Took three long reels of firehose down Eastwater as far as the Upper Traverse where they were attached to three of the four pipes already in place. It was bloody hard work attaching the hoses and reeling them along the Traverse to Primrose Path – mainly caused by our stupidly attaching the hoses first and letting them get full of water! Eventually we had them all in place and water was flowing freely down the Path towards Primrose Pot. It would be interesting to descend the pot in wet conditions! After clearing some rubbish from the Traverse we headed out to the pub. p.m. Quick trip into Attborough to visit the latest Cotham find beyond the rift that I blasted for them. From where I stopped banging a short, flat out crawl led out over a 10' pot. This was free climbed down to a 15' rift/pot with a fixed rope. At the foot of this a mud slope led down to an impassable rift with a view into a section of fast flowing streamway beyond. To enter this will require digging and some hammer and chisel work. There was about three times the amount of water in this streamway than was entering the cave so it may represent His Lordship's Hole water or even that from the large swallets in the plantation. It looks almost impassable and
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				undoubtedly backs up but will probably go with banging or chiselling. The walls of the two pots are composed of conglomerate with apparently large limestone chunks in. Back at the top of the 10' pot a short, muddy tube was entered for 6' or so to a point where it is partially blocked with marl and being actively dug. This may tie up with the muddy parallel tube. An interesting little find that hopefully will reveal more of this fascinating system.
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Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 20/10/93 Alex Gee, Pete Hellier	1h 55m	Priddy	The pipes were working well, the weather was good and the Morton's Pot dig was not flooded, apart from a foot deep puddle at the end. We spent our time removing inwashed spoil to the tune of about 20 bag loads. These were dragged out to the bottom of Morton's Pot. Luckily a heap of filled bags had stopped most of the crap from filling up the dig. Given chance to dry out a bit we can now get back to digging it regularly. In the pub that night I presented Jim Hanwell with an original "Morton's Pot stemple" which he had taken down some 40 years previously! It was the last one left vaguely "in situ" and we had brought it out a few days ago.
SCOTLAND Isle of Skye (Rosshire)	Calaman Cave(s) Uamh Cinn Ghlinn/Uamh Ceann Mullach o'Chlinne Rift/pot Uamh an XXXX 23/10/93 1) Nick Williams 2) Mike O'Driscoll, Derek Jamieson, Martin Hayes and Vic (a concrete garden gnome) 3) and 4) alone	5m 1h 5m 15m 15m	Suishnish Allt nan Leac Allt nan Leac Allt nan Leac	<i>See below</i>
	<p>This was the weekend of the GSG dinner, held for a change on Skye, at the Broadford Hotel. On Saturday morning Jane drove Nick and I along the track from Camas Malaig to Suishnish, to look at the cave marked on the 1:50,000 sheet. On reaching the area we found two short sea caves – neither being in Durness limestone as stated in Caves of Scotland. The larger is the 60' long Calaman Cave with a flock of resident pigeons and lots of washed in debris and the adjacent smaller cave is apparently used as a shelter at times, being well above high tide level. Though very small it may be of potential archaeological interest. Neither cave worth another visit.</p> <p>Nick then went off with Jane on a tour of the island while I joined the enthusiastic members of the Group in the Allt nan Leac valley. The through trip is High Pasture Cave was on the itinerary and one I had long been hoping to complete, having only been in the lower entrance before. Despite fairly wet conditions we accomplished the trip, mainly thanks to Mike who wore a mask in the wet bits and assisted us through. The fact that he was carrying a concrete gnome in a BDH container didn't seem to slow him down at all! Vic – a fully fledged member has done lots of trips I gather (though he was later "gnomenapped" and is now resident in Mendip!)</p> <p>This is a superb, thousand foot through trip involving a lot of very aquaphobic ducks and a 5' free dive under a ½" airspace section. The coldness of the water and froth covered ceiling do not encourage one to linger. The upstream section has some superb rock scenery with marbled veining, interesting formations, attractive colouring etc. Golden drops of condensation/algae(?) add to its beauty. A short but classic cave and a must for the Skye caver!</p> <p>The weather had now closed in and thick, seething cloud surrounded us. We wandered around looking for the others but found a partly open rift instead. I spent some time digging here and eventually managed to squeeze down into some 10' more depth of open rift which closed down at the bottom. A frog was "rescued" from this hole.</p> <p>Continuing on up valley we reached the recent GSG find of Uamh an XXXX – named due to Mike O'Driscoll's Australian nationality. Mike and Derek insisted I have a look and waited at the entrance</p>			

	<p>while I struggled through this short but attractive keyhole shaped passage made difficult to traverse by the cave coral covered walls. I did not reach the end/sump as I valued the remains of my wet suit too much! A couple of spiders were noticed in residence.</p> <p>Back down the hill for Annual Dinner (crap food but plenty of booze) after an excellent day on the hill.</p>
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SCOTLAND Isle of Skye (Rossshire)	<p>Sea caves Spar Cave (Sloched Altrimen) 24/10/93 1) Alone 2) Pete Mulholland, Matt Tuck (Jane, Myrna)</p>	5m 20m	Camas Malag Elgol	<i>See below</i>
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	<p>While Pete and Mike had a sea dive to look for prospective (but apparently non-existent) “Plaid Holes” I investigated several short sea caves on the shore blow Camas Malag. Nothing of interest found.</p> <p>In the afternoon we drove to Elgol in magnificent weather and between the awesome ranges of the Cuillins to visit the sometime Victorian tourist attraction of Spar Cave. This is also known locally as Sloched Altrimen or Cave of the Nursling and is reached at low tide via a 200 foot long “geo” or gorge. It is 310’ long and was visited and described by Dr Johnson.</p> <p>We spent some time hunting for the cave in the wrong area which was fortunate in that when we eventually found it (by following a sign saying “Spar Cave”!) the tide had gone out sufficiently for me to doff my trousers and start the approach traverse towards the entrance. Matt joined me, then led the exciting traverse on up the gorge to the large, partly walled-up entrance. Pete followed, clutching his camera but the ladies decided against it.</p> <p>The cave is in calcareous sandstone and is magnificently decorate with pure white and grey calcite formations, gours, flowstone, cave pearls, straws etc. It has been damaged by vandalism in the past but judging by the heavy water drip from the ceiling is able to repair itself relatively quickly. We all scrambled up over the massive flowstone barrier to find it sloped down at the end into a deepish, green gour pool. I removed the rest of my clothes and waded / traversed across to find that the passage closed down some 20’ beyond. Pete took incriminating photos on my return! A side passage near the entrance ends after only a few, muddy feet. A superb cave and another Skye classic as were the superb views on the main Cuillin range silhouetted in the evening sunset on our way back to Broadford. A great day.</p>
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SCOTLAND Isle of Skye (Rossshire)	<p>Uamh an Ard Achad 26/10/93 Pete</p>	50m	Coire Gaireallach	<p>Short and sweet trip to this fine stream cave. Continued the good work of the Grampian who had a couple of days previously cleared out some 6 rubbish bags of old tins etc from the cave, by bringing out another tackle bag full. Last time I was here the place was full of bailer twine and rotting sheep fleeces but this has all gone and onlt the odd pile of Export cans, etc remains. This is a very attractive and easy going cave and Pete was impressed, especially by the golden condensation drops so peculiar to the caves of this area. The igneous Neptunian (?) dykes and rock sculpture are also most impressive. Pity it isn’t longer but the obviously flood prone boulder choke at the end doesn’t show much promise.</p> <p>Drove from Skye to Inchnadamph, noting the impressive amount of limestone at the head of Loch Kishorn en route.</p>
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SCOTLAND Sutherland	<p>Lower Traligill Cave 27/10/93 Pete, Jane, Myrna</p>	5m	Inchnadamph	<p>Morning stroll up the Traligill Valley looking at all the usual sites between Waterfall Rising and Cnoc nan Uamh and finding nothing new of interest. Stopped in the entrance of Lower Traligill Cave for a fag and to let the girls get a Log Book mention! Back to the Inch for lunch then off on the long drive back to Mendip.</p>
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Somerset	Attborough Swallet	2h 10m	Red Quar	Afternoon trip to survey the new bit and to bang
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	31/10/93 Trev Hughes, Trebor McDonald, Nick Williams, Anna, Nigel and Tony (CCG)			the terminal rift, just before the new streamway. The cave was almost completely dry but there was still plenty of water in the new streamway – flowing in from the left and pouring on ahead. While Nigel and Tony (Cotham) had a look at the new bit the rest of us spent some time clearing stones back to Cotham Hall. Nick and I then went down and I drilled eight shotholes with the 14mm bit. These I filled with eight lengths of 80' Pentaflex and joined them all together with 2m of Pentaflex cord and noe No.8 det. Meanwhile Trev, Trebor and Nick completed the survey. They were all impressed with the squeeze and head first exit over the 10' pot! The charge was fired from Cotham Hall and a rapid exit made after a pleasant trip.
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Somerset	Attborough Swallet 1/11/93 Trev Hughes	2¾ hr	Red Quar	I went down first and commenced clearing the spoil from the successful bang of the previous day. This gave us some 6' of roomy passage enabling one to reach the streamway. Trev arrived and assisted in digging and stacking the spoil. I then drilled 3 ¼ (!) holes in both walls at the start of the stream passage. The battery soon gave out as I had previously drilled a 6" shothole in the muddy tube above the 2 nd pot where a marl boulder obstructed progress. 4 x 6" lengths of 80 Pentaflex connected with 1.5 m of Pentaflex cord were fired with one No.8 detonator. A further 6" of 80 Pentaflex and a 4" length of Pentaflex cord, fired by another No.8 det was fired in the upper level shothole via a separate wire. I then retreated to the pub and Trevor to sign on the dole. This is a promising site but seems to have gained depth too fast and the link to upstream Wigmore Swallet may well be sumped for a considerable distance. There is always the chance of upper level passages though and a large amount of inlet passages should also be found. Theoretically the new streamway should soon start thurning to the left. Time will tell.
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Somerset	Attborough Swallet 2/11/93 Rich Blake	1 hr	Red Quar	A miserable uninspiring and fairly useless trip! The plan was to bang the end of the muddy parallel tube which I gathered had become much cleaner. In dry grots we struggled along this still filthy gravel to reach the flat out crawl and mud pool at the end. By now my light had almost completely failed and I eas soaked and generally pissed off. There was no easy way to drill and bang without wrecking the Bosch so I did a token bit of digging and we bugged off out, pausing to look up the equally foul inlet (?) passage halfway back. This appears to sump. Left all the kit in the cave for tomorrow night. The end of the mud tube appears to back up in high water conditions as there is froth on the roof – though the main stream can still be heard beyond. I suspect a sump lies in wait not far along the main streamway.
Somerset	Attborough Swallet 3/11/93 Paul, Dave, Rog	2 hr	Red Quar	Large turnout of Cotham lads on digging, tourist, etc trips. I went down first and drilled five shotholes in the walls of the stream passage. This

	Marsh, Rich, Marcus + 4 CCG			<p>can now be seen to close down almost completely some 10' ahead. Meanwhile, in the muddy tube above the 2nd pot a couple of the lads cleared the debris from the last bang until they were able to see on for some 25' or so. This passage needs some clearance of mud to progress but is potentially the best bet for further extensions, being above and beyond the streamway.</p> <p>The five shotholes were loaded with a total of 1m of 80 Cordtex and 2m of Pentaflex and fired with one No.8 detonator from Cotham Hall. This site can now be left for the lads to clear out the floor as far as possible and also dig the upper passage. We were told of a vocal connection between the "sumped" inlet in the muddy parallel tube and a too-tight phreatic tube above the banged section before the pots – thus proving Trevor's survey.</p>
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Somerset	7/11/93. Assisted Trev Hughes with surface levelling from the bench mark on Wigmore Farm cottage (adjacent to the road) to Attborough Swallet via His Lordship's Hole and another interesting swallet between these two. The swallets in the plantation were also revisited and both were noted to be dry. Where is the Attborough streamway water coming from?			
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern (Barrow Rake Swallet) 8/11/93 1) Alone (apart from a large toad!!) 2) Jake (and 2 frogs) (Trev Hughes and two dogs)	2h 25m	Priddy	<p>In the morning I took a load of new digging bags down to Morton's Pot to find the dig dry and a large toad in residence. I filled up some 20-30 bags and stacked them in the passage ready for removal. Digging was easy and relatively pleasant in roomy passage, though some of the spoil had been washed in in the last flood. The last bag was used to remove the toad from his dark and lonely vigil and transport him to his new home in the Belfry washing pond.</p> <p>After lunch we started re-digging Barrow Rake Swallet after the collapses of the last flood which had filled up some 5' depth of the dig with sticky mud and organic debris. Jake dug, Trev winched and I emptied the skips – at least fifteen being removed plus two frogs. A great day for the Reptilean Rescue Service!</p>
Somerset	Barrow Rake Swallet 11/11/93 (Rich Blake) (visitor:- Jake)	1½ hr	Priddy	At least 20 skip loads of foul smelling, incredibly sticky mud were hauled out. A couple of feet of downward progress was made.
Somerset	12/11/93. Went for a lunchtime walk around Wells Golf Course area noting the uninspiring Golf Course Swallet en route. An interesting limestone/conglomerate area but with no obvious digging sites.			

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Somerset	14/11/93. Trev and I joined Alex, Estelle and Jake at Barrow Rake Swallet to find the c.25' shaft full to ground level with water!! So much for the draught, open rift and promising dig! Trev, Alex and I then walked around Pen Hill area and returned to the dig to find the water level down by only a foot or so.			
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern Barrow Rake Swallet 15/11/93 1) Rich Blake, Trev Hughes 2) Alone (Trev, Rich, Jake)	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	<p>The aim of the day was to do an SRT trip to the bottom of Primrose Pot in the wet conditions created by our diversionary piping. Three bags of Bluewater and SRT kits were dragged to Tether Chamber down a very wet Primrose Path and I inserted myself in the squeeze – in company with the stream. This was very unpleasant as I was wearing a fleece suit and getting wet and cold. We then decided it was not a wise move to do the trip in either dry kit or with the stream going down and called it a day – leaving most of the</p>

				<p>tackle in the chamber for future use. We then went to Morton's Pot dig and hauled a dozen or so bags to the head of the Pot before departing to the pub for lunch. There was a foot of water in the dig (not bad!), the Boulder Ruckle guideline was repaired and various bags taken out for disposal or repair.</p> <p>After lunch we visited Barrow Rake to find that the water had gone down but another mega mud collapse had occurred – back to stage 1!</p> <p>Surface visits were then made to Stock Hill Mine Cave, Snake Pit Hole, and Bowery Corner Swallet. All were in a tidy condition and at the latter we dug out a heap of crap from the sluice.</p>
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 17/11/93 Rich Blake, Estelle, Pete Hellier	1 ½ hr	Priddy	Bag hauling from Morton's Pot and partly up the 380' Way. The base of the pot was cleared ready for the construction of a spoil wall.
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Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 22/11/93 Trev Hughes	2h 40m	Priddy	<p>The dig had at least 2 foot of water in so little could be done here. Instead Trev bolted a short section of dexion as a stemple across the top of Morton's Pot to act as a foothold when winching and I cleaned up the base of the Pot and built some 3 foot of retaining wall to contain spoil. This was drystone built but will be more secure with the addition of cement, as was done on the nearside of the Pot. The lack of large rocks may be an embarrassment and they may have to be brought down to the dig from the 380' Way! A fair amount of old spoil was dug from the floor of the pot and backfilled. A load of "tube" sacks were taken out for repair. The entrance was well iced up following the first snow of winter the previous day – 21st November – my 44th birthday. (Excellent MRO Stomp on Sat. night and birthday barrel early Sunday morning.)</p>
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 23/11/93 Jake	1 ½ hr	Priddy	<p>The entrance was half full of ice with some fine ice formations and crystals. It would not take much more to seal up the way in! Two bag loads of cement mix were taken down to the bottom of Morton's Pot and the new spoil wall was grouted up. The dig was still flooded so we then spent some time moving bags back through the narrow section above the Pot into the 380' Way proper. Some of the flood settled spoil at "Jepson's Dig" was also bagged up. Hopefully work will continue here tomorrow.</p>
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 24/11/93 Trev, Andy Sandford	1h 50m	Priddy	<p>All of the bags in 380' Way, about 40, were dragged up to the Traverse and emptied – not an easy job. A start was also made on emptying the large bags which form a temporary dam in the squeeze beyond "Jepson's Dig".</p>
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Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 26/11/93 Alone	1 ½ hr	Priddy	<p>The dig was still 2-3' under water but I managed to remove three full bags and dig some spoil from above water. Another few bags were filled and stacked before my light gave up the ghost and I had to head on out. There is little that can be done here in wet conditions.</p>
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 28/11/93 Jake, Estelle	2h 20m	Priddy	<p>3 bag loads of sand/cement mix were taken down to the new wall at the bottom of Morton's Pot where Jake cemented another foot or so of stones</p>

				on top. This was backfilled with bags of spoil dragged up from the (still flooded) dig by Estelle and myself. The cement was then left to set and we spent some time clearing the old, densely packed spoil from the crawl above Morton's Pot. All useful stuff.
Somerset	Attborough Swallet 30/11/93 Jake	55m	Red Quar	Banging job for the Cotham lads. 4 slabs of plaster and 1.5m of cordtex, with one No.8 detonator were placed on the walls of the stream passage and fired from Cotham Hall. It was hoped that this would widen the rift to allow digging down to the left trending continuation to be done. More of the entrance slope has collapsed and needs tidying. There is still plenty of loose stuff to come down!
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 1/12/93 Jake, Estelle, Pete Hellier, Richard May (visitors: Neil Riach? , Steve NXXXX +1)	1h 55m	Priddy	Tidying up trip. Two bag loads of cement taken down which Jake used to build up the spoil wall another foot or so. Several bags of spoil were dumped in behind it. The rest of us then continued with and completed the clearing of the passage above Morton's Pot back to its original, roomier condition. At least 20 bags of spoil were dragged up the 380' Way and about 12 of these were dumped. A lump of ancient bang wire was taken out.
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Somerset	Attborough Swallet 5/12/93 Keith Savory (WCC)	55m	Red Quar	Tourist trip for Keith – impressed especially as the pushing of upstream Wigmore Swallet is his project! We laid a 2 slab Gelamex charge with 1m of Pentaflex and 1 No.8 det in the stream passage at the bottom. The last charge had not significantly improved the size of the place but I suspect that the walls are well shattered. Fired the charge from Cotham Hall. Came out via the top of Cotham Hall and the round trip through the upper series. Nice trip.
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 6/12/93 Rich Blake, Trev Hughes	2h 40m	Priddy	Spent the morning firing up one of the BEC hand pumps and going to the pub for an early lunch. In the afternoon we dragged twenty feet of plastic pipe, the pump, etc down to the dig below Morton's Pot and after lots of bugging about succeeded in pumping about half of the water into the backfilled bedding plane on the RH side (the old dig). This quite happily flowed away and did not come back into the dig – well worth all the effort of this trip just to establish this fact. The pump then started playing up, as usual, and combined with the hard work needed to operate it we decided to pack in and return with a larger bore inlet pipe. Little gained on this trip except experience!
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 7/12/93 Jake, Rich	1h 10m	Priddy	2 metres of new, 1 ½" plastic pipe was taken down to replace the narrow bore pipe on the pump inlet. We also took down three bags of pre-mixed concrete which were used to lay a solid floor in the bottom of the rift above Morton's Pot. This should prevent too much gravel getting washed in during floods. The pump started off operating well and the water level began to go down until suddenly the pump failed. It was assumed that there was grit in the diaphragm. Having no screwdriver with us we bugged off to the pub. Water levels in the cave were rather

				high anyway and pumping on this occasion would hardly have been worthwhile. At least we are almost all prepared for a major onslaught when conditions become drier. New handle also fitted to pump.
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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 8/12/93 Trev, Estelle	1h 40m	Priddy	Several sections of iron girder were taken down to be used as shoring in the dig. The longest section was over 4' and despite our worries it went relatively easily down the cave. At the end it was found that the large, unstable roof boulders had collapsed leaving a reasonably stable ceiling above. After some barring down three large boulders were left for removal with explosives and a large amount of spoil and rocks were passed back to the first chamber. The place actually looks a lot more inspiring now than it did on my last visit. Future work will involve building a shored shaft in the end chamber to enable us to get down to and dig along the rift below. Spoil can then be stacked around this shaft. A good winter project! (Meanwhile Ivan, Jake and Rich laid another four bagloads of concrete in the crawl above Morton's Pot in Eastwater Cavern.)
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 12/12/93 Trev	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	Trev went down first and set about the boulders with a sledge hammer. I joined him and a lot of rock and spoil was removed. Much of this was packed behind boulders in the short pitch before the end. We will now carry on digging straight ahead into the sand filled passage(?) which exists above the rift.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 13/12/93 1) Dan Sullivan, Emma Porter (Wolverhampton UCC) 2) Alone	2 ¾ hr	Priddy	In the morning Dan and Emma moved rocks to the base of the entrance shaft while I dug and filled bags at the end. These were then dragged back to the first chamber and we retired to the pub. In the afternoon I went back down with masses of new digging bags and filled well over twenty of them. A major clearing out trip is now needed. The passage at the end is a deep sand filled rift with undercuts and is sticky but easy digging. In the prevailing flood conditions on Mendip there was a very large stream sinking in Wheel Pit but this could not be heard in Snake Pit Hole. (Jake filled more sacks on 14/12/93)

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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 16/12/93 Alone	1h 10m	Priddy	I carried on filling bags in the rift at the end. Suddenly, and totally silently, an enormous wall block some 3x2x2 feet slid out to rest on the opposite wall, part of it pushing my head forward as it went! If I had been a foot to the right, as I had been for most of the time, I would have been trapped, badly crushed or worse. The suddenness of the collapse was probably responsible for my lack of shock and I carefully squeezed out from under the boulder then propped it and filled a few more bags before deciding that made the dig too awkward to work easily and will have to be removed with bang. All the filled bags, plus Jake's pile, were moved just up the passage (along with the tools) in case of further collapse. The mud/conglomerate/limestone nature of this area can obviously not be trusted and roof falls
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				are possible at any time – and without warning due to the cushioning effect of the sand and clay.
Somerset	Priddy Green Sink Swildon's Hole 20/12/93 Davey Lennard, Snablet	½ hr 25m	Priddy	Due to road flooding problems Priddy Green Sink had been re-opened the previous weekend by Butch, Mike Thompson, the BEC etc and Prew and Rick Halliwell had been down to find it practically unchanged after some 20 odd years of being closed. The original bang wire and (rotten) buckets were still in situ. Taking advantage of this we went down for a look and to assess the possibilities for a dig. After the short entrance pitch the cave consists of a steeply descending canyon-type passage ending in a mud/gravel/cowsh choke – eminently diggable with modern techniques. Spoil could be easily bagged and dragged back to a roomy aven chamber halfway back towards the entrance. If permission is granted by the local parish council we will have a, probably combined club, dig in the hopes of opening an entrance to Cowsh Avens in Swildons IV. Lots of old bang wire, animal syringes etc were removed from the cave. Despite the very wet conditions the cave was not taking a large stream and will generally be dry. It's relatively clean despite the large amounts of cowsh in the area. To wash off we went down Swildon's to the head of the 20' Pot. The cave was well flooded and magnificent – there being a large stream in the Dry Way than in the Wet Way! The old Forty and the climb below the Water Chamber were raging waterfalls and scoured us clean instantly. A great little trip. If any idiots get down there this week there will almost certainly be a rescue.
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Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 22/12/93 Jake, (Trev), Pete Hellier	1h 35m	Priddy	Trev (and Pete) hauled from the surface – c.85 loads out!! I laid a 2 slab, 1 det 1m Pentaflex charge at the end which misfired. Not having any fresh wire the charge was left for 24 hours. There are only some twenty of so bags left in the cave. A good night's work.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 23/12/93 Trev Hughes, Nick Hawkes	40m	Priddy	Quick trip to sort out the misfire and haul out the last few bags – 27 in number. Nick's first visit. On reaching the surface the THREE of us were amazed to see a bright STAR in the sky. We were only bearing mud, old bang wire and an ex-army battery at the time so were relieved when it turned out to be an aeroplane's landing light!
Somerset	Tusker's Folly (18 Acre Cave) Attborough Swallet 25/12/93 (Christmas Day) Rich Blake	¼ hr ¼ hr	Priddy Red Quar	Two short "sub-contracting" jobs before the traditional Christmas Day lunchtime session. In Eighteen Acre we laid a 1 slab, 1 det, ½ m charge between the boulders in one of Tusker's digs. Fired from surface. Then to Attborough Swallet where I paid a 1 slab, 1 det, ½ m cord charge on a recently fallen boulder at the base of the climb down (breakthrough point). This was making access difficult and threatening to hold up other fallen material. After the charge was laid I started coming out when Rich yelled "below". It took a split second to decide to stay put rather than let the falling rock hit the exposed detonator and I got a good smack on the head from an 8" square stone! Luckily I wasn't damaged so we rapidly

				left the cave and fired the charge successfully from the surface (though with shaking hands!) With clear consciences we then went to the pub.
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Somerset	Attborough Swallet 27/12/93 Marcel, Hans (5), Sjir, Eline, Anne, (Speleo Limburg)	1h 5m	Red Quar	Took the five Dutch cavers on a tourist trip around the cave. They were "suitably impressed" by the place – comparing it to the grotty little caves of Belgium! I also cleared the bang debris and other broken rock from the breakthrough point. There is still plenty more to fall down though. The streamway at the end had obviously backed up a long way during the recent floods – not a very encouraging sign.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 28/12/93 Alone	2h 10m	Priddy	To clear bang debris from 23/12/93. The results were more than expected – a large heap of mud and boulders showing that the blast had brought down more of the ceiling and walls on top of the well shattered boulder. A couple of hours was then spent backfilling part of the chamber and filling bags of mud until I could reach and smash up the blasted rock. We are now back to the rift at a point where an arched, phreatic, conglomerate tube seems to go off full of sand. Digging conditions are very shitty as Davey Lennard and Trev Hughes found out in the afternoon when the filled another dozen or so bags and dragged all the day's spoil back to the "main chamber". I would suggest that a few more digging sessions will prove or otherwise the potential and safety of this site.
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Somerset	White Pit 30/12/93 Snablet, Rich Blake	50m	Priddy	Continual pissing rain had narrowed down our options on digs and White Pit should have by now regained some fresh air. We went in via Waist of Thyme and abseiled down the 40 Backs to Masters Hall where we climbed to Pete Hellier's dig and laid a 1 slab, 0.3m cord, 1 det charge on the wall on the right. This was fired from Masters Hall and we climbed out of the cave via Coffee Pot route. The air seemed fresh today and a considerable trickle of water was flowing down the 40 Backs to sink in the suicidal choke dig below.
Somerset	Swildon's Hole 31/12/93 Barry Weave, Trev, Davey, Rich Blake, Jake	1 hr	Priddy	Magnificently wet trip down to Sump 1 and back to freshen us up for the New Year celebrations. Barry went through the sump but Trev got his head stuck in it and retreated. I hurt my ankle by jumping off somewhere. In via the Wet Way and back out via the even wetter Dry Way. Great trip followed by a good New Year's Eve with a fine singing session in the back room.
Somerset	White Pit 2/1/94 Trev	55m	Priddy	Back to Pete Hellier's dig where we cleared the limited amount of debris from the last bang and laid another (2 slabs, 1 det, 1.5m cord) charge. Fired from Masters Hall. In via Waist of Thyme, out via Coffee Pot.
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Somerset	White Pit 3/1/94 Vince Simmonds	50m	Priddy	Abseiled down the 40 Backs to the top of Prophecy Pot where I traversed across to Brian's Attic – a short section of attractively decorated phreatic tube with a reasonably promising dig at the end. The traverse across is fairly daunting and long legs are a necessity! I found it easier

				coming back though. We then climbed up to Pete Hellier's Dig and hammered off a few flakes of rock before deciding that another good bang will be needed to gain access to the rift. The atmosphere was quite "funny" and the air obviously bad so we ditched a few boulders in Masters Hall and panted our way out to the surface via Coffee Pot. We were quite relieved to get out into the drizzle and fresh air! The last bang had obviously burnt up what little oxygen was in the cave and we will now have to leave it to freshen itself up again.
Somerset	Snake Pit Hole 5/1/94 Trev, Rich Blake	1h 20m	Priddy	c.40 loads out, mostly rocks. The terminal dig was a foot deep in water so we propped a few steel girders across the passage to catch roof falls then concentrated on shifting the spoil out. I also re-opened the lower part of the old MNRC entrance shaft, removing rotten timber and an old bucket. The rift to the surface is well filled with loose boulders. On leaving the cave a mega snowstorm began. There was also a large pool forming in Wheel Pit. As all our digs are now temporarily out of play we may go and assist at Hillgrove Swallet next week.
Somerset	White Pit 10/1/94 Rich Blake	1 ½ hr	Priddy	Firstly to Waist of Thyme where a hand line was installed to the top of the Forty Backs. I then dug five skiploads of clay from the dig at the end and Rich hauled these back and dumped them. As the air began to deteriorate we left the dig and abseiled down the Forty Backs before climbing up to Pete Hellier's Dig where a 3 slab, 1m cord, 1 det charge was laid and fired on both walls. Back out via Coffee Pot carrying the battery, etc. The air throughout the cave was quite fresh today but we will not return to the dig for several days as the fumes will be bad. A brief visit was then made to Lodmore Hole Dig – the latest NHASA site. They have done a vast amount of work on walling up the shaft – some 30' deep by 20' wide stone and concrete wall having been built. A selection of winches, an aerial cableway and diggers' shed, complete with Christmas decorations, make this excellent site well worth a visit!
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Somerset	Attborough Swallet 10/1/94 Rich Blake	50m	Red Quar	The Cotham lads have started to dig the LH passage above "Twist and Shout" but have not got far with this. We went to the end of the "mud tube" to where they have passed the grim, flat out section at the end into a short piece of tiny streamway where the main stream (?) can be heard beyond. A 3 slab, 1.5m cord, 1 det charge was laid and fired on both walls to allow easier access for digging. This will almost certainly have to be banged regularly. A pity, because it's a real shithole. We diverted most of the stream down this passage to clear out the fumes. Cave quite wet. A good day's work.
Somerset	White Pit 11/1/94 Rich	1 ½ hr	Priddy	14 skiploads of clay were dragged back and dumped down the Forty Backs. We took turns at digging due to the distinct lack of good air at the face. There is now room to turn around at the junction. The way forward is a bit narrow but we may solve this by digging the floor down. This is

				at present a comfortable, dry, two man dig but will shortly require a third. At least it doesn't flood!!
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Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 12/1/94 Pete Hellier (Jake, Trev, Rich, Barry Weaver (CSS), Pete Lacey (WCC), Dick Lawrence(CSS))		Green Ore	We had been invited by the Hillgrove Diggers to assist with this prospect as they were short on men. Unfortunately due to the continuing bloody awful weather there was a large stream pouring down the cave making conditions decidedly unpleasant. We pratted about on the surface for a while before going to the pub. Barry and Co. went down the cave to find the water rushing away into the terminal rift which needs banging.
Somerset	White Pit 13/1/94 Rich Blake	1 ¾ hr	Priddy	6 skiploads dragged out of the Waist of Thyme Dig in extremely bad air conditions. We could not safely dig any more until the conditions are better. Bottles of compressed air may have to be used here. We then descended the Forty Backs in a shower of wet mud – getting our own back! At Pete Hellier's Dig we hammered and chiseled off the bang-shattered rock on the walls of the rift to enable me to squeeze down feet first into a body sized hole with no passable (or diggable) ways on. Another dig "bites the dust"! Bang wire, tools etc removed from the site and stored in Masters Hall.
Somerset	Eastwater Cavern 16/1/94 Alone	2 ½ hr	Priddy	Cave very wet. I undid the jubilee clips in the centre of the pipes at the start of the Traverse. These were then dragged out with difficulty to the 380' Way. The pipes attached to the two dams were also dragged out and the whole lot gradually dragged and kicked down the passage to Morton's Pot. After much struggling with water filled pipes I managed to join up the three sections and get most of the water flowing down the Pot. A quick visit to the bottom revealed much of the debris floor washed away and the water level up to the top of the potholed section. A drill steel from our old dig had been revealed in the floor. Cold, wet and knackered I then left the cave to its own devices for a few weeks.
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Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 17/1/94 Rich Blake	25m	Green Ore	Dressed in wet suits we were suitably amazed to find the cave bone dry and clean washed! At the bottom an impassable, choked bedding plane seems to be the way on. Froth showed where the stream had sunk into the infilling gravel. 2 slabs of plaster were wedged into a floor crack and 2 other slabs placed, one on each side of the crack, on the floor of the bedding. 1.5m Pentaflex and 1 No.8 det. completed the charge. This was fired from the surface. The dig is at the bottom of an eroded calcite vein and the cave is full of generations' worth of old digging tools and tackle. A good tidy up would not go amiss. We hope to clear the debris on Wednesday.
Somerset	White Pit 18/1/94 Jake, Rich Blake	1h 40m	Priddy	18 skiploads dumped down the Forty Backs. A diving cylinder of compressed air was taken down and used occasionally to purge the foulness from the dig. This seemed to work quite well, if only psychologically! We each took a turn at the face, skip hauling and dumping down the pitch.

				The mud bank above the pitch was also lowered and entrenched to both assist in air circulation and help protect a vulnerable carrot-shaped stalactite above. Apart from the bad air this is a most pleasant, dry, sandy and easy dig. It is also in a very promising positions.
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Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 19/1/94 Trev, Alex Gee, Barry Weaver, Pete (Hillgrove Team)	1h 50m	Green Ore	Small stream entering cave which we diverted down another sink. Trev, Alex and I went to the bottom and cleared the debris from the last bang – basically one large, upside down boulder which used to be the RH side of the bedding plane! About twenty bucket loads and an assortment of rocks were hauled out towards the surface with assistance from Barry and Pete who turned up later. The way to follow seems to be ahead and down the bedding. This will need a lot more blasting. (Meanwhile, at White Pit, Vince, Jake and Rich dug out another 18 skiploads).
Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 21/1/94 Rich Blake	25m	Green Ore	Quick trip to bang the end. 2 slabs, 1m cord and 1 det were laid in the bedding on the RH side and fired from surface. (The previous day Trev had prepared the site for banging and cleared out some 30 bucket loads of gravel and rock). Cave bone dry (Trev cleared the bang the next day).
Somerset	White Pit 24/1/94 Alone	1h 20m	Priddy	Two skiploads dragged out and dumped down the pitch. A length of rigid plastic hosepipe was taken down and inserted in the dig with the other end down the Forty Backs. This will hopefully operate as a CO ₂ siphon when I can be bothered to go down the pitch and suck the end! A few Draeger readings were taken in the dig and read 1.5% when I got there and some 3% when I finished an hour later – not half as bad as expected and quite capable of sustaining a candle flame. The passage is going straight on and of caveable size. Digging is relatively easy and still nice and dry. Richard Masters has fenced the entrance and erected a stile and Trev has put an MRO notice on the pipe.

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Somerset	White Pit 25/1/94 Jake, Estelle	1h 40m	Priddy	12 skiploads out. 3 ½% CO ₂ at the end when we stopped digging. The dig is now some 3-4' high by 1' wide and can be made deeper. The old skip was removed and will be replaced on Wednesday.
Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 26/1/94 Pete Hellier, Estelle, Barry Weaver (CSS)	1h 40m	Green Ore	Vast amounts of bucket loads of spoil and rocks were hauled up the cave to the bottom of the railway. Trevor (and the last bang) had done an excellent job at the bottom and there was a huge pile of rock stacked ready for removal – which we did not have the time or manpower to do. I laid a 3 slab, 1 det, 1.5m cord charge on the RH wall at the bottom – fired from surface. A recent inrush of water had backed up a couple of feet at the bottom but the dig is definitely vaguely promising! (I said that 25 years ago!) Meanwhile, in White Pit, Jake, Vince and Rich Blake built a “flushing out” dam near the entrance and failed to take in a new skip so did no digging. (They removed 13 skips on 29/1)
Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 30/1/94	2 hrs	Green Ore	The cave was surprisingly wet. (Trevor had been down and cleared the bang debris on the previous

	Trev, Estelle, Davey Lennard			day when conditions were dry!) I was unable to bang the end as it was under a foot of water – covering the open, draughting hole that Trev had uncovered. We hauled up a vast amount of spoil to the foot of the first ladder and all got soaking wet and cold in the process. There will have to be a mega winching session on Wednesday. Met Tony Audsley and Co. who were fettling the Mendip Digger narrow boat in preparation for its re-launching on the Kennet and Avon Canal at the end of February. We will have to let the dig dry out a bit before I can bang it again. (Meanwhile Rich, Jake, Mike O’Driscoll dug in White Pit)
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Somerset	Tusker’s Folly (Eighteen Acre Cave) Hillgrove Swallet 31/1/94 1) Ted Humphreys, Rich Blake 2) Ted, Rich, Matt Tuck	10m 50m	Priddy Green Ore	1) 3 slabs, 1 det, 1.0m cordtex laid on rock floor and boulders in Tusker’s dig. Fired from surface. 2) 3 slabs, 1 det, 1.0m Cordtex laid and fired on wall and roof at end of cave. About 15 digging bags were filled with spoil and moved back up the cave. At the dig face an open (for at least 8’), body-sized phreatic tube can be peered into. This seems to head back to the left, with a possible bend to the right at the end. The floor is of rock with a layer of gravel and there is a slight draught. This may be the first bit of open cave passage in Hillgrove! Richard and I will have a look tomorrow and hopefully there will be a pushing trip on Wednesday.
Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 1/2/94 Barry Weaver (CSS) Rich Blake	40m	Green Ore	The aim of the trip was to push into the open passage which yesterday’s bang must have allowed access to. Sadly not! The hanging wall was still in situ and there were heaps of gravel in both the approach passage and the “new bit”. These were <u>possibly</u> caused by the lump of plaster on the hanging wall having fallen off before being fired (which may account for the louder bang than usual). There was a foot of water in the end which I had to lie in to get my head through the gap. While Rich and Barry bagged up all the loose crap I laid a split 4 slab charge on the facing and hanging wall which we fired from surface. Hopefully this will have done the job. (Meanwhile, at White Pit, Vince, Jake and Matt Tuck had dug their way into a small, open aven at the end of Waist of Thyme. They report it to be slightly draughting – FRESH AIR! – and an encouragement for finding further open cave here. Things are looking up.) (12 skip loads were dumped).

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Somerset <i>Minor discovery</i>	Hillgrove Swallet 2/2/94 Trev, Pete Hellier, Estelle, Barry Weaver, Pete Lacey	2 hr	Green Ore	I went to the end to check the results of the last bang. The way on was small but open and as the cave was dry I managed to squeeze up into the new passage and dig out the wet mud and gravel infill. This I pushed back to Estelle who bagged it up. Trev and Pete H. moved spoil back near the entrance until Barry and Pete L. turned up to operate the winch and remove vast amounts of debris to surface. At the end I dug myself into 10 ft of almost hands and knees sized passage ending in a slot with a view into a relatively roomy lower passage some 3ft below. By this
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				<p>time my elbow was bleeding, I was caked in shit and there was little to do except bang it. I laid a 2 slab, 1 det, 1m cord charge and then Trev and I filled a few more bags with slop before retiring to the entrance passage to assist with hauling. The charge was fired from the bottom of the railway. A most productive night.</p> <p>(Meanwhile, in White Pit, Alex Gee as leading four Moles (Avon Mountaineering Club) lads on a slow trip and Jake, Vince and Rich were removing 18 skip loads of sand from the increasingly pleasant and air-filled dig.).</p>
Somerset	White Pit 3/2/94 Rich Blake, Matt Tuck, Vince	1h 50m	Priddy	30 skiploads out! The lads have been doing a superb job here and the digging face is at least 3' high and a foot wide in layered clay and sand. The new aven is superb – nicely decorated and with a millimeter thick calcite floor below which we are digging. Sadly this will probably not last. There is definitely more air flow in the dig now though the conditions still deteriorate after an hour or so's work. The spoil is loaded into plastic buckets (borrowed from Hillgrove) and transferred into the skip. A partly covered skip may be used in future. The (never used) siphon tube and assorted gash equipment were removed from the cave. A good metre of progress was made but we now need to follow the passage down at the angle of dip. A team will continue with this excellent and comfortable dig tomorrow night.
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Somerset <i>Minor discovery</i>	Hillgrove Swallet 4/2/94 Trev Hughes	1h 40m	Green Ore	(In White Pit, Alex Gee, Vince, Jake and Rich removed 24 skiploads). Trev and I took digging bags, bang, etc down Hillgrove with intentions to clear the results of the last bang and hopefully enter the passage beyond. I squeezed in (over a pool of water) to find a lot of broken rock and vast amounts of mud/gravel blocking the open way on. I dug in this filth and pushed it back with my feet to Trev, who dragged it out and bagged it up. A great deal of crap was removed and the way on eventually opened up – not down but almost horizontal. I carried on digging the floor, roof and walls until some 10 ft of open crawl could be seen and eventually entered to a point where it became very low and muddy and a tooth of rock hung out of the ceiling. I didn't fancy pushing it because of the loose roof gravel so decided to jack it in and put 1 slab of plaster, 1 det and 0.5m cord on the offensive rock at the entrance to this kneeling sized phreatic passage. Fired from bottom of railway. This is a most interesting piece of horizontal phreatic tube formed on a joint and totally different development than the rest of the cave. Things look good for the future!! (In White Pit, Jake, Rich and Alex dumped 24 skips).
Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 6/2/94 Trev, Davey Leonard	1h 55m	Green Ore	With continued wet weather we expected a damp trip and unenthusiastically donned our wet and filthy wet suits. On arrival the cave was bone dry! The last bang had smashed up the boulder/bedrock at the start of the new section and Trev removed the debris, plus loads of muddy gravel. Davey bagged it up and I chucked

				it back. Loads of bags and rocks were then hauled halfway up the cave before exhaustion took over. Assorted crap was taken away from the site to be given to the dustmen.
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Somerset	Attborough Swallet 8/2/94 Snablet	1 ¼ hr	Red Quar	Tourist trip round the cave for Snablet, including the upper series on the way out. The entrance area is still loose. The left hand dig in the main streamway has been partly excavated by the Cotham lads and appears to sump. Closer inspection reveals it to bend to the left and this is the way they should go in future as the water definitely flows away. We next went to the end of the grotty mud tube (now slightly cleaner due to a series of dams and pipes) where I laid a 4 slab, 3m cord, 1 det charge on the walls before the end to increase working space. There is an open rift ahead with the noise of a very close stream. The charge was fired from the chamber halfway back to Cotham Hall as we only had a half used Duracell Zoom battery to fire it with, having forgotten the heavy rechargeable battery!! No problems and a healthy bang. (Meanwhile, In White Pit, Jake, Estelle, Vince and Rich dragged out 24 skiploads).
	(On 11/2/94 Jake, Snablet, Vince and Rich dug out 24 skiploads in White Pit and reached an area of buried boulders) (On 12/11/94 the team removed some boulders and 24 skiploads)			
Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 13/2/94 Trev	1 ½ hr	Green Ore	On 9/11/94 Trev and Pete Hellier removed several bags. On 12/11/94 Trev, alone dug out 17 loads. Today, being short of a hauling team, we filled bags and dug in the terminal passage – now less muddy and with more gravel due to recent flooding. I worked at the end and after removing some ceiling rock and floor gravel banks I was able to look up into black open space – at least standing height! Due to the angle of view I was not able to see ahead and a very long roof flake prevented easy access. This will have to be banged as it is unsafe to hammer from below. The draught, and hence cold was now intense so I retreated from the dig to warm up and spread the good word. I will bang the flake tomorrow and hopefully get into the new stuff.
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Somerset <i>Minor discovery</i>	Hillgrove Swallet 14/2/94 Rich, Trev, Matt Tuck, Ted Humphreys	2 hr	Green Ore	Providentially, a good team assembled at the Belfry – due to the sudden snowfall which stopped Trev and Rich from surveying. At the cave Rich and I went to the bottom while the others hauled sacks and moved rocks. I laid a 2 slab, 1 det, 1m cord charge on the roof slab and fired it from the top of the stepped pitch – very loud! We then continued with spoil hauling for half an hour or so until, realizing that there was an inward draught, we went back down to check the results. The roof slab was now on the floor, together with a vast heap of gravel and mud. I started to clear this, pushing it back to Rich who bagged it and sent it out to Matt and Co. The bang had done an excellent job but a couple of pieces of the slab were too large to move easily. Eventually enough was cleared to allow me to squeeze rapidly through into open passage. Alas,

				though standing height as foreseen, it was only some 4' long! The draught disappeared into the clean washed rift in the floor – choked with loose rock and inwashed debris. Rich joined me and we then headed out for an excellent lunchtime session at the Hunters. A lot of clearing work is now needed on this superbly promising site to progress further. It will almost certainly “go big” over the next few trips. A bloody good session despite the lack of major open passages.
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Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 16/2/94 Pete Hellier, Alan Mills (!), Barry Weaver, Pete Lacey	2h 10m	Green Ore	Took down a couple of plastic skips and, using bits of rope left round the cave, rigged a skipway in the new passage. Pete then hauled and I dug at least 20 bag loads and a few boulders. Barry and team arrived and hauled heaps of bags up to the base of the fixed ladder. There is still lots of crap to come out before the digging of the way on starts – a good flood would help by cleaning out all the mud (the reverse Midas Touch strikes again!) The Hillgrove Team seem impressed by our efforts and have now been converted to the use of digging bags! This is the first time I have been digging with Satanic Mills in about 20 years! Another good session. (On 17/2/94 Vince, Rich, Alex and Jake removed 20 skiploads from White Pit)
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Somerset	Eighteen Acre Cave Hillgrove Swallet 21/2/94 John “Jingles” Williams	10m 1h 25m	Priddy Green Ore	1) Laid and fired a slab, 1 det, 1m cord charge on boulders in Tusker’s dig. 2) Then to Hillgrove with a load of empty sacks which we took down to the dig. A dozen or so bags were filled and Jingles dragged them back in the skip. Several large boulders were removed from the last breakthrough point and also dragged out. The terminal passage has now improved somewhat in size and ease of access to the end. This will make dragging easier. The way on at the end seems to be straight down in the floor in the hope that we can follow the continuing rift at a lower level. A good flood would be a benefit by washing the crap away. A good morning’s work.
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Somerset	White Pit 23/2/94 Jake, Estelle, Ivan, Rich Blake	1 ¼ hr	Priddy	Late start. We took down the Bosch drill and heavy duty battery and two rolls of conveyor belt which had Jake had earlier recovered from Stock Hill Mine Cave. While Ivan and I stitch-drilled and hammered a large loose boulder at the end of the dig the others laid out and pegged down the belt to act as a smooth floor for easier pulling of loaded skips. About half of the boulder was broken off before we had to rush out for the pub. A new, narrow skip was also installed.
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Somerset	White Pit 25/2/94 Jake, Matt Tuck, Rich Blake	1h 40m	Priddy	20 skiploads and a large boulder out from the dig. The boulder only just fitted along the passage and was what was left of the in situ large boulder after Jake and Rich had drilled and hammered it into submission. The conveyor belting and new, thin skip on the last section of passage are working fine. The clay steps in this passage should be dug away and slopes formed to aid in skip hauling. At the face the way on seems to be down in the floor, through a bed of
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				gritty, yellow sand containing the odd rock. Nice and spacious.
Somerset	Eighteen Acre Cave Hillgrove Swallet 28/2/94 1) Rich, (Trev) 2) Rich, Trev (visitor: Dave Irwin)	¼ hr 1h 25m	Priddy Green Ore	1) A three slab, one det, 1m cord charge was laid and fired on solid rock at the top of a narrow, choked rift in Tusker's dig. The key to the cave had unknowingly been lost but was amazingly luckily found in the field about 20ft from the entrance! 2) A vast amount of bags were hauled to various point throughout the cave – several of these having been filled by Trev the previous day. The end was looked at and found to be cleaner following recent rain. The way on seems to be down in the floor. A large, loose rock may need banging or could submit to the hammer. A good morning's work

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Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 2/3/94 Trev, Pete Hellier, Barry Weaver, Dave Evans (Pete Lacey)	2 hr	Green Ore	(In White Pit, Ivan, Jake, Rich and Matt removed 20 loads). At Hillgrove: Trev bolted onto the trolley his home-made wooden "sauce boat" – beautifully painted but unfortunately too large for the passage! He then had to spend an hour chiselling bits of rock out of the roof to make it fit. Pete and I went to the end and managed to move the offending boulder with intentions of either hammering it to bits or banging it. We decided on the latter course of action and I laid a 1 slab, 1 det, 0.5m cord charge on top of it. On attempting to fire it from the top of the last "pitch" we suffered a misfire so I had to go back down to check it. One of the firing wires had pulled off the det wire so in fear and trepidation I rewired it. This time it worked! Barry and team arrived and lots of bags were then hauled throughout the cave and to the surface. – 96 bag loads and 10 large rocks ending up on the spoil heap. Dave had a look at the end but couldn't see much for the recent bang fumes – I expect him to suffer with a headache! There is still a vast amount of bags ready to go out but the evening was extremely productive. Now we can get down to the digging. I prophesy an imminent breakthrough.
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Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 3/3/94 Matt Tuck	2 ½ hr	Green Ore	I went down first and took a load of empty bags to the end, which I began filling and stacking – also removing the broken rock from the successful bang of the previous evening. Matt then unexpectedly appeared (despite his hangover and aching piles!) and hauled the bags out to the "Acro Rift" area. After a fag break we changed positions and I hauled out a few more bags to the final tune of 30 or so. A bit of tidying up was done on the way out. It was interesting to note that the whole cave seems to be formed in vertical bedding planes connected by short sections of horizontal joint passage. A bit like a vertical version of Eastwater Cavern. An enjoyable morning's work followed by a pleasant Hunter's mid-week lunchtime session.
Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 6/3/94	2h 50m	Green Ore	At least 30 bags were filled at the end and dragged back to the "Acro Rift". Many of these

	Trev Hughes			were then stacked up and lots of rocks used as “ginging”. Much assorted ironmongery was moved up the cave and rubbish removed from site. The way on still seems to be straight down in the floor though there is a narrow, partly open and draughting horizontal joint passage on the RH side. There is a very strong draught throughout the cave and I have a strong feeling of a large open system not far away (Diggers here have been thinking that for over 90 years though!) The Mendip Digger narrow boat has been carted off to the canal.
Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 7/3/94 Trev	2h 55m	Green Ore	Between us we filled about 25 bags and removed these and a selection of rocks from the end of the cave. As previously stated the way on appears to be down in the floor, and this is in fact where the stream disappears. After clearing out most of the infill it was apparent that the true way on is through a horizontal joint on the RH side into a theoretical parallel bedding passage (vertical). The strong draught goes straight into this area. This low section was dug as much as possible but bang will be needed to make it accessible. Another general tidying up was also carried out.

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Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 9/3/94 1) Alone 2) Pete Hellier, Estelle Paul ConXXt, Barry Weaver, (Dave Evans, Pete Lacey)	¼ hr 1h 40m	Green Ore	1) Lunchtime banging trip to take the RH corner of roof off at the end using 1 slab and 1 det only. 2) Back in the evening to check results of bang. The RH corner was untouched (!) but a large lump had been blown off the hanging wall opposite (!! This wall was in fact a huge, loose flake which I later brought down with a crowbar and banged with another 1 det, 1 slab charge. Some digging and hauling of skiploads of rock was also done before we concentrated on shifting all the bags from the bottom of the main “pitch” up to surface, along with all those stacked at the bottom of the incline. This was probably a total of over 90 bags. The cave is now clear of spoil as far as the Acro Rift where there are many more full bags to come out. The hauling engine and wagon worked magnificently in the capable hands of Pete Lacey and really ought to be recorded on video! It seems unfortunately that there is some discussion in the ranks of the Hillgrove Team about our (my) style of digging and they apparently are upset that I banged the end before they could have a look. As it cannot be dug further in the present state I feel justified in using up the limited available time on a Wednesday evening in banging it during the digging session. They have the rest of the week to go in for a look. Likewise, Jake, Vince and Richard do not want the use of spoil bags in White Pit for similar reasons – they correctly assuming that I will go in alone and fill them up for them to drag out! They are dead right but though I am somewhat selfish in this respect no one can deny that it brings results and saves one hell of a lot of wasted time. I may have to moderate my enthusiasm or find a solo dig somewhere.
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Somerset <i>Minor discovery</i>	Hillgrove Swallet 10/3/94 Alone	2 ¼ hr	Green Ore	Yesterday's bang had smashed up the fallen boulder to perfection. Half of this was thrown back into the rift and the remainder left as shoring to prevent the fall of another huge lump above. I then dug into the gravel and rock filled crawl beyond in order to gain access to the parallel bedding plane which could be seen some 8' to the right. After a lot of bloody hard work I was able to squeeze with difficulty into open, apparently big, passage. With much struggling and trapped arms I entered a rift/aven just about big enough to stand up in and turn around with no way on. Bastard! This seems to be some sort of inlet and there is flood debris well up the walls. With lunchtime looming I managed to squeeze out again and headed for the pub – knackered, cramped and disappointed at the lack of a big discovery but pleased at getting through. The excellent weather was much appreciated. It seems that the way on is down the (now infilled) rift and a lot of work will be needed to progress here. Hillgrove is not going to yield up its secrets easily after all! Several spoil bags were stropped and some tidying up was done on the surface including removal of the blasted rocks which were spoiling the views of the "Tower Karst".
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Somerset	White Pit 13/3/94 Trev, Ivan, Carmen, Ben Lovett	2h 20m	Priddy	About 35 skiploads were dug and hauled out from the end using a new system of loading two full buckets into each skip all the way out (as we are not allowed to use bags on this dig!) The air is pretty bad at the end and the passage is continuing to slope down without any signs of airspace. It is still one of Mendip's most pleasant digs though. Andy Sparrow and Co. have restarted Brian's Attic dig and were probably in the cave today, though we could not hear them.
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Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 14/3/94 Trev Hughes, Pete Hellier, Carmen Smith, Estelle Sanford, Pete Lacey, Barry Weaver	1h 40m	Green Ore	90 bags were hauled out to surface on the "Light Railway" – many of these having been dragged up from the depths by "the Girlies". Trev and Pete learnt how to operate the winch. Barry and Pete Lacey arrived and went to the bottom for a look and to dig. We did not see them in the pub afterwards so don't know how they got on. More tidying up was done on the surface.
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Somerset	Eighteen Acre Cave Eastwater Swallet 17/3/94 1) Estelle 2) Estelle, Carmen	20m 1 ¼ hr	Priddy	1) 2 slabs, 1 det, ½ m cord was laid and fired on a ledge of rock at the "working face". Estelle went for a look around the rest of the cave. 2) Down to "Jepson's Dig" in the 380' Way where we filled and dragged out over 20 bags of infilled sand and gravel. These were dumped in the Traverse. Cave quite wet. Well done "the Girlies"!
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Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 21/3/94 Alone	1 ¾ hr	Green Ore	The cave was taking a "moderate Swildon's sized" stream and thus was very wet all the way down. At the end it flowed into a 6" deep pool and was obviously escaping easily into the vertical bedding plane below, though the actual sink points were not obvious – despite my probing into the floor with a crowbar. I managed to fill about 20 bags at the end and in the "Acro Rift" where washed in spoil was saved from
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				being transported to the working face and dragged out again! There was little else I could do in the prevailing wet conditions so I stacked a few rocks underground, did some tidying up on the surface and headed for the pub.
Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 23/3/94 Estelle, Paul Constant, Barry Weaver, Pete Lacey	½ hr	Green Ore	I spent much of the evening on the surface, filling bags with the contents of the dams/silt traps and stacking them against the eroded headwall to help stop it worsening – and to clear the silt traps ready for the next flood. Estelle and Paul arrived to assist before going to the bottom and tidying up the skip run. They were not inspired to dig so began moving a heap of filled bags towards the surface. I joined them and the heap was hauled to the base of the railway incline where we met Barry and Pete just coming in – 9.30! We left the “night shift” to it and buggered off to the pub.

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Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 27/3/94 Rich Witcombe (WCC), Trev, Estelle, Paul Constant	2h 10m	Green Ore	Rich came down on a “tourist trip” and ended up being sub-contracted to the sub-contractors! After a look at the end he hauled the skip, taking the bags which I filled with spoil from the floor of the rift. Trev arrived and together they hauled and stacked bags and also filled more in the “Acro Rift”. Meanwhile, above, Paul and Estelle were also hauling bags. At the end I moved several large rocks which I had erected previously as a temporary roof support and filled up more bags. It is possible that the way on is straight ahead, following the gently dipping horizontal joint/vertical bedding plane intersection. This is full of mud, gravel and boulders and when excavated leaves the hanging wall in a dodgy state. I loosened up some massive rocks which will have to be banged tomorrow. Acro jacks may be needed to support a large boulder forming the “ceiling”. Having run out of bags I then joined the others who had by now got all the bags up to the railway and were tramping them out to surface. In a short time we had the 40 plus bags out and emptied – a good afternoon’s work.
Somerset	Hillgrove Swallet 28/3/94 Alone	1h 50m	Green Ore	I took over bang to use on the boulders at the end but decided that it was unnecessary as I managed to break up a couple of them with the lump hammer. I also filled about 20 bags and removed / stacked several rocks. Two skiploads and a selection of rocks were dragged out and stacked. I made a couple of feet progress by digging straight ahead and there is now a great deal of spoil to be bagged up and removed – plenty to keep the lads going over the next few weeks. The loose roof boulder was wedged up with a small rock but will still need scaffolding for extra safety. Some surface tidying up was also done. Cave surprisingly dry.

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Somerset	Attborough Swallet Hillgrove Swallet 29/3/94 Vince, Estelle	40m 1 ¼ hr	Red Quar Green Ore	The aim of the Attborough trip was to bang the LH dig in the main passage below Cotham Hall. This was flooded so I didn’t bother and waited for Vince and Estelle to do a tourist trip to the streamway below. On the way out we noted
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				<p>Nigel's dig in the entrance passage below the "Escape Route" and decided to bang that to save them a lot of hammer and chisel work. I laid 2 slabs, 0.5m cord and 1 No.8 det which we fired, noisily, from the bottom of the entrance shaft. Then on to Hillgrove where the 20+ bags of spoil were skipped out from the end and eventually hoisted to one of the ledges. These, and others, were hoisted up the drop and stacked ready for the Wednesday night team. The dodgy roof boulder at the end was partially propped with a scaffold pole. A pleasant, hard working, evening's entertainment. Vince was impressed with both sites.</p>
Somerset	<p>Hillgrove Swallet 30/3/94 Barry Weaver, Trev</p>	55m	Green Ore	<p>Ag and rock hauling throughout the cave. 15 sacks and 3 truckloads of rock to surface before the winch as out of fuel and the pissing rain pissed us off!</p>
Somerset	<p>Attborough Swallet Snake Pit Hole 31/3/94 Alone</p>	35m 5m	Red Quar Priddy	<p>1x To the dry side passage banged on Tuesday. I laid and fired a 2 slab, 1 det, 0.5m cord charge which will hopefully be the last one needed before the Cotham lads break through into the open section visible beyond. 2x On the way to the pub I had to break into Snake Pit Hole (lock bugged) to look for my 5' steel bar. It was not there and must be either down White Pit or in Trev's garage! A pleasant morning's entertainment. At least 6" of water in the dig at the end of Snake Pit Hole. This week British cave diver Ian Rollands died in a sump in the Huatla System, Mexico. I didn't know him very well but the fact that he has a wife and three small children brings home the terrible conflict between caving and responsibility. Unfortunately I agree with Ian.</p>