

MINUTES OF THE NCA EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY
10th FEBRUARY 1996 IN THE STAFFS C C CLUB, EASTGATE STREET, STAFFORD

- 1/ ATTENDANCE Owen Clarke NCA Equipment Officer
Mark Lowe DCA Anchor Placing Team rep.
Paul "Chips" Rafferty BCRA Equipment rep.
- 2/ APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Adrian Fawcett, Rowena Magdan, Jenny Potts, Les Sykes, Les Williams.
- 3/ The MINUTES of the 16th DECEMBER meeting were accepted as a true record.
- 4/ MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES were confined to the points raised in Les Sykes undated letter on the 95 report and the meeting of 16th Dec. A letter was sent to Les replying to the points made but no answer has been received.
 - 4/10/ OC interpretation is that W means washed, but Speleoscene gives W as washed and brushed. An answer is needed, not a snide remark, even though the point is trivial.
 - 9/ There was considerable discussion on the Safe Working Load that should be given to S. Wales CRO. It was agreed that since C50 use will continue for some time a figure of 10kN, two thirds of the previous proof load of 15kN be given. It should be noted that the limiting failure was anchor to resin which would be independant of the limestone containg the placing.
 - 14/2 The warning was noted.
 - 14/3 The meeting agreed with the concept of using the internet to make cavers in the UK aware of the NCA, and cavers overseas aware of the work that the Equipment Committee is carrying out. Everyone agrees that great care must be exercised in what is put out and that the content should be agreed at a Committee meeting.
 - 14/4 Adrain, like myself is still concerned about the unreliability of verbal instructions, especially in Mendips and Wales where distance hinders frequent contact.
 - 14/4 The equipment Officer is not forgetful in this matter, and 2nd remembers only to well that the route for obtaining the only para copies of Permanent resin bonded Anchors Training, Testing & Documentation updated 26.07.1994, and Permanent resin bonded Anchors Installation Guide lines updated 26.07.94 was by requesting a copy from John Cliffe.
It was also noted that the only copy of Anchor Placement Program in the Equipment Officers file is a hand modified copy of draft 2 of the Bolting Programme. Also the requested details of the trials on the proposed Hilti C100 replacement resin have not been received.
- 5/ Action to be taken on TECHNIQUES
This discussion took place in two parts, as the Equipment Committee and during a joint meeting with the Training Committee. The first section outlined the position and various suggestions were made
 - 1/ Offer to take on the responsability for updating sections of Caving Practice and Equipment such as digging which are out of date.

FEBRUARY MINUTES (continued)

- 5/ 2/ Test and comment on newly available equipment and the techniques for safe and effective usage. Comments on new equipment were not made in the last four years because this function was being effectively carried out elsewhere. Chips Rafferty was keen to carry out this function.
- 3/ Actively encourage the sending in of equipment or technique failure reports.
- 4/ At the joint meeting the desirability and difficulty of publishing technical studies of the problems causing rescues was discussed.
The joint meeting resolved that the above ideas be considered and specific proposals be presented at the September 7th joint meeting. There is no bar on prior action.
- 6/ CONVENERS CORRESPONDANCE A letter from a caving club detailing an accident where a rack became detached from the krab to the harness D giving a 20 feet drop without serious results was discussed together with the proposed reply. It was agreed that the letters be sent and that the incident should be reported in Speleoscene, together with the proposed sequence of events, how to avoid it, and asking if there had been partial or total sequence occurrences before.
- 7/ ANCHOR REPORT FROM THE CNCC ZONE None
- 8/ ANCHOR REPORT FROM THE DCA ZONE Mark reported that the situation is as in the DCA annual report, i.e. the majority of systems have been covered.
- 9/ ANCHOR REPORT FROM THE CSCC ZONE None
- 10/ ANCHOR REPORT FROM THE CCC ZONE Adrian had reported verbally that anchors had been placed in Llanelly Quarry Pot, Ogof Draenen and Ogof Agen Allwedd.
- 11/ There has been little progress with actual ROPE TESTING, due to both problems of effectively stabilising the rig and absence overseas. A display stand has been made up for tested ropes and descriptive documents at a cost of £45-05. This is aimed to provide an indoor focus for rope testing at events, much needed since participants and the press (including speleoscene) fail to notice the necessarily external rope testing process. The first use will be at the BCRA Cave Science Symposium in Stafford on 24th Feb, without any actual tests. A short report of the Speleo Rope Project will be on the stand, a copy is enclosed for Equipment Com. and Council members. The guidance on SRT rope life as part of the prEN 1891 requirements will have to be challenged in view of data accumulated during the NCA Rope Tests. Edelrid are stating 2 year life in use and 3 year in storage, Beal gives intensive use 3 months to 1 year, weekly use 2 to 3 years, occasional use 4 to 5 years, max life 10 years including storage, all in the absence of serious damage. Marlow are basically looking at industrial applications and give a life of 100 to 150 hours use. My view is that the manufacturers minimum life expectancy in the usage condition should be used as a trigger for sending a portion of the rope for residual strength determination by a destructive drop test, since this is the only way of accurately finding the actual residual strength.

FEBRUARY E & T MINUTES (continued)

- 12/ CONTACTS WITH BRITISH STANDARDS INSTITUTION No Report
- 13/ ROPE TEST FUND ACCOUNTS No change since Dec
EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING COMMITTEE expenditure £45-05
- 14/ The use of ROPE TEST FUNDS for purchase of a third of a replacement rope for Wolves Uni so that the suspect rope could be returned to Edelrid for testing, and retested by NCA. This was agreed providing that Edelrid would refund the money if the problem were found to be a manufacturing fault.
- 15/ There was no OTHER BUSINESS
- 16/ The date of the NEXT MEETING will be 20th April in Staffs CC Club. Further meetings are planned for 6th July, 7th September and 16th Nov to coincide with Training committee meetings.

Since this is my last minutes issue as Equipment Officer, may I take the opportunity of thanking all the people who have assisted me during my tenure by attending meetings and giving their opinions, and by sending me information. I am deeply aware that although on occasions it is necessary to respond quickly as Equipment Officer, the conveners job relies on the contact and assistance of many people to achieve the best result from the Committee for the NCA.

Owen Clarke

Equipment Officer

15th March 1996