

PLYMOUTH CAVING GROUP

NEWSLETTER AND JOURNAL

# MATIENZO '94 (Part 1)

The 1994 Matienzo expedition proved to be very successful, with many kilometres of new cave discovered, and many exiting new possibilities for the future opened up. About 50 British cavers from various clubs were present, and also joint trips were made with the Espeleo Club Tortosa (Catalans), who hold the adjoining permit area to the south. These successes were unfortunately married by a fatal accident towards the end of the expedition, when Alan Box abseiled off the end of a rope at the top of the 101m high Astrodome in Uzueka.

PCG members present included Dave Jean, Bob, Julie and Lloyd Cawthorne, Mike Heard, and Alasdair Neill.

# 2nd August.

Having arrived on the Plymouth - Santander ferry, Mike Dave and Ali visited Cueva de Cofresnedo (65). A short walk from the Snows bar and a climb up the hill side leads to a large entrance. The cave consists of a 20m wide passage with fine formations, which chokes after 275m. Photos were taken. This is an important archaeological site.

### 3rd August. Simas del Picon (75).

We surveyed this cave last year; following our departure it was extended beyond the terminal stal choke, the extensions containing some very fine helectites (see cover photos of Caves and Caving 63). This time Bob Mike and Ali returned to look at various leads in the old part of the cave. A drafting sand-choked passage at the foot of the Scree Run was dug, breaking through after about 2 or 3 metres. This led into a small decorated chamber and a passage leading to a rather loose pitch of about 10m. This was followed immediately by another pitch, for which we had no tackle.

### 4th August. Simas del Picon.

Ali, Andy Pringle, Paul Stacey, Sarah Hall, Ian Walton.

Ali and Paul rigged the second pitch of the previous day, which reached a very tight slot possibly going onto another pitch, with a fair draft. This extension we called Megabat, there being large (c2" long) droppings composed of insect remains at the top of the pitch.

We also looked at a stream passage (active only in wet weather) at the foot of the entrance slope, where a squeeze under loose rock leads to a slot down, where water can be heard falling. A number of climbs were also looked at.

## 5th August. Cueva-Cubio de la Renada (48).

Bob, Dave, Mike and Ali.

This trip was primarily to continue re-surveying of areas around the end of Stuffed Monk Gallery, the original survey data having been lost. However about 20m of previously unsurveyed passage was added, through a crawl which connected to the choke at the end of Stuffed Monk Gallery - an area we looked at with Plymouth University cavers last year.

### 6th August. Cueva de la Codisera (39).

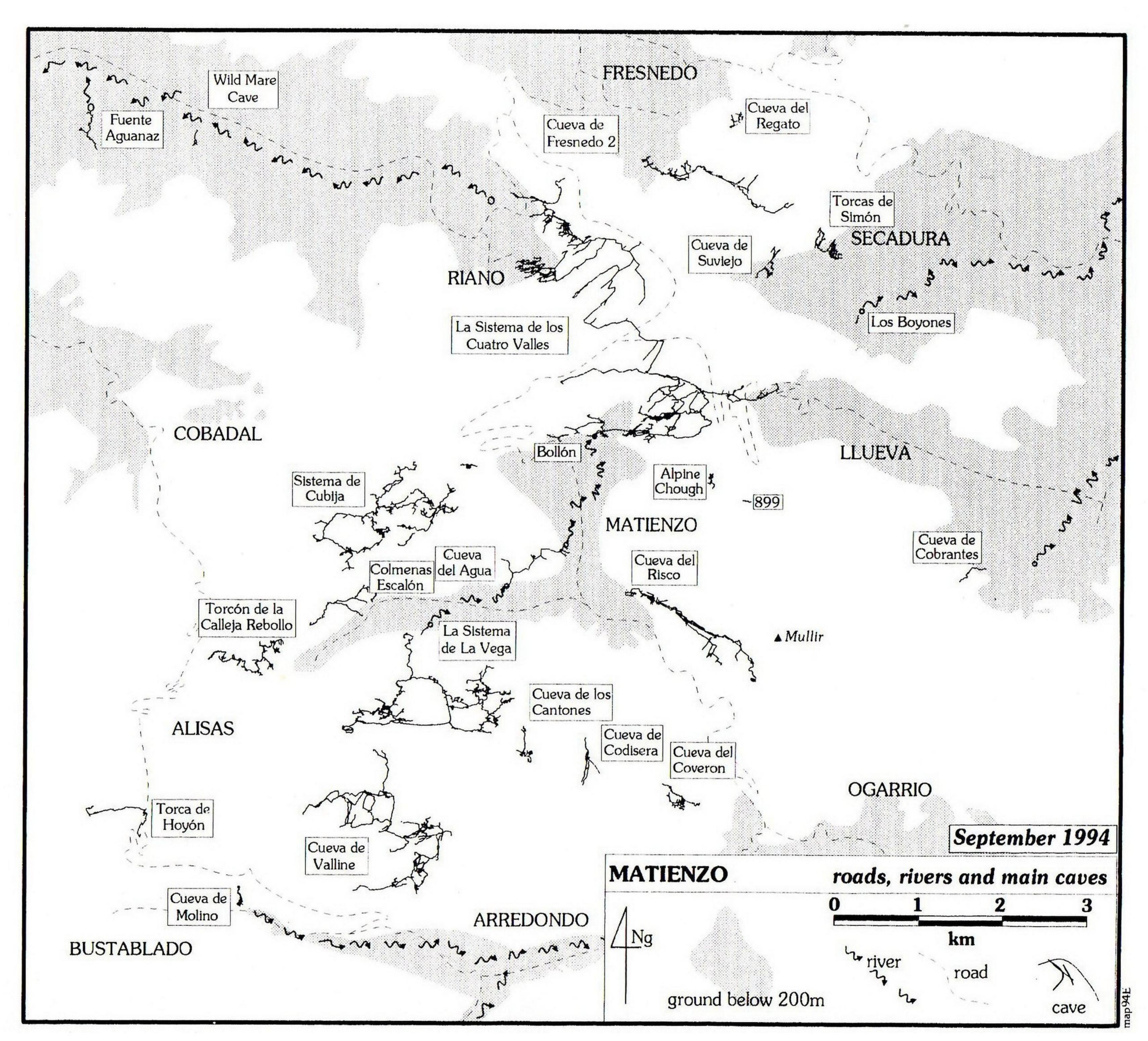
Pete Eagan, Simeon, Phil Pappard, Ali.

This is a very high level cave on the south edge of the Matienzo depression, running through to chokes outside our area, which were later radio-located. The cave starts off as a huge passage. Some way in, a climb up to the left and a route along a large ledge enters a bouldery passage, then an exposed rope traverse around a 90m pitch, followed by large "minaret" shaped passage which ends in a choke. Just after the traverse, a climb and a traverse along a ledge enters a small passage. This was investigated about six years ago by Portienzo, but no records were left. The passage leads to traverses over a number of (mostly small) holes in the floor, which all drop into a large chamber - forming a 90m pitch. Simeon dropped a pitch at the end, noting a number of large passages leading off part way down. At the bottom was just a small choked streamway.

A later trip with Mark Wright saw the passages part way down bolted to; these totalled about 350m of largish passage, which choked.

# 7th August. Matienzo v. England Football Match.

The score: Matienzo 12 goals, England 6. However away goals were deemed to count double, so the result was a draw - replay to be held in 1995.



Simas del Picon. Ali, Phil Collett and Hobbit from the Shepton.

Many expedition members managed to escape injury by going caving; Mike and DJ went down Agua. We had a look at the passage branching off near the end of the old cave. A pit in the floor (a pitch of about 10m) was descended by Hobbit - no way on. A French group in April had bolted up on the left hand side of the pit and found a way on through the stal blocking the end of this very high passage, into continuing large, but eventually stal choked, passage. This may repay a look at.

We then went on to the extension of last summer, which Keef and Ali had just missed finding, and took some photos of the pretties.

We then returned to dig the stream passage near the entrance, getting down about 1m, but the tight slot we were going down demanded better tools for further progress. But it looks good.

Ali Neill

#### **MATIENZO DISCOVERIES 1994**

1994 surveyed(m)		Total length (m)
Colmenas-Escalon	2248	2341
Regato	1034	1034
Sistema de Cubija	950	14621
Risco	769	9046
Codisera	371	1881
Hoyos	200	200
Picon	175	1441
899	154	154
846	99	99
South Vega	76	21982
Volvo	67	467
Arturo	56	56
Fresnedo II	40	6801
717	25	
750	23	25
825	20	25 20
TOTAL	6336	sen gained by bringing in

# IN CONJUNCTION WITH SPANISH CAVERS:

Pena Jorao	2319	
Valline	6990	20200
		up even with a local ream. It is not true to say that it too
TOTAL	15460	

(Watch out for the continuing saga of Ali's adventures in Spain in the next exciting issue of the PGC Jounrnal....)