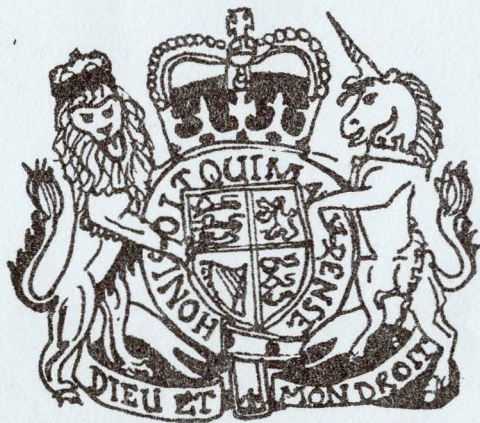


VENTURE 44



NUMBER 67



VENTURE 44. The magazine of the 44th Gloucester
(Sir Thomas Rich's School) V.S.U.

NUMBER 67

MARCH 1991

UNIT OFFICERS

Leaders	Frank Henderson
	Phil Brown
	Alan Quinn
Secretary	Matt Wilton
Chairman	Nick Cambridge
Treasurer	Mike Cheshire
Editor	Paul Kingsbury
Quartermaster	Brad Salter

CONTENTS

Unit News	Paul Kingsbury.	2
Sports Report	Nick James.	3
Christmas in Norway	F.H.	4
On ski in Austria	Adrian Stokes	6
Culture Spot	Kev 'n' Paul.	7
Top Gear	Matt Wilton	9
A German Exchange	Andy Roderick	11
Teach yourself Spanish		13
From All Points		15
Iraqnaphobia	Derek Dalby	16
Summer Camp U.S.A.	Justin Sargent.	18

UNIT NEWS

We start with good news - two teams from the Unit completed the annual Cotswold Marathon last month - congratulations in particular to Jim Newman and Adrian Stokes, entering for the first time. Old hands (feet) Paul K. and Matt W. knocked two hours off last years time, and Phil B. also made it, whilst Mike Cheshire managed 25 miles despite illness, and Sam Cambridge got a good way on his debut.

On the sporting front we have played indoor hockey and competed in a 5-a-side soccer event - more on that later. Mental brawn was needed for yet another exciting Quiz evening held at school on "Stonker" night. The "Birmingham Six", made up of Matt & Dave Wilton, Nick Cambridge, Adrian Stokes, F.H. and myself (all innocent!) finished first equal from a field of 40 teams. the night was a great success with £500 raised towards comic relief and other causes.

The climbing season started last weekend on a cold damp Castle Rock - not so easy as we all remembered from last summer. The hut problems are still unresolved, but some progress seems to be in the offing.

You will notice that this issue has a distinct "Euro flavour" with contributions from members and ex-members reflecting up to date attitudes towards the E.E.C., and increasing links with other countries. (Excuse the article on America by Justin Sargent, but what do you expect from a geography student?)

We welcome one new member this term, Jim Callen, and hope his association with the unit will be a long and successful one.

PAUL KINGSBURY



Two teams from the unit descended on the Beaufort Leisure centre one Sunday afternoon to display their immense talent in this years District 5-a-side Football tournament.

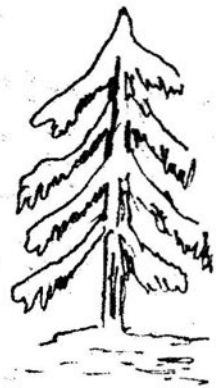
The B team, captained by the inspirational Brad (bite yer Knees) Salter were first on. The match was competitive, if not skilful, with the only noteworthy moment being an unstoppable left foot shot from the vicious boot of Mike Cheshire. In spite of this they went down 2 - 1. Then the crack elite A team, led by county player Nick Cambridge got their first game under way after a rapid and passionate encounter, it ended 3 - 3.

Things continued to go against the B team as they managed a 0 - 0 draw when a win was needed, and sadly left the competition. the A team coasted through their next match 2 - 0, and then won the semi final 3 - 1. Credit must go to Paul Kingsbury, solid as a rock in defence, and new boy Jim Callen who always looked dangerous in attack, and to Nick James in goal, who made some cosmic (shouldn't that be comic?) saves.

The final brought together by far the two best teams in tournament - our opponents were the Javelin unit who we had met earlier in the 3 - 3 draw. It was a hard battle but the A team could not reproduce their earlier form and went down eventually 2 -1 to the older and more experienced side

NICK JAMES





CHRISTMAS IN NORWAY

It was -10°C on a sunny morning when I landed at Oslo airport, and before dark I was in the Davies home at Krattebøl. Many ex members of the unit have visited this little corner of Norway over the years, but this was a mid winter first.

Christmas in Norway is not quite the same as in Britain, for a start there is no jolly Father Christmas - gifts are left at the tree base by "Julenisse", the Yule fairy. This character is somewhat ambivalent, as though he leaves small presents he is best avoided as he is rather ill tempered.

Food and drink feature strongly, but festivities start on Christmas eve, and turkey is not generally on the menu. The main meal varies from district to district with pork and fish popular main course dishes followed by creamed rice. A cordial drink with the inviting name of Glugg is popular, as is the traditional seasonal beer, jule øl, which is available only in small bottles and has up to 7% alcohol!

For some families Christmas day starts with a running buffet of typical cold table delights, the (Julebord) complete with Akvavit (schnapps) The office parties in Oslo are run on these lines and some white collar workers have a week of self indulgence before heading up country to

their respective families!

Being British we varied the fare a little and had genuine Christmas pudding on the 24th, and reindeer on Christmas day. Much of the reindeer meat in Scandinavia is still pretty radioactive even 4 years after Chernobyl, but eaten once in a while should do no damage.

Eating and drinking aside the other main activity, as in Britain, is watching the box. If you ever wonder where all the dull unimaginative seasonal programmes from last year went, I can tell you - they went to Svensk and Norsk T. V. - as did the worst on offer from Germany also. If you've never seen a really awful, out of date Finnish comedy(?) with Swedish subtitles you know where to go next year.

One other seasonal feature common both to Norway and Britain is, of course, the Christmas tree. Over there it is the real thing, a spruce which is ideally selected weeks beforehand and then dug up and brought into the house for decoration. The tree should be just the right height to fit neatly between the floor and ceiling. In many households suitable trees in front of the house are also decked with lights.

Fortunately the weather was not quite as bad as in England. True, we had dark clouds and rain, but there was also snow and blue skies, and the rays from a sun that just made it to the tops of the tall trees at mid-day produced some magic christmas card effects. On several days we managed to get out on skis, though the few hours of daylight gave little opportunity for sun tan.

All too soon however the ten days I had come to a close and I was back in Oslo. As I arrived at the airport, it was obvious that I was setting off at the time that many Norwegians were returning home for the really big celebration of the winter, the New Year.

F.H.



The School ski trip of last year took us to the resort of Zel am See in Austria. It should have been 27 hours on the coach, but after 30 hours we were all bored with the available videos and still somewhere in central Europe. Eventually we made the Gasthoff Wasserfalle in the early hours of the morning.

the party consisted mainly of Tommies 5th formers, five members of the unit, and a bunch of kids from Weymouth. Oh, and the staff who included our own cross country champ, the V.S.L., and a lady from Weymouth who attracted some interesting nicknames...

Next morning we were off to the slopes for our first taste of the snow. The skiing was easy, but getting up the slope on the T bar lift was the difficult bit (A T bar is an upside down T shaped seat for two to sit on and get pulled up). Everyone seemed to fall off, and Derek Gabb even managed to take out the V.S.L.

Once we conquered the ascents we were well away. each day was spent on the slopes, and the evenings were spent out doing various things. Activities included skittles, swimming, Ice skating, and even a disco. other nights were spent in the hotel, except for the 5th formers who stole away for a forbidden pint or smoke.

By the end of the week we were all quite good skiers, and were all worn out. The coach on the way back was full of tired bodies in the gangway. Our long journey ended at about one in the morning.

ADRIAN STOKES

And now for something different...

A little bit of culture....



The River

The provost of the moon's disperses its
 magnitude of power upon the mountain,
 the glaciers gleaming as would a perfect diamond
 Amongst the subtle mist mustering about the
 peak,
 the true vigour of the great mountain prevails.
 The river is born of the skies,
 flowing amongst the rocks as would a snake
 slither amongst the grasses.
 However, hastily this is deceased,
 as the new-born becomes of age and exhibits it's
 own strength of heart.
 The river powers its way down the hogs back of
 the mountain,
 Displaying no mercy amongst it's minions.
 The river peaks its maturity quickly, and now
 communes with domination.
 However this notion is severed forthwith as its
 life is cut short.
 It is now them
 As Saddam Hussain joins all the other Anti-
 Christs of history.

KEV SNOW



The Union Jack is Here!

Broadcast foreigners, brimming with fear,
 Roll on tourists, roll off louts,
 SIGNIFY ferries,
 No one doubts.

"The Union Jack is Here!"

None go near.
 All night Discos,
 Long term foes.
 Why the invasion?
 No one knows.

They drink a toast to John Major,
 And shout "death to all argies",
 or Saddam Hussain
 (They're all the same)
 For are they the real Union Jacks?
 For they blemish and brandish with fist,
 Be gone, scum! You won't be missed.

Oh please Jack behave,
 It's our country we're trying to save.
 Oh! Please Jack do refrain,
 Let's not fight again.
 Oh! Please, Jack desist
 All they want is quiet peace.

It's "Farewell Bowler hat"
 "So long umbrella"
 I suppose it's the end of "The Times" too.

Yes Union Jack has changed,
 All the wars he had fought,
 To factory made boxer shorts,
 Red, white and blue - it's you know who!
 The red, lobster skinned "brits",

Or the white, the misfits,
 On beaches of bronze flesh,
 The blue of bitterness and regret,
 Worse - not surely yet.

"They've no sense,
 "Hide them behind a fence
 "Better still ban",
 Say corrupting press.

We don't want you Jack,
 Blotting our part of the map
 We've enough problems as it is,
 Did we cause acid rain?
 Oh Jack, quell this needless pain.

Luckily Jack is a minority,
 The rest, just a majority.
 Jack, change for both you and me,
 Lay off the final bevy,
 And if you must really riot,
 Then do it quietly, away in private.

Get off our back, Jack.
 Stay here - leave the beer,
 Rot away! Rest the Perrier!

PAUL KINGSBURY

TOP GEAR

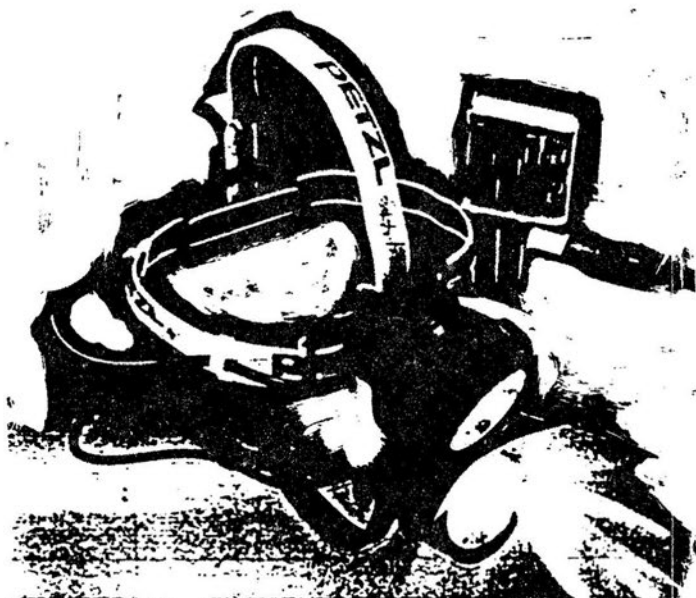


An effective source of light is always helpful, whether in the mountains or under a car in the garage, and ideally a head torch is the best buy. It can be tricky taking a compass bearing at midnight under torchlight, as you soon run out of hands! The PETZL head torch is extremely good and comes highly recommended.

All the head torches come with spare bulb and a Duracell MN 1203 battery. You can expect 18 hours of light with the Zoom model. With a halogen bulb fitted the beam becomes 300% brighter, although the battery life is halved. All the lamps have wide and spot beam focusing and can swivel from horizontal to vertical.

Four varieties are on the market at the moment: The Petzl ZOOM - the most popular head torch in the world. It has proved indispensable in many kinds of work; the armed forces, rescue services, fishermen, engineers, field medics and farmers. This excellent light has travelled the Himalayan heights with Chris Bonnington, and reached the depths of the world's deepest caves.

The MEGA - exactly like the Zoom only with a larger battery pack.



A Petzl Zoom head torch, batteries and bulbs.

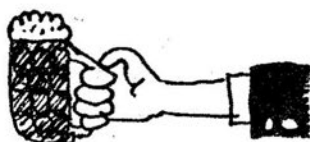
The ARCTIC - comes with a battery pouch so that its output will not be affected by use in temperatures down to -20°C .

The MICRO - much smaller than the rest, and is excellent for household light failure and car repairs.

I have used my Zoom on night activities such as the Cotswold Marathon, where Petzl head torches were much in evidence, and the V.S.L. used his for night time cross-country skiing in Norway at Christmas.

I would thoroughly recommend the Petzl Zoom which at about £16 is very good value for money.

Matt Wilton



Home Thoughts from Abroad: A German Exchange

An exchange is only an exchange if two visits are made, but because there is a chance of this article getting into the wrong hands I have decided to stick to the away visit and stay safely with writing about interesting material like what time I got up, and what toothpaste I used, etc - so here we go.

We left Gloucester in high spirits, talking about seeing our partners again and what they

got up to when they were over here. This discussion soon died out and the stage of the journey when everything on the coach went quiet quickly arrived. After two minutes silence an observant traveller said "it's quiet", and soon the Magic Roundabout is better than Rainbow conversation arises. Then after a few stops, an hours delay at the ferry and a five minute panic because (a) we couldn't find our way to the coach deck and (b) going round all the parked coaches looking through windows trying to see someone you know.

Back on the coach we are soon at personal stereo time. After an hour and a half it was "Oh b*****, my batteries have run out" stage, and then finally the off to sleep stage....

Waking up in Germany one thing we noticed that there were trees everywhere. Apparently a third of Deutschland is covered in trees. Two of my colleagues started to count them, an ill omen as I realised that they were to be the nearest English civilians to where I was staying. I was beginning to have second thoughts about this exchange! At this low point it dawned on us all - "Ay up! We don't know any German!"

Meeting my partner (Heinrich Nitsch) again I was glad he spoke good English but to my great horror he came over and said "Geht es?"

"Yer wot?"

"O.K.?"

"Oh, yeah, O.K.!"

I was introduced to his dad who, thankfully, did speak English.

After a few days I was settling in alright, apart from having to get up at 6 a.m. to walk 1 km to the bus stop. Their school system was much better than ours, with a 5 minute gap between each lesson, a 15 minute break, and school finished at 1 o'clock.

The hardest thing to cope with was the meal time conversation. You are just sitting there

eating the food (very nice!) and letting them natter on in German, and just as you put a large piece of meat into your mouth, you look up to see the family staring at you and expecting an answer to a question! A difficult situation! But these situations became fewer and fewer and as we got used to it all, suddenly we had to return to England.

ANDY RODERICK

And now a bit of Euronostalgia... We reprint a little item from Venture 44, no 51, the account of the 1984 vist to the mountains of Northern Spain.



"A glossary of useful Spanish words"

Aqua minerale; In England we would call it tap water, but in Spain you buy it in bottles - it is dearer than wine.

Caballero; The legend over the toilet you DO go in to. (see also Señora, the one you DON'T go in to.)

España; Where you go for Fiesta, Siesta, Mañana.

Fiesta; Long period (often several days) when no one does anything except eat, drink and sleep (see also Siesta - shorter period after lunch for the same activities.

Gringo; One of us.

H; A letter the Spanish seem to manage without.

Ingléz; Us, again, but politer than Gringo.

Leche; Milk, never fresh, always U.H.T.

Mañana; Tomorrow, when most Spaniards plan to do things. The idea catches on well with a typical Venture Scout Unit.

Naranja; Special word used by the Spanish to confuse and infuriate visitors. Totally unpronouncable. Believed to mean orange

Ola; What you say to Spaniards met in the hills: it also works with Germans and Dutch.

Paella; The staple diet of all Spaniards, EXCEPT for the inhabitants of Asturias and of Cantabria - they eat pigs trotters...

Que! Useful word when addressed by natives. Best when followed by shrug of shoulders, a grin and the word "no entende".

Refugio; Hut in the mountains, good for siesta.

Siesta; See fiesta.

Skol; Sweet, sickly lager, enough to make you TT

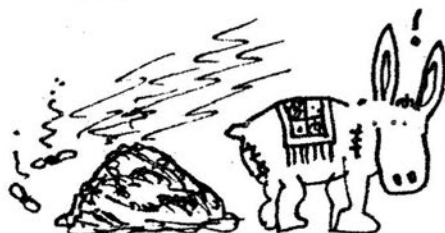
Tienda; Tent, but also means shop, so can be a little confusing.

Umbrio; The shade, essential for pitching your tienda, or enjoying your siesta.

Xilofono; Xylophone.

Yo; I - not you, which is tu, or te, or ti, or even usted or ustedes - (n.b. not us, which is nos, or, well, it doesn't matter, we can sort it out mañana...

Zaga; To lag - "ir a la zaga" to lag behind ... what you tend to do if a hike strays into siesta time...





It was good, as ever, to hear from so many of our ex-members at Christmas. This year came news of a wedding to come, and one accomplished.

PHIL CHAMPION will become a married man in June and JER HOBBS has already tied the knot. Jer chose DAVE JERRARD for best man, and

apparently the groom's well known hypochondria featured prominently in the best man's speech! Back to Phil - he has been spending weekends recently working with big brother ROB helping to deliver lambs. The Champion "pet sheep" have increased in numbers from two to two hundred on the family small holding at Down Hatherley.

A recent visitor to Gloucester was ROB DALTON, who reports that he is still enjoying his subediting job on the dreaded "SUN" a healthy mixture of adrenalin, nervous tension, and absolute fear does wonders for the career" .. to quote Rob who expects to be a father for the third time this May - congratulations!

Also seen recently in Gloucester, engineer JON WRIGHT, who after working in Reading for some time is looking for a job nearer home. His little(?) brother DAVE has also been back in the locality lately. Moving in the other direction is JASON STONE. I saw Jase a few days before he set off on a journey to the other end of the earth - he has gone to Australia to seek fame and fortune (or a small part in "Neighbours").

Whilst out in Oz Jason plans to visit ANDY CHALKLEY, one of the founder members of the Unit back in 1968 who is at present running a double decker bus hire service in Perth, W. Australia. A recent card has confirmed Jason's arrival in the antipodes...

"Just spent the last two weeks travelling round Tasmania in a hire car, splitting the cost between 5 of us. If you ever get the chance to hike out here, Tasmania is a must - really beautiful, and much of it is still total wilderness, some of the last temperate rain forest left on the planet....Will send an article for Venture 44 soon....

Moving permanently from the district is the FOSTER family, as father Alan has got a job as a Maths adviser in Sussex. JAMES is now starting on a teaching career whilst ADAM is still in the big city finishing off his medical studies. Will Doctor Foster return to Gloucester, we wonder?

As this is being written on 26th February the news of the liberation of Kuwait is coming over the air waves. One ex member of the Unit has been involved in the action, but is now back home.

DEREK DALBY is an officer in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. (The beard is part of the uniform! Recently Our editor met with Derek and the "debriefing" is recorded below - (Derek has promised me the true version over a pint one evening before he sets sail again.



Derek Dalby (22)
Third Officer

IRAQNAPHOBIA

Intrepid ex-Unit Chairman Derek Dalby has recently encountered the 96⁰ of the Gulf (Persian, not Mexican). As an engineer on the R.F.A. Olna he spent 7 months afloat just off the U.A.E, coast. Luckily the Olna, although 25 years old did not need much mechanical attention from Derek on his first proper mission. His view of the action was "The food was fine, but we

were glad when the beer arrived!" The main duty of the ship was to replenish the fighting craft with oil and other goodies - these included U.S. and dutch ships as well as the Brits.

Being in the thick of things the main source of information on how things were going was the B.B.C. World service or conversing with the communication officers. "It was important to maintain a sense of high morale" recalls Derek.

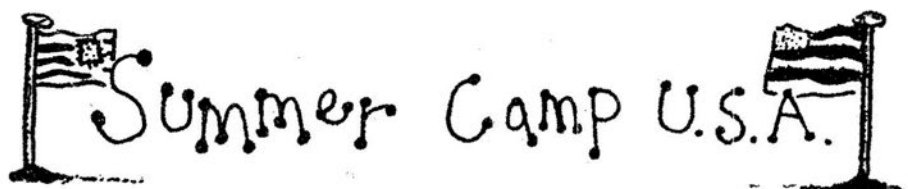
Asked what he felt about being involved in another "adventure", Derek said he was in no way apprehensive, it had been a valuable experience, and there was a nice free visit to sunny Cyprus on the way home.

P.K.

People do read Venture 44 and act on the advice freely given - I cite the case of CHRIS COLLINS who read the article on Mountain biking last year and rushed out and bought one. Sadly it wasn't one that we recommended, and I learn that he has had to replace it as the frame was rusting! Hopefully brother MARK, now working for the City Council, has taken our good advice when buying his recently. Mark, incidentally, has been advising us on future plans for the scout hut.

Heard from MARK EVANS, still up in Scotland but after a career in agriculture and H.G.V. driving he is now qualified as a R.G.N. Mark is still hill walking and has also tried a spot of mountain biking.

Back to the European theme, we now have a resident correspondent in Paris. YOSH COWMEADOW has moved from Athens and now is working in the city of Notre Dame and the L'Arc de Triomphe. We hope to receive an article from Yosh for the next issue, due out in June, so any of you other ex-members out there with a tale to tell, get your pens out now!



Summer Camp U.S.A.

At long last, the article you've all been waiting for..No? Oh well, here it is anyhow - the story of my summer of 1990.

Throughout America there is a tradition of sending children to Summer Camp. it was at one such institution in Florida that I spent 10 weeks learning about another culture. The kids on my camp were aged 5 to 15 and they stayed for 4 or 8 weeks. It is quite traumatic to go away from home for 8 weeks, so there was a certain amount of vomiting and bed wetting - and that was only the staff! So what enabled them to survive? I have to say the food, since I was working in the kitchen!

Food apart there was a terrific range of activities, not available in downtown Miami. At Camp Universe we had staff and equipment to provide horse riding, sailing, tennis, swimming, baseball, soccer, volleyball, tae-kwan-do, water skiing, archery and so on. Not a bad range, but the parents paid for it - \$2000 for eight weeks.

The staff was a combination of american and european, about thirty of each. The americans were very friendly wherever I went. initially you might think they are O.T.T., but apart from the odd exception they were "normal".

After eight weeks the kids left, and the staff took a well earned vacation. I remained to help run a cheer leaders conference the camp was hosting. These were difficult days, surrounded by 300 cheer leaders - it sure was tough, but I survived!

Exactly ten weeks after I arrived I left to explore a little of the vast country. I met up with some of the other guys from camp in the cool city of New Orleans, home of dixieland jazz. Having explored the French quarter, especially the market and Bourbon Street, we headed on to San Antonio. This took 15 hours by Greyhound bus to laid back city which does contain the most popular tourist attraction in Texas (I'd hate to see the worst!) This is, of course, the Alamo, where Davy Crockett and friends tried to see off a few angry mexicans.

Moving swiftly on, we swept into Arizona, but before arriving we were rudely awoken at 2 a.m. by a burly border patrolman toting two six-shooters. I wisely decided not to pick a fight with him, as all he was doing was looking for mexican illegal immigrants. Eventually we hit the famous city of Flagstaff (where?), and next day with a New Zealander, a Frenchman and another Brit we hired a car and set off for the Grand Canyon. Despite tyhe weather (thunder and lightning) it was a truly awesome sight, and no photograph could do it justice. We decided not to trek down to the Colorado, in the footsteps of our intrepid V.S.L.

A quick visit of two hours to Las Vegas was enough, it's just a lot of bright lights and opportunities to lose money. San Diego was our next destination, with a day on the beach follow-ed by one in Mexico. we didn't see the real country, just the part put on for tourists. It was fun bartering with the shop keepers. One did try to sell me a belt for \$36, but I got it for \$10!

We stayed in California but made our way to San Francisco. I wouldn't say there was an awful lot to do there, except to go to Alcatraz, the Golden Gate bridge, and visit Fisherman's wharf by the cable hauled tramcar. It seemed a nice,

friendly, clean city (except for where we were staying!).

In contrast to S.F., New York was, as they say, the pits! We didn't see much admittedly, but have you ever been frisked when you entered a shop? We were sat in Grand Central station waiting room waiting to meet a friend from camp when who should appear but another former member of the 44th V.S.U., Steve Clutterbuck, also on a visit to the states. They get everywhere!

Anyway, I think it was probably the best thing I've done in my life, and if you are planning to go on to higher education, I would certainly recommend taking out a year and doing something useful. If anyone wants to know more about working in an American camp, you can contact me through the V.S.L.

JUSTIN SARGENT

SUPPORTERS CLUB

In April 1990 we set up a Unit Supporters Club in which parents, ex-members and friends of the Unit paid £12 a year (or multiples of £12) in order to take part in a monthly draw for a chance to win £25.

This has proved a success with 50 "shares" sold, mainly to ex-members, and 12 lucky people have received £25 cheques throughout the year.

The first year is now drawing to a close, and I hope that all of you would contributed last time will sign up again. If you have not participated so far, why not join in now, and also perhaps encourage a relation, friend, colleague or neighbour to come in on the scheme. Cheques should be made payable to "44th Glos V.S.U."

F.H.

