

EDITORIAL

It has been a little longer than anticipated in bringing you Issue 3. Over the christmas period the editor found himself learning a new software package whilst rehashing the workings of the machine that brings you these pages!

The future looks significantly better a result and the British Caving Association will strive to bring you all the updates, news and access information that you might require, plus training articles and course dates.

This edition includes important developments within BCA, news on insurance, web-hosting opportunities and forthcoming event details. Don't forget the handy diary on the back page. Happy Caving.

Dave Edwards

We are sorry to have to report the death of Dave Edwards at the end of January. He passed away peacefully in Ashgate Hospice near Chesterfield after a long fight against cancer.

Many cavers will have known Dave as a caving and outdoor pursuits instructor, for many years at Whitehall and latterly as a freelance operator. He was NCA's Technical Training Service Advice provider for some years and was also a longstanding and active member of DCRO. There are few of us caving in Derbyshire whose lives haven't been touched by him.

For details of Dave Edwards and 'The Big C Challenge', please contact Ralph Johnson at RJohnCAVE@aol.com.

"Dave Edwards & Associates" will continue until further notice.

Report: Ralph Johnson

NCA Dissolution meeting

The BCA secretary; following a meeting between Regional Caving Council treasurers on 28th November 2004 at which the BCA funding mechanism was proposed and agreed, has organised a Special General meeting to discuss and vote on the dissolution of the NCA in favour of a successive nationally united body under the British Caving Association.

The meeting will take place on Saturday 12th March 2005 at Alvechurch Baptist Hall and will immediately precede the proposed NCA and BCA Annual General Meetings at the same location. All NCA members are requested to attend.

Report: Eddy Hill, BCA Secretary

'Descent' Moves to Wilder Places

For those that are as yet unaware, the office of 'Descent' moved in December to a new home in Abergavenny. Due to the work involved in moving, some e-mails and letters 'slipped into the background somewhat'.

Editor Chris Howes apologises for any late responses, but promises the magazine will continue to run to the high standard achieved so far!

The new contact details are as follows:

*Wild Places Publishing
PO Box 100
Abergavenny
NP7 9WY
Phone and Fax: 01873 737707*

Email and Web address remain unchanged:

descent@wildplaces.co.uk
www.caving.uk.com

BCA Update

Update on developments with BCA and BCRA and the demise of NCA

BCRA's Council agreed at its November meeting to a proposal to transfer of various functions to BCA and set up a General Meeting in february 2005 to obtain approval from its membership for these changes. BCA set a budget for 2005 in late November that incorporated the funding of core activities of Regional Caving Councils and recognised the wide range in size of clubs. BCA obtained a firm renewal offer of its public liability insurance policy in late December and was thus finally able to set its subscription. In line with the resolution at NCA's AGM of 2004, NCA handed over all of its functions to BCA and ceased activity on 31 December 2004. The concept of a one stop shop for cavers has at last been achieved.

Part 1

The key decision of BCRA was that membership of BCRA would only be available via BCA. The transfer of existing BCRA members to joint BCA and BCRA membership would occur over 2005. A publications subscription would be available to persons who did not want to become members.

The principal transfers of function from BCRA to BCA were around publications. The BCA Newsletter becomes a newsletter for both BCRA and BCA with both logos being displayed on the front page. The BCRA Journal Speleology would become a joint journal, again with both logos being used. Concern was expressed over the financial liabilities associated with Speleology if the subscription base has been overestimated. A joint review by BCA & BCRA will be undertaken around June to see if the numbers of BCA and BCRA members receiving Speleology are sufficient to warrant keeping the publication going in its current format.

BCRA confirmed it was keeping the publication Caves and Karst Science. BCA members would not get Caves and Karst Science. Although publication would remain in paper format in the short term, BCRA was looking into providing an alternative electronic format as a way of reducing production costs. BCRA would keep the National Library and also manage the provision of Speleo Abstracts within Great Britain. It would also keep its range of other publications, including the Cave Studies series.

BCRA recognises the need to change some of its officials, with posts such as Insurance Manager becoming redundant with insurance transferring across to BCA. The BCRA membership secretary, who is an employee, has now been transferred to BCA. The membership secretary will cover members of both BCA and BCRA.

The responsibility for Hidden Earth would be transferred to BCA, but the current team management structure would remain untouched. BCRA would continue to organise scientific meetings. BCA or BCRA or both as appropriate would support other meetings.

The challenge (or knotty problem) of SIGs was debated at some length. A proposal was made that SIGs become fully independent but are provided with support by both BCA and BCRA. The extent of that support shall have to be decided on the basis of specific negotiations between the SIGs and BCA and or BCRA.

Gara Paru Foundation and UK Cave Conservation Emergency Fund will remain within BCRA, reflecting their charitable status. BCRA will also retain control over the various caving awards.

Finally, BCRA recognised the need to consider further its own structure, period of appointment

BCA Update

of trustees and the development of stronger links between the separate Councils of BCA and BCRA. Given the nature of changes which faced BCRA over the year or so, these were left for future consideration.

Part 2

As expected, the setting of BCA's subscription rates ended up awaiting the renewal notice and the size of the premium. BCA received a renewal invitation from its insurers in late December with a slight reduction in the premium. See elsewhere for more details on BCA Insurance.

Direct Individual and Joint Membership of BCA will cost

	Insurance cover required	Subscription	Subscription including BCRA membership
Direct Individual Member	Caving	£33	£43
	Non-Caver	£21	£31
Direct Joint Individual Members	Both Caving	£51	£61
	One Caver other Non-Caver	£39	£49
	Both Non- Caver	£26	£36

The "Subscription" entitles an individual to receive the Handbook, Newsletters and Speleology as well as a vote at a General Meeting (see handbook for further details). The "Subscription including BCRA membership" entitles the individual to additionally receive Caves and Karst Science. See BCRA web site for further details on benefits of membership to BCRA. Direct Joint Individual Membership entitled the two persons to receive one copy of the above mentioned publications at one address but two votes.

At the admission of the ex BCA Treasurer, Bob Mehew, BCA's club subscription rates have become rather complex with taking into account club size, variation on publications required and BCRA's membership. The rates are

Club Size	Basic Subscription	Subscription including Journal	Subscription including Journal & BCRA membership
4 to 10	£20	£25	£35
11 to 20	£30	£35	£45
21 to 30	£40	£45	£55
31 to 40	£45	£50	£60
41 upwards	£50	£55	£65

The major benefit for clubs by being members of BCA is that no more do you have to join Regional Caving Councils to obtain access to their caves, a core feature of the One Stop Shop concept. The club subscription includes a component to cover the core costs of Regional Caving Councils. The BCA membership form requires a club to identify which Regional Caving Council it wishes to be joined with, so that Regional Caving Councils knows their membership. (This does not stop Regional Caving Councils from raising additional funds to cover work which is not being treated as core and hence funded by BCA.)

The "Basic Subscription" entitles a club to receive the Handbook and Newsletters as well as a

vote at a General Meeting (see handbook for further details). The "Subscription including Journal" entitles a club to additionally receive Speleology. The "Subscription including Journal & BCRA membership" entitles a club to additionally receive Caves and Karst Science. Clubs are reminded that BCA has substantially adopted the definition of BCRA in deciding what a club is and is carrying out checks to confirm that they do comply with these requirements. The definition focuses on the constitutional basis of the club, further details are on the BCA web site. Clubs are requested to use the application form on the web site.

Clubs seeking insurance cover are required to not only join BCA themselves but also cause all of their membership to join BCA as well. This point is discussed in more detail in the other article on BCA and its insurance. BCA has agreed to do away with the need for duplicate individual membership. This has brought some administrative challenges that BCA are tackling by direct discussion with clubs. By now, all clubs whose membership were Club Individual Members of BCA, should have received a communication from BCA. The aim is to help the club make its application, thus helping BCA in sorting out those persons who are members of more than one club.

In reviewing this area, BCA has recognised that there are some hundreds of cavers who are known by different names and addresses to different clubs. BCA is unable to accept the task of recognising these duplicates, as the potential consequence for wrongly omitting a person would be high. BCA considers that this duty lies with the clubs and the individual. Would those individuals who are members of more than one club, please advise their clubs, NOT BCA, of their preferred name and address. This will enable the clubs to amend their records and hence enable them to correctly advise BCA.

As some of you may be aware, BCA's search for a logo at Hidden Earth resulted in a deferral of the decision until January 2005. Several more entries have been received. BCA Council agreed that the logos should be judged. It is hoped that a winner can be soon selected and the logo brought out in time for the AGM.

NCA is now winding itself up. The intention is to hold a Special General Meeting on 20 March to approve the wind up with all of the assets going to BCA. At the same time, NCA will hold its last AGM to present its officers' reports and accounts. Hopefully BCA will have received nominations to fill all of the officers posts. Last year, BCA had only two nominations for club representatives to Council. BCA's constitution provides for 4 representatives from individual members and also from Group members. Nominations are needed to fill these posts, so Council can better appreciate the concerns and needs of its members. Contact BCA's Secretary for more details by emailing secretary@british-caving.org.uk.

Insurance and BCA

BCA received a renewal invitation from its insurers with a slight reduction in the premium. Regrettably BCA has not been able to pass this slight reduction on. This has been due to the recognition that there will probably be a potentially significant reduction in the take up of Club Individual Membership of BCA.

BCA decided in the run up to 2004 to provide insurance on the basis of individual membership only, either by direct application to BCA, the Direct Individual Members (DIMs), or by a club applying on behalf of all of its members to BCA, the Club Individual Members (CIMs). This approach was adopted for two reasons. The first reason was the need to ensure BCA was not seen to be selling insurance. This requirement arises from demands on the insurance industry to ensure that insurance policies are not sold by incompetent people. BCA has adopted the approach that it

provides insurance as a membership benefit and hence is not selling insurance.

The second reason was based upon legal opinion which viewed that all members of a club were liable if the club was sued. Recent research by one club has identified legal precedent that indicates that the vulnerability of members of a club that is the subject of claim is limited (see http://www.olrni.gov.uk/advisory_committee/archive/Index_archive.cfm for a review paper by the Northern Ireland Office of Law Reform on Unincorporated Associations). This paper gives rise to the proposition that there are notionally 3 groups of members of a club at different levels of risk in the event of that club being sued. These groups may be loosely described as:

- 1) those members directly or indirectly involved with the event,
- 2) those members who were club officials of the club at the time of the event, and
- 3) those members who had nothing to do with the event.

The paper indicates the risk of the third group is, according to the cited paper, limited to the sum of their subscription. The risk to the other two groups is not so limited and clearly will depend upon specifics of the event.

The nature of indirect involvement in an event could be much larger than one might initial think. For example, a member when overhearing a planning discussion by other members of a trip and who fails to give them a warning, might well be considered indirectly liable. It is very difficult to spell out the circumstances where "indirect involvement" can reach out; all one can say, is that lawyers representing victims are very inventive in viewing who may be potentially liable. And even if you think you have a good defence against a claim, the cost of legal fees could be crippling.

This leads to a possibility of clubs recommending that the first group seek cover by becoming DIMs of BCA, seeking alternative cover for the second group and not covering the third group. Clearly such a move would reduce the membership of BCA. An analysis of BCA membership indicates that if some 28% of BCA's individual membership could disappear if clubs decided to follow this approach. In addition, the impact of removing duplicate membership is likely to further reduce membership levels by over 10%, leading to possible reduction in subscriptions of around 40%.

A review of the cost implications is such that there would be a sizeable hole in BCA's finances. However, there are several other potential new members that should substantially off set the magnitude of the loss.

Nick Williams put forward the concept that a special individual membership status be created, focused on encouraging full time students at higher education establishments to become members of BCA. This would enable them to gain access to caves where insurance cover was a condition of access and help promote caving in an area under severe pressure from University officials. Council accepted the idea with enthusiasm and agreed that Nick should study the matter further and report back to the March Council meeting with a full proposal.

BCA has concluded that it will retain its current approach to offering insurance as a membership benefit.

Report: Bob Mehew

BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION WEB SERVICES

The British Caving Association can now offer cut price web hosting solutions for its members. This is a fully featured service which gives you complete control of your webspace and email. Hosted on Windows 2003 servers or the latest Redhat Linux servers.

Basic Webhosting (Windows 2003 servers) £25 Per year
(includes unlimited POP3 mail boxes, unlimited Email forwarding, personal control panel, Perl, PHP, compiled CGI support)

Linux Webhosting (latest Redhat Linux servers, Apache,) £40 per year
(includes unlimited POP3 mail boxes, unlimited Email forwarding, personal control panel, Perl, PHP, compiled CGI support)

Domain registration and renewal

£7.00 for 2 years (.uk domains)
£11.00 per year (top level domains)

Password Protection	£15 per domain per year
Spam Filtering	£15 per mailbox per year
Virus Scanning	£25 per domain per year
Web Stats	£15 per domain per year

Many other services available including:

ASP, .NET Framework, FrontPage Extensions, ODBC, Databases.

Prices on Application

Note: These prices are for clubs and individuals.
Commercial organisations can also purchase web space at competitive rates, please contact the webmaster for details and prices.

Information is available on the BCA web site:

www.british-caving.org.uk

or by email:

webmaster@british-caving.org.uk

DCA / BCA CAVERS' WORKSHOP 2005

**Saturday and Sunday March 5th & 6th 2005
At the Upper Limits Centre, Longnor, Derbyshire**

Please make only one application per form. If you can not get hold of a spare one for a friend etc. we are happy to accept photocopies of this one. Please tick the session/s that you wish to apply for, one session per day. All course fees must be paid in full on application as there are limited places available. Some sessions may be cancelled due to low numbers and we will contact you before the event if this happens. Cheques must be made payable to 'DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION'. Details of the event plus location maps etc. will be sent out on confirmation. Please complete the booking form, tear off and send it together with your cheque enclosing a SAE to: DCA Training officer, Wharfedale House, Springfield Close, Midway, Derbyshire, DE1 1 ODB.

ALL SESSIONS ARE £10.00 PER HEAD / PER DAY. Cheques payable to: DCA

LADDER & EMERGENCY Saturday March 5th	
LADDER & EMERGENCY Sunday March 6th	
SRT INTRODUCTION Saturday March 5th	
SRT INTRODUCTION Sunday March-6th	
SRT ADVANCED Saturday March 5th	
SRT ADVANCED Sunday March 6th	
SRT PITCH RIGGING Saturday March 5th	
SRT PITCH RIGGING Sunday March 6th	
CAVE RESCUE & FIRST AID Saturday March 5th	
CAVE RESCUE & FIRST AID Sunday March 6th	
CAVE PHOTOGRAPHY Saturday March 5th	
CAVE VIDEO Sunday March 6th	

Cheque Enclosed:

Contact: First Name Surname:

Name of Club / Group:

Address:

..... Post Code:.....

Contact Tel. No:- Day: Evening:

Fax: Mobile: E-mail:

Fee must be paid on booking of workshop. Failure to comply will result in the above places being lost without refunds. Cancellations within two weeks before activity start date will result in full payment of booked places without refund. DCA reserves the rights to cancel any course at any time for any reason and offer an alternative or refund. We also reserve the right to remove any individual/s from any course at any time if bad behaviour affects the safety of themselves, any course members or DCA staff without refund. I UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THESE CONDITIONS FOR MYSELF AND ON BEHALF OF THE ACTIVITY MEMBERS BOOKED UNDER MY NAME.

SIGNED:.....PRINT NAME:.....DATE:.....

Regional News & Access

Mendip

Regional Council - COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CAVING CLUBS

For information on CSCC, send S.A.E to: Hon. Secretary: Steve King, 33 Ottery Way, Didcot, Oxon. OX11 7UG.

E-m: secretary@csc.org.uk

Website: www.csc.org.uk

Anchors in Swildon's

Following comments about loose eco anchors at the Swildon's 20 foot pitch, one was replaced in November. The effort required to remove it gave rise to a question of whether the anchor was truly loose. The three eco anchors were then tested with BCA's special "puller" as used in the Industrial Rope Access business in early December. This device can provide a measured axial pull out force on an anchor, representing the worse possible load condition. Each anchor at the pitch was able to withstand a 5 kN pull for 15 seconds. This is the standard recommended in the British Standard on anchors used for personal protection (BS EN 795 1997). A 5kN force is equivalent to the tug of a 500 kg weight under gravity. BCA is not intending to use this method as a means of testing anchors as it would be impracticable to carry out on the many thousands of anchors now in place across the caves in the UK. However it does provide a handy means of checking an anchor when reported loose. The guidelines for checking anchors state that before every use:

1 The surface of the resin/mortar breaking away from the rock (indicating possible internal fracture of the resin/mortar, or a poor chemical bond).

2 Fracturing of the rock within 200mm of the anchor placement.

3 Looseness of the anchor placement in the rock (this should not be confused with flexing, as a 00.06mm deflection occurs when an anchor is loaded in line with it's axis with 85Kg, and a deflection of 00.13 occurs when an anchor is loaded against it's axis with 85Kg). Looseness should be defined as actual rotational movement

in excess of 1mm.

4 Egress of the anchor from the resin/mortar, or the anchor and resin/mortar from the drilled hole.

Should the anchor placement fail any of these tests then it should be deemed un-safe, and the action ... should be taken.

Despite a number of reports across the UK, none so far have been found defective on examination. NCA has purchased 3 pullers which are now located with CNCC, DCA and DCUC (for testing a special test bed of anchors in other rocks). Concern over possibly loose anchors should be reported in the first instance to the relevant Regional Caving Council Equipment Officer or Secretary. They will organise the deployment of the puller if needed.

The work in Swildon's was carried out by Andrew Atkinson, Chris Binding and Bob Mehew.

Report: Bob Mehew

Derbyshire

Regional Council - DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

For information on DCA, send S.A.E to:

Hon. Secretary, Jenny Potts, 3 Greenway, Hulland Ward, Ashbourne, Derbys. DE6 3FE.

Tel: 01335-370629, E-m: dca@theDCA.org.uk

Website: www.theDCA.org.uk

Car break-ins

There has been a spate of car break-ins in the Castleton area. A car parked on Castle Street overnight was broken into and one parked in the Peak Cavern car park was also broken into as well as a car parked near Odin Mine. If you are parking in Castleton during the day or overnight, it's probably now a good idea to totally empty your car of anything valuable to you.

Wales

Regional Council - CAMBRIAN CAVING COUNCIL

For Information on CCC send S.A.E to:

Hon. Chairman, Sue Mabbett, 2 Garth Close, Morganstown, Cardiff, CF15 8LF. Tel: 02920 -844558, E-m. suemabbett@hotmail.com

Bridge Cave/Little Neath River Cave

Sorry to have to report that there is currently no access at all to either Little Neath River Cave or Bridge Cave. Cambrian Caving Council are negotiating with the landowner and hope to get access restored although this may take some months. The problem doesn't seem to be related to any bad behaviour or problems with cavers themselves - rather it's to do with Health & Safety and possible insurance. Suggest you steer clear for the present and keep an eye on the Cambrian website at www.cambriancavingcouncil.org.uk for updates on the situation.

Ogof Draenen Permits

Please remember to send requests for Ogof Draenen permits direct to the Permit Secretary: Sue Mabbett, 2 Garth Close, Morgantown, Cardiff. CF15 8LF. Email suemabbett@hotmail.com. Please don't send them to the Pwll Du Cave Management Group Secretary at Hlland Ward, (whose address was given in error in the BCA Handbook) as that leads to a delay while they are forwarded on.

Ogof Ffynnon Ddu Permits

The new Permit Secretary took over in early February: Elaine Owen, 19 Parham Road, GOSPORT, Hants. PO12 4TZ Tel. 023 92 715 382, Email: ofdaccess@hotmail.co.uk

Forest Of Dean

Regional Contact - FOREST OF DEAN CAVE CONSERVATION AND ACCESS GROUP

Hon. Secretary, Dave Appleing, 128 Brooklyn Gardens, Cheltenham, Gloucester. GL15 8LW. Tel: 01242-581385, E-m. DAppeing@aol.com

North

Regional Council - COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

For information on CNCC, send S.A.E to: Hon. Secretary, Les Sykes, 49 Manfield, Ashurst, Skelmersdale, Lancs. WN8 6SU Tel/Fax. 01695-728673 E-les@speleo999.freeserve.co.uk

BCA/NCA OFFICERS

2003-04

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Publications & Information Officer & Webmaster:

Les Williams,
51 Churchill Road East,
Wells, Somerset, BA5 3HU.
E-m. webmaster@british-caving.org.uk

BCA Travel Insurance - Change of Administrator

With immediate effect the broker/administrator for the Expeditions/Travel Insurance Policy has changed to:

RBPM Ltd

Volpoint House Blakely Road

Salisbury

Wiltshire

SP1 2JG

Tel: 01722 336998, Fax: -336407

travel-insurance@british-caving.org.uk

The insurer remains the same: Travel & Personal Underwriters Ltd, and the rates that have been negotiated with them show a small rise over those for 2004-5. The policy and benefits offered remain unchanged as do the conditions that are applicable. (See page 6 of the BCA Handbook 2004-2005.)

On 14th January 2005 the new Financial Services Authority rules concerning insurance came into force and these have led to the change in our arrangements.

David Judson, Legal & Insurance Officer

Training Courses

LCMLA LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT REVALIDATION WORKSHOPS 2005

LCMLA holders are advised to contact their Area Liaison Officer for other Revalidation Workshops. Names and contact details may be found on the Training Pages on NCA's web site www.nca.org.uk.

LCLMA REVALIDATION COURSES

Level 1 and 2 (6 Year)

March 12th - Northern England, Contact Tony Flanagan, Tel: 015242 41210, 07876 402842

April 24th - Southern England, Contact John Crowley, Tel: 01971 502383, 07789 503066

May 6th - Northern England, Contact Guy Lee, Tel: 017687 76690, 07801 056344

June 4th - Northern England, Contact Duncan Morrison, Tel: 015242 510112, 07974 078874

Training Courses

For any other enquiries contact the **Training Administration Provider at BCA Training Administration**, C/o RAM Business Services, Sun Lea, Joss Lane, Sedbergh, Cumbria, LA10 5AS, Fax/Tel: 015396 22040, Email: trainadmin@british-caving.org.uk.

The following workshops are planned to take place in the near future:

C.I.C REVALIDATION WORKSHOPS 2005

(Contact Training Administration Service Provider for an application form)

May 7 / 8 Contact Dave Elliot, Stocks Tree Cottage, The Green, Langcliffe, Settle, North Yorks., BD24 9NN, Tel: 01729 823984

August 6 / 7 Contact Geoff Barber, 10 Meadhope Street, Wolsingham, County Durham, DL13 3EN, Tel: 01388 528275

TRAINER / ASSESSOR WORKSHOP 2005

2005

Sat 23 April, Mendips

Contact Tony Smith Tel: 01342 822625

Hindleap Warren, Wych Cross, Forest Row, Sussex RH18 5JS. Email: tonytrogsmith@aol.com.

Sept - date to be arranged, Derbyshire

Contact Dave Baines Tel: 01298 25031 & 07980 118656

6 Millcliff, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 6QP.

C.I.C TRAINING COURSES 2005

April 26 / 29

Course Director Tony Flanagan, Tel: 015242 41210, Email: tony@flanagans.fsnet.co.uk
Yorkshire Dales, contact Tony for residential/non-residential costs.

October 11 / 14

Course Director Tony Flanagan, Tel: 015242 41210, Email: tony@flanagans.fsnet.co.uk
Yorkshire Dales, contact Tony for residential/non-residential costs.

December 6 / 9

Course Director Tony Flanagan, Tel: 015242 41210, Email: tony@flanagans.fsnet.co.uk
Yorkshire Dales, contact Tony for residential/non-residential costs.

TRAINING & EVENTS

Elysium Learn Self Rescue

This is the text of a report received from Elysium Underground after their recent training session. The event was supported by a NCA/BCA Training Grant. These grants can be made to any BCA member club to fund up to 1/3rd of the cost of properly organised training sessions. Suitable events could include:- Basic SRT, SRT rig & rescue or any other technique involved in Caving or Mine Exploration. An application form and guidance notes can be found on the website or by applying to the Training Officer.

Elysium Underground Group Rescue Training Day – 19th November 2004.

On Friday 19th November, three members of the Elysium Underground Group met at Yordas Pot in the Yorkshire Dales for a day's training in Basic SRT Rescue. Despite the combined caving experience of the group being almost 30 years, none of us had ever undergone any formal SRT rescue training. The one-day course, given by Les Sykes CIC, would cover the following components of SRT Rescue, so that in the event of an accident, the group would be able to undertake a basic rescue and remove a casualty from a pitch.

- Rigging for rescue
- Stabilising casualties prior to rescue
- Mid rope rescue
- Lowering injured cavers
- Hauling injured cavers
- Moving injured cavers along traverses.

The course started with a quick discussion on the surface on ropes and rigging, and Les ensured that we were all proficient with the various rigging knots we would use. After descending the entrance pitch of the middle entrance into Yordas, the second pitch was used for the exercises and demonstrations. In all the scenarios, the minimum basic rescue equipment of three pulleys, a stop descender, a chest jammer, a couple of slings and a spare 10m length of rope were used.

The first exercise was to haul an injured

caver from the bottom of a pitch to the top of the pitch, and then using a second rope, guide them off the pitch on to a secure area. Using each other as the casualty, this was repeated twice using two different rigging arrangements. Once we were confident in the setting up and use of a pulley system, Les moved on to lowering off and hauling up an injured caver from mid pitch using the same system of pulleys and jammers. Again it was repeated several times with each of us taking turns to play the injured caver. Not only did this give us each a turn in setting up a system, but also gave us confidence in each other's abilities when we played the casualty.

From rescue scenarios from the top of the pitch, we then all descended the pitch to try a mid-rope rescue from below. This would be required if the last person down the pitch got into difficulties, and the rescue had to be carried out from the bottom. This involved the rescuer climbing the rope using ascenders, passing the casualty, then attaching the casualty to their harness, removing the casualty from the rope and swapping over to a descender to lower the casualty to the bottom of the pitch. This was a nightmare, and not something any of us would like to do for real. However now that we have had a go at doing it for ourselves, we feel that some extra practice would be beneficial and propose a training day for ourselves in the New Year.

Time passes quickly underground, and unfortunately there was not enough of the day left to be shown or practice moving an injured caver along a traverse. Instead we decided to use the remaining hour left to us to consolidate the training received so far by rescuing Les from the bottom of the pitch. With minimal guidance from Les, we worked as a team and set up a haulage system using the principles learnt during the day. We successfully brought Les to the top of the pitch and landed him on a secure area.

Although we had not managed to complete all the proposed training, the day was a great success and has given the three participants much more confidence in being able to help each other, and other cavers if an accident should occur underground. We have to thank

TRAINING & EVENTS

both Les Sykes for providing the instruction and the BCA/NCA for providing funding for this training, and enabling us to advance our caving skills in a very practical and enjoyable way.

Report: Alison Fuller-Shapcott (Elysium Underground Group)

EVENTS DETAILS

BCRA CAVE SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

5 March 2005, Birmingham University

Lecture Secretary is Andy Baker, School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences, The University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT.

E-mail: a.baker@bcra.org.uk, Tel: 01214 158133, Fax: 01214 145528. Further information will be on the BCRA website at www.bcra.org.uk nearer the date.

DCA/BCA Cavers Workshop

March 4/5 2005

Derbyshire. Details of sessions available, prices, accommodation, etc. will appear on the DCA website at www.theDCA.org.uk as soon as they are available. This event which will include sessions on Cave Rescue, Cave Instructor, SRT, Advanced SRT, Ladders Lines Abseiling with Groups & Self Rescue, Cave Video, Mines History, Cave Formation Development & Conservation. Cost per session will be £10.00 and it will take place at Upper Limits in Longnor. Contact DCA Training Officer, Nigel Atkins, on 01283-210666 or email training@theDCA.org.uk. (Or see the form on Page 7).

Forest 2005

Places available at the Forest of Dean caving Symposium IV are limited and are issued on a 'first come first served' basis - all previous events have been oversubscribed! The organisers can ONLY accept bookings in advance and tickets will NOT be available during the weekend. Ticket price includes all activities and meals for the weekend excluding breakfast. This event will include Underground Field Trips, practical surface sessions, trade stands, rope

testing and displays. Prices and booking forms are available from the event co-ordinator, Paul Taylor at info@forest2005.org.uk

BCRC Conference

This years conference is to be hosted by the MRO at Eastwater Farm on 1 - 3 July. Demonstrations, talks and a 'stomp' with bar are all on the menu. This is a ticket only event - check the new website www.mendip-rescue.org for the latest information, or contact MRO Secretary Bob Cork on 01749 679458.

HIDDEN EARTH 2005

Hidden Earth is the UK's annual caving conference, traditionally hosted by the British Cave Research Association (BCRA - a registered charity) for the benefit of all cavers.

For 2005, the conference returns to the Mendip Region, to a new venue at Churchill Community School. This is located south-west of Bristol, between Bristol and Weston-Super-Mare, near the town of Winscombe, at the foot of the northern side of the Mendip Hills. For cavers, the description "a couple of miles west of Burrington Coombe" should give you an idea of the location.

The conference will be on 23rd-25th September. Further information will be available at <http://www.hidden-earth.org.uk/> in the Spring.

A location map can be found at: <http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?pc=BS255QN&scale=200000>

The venue address is Churchill Community School, Churchill Green, Churchill, WINSCOMBE, BS25 5QN.

<http://www.churchill.n-somerset.sch.uk>

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

RESCON 05 - Poland

19 - 25 September 2005.

An International Cave Rescue Congress; RESCON 05 is organised by the Voluntary Mountain Rescue Service of Poland. The con-

EVENTS & TRAINING OFFICERS

gress will involve talks and training by cave rescue specialists both on the surface and underground including possible trips to both Cracow and the salt mine of Wieliczka.

The conference fee is 40 Euros, with reasonably priced accommodation and food in addition.

If you are interested and would like to be added to the circular list please send your E-mail address to: RESCON 05 Director, Tadek Widomski t.widomski@bz.net.pl or RESCON 05 Secretary, Jarek Gutek goutec@pro.onet.pl.

THE REVISED CIC HANDBOOK

The final draft of the revised C.I.C Handbook is now on the NCA website from where it can be downloaded.

LCMLA HANDBOOK 2ND EDITION

The new LCMLA Handbook is now ready. All changes to the 1st edition are available as a single file on the NCA website from where they can be downloaded.

www.nca.org.uk

BCA/NCA ONLINE

NCA Website:

<http://www.nca.org.uk>

BCA Website:

<http://www.british-caving.org.uk>

Both websites will continue to operate as the BCA website gradually takes over and there are links between them. The BCA website currently concentrates on Membership and Insurance; other material relating to the national body will still be found on the NCA website for the time being.

BCA Newsletter Editorial Address

BCA N/L Editor, Jim Cochrane, BCA N/L Editor,
148 Mackintosh Place, Cardiff, CF24 4RS
E-mail: newsletter@british-caving.org.uk

Publication Schedule

Published bi-monthly (hopefully)

Note: The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the formal view of the British Caving Association.

FUTURE MEETINGS OF BCA/NCA TRAINING COMMITTEE, 2004/5 All at 10am. At Stafford 9 April 05

Items for consideration by the committee should be raised through your constituent body representative or sent to the Training Officer.

Members of the Training Committee 2004/5

Convenor & Training Officer:

Idris Williams, Glen Cottage, Holden Lane, Ruyton-XI-Towns, SALOP, SY4 1JD. Tel. 01939 260412, E-mail:

training.officer@nca.org.uk

A Representative from each of BCA's constituent bodies:

These are currently:

The Regional Councils of Caving:

- Cambrian Caving Council
- Council of Northern Caving Clubs
- Council of Southern Caving Clubs
- Derbyshire Caving Association
- Devon & Cornwall Underground Council

The other bodies which represent specialist interests:

- Association of Caving Instructors
- British Cave Research Association
- British Cave Rescue Council
- Cave Diving Group
- Council of Higher Education Caving Clubs
- National Assn. Mining Historical Organisations
- William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust

Co-Opted Members are:

- John Cliffe, 4 Kensington Avenue, Lansdown, Cheltenham, Glos. GL50 2NQ. Tel. 01242-262505 E-mail: jcliffe@gxn.co.uk
- A representative of the Forest of Dean Conservation & Access group.

- The Chairmen of the CIC Panel and the National Co-ordinating Panel.

Publications

BCA/NCA PUBLICATIONS ON TRAINING / SAFETY, CONSERVATION, ETC.

From: **BCA/NCA PUBLICATIONS**, c/o 3 Greenway, Hulland Ward, Ashbourne, Derbyshire. DE6 3FE

For queries, contact:- Tel. 01335-370629, E-mail:

publication.sales@british-caving.org.uk

All cheques etc. should be made payable to B.C.A

For "free" items, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope as appropriate.
(C5 envelope with 1st. or 2nd. class stamp for DL or A5 items.)

Report of Technical Advisors Seminar (40pp) (£2.00 incl. p&p)

NCA Training Committee Report

Guidelines for University and College Caving Clubs. (8pp) (£2.00 incl. p&p)

(The 'Guidelines' includes the leaflet **Caving Notes for Beginners** which is NOT available separately)

NCA Cave Conservation Handbook

The definitive Cave Conservation Publication, supported by English Nature, Countryside Council for Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and other conservation bodies. 174 pages, fully illustrated, with sections detailing threats, initiatives, policies, legal points, etc. plus regional sections and appendices.

(Sold unbound - you provide your own file cover.)

(£1 + £3 p&p)

(Sold complete with file cover.)

(£10 + £4 p&p)

Cave Conservation Policy (32pp) (£3.00 incl. p&p)

Lost Caves of Britain (Cave conservation video) (£10 + £1 p&p)

Radon Underground (Radon Exposure During Underground Trips -

A Set of Guidelines for Caving and Mine Exploration.) (24pp)

(£3.00 incl. p&p)

Weil's Disease Card (Summary on credit card size plastic card) (20p each, £1.80 /10)

Underground Britain - Legal & Insurance Issues (Published 2003.) (£3.50 incl. p&p)

Free Conservation/Safety/Information Leaflets - just send us an S.A.E.:

Cave Conservation Policy - Summary (DL)

Protect Our Caves (DL)

Bats Underground - A Conservation Code (A4)

Code of Practice for Mine Exploration (DL)

Weil's Disease leaflet (DL)

So, You Want To Go Caving (information leaflet for beginners / non-cavers) (DL)

Syllabuses for LCMLA and CIC can be obtained from BCA Training Administration (see below) or downloaded from the BCA Training website at www.british-caving.org.uk

Almost all of these publications can be bought at a special discounted price from BCA stands at caving events such as Hidden Earth, Cavers Fairs, etc.

Training publications may also be obtained direct from: BCA Training Administration,
RAM Business Services, Sun Lea, Joss Lane, Sedbergh, Cumbria, LA10 5AS.
Tel/Fax: 015396-22040, E-mail: trainadmin@british-caving.org.uk

DEADLINES FOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Ghar Parau Expedition Grants: 31 August. Contact the Secretary, Hurst Barn, Castlemorton, Malvern, Worcs, WR13 6LF. Tel/Fax 01684- 311057. E-mail: d.judson@bcra.org.uk

BCRA Research Fund: 1 April, 1 August, 1 December. E-mail: research-fund@bcra.org.uk

Dates for your Diary

COURSES, CONFERENCES, EVENTS, ETC.

2005

March 5 - BCRA Science Symposium, Birmingham University Details on page 13.

March 5-6 - DCA/BCA Cavers Workshop, Upper Limits Centre, Derbyshire page 13.

March 13-13 - Cave Radio & Electronics Group (CREG) meet, contact Richard Rushton,
18 Long Meadow, Skipton, BD23 1BH, E-mail: r.rushton@bcra.org.uk.

June 17-19 - Forest 2005, Forest of Dean Caving Symposium IV,
English Bicknor Village Hall, www.forest2005.org.uk.

July 1-3 - BCRC Seminar, Eastwater Farm, Priddy, Mendip page 13.

September 23-25 Hidden Earth 2005, Churchill Community School, Mendip page 13

MEETINGS

Mar. 12 (Sat.) - BCA Special General Meeting on Dissolution of NCA (Preceding AGM below),
All NCA members welcome

Mar. 12 (Sat.) - BCA AGM & NCA AGM. 10.30am. Baptist Church Hall, Alvechurch

Mar. 26 (Sat.) - CNCC AGM. 10am. Hellifield Institute, Hellifield.

Apr. 9 (Sat.) - Charterhouse Caving Company Ltd. AGM. 11am. Hunter's Lodge, Priddy.

Apr. 9 (Sat.) - BCA/NCA Training Committee Meeting. 10am. Stafford.

May 7 (Sat.) - CSCC AGM. 10.30am. Hunter's Lodge, Priddy.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Check for details of these and other international events on the UIS Speleo Calendar at
<http://rubens.its.unimelb.edu.au/~pgm/uis/events.html>

2005

June 16-19 - 16th Mining History Assoc. Annual Meeting, Scranton, Pennsylvania, USA

July 4-8 - NSS Convention, Huntsville, Alabama, USA

August 21-28 - 14th International Congress of Speleology, Athens. 1st Circular now available on NCA website www.nca.org.uk Contact details: E-m: secretariat@14ics-athens2005.gr. Fax: +30-210-3643476, Post: Secretariat, 14th International Congress of Speleology, c/o Hellenic Speleological Society, 32 Sina Street, Athens GR 10672, Greece.

Website: www.14ics-athens2005.gr

19-25 September - RESCON 05 - International Cave Rescue Conference, Podlesice, Poland.
Details on page 13.

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EQUALITY STATEMENT

The BCA will make its services available to all sections of the sporting community, there will be no discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, creed, colour, occupation, religion or political opinion.