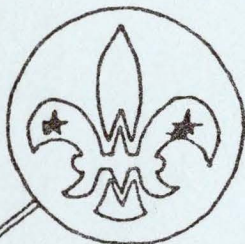
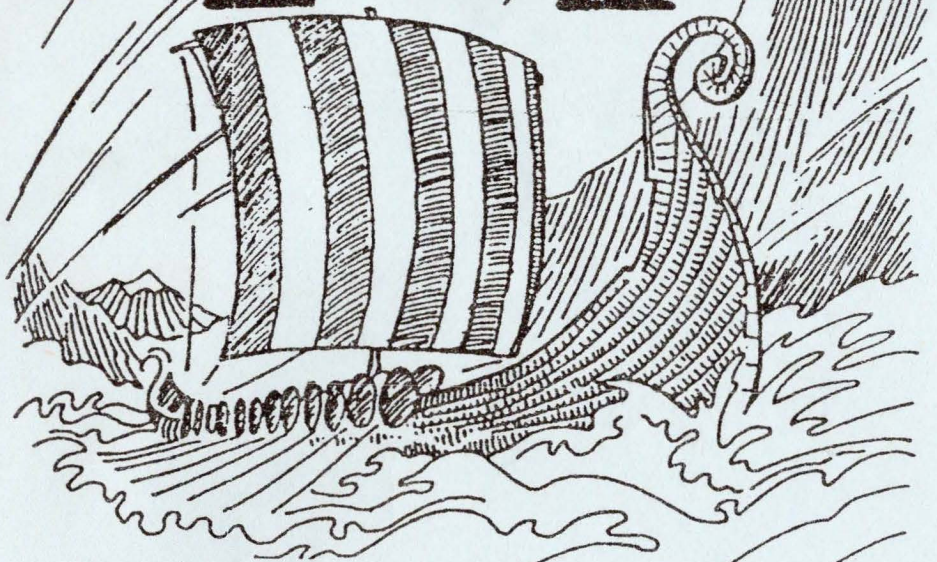


VENTURE



44



NUMBER 72

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

NUMBER 72

NORWAY EXPEDITION SPECIAL

The moderately unedited diary of the 44th Gloucester Venture Scout visit to Norway, July 22nd to August 10th, 1992.

The party consisted of the following:

Leaders

Frank Henderson

Phil Brown

The lads

Matt Wilton

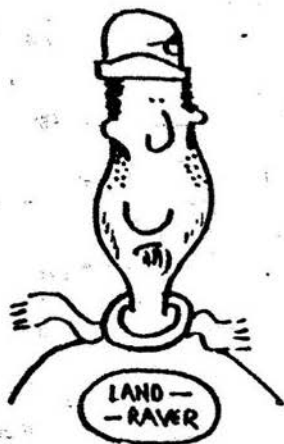
Mike Cheshire

Keve Snow

Charlie Richardson

Jim Callen

Mark Hibberd



Wednesday 22nd July

Although we were due away at noon, activity started well before that time, as it had been discovered on the evening before that there was no spare wheel on the bus! F.H spent the first few hours of the working day negotiating down at Watt's Trucks before getting a wheel off a new vehicle.

Loading the final bags and bikes was done, and we were on the road at 12.15 p.m. A40, M40, M25, A12, A120, and before 4.00p.m. we hit Dovercourt - the seaside satellite neighbour of Harwich. Tea, a stroll along the beach, and a visit to town to do some last minute shopping, then at 5.30 we drove the last short distance down to Parkstone Quay. Although we were early in the queue, we were passed over and it seemed a long time before we rolled onto the "Prince of Scandinavia". We met up with the Hughes family in the car park, also heading for Sweden.

On board the ship we were all pleased by the accommodation we had, and everyone spread out to investigate the facilities. Phil and Frank made for the Smorgasbord that evening whilst the less well heeled settled for hot dogs. Later the night club and the various gaming facilities were sampled.

Thursday 23rd July

Most of the party were up fairly bright and early to hear rumours of Kev's antics with a sturdy Swedish lass, although the relationship was purely platonic. Mike and Matt were a little the worse for wear after a late night with Steff Hughes in the Columbus Bar. Here one could sample the delights of the resident band who resembled a motley bunch on day release from the Gothenberg Institution for the Badly dressed and

Tone Deaf. Everyone except F.H. decided to go to the on board cinema to see Basic Instinct, which proved to be a real eye-opener (from the point of view of being a well scripted and directed thriller). Arguments ensued over whodunit later in the cabins.

After only twelve hours Kev, Mark, Charlie and Jim had managed to convert their cabin into something which even Rab C. Nesbitt would think twice about entering. The odour was not dissimilar to that of macaroni cheese being left under the bed by the previous occupants. The late afternoon was spent moaning at the prices of food and drink. Denmark, and later Sweden, came into view before the usual mayhem of boarding vehicles. We waved goodbye to the Hughes gang, off to Stockholm, whereas our party eventually made our way to the camp site at Lilleby, which was to our surprise not full. (This site was the last one used by the Unit in 1990). We had time for a quick cup of tea before bedding down.



Friday 24th July

We staggered out of our tents and most of us appreciated the fine washing facilities. Controversy abounded over the earthquake during the night - a popular opinion was that Phil was to blame. After a quick breakfast we boarded the van and headed along the Swedish back roads till we hit Norway. We were soon at Kongsvinger where we followed some of the route we had cycled in 1992. We arrived at Sand where we were greeted by Margaret Davies. We then unloaded the van and assembled the many bikes quickly, except Jim's which required the "expert" help of Frank. To show their immense gratitude Bert and Matt proceeded to demolish Margaret's prized wooden bench. After analysing the situation we became more and more inclined to believe the bottom of the problem was Bert's bowels!

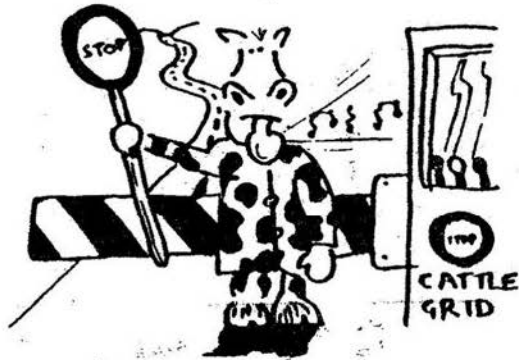
After a quick tea we were eager to explore the local area and so we made our way down to the lake. Kev decided the future fishing prospects would be "most excellent". On reaching the beach Kev sharpened up his downhill technique on a rather rocky trail which came to an abrupt end - literally. He was hastily followed by Jim, and then came Charlie, a co-rider of the infamous Dave Swann, who displayed his vast skill and experience by somersaulting over the handlebars in a desperate fashion. After a rest on the beach we headed for home and bedded down for a much needed nights sleep.

Saturday 25th July

Sand day! We all mosied down to the sprawling metropolis of Sand, and Mike and Matt snook off secretively to buy Charles a birthday card. After flicking through reams of glossy male interest magazines, we eventually found a

general purpose card which had the advantage of being suitable for anyone aged 1-99.

Shopping for food was next, and we managed to spend £45 (450Kr) on spreads and breads, with some Sjokolade pudding mix for a special treat. Back to Krattebol for luncheon on the verandah where it was decided that the old and middle timers would show the young blood the abode of "Norway 90"



We set off for a really tough manly sweaty gruelling tiring bike ride into the hills whilst Kev and Mark went to dip their tackle in the lake. The first part of the ride was on road, and was straight forward. The forest section then started and we climbed up to the huts where Mike showed off the door he had made in 1990. I showed where Panji hit his head, and Frank peered through the window of the locked hut at the stove that was now meant to be in our possession! The young bloods were suitably impressed, and so we all span back down the hill, with Jim coming a cropper on Devil's Elbow - only to be caught by Mike on candid camera. The ride proceeded on to the lake where we splashed about like typical British yobs. All dried off we finished the ride on the main road. Some rather stubborn cows slowed us down at one point, but we eventually got past them and clocked in at 26 miles for the afternoons ride.

Tea was prepared and eaten, with Charlie being presented with his card over Aunty Marions speciality birthday fruit cake (first class). tea and coffee chez Ben finished off a full day.

Sunday 26th July

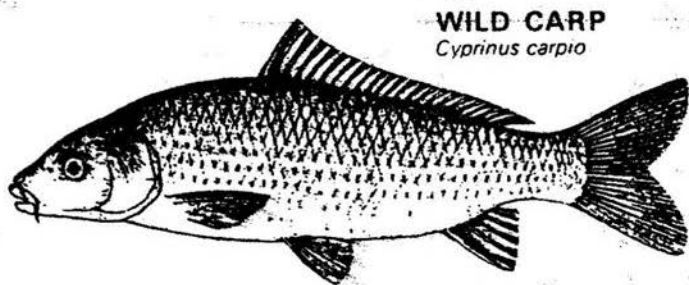
Sunday dawned and we all rose relatively early so that we could have a full day in Oslo. After the regulation brekky of bread and jam etc we all assembled in the van ready for the off. A quick shout from Frank "Has everybody got everything?" and he turned the key to bring the powerful beast (a.k.a the school bus) into life. however, instead of the normal "vroom vroom" we were met with absolutely nothing. So everybody piled out and proceeded to push the van down the length of Margaret's drive, out onto the road and down the hill. All was to no avail and we pushed it back up to Krattebol. An investigation led to the conclusion that the battery was, as Frank put it, as "dead as a dodo".

After more cogitating and deliberation the trip to Oslo was abandoned. As the rain started Frank went to Sand to try to get a new battery and the rest ambled back inside. Later, after lunch, we went to Eidsvoll. It seemed that the whole town had moved out for the day, all except for the people surrounding a small kiosk that sold chips who had a strange tendency to stare at us.

Once back at Krattebol we proceeded to clear Margaret's drive of all things green and plant like. After an early dinner trawler Kev and Mark went down to the lake to mess about with their tackle and rods whilst back at home Matt and Phil were doing an excellent repair job on the bench that had been ripped apart earlier.

Ben arrived home from Denmark later to be come acquainted with some new faces, and find

that his room had been taken over! A storm was brewing, and soon there was heavy rain and large amounts of thunder and lightning. thoughts started to turn to Kev who had unknowingly turned himself into a mini lightning conductor with his graphite rod. A rescue party set out to search for the missing fishermen, and they were duly found, wet, but in high spirits. We returned with Mark, and Kev was left to carry on. He finally returned at 10 p.m. along with two unbelievably large carp. He then proceeded to gut them as many photos were taken. Ben remarked that they were the biggest he had seen from the lake, and Kev was well chuffed. Once the gutting was over we hit the hay at about midnight pretty well knackered.



WILD CARP
Cyprinus carpio



**KEV
SNOW**
drenchus
blokeum

Monday 27th July

After breakfast we loaded up the kit, but we were forced to leave Kev's fish in Ernest's freezer. We were to head north, and had our fingers crossed that the engine would start. It did first time, and we were off. We stopped by Kvitafjell where the downhill course for the next winter Olympics could be seen, and then continued to Dombas. One and all set out to investigate all the local retailers, and Mark

purchased a doll for his dear sister, whilst Kev purchased the right to use the local toilet for 1 kr. After about two hours searching for gas for the cooker the mission was eventually accomplished and we set off for a campsite at Rolstad which we reached about 4.00 p.m. It was right next to the River Lagen, and Kev's eyes lit up like a red light district at midnight, and he and Mark set out for a few hours fishing. The only catch was a small trout by Kev whilst Mark caught a cold. Tea was finished by 8.00 p.m. and we eventually retired hoping the the river wouldn't come up and wash the tents away.

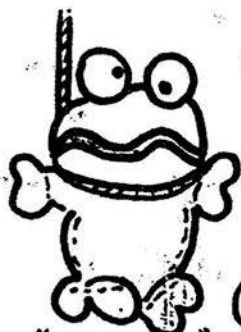
Tuesday 28th July

Mike rose from his humble sleeping bag to be greeted by a terrible vision. during the early hours a frog called, wait for it "Froggy", reacting to the immense pressure of being a close friend of Mike's had become too much to contemplate. The sight of the deceased frog hanging forlornly from the bridge over the river simply overwhelmed Mike's tender heart and Frank was forced to risk life and limb to retrieve and resuscitate the animal for him.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

V44 WOULD LIKE TO
MAKE IT CLEAR THAT
THE FROG WAS A
TRAINED PROFESSIONAL.

(GOD REST HIS SOUL.)



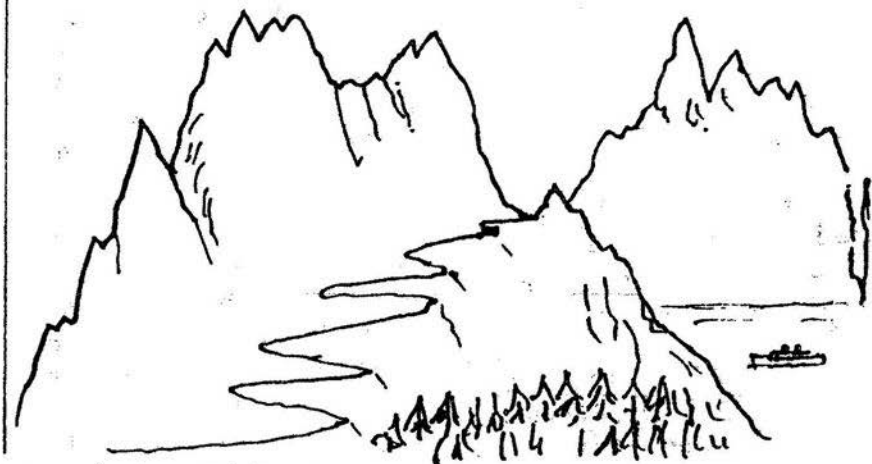
"FROGGY"

1991-1992

Breakfast was enjoyed by all, except froggy, and it gave us a voracious inspiration for cycling. We set off from the site leaving Phil to rendezvous with us at Vaga, later in the day. The urge to arrive first was too much for Jim as he hastily sped off along the foot of the mountain. However, not listening to Frank's initial briefing, he missed the turning and set off down the Lesja valley. After the group realised the blunder, "Valiant Matt" steamed after Jim and brought him back. Older members reminisced over last years expedition, and began to draw parallels with a character known as Brad who did the same thing in Scotland.

After assembling by the toll gate we ascended the very steep mountain road. Kev and Matt broke out in front, reaching the top in just over half an hour. The rest reached the top at a steady rate, and thoroughly exhausted we decided to have lunch, whilst Frank pointed out the various mountains across the valley which he often visits at easter time. Recuperation commenced, and we set off again along a much easier ride across the top of the plateau, and down the other side. the road down was very steep, Kev finding problems with kamikaze sheep jumping out in front of him as he hit 40 m.p.h.. we reassembled at the edge of Vaga, then set off to find Phil and the van. WE piled everything in and set off back to the E6 and soon were in Dombas again. We were soon heading to the top of Gudbrandsdalen, through Lesjaskog where the Unit camped in 1980 and into the valley of the Rauma river. We stopped at the Slettufoss waterfall, had an ice cream, and bought an Elk sticker. Then we descended into the spectacular Romsdal, with sheer cloud clad cliffs towering above us, and decided to look at them in more detail the next day. We reached Andalsnes at 7.00 p.m., just as the rain started. Dinner was

eaten, and Matt, Mike and Phil trekked off for coffee at a neighbouring camp site, whilst Mark, Kev and Jim watched Olympic wrestling being won by a Norwegian! The excitement, fatigue, and loss of loved ones finally drove us to our sacks, where a good night's sleep was had by all.



Wednesday 29th July

Today was to be a "sight-seeing" day, and it started with us packing up after breakfast (porridge based) and heading up along the old road to Andalsnes. Unfortunately road excavations gave us insufficient space to get through, so we had to do a lengthy detour. At Andalsnes we looked at sports shops, comparing prices with England, before touring the petrol stations to get another gas burner. Eventually we set off for the mountains, and we stopped at Trollvegen at the base of the Trolltind mountain. The great wall is 5500 ft high, 1500 ft vertical, and a 150 ft overhang, and is the highest vertical wall in Europe. It was difficult to appreciate the scale standing below. Matt informed us that he would be back!

We left the wall and turned into the flat bottomed Isterdalen and soon hit Trollstigen, a narrow road with 11 hairpin bends. We rose from sea level to over 2300 ft, narrowly avoiding other traffic and giving the passengers a few frights, before stopping to look at the scene below. Cars and vans passed with centimetres to spare, and one cyclist did a hair raising descent which even Kev thought was a bit dodgy! Back on the road we threaded through peaks and waterfalls before a gentlish descent to Valldal, where we queued for the ferry to Eidsdal. A slow ascent followed, and soon we were above the famous Geirangerfjord, looking down over near vertical walls to the deep fjord with large ships looking like toys. After the obligatory tourist photos we zig-zagged down to Geiranger, and noticed a certain reluctance on the part of the brakes to work efficiently. Then straight up again, more hairpins, more super views and suddenly we were at 3350 ft, with snow fields either side of the road. A violent snowball fight was engaged in, and then back to the comparative warmth of the van.

We reached our destination, near Lom after eight hours on the road doing only 120 miles, it would have been quicker by bike! The evening was spent chatting to some dutch girls - in french, of course...



Thursday 30th July

Charlie and Mark rose with thoughts of the two windmill-land wonders still fresh in their minds. A visit to Lom was instigated and Frank and Phil were surprised by the increase in size of the town which had blossomed since their last visit. It resembled the Norsk Betws-y-coed, with every other shop pushing Lillehammer '94 and troll souvenirs to the many tourists. Lunch was munched in a car park at the foot of the toll road up to Galdopiggen. A pleasant camp site was found nearby at Leirmoen, and heavy rain all afternoon and evening required various forms of in-bus entertainment, such as Yatzee lessons for beginners, and a heated debate on the fore and surnames of assorted characters from the much acclaimed series, "Moonlighting". For those who are now pulling their hair out a to the aforementioned they are as reads:

Bruce Willis - David ? (we know now..)
 Cybil Shepard - Maddy Hayes
 Secretary - Agnes De Pesto
 Dogsbody - Herbert Viola

Friday 31st July

FH, Matt and myself (Charlie) arose rather earlier than normal so as to get an early start on the climb of Galdhopiggen. Breakfast was eaten whilst considering the weather prospects. The cloud was rather low, and there was quite a wind. We left the site with the rest of the lads asleep, apart from Phil who was driving up with us so we could ride down from the mountain on our bikes. Having arrived at Juvashytta, (the hotel/hostel at the start of the climb) at about 9.30 a.m. we bought some expensive chocolate and got kitted out in our boots, gaiters, thermals, gloves, ice axes, etc. As we were about to set



off we were mistaken for Norwegian mountain guides!

The first part was fairly flat and rocky, but it was made more arduous by the biting cold winds. The rocks were briefly interrupted by a short walk across the edge of a ski-ing piste. Walking through the snow proved more tiring than first expected as fresh snow had fallen the previous night. After a field of rocks we reached the glacier at about 11 a.m. where we all kitted out with harnesses and rope ready for the trek across the ice. There were a couple of other groups getting ready and we were debating whether to follow one of these which had a local guide. However we decided to leave first and set out on a lonely journey. On the first part we could make out other peoples tracks, but further on there appeared to be a junction. We took the left hand route which petered out but we managed to struggle up a steep slope on to a rocky ridge. It was slow going with slipperey rocks and deep snow in places. We found a route to the left of the mist shrouded ridge. It proved

rather hairy as there was a maximum of 4 - 6 inches of loose snow on ice, and a large steep drop to the left below us. We battled on up onto the ridge against the wind and snow, and suddenly we were there! Three hours of climbing had got us to the summit, and after photos were taken we started down almost immediately.

The journey down was much quicker and less hair-raising as we took the tourist/easy(ish) route along, instead of around the ridge. Back on the edge of the glacier we roped up again, and as we started down we were quizzed by a local guide with an up going party as to the weather conditions on the top. We must have looked the part of seasoned mountaineers. Half way across Frank spotted some crevasses and asked Matt and myself if we would mind stepping closer so that he could get a good photo! At the end of the ice we had a small rest and indulged in some of the chocolate that was bought earlier. We arrived at Juvashytta a couple of hours after we had left the summit.



More chocolate was eaten and we unlocked the bikes which we had hidden round the back of the hostel and started our long descent. Matt and I sped down at great speed passing about 8 cars, 2 camper vans and a coach, leaving the occupants gobsmacked. Frank descended at a rather more liesurely pace, taking photos and spotting a squashed lemming on the road. We arrived back at the camp site at about 4.30 p.m. at the end of a memorable if slightly tiring day.

Meanwhile, the others decided a bike ride would be more interesting, so after a morning in Lom Kev, Jim and Mark set off from Leirmoen hoping for a good trail along Boverdalen. First it went uphill for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, Jim using a tractor for a pace maker. then the road disappeared into a mud track that was fairly flat for about $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles until we reached Ulvot where the granny ring was needed until we eventually reached the E55 at a height of 3269 ft (higher than the highest point in England). We then descended back to camp reaching speeds of 43 m.p.h. +. Total distance covered was 15.2 miles in just over 2 hours.

Saturday 1st August

We arose to the sight of another cold and wet morning. Breakfast was quickly consumed and both bikes and riders were loaded into the van to be taken up to start the first leg of the three day cycle ride at Jotenheimfjellstua - the high point reached by Kev, Mark and Jim the day before. One and all hit the road, avoiding two sorry looking reindeer, and soon the group was spread out along the route. All paused to remove a few layers of clothing just before the serious climbing started - this cycling lark sure is sweaty work! With every upward roll of the wheel

the scenery became more and more spectacular. I often stopped to look back to see the beautiful mountains all wonderfully clear, but wispy cloud ever present adding to the vastness. Crevassed glaciers shone blue and looked as if they could slide off the face of the steep mountain sides at any time. The peaks in front beckoned as we climbed out of the valley and onto the ridge (but still with as steady a climb as ever). The mountain Fannaroki came into view, a target on previous expeditions, and as I gazed at it in awe I was tooted from a vehicle behind. I turned quickly to greet the "tooter" in an appropriate English fashion only to find it was the 44th support bus hot on the trail. I stopped briefly to discuss the situation concerning the "tete de la course" and the main "peleton".

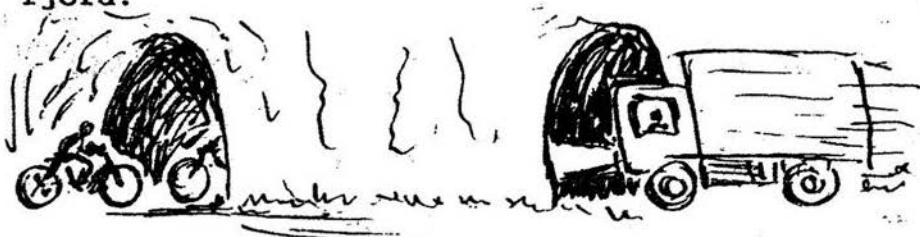


Cycling then resumed with a climb to 1420 m.o.h. before we started dropping down, as indicated by posts every 100 m of descent. Massive speeds were reached on "Italian Job" style roads with hairy hairpins just whenever you thought you were going to break the world land speed record. We were later to learn that the van didn't have an exactly easy time of it. After a 4615 ft descent the team regrouped beside the fjord at Skjolden, and a very pleasant site was found. Unfortunately all the local shops were closed (Saturday afternoon), so

FH and Phil took off on a food hunt whilst we rested at base. Everybody showered and ate well, finishing the day with an evening walk which ended at the biscuit shop.

Sunday 2nd August

The day of the Sabbath meant everyone was up a tad later than usual for the next stage of the ride to Gaupne on the other side of the fjord. Phil and the van took the short route on the main road. The cyclists headed round the minor road, cutting through the mountain side in the form of several unlit tunnels, which proved entertaining. The cross country convoy wobbled through the darkness, following the dim light of a Petzel head torch as American 4WD's tore past, sending some of the party into the gravel side-way, and one into the tunnel wall. The going was fairly easy, the road hugging the side of the fjord.



On arrival at Feigum the party split with FH, Matt, Mike and Charlie deciding to navigate the slippery slope to a suitable photo-point to view the foaming 218 m (700 ft+) vertical drop of the Feigumfoss waterfall, shrouded with mist. Soon they were on their way to join the others at Urnes. Frank and Matt took a quick stroll up to the local tourist attraction which was the oldest church building in Norway. We then cycled down to meet the small ferry which was just arriving, and we managed to pile on the bikes



for the short journey over the fjord to Solvorn. To everyone's disappointment the one and only kiosk was ferme. The next part of the ride was a hard one, up the steep and winding road through damp fog up onto the main road. This continued up and up until we crossed the ridge and began to drop down to the mecca known to all as Gaupne. A ride past the smart shopping complex brought us, wet and tired, to the camp site to find Phil had kindly put up all the tents, bless him!

Another welcoming discovery was that the town kafe was open till 9.p.m. and the coffee was only 5 kr a cup. this seemed an irresistible offer for Phil, Mike, Matt and Kev who dashed down after washing up. having sat in the warmth supping a cup we began to notice an elderly bloke, obviously local, who seemed to be listening to our conversation. After a while he sidled over, which became a bit of a habit. During this to-ing and fro-ing he gradually unravelled his life story. Asmund, as we learned he was called, had worked for Townsend Toresen from Southampton and Portsmouth. While he worked

there he had been under the captain involved in the Zebrugge disaster, and spoke highly of him. On his other travels, to the Carribean for instance, he had met Roger Moore of 007 fame, and Roger Whittaker of ...mmm... Roger Whittaker fame. Other tales involved Christmas in San Francisco, his sister and Jimmy Savile, and so on. Kev didn't say no when he offered us all a Pils, and by the time FH arrived after a Yatzee match, Asmund was jumping up and slapping the table in hysterics. Fortunately closing time drew ever closer, and the talk that night was of nothing but our interesting encounter with a real well-travelled local.

Monday 3rd August

The hot sun shone through the tent. The morning dew was evaporating as the song of the early birds gently woke us from our soft and elegant slumber - I WISH! I got up to brave torrential rain and fog so thick that I couldn't see my hand in front of my face. Obviously we were not discouraged and we were all fighting fit for the last day of the cycle tour.

We were bound for Nigardsbreen, an offshoot of the great Jostedalsbreen, the biggest glacier on mainland Europe. It was a popular attraction to which guided tours and coach trips are plentiful. FH, Phil and Mike had to (against their will, might I add) revisit the cafe and consume vast quantities of coffee and waffles - a living hell - whilst the other lads progressed up an easy angled road to Niagrdsbreen.



There was a notable change in temperature as we got nearer the glacier, and soon you could almost smell the ice (if you know what I mean). A beautiful blue light shone through the snow and ice making it look like the home of Superman. After meeting for lunch with the bus party all except Phil progressed towards the blue light like droves of zombies, slipping and sliding over the bulging, curving, glacially striated rock. Photos were taken and cheap jokes made about Fox's "glacier" mints (mainly later by Phil). into the van, and back down the road, bikes'n'all!

Dinner and drying out back at Gaupne, until we ventured back to our local haunt, the cafe. Unfortunately no Donny Asmund to buy us drinks, so we were forced to stick to the cheap but good coffee. Matt gorged himself into a fattened stupour on custard cake, Norwegian style.

Tuesday 4th August

After another very wet night dawned another very wet day. We decided to leave the fjord country and head south east hoping for better weather in the lee of the mountains. A swift visit to an ancient stone with a runic inscription at Sogndalsjora, then we caught the ferry over Sognfjord. For a fleeting moment the sun threatened to shine, and we almost saw some classic scenery. At Laerdal lunch was taken, and a few looked around the old town before we hit the road again. This is the ancient east west route through Norway, and at several points traces of older roads could be seen. It was amazing that there was any route at all as in some places the steep sided valley seemed far too narrow for the river and the road.

At Borgund we stopped to view the stavekirk, one of the finest medieval buildings

in Norway, then it was on and up until we crossed the 1000 m.o.h. height. We dropped down to Vang in the Valdres region where we set up camp beside the lake. Matt and Phil made light of the weather conditions by going for a swim, for several seconds before Matt lost something of value, so he came out. The nearby mountains appeared and disappeared as the rain clouds scudded over, and white capped waves crashed into the shore a few metres from our little encampment.

Wednesday 5th August

Morning dawned and to our immense surprise it was still persistently precipitating (pouring down). As this was our spare day after another amazingly quick breakfast (I'm sure I did eat something, I think) the party split up. Matt, Phil, Charlie and Frank went climbing whilst three lazy gits called Kev, Jim and Mark decided a day's fishing would suit their style more. After paying the dwarf we found hiding under the kiosk counter in a shoe box, we were given two oars and promised a couple of hours of good fishing.

The intrepid fishermen piled into the boat leaving Kev to row us out, and row us out he did, at least three feet, before a one person one oar situation we adopted. Some hearty pulls took us about 100 m where we shipped our oars and dropped our tackle overboard. three minutes later we had drifted down the lake and we had to row back. This carried on for another half hour before we decided that fishing was useless and a general mess around would be more fun. After losing an oar or two and almost drowning we decided to return and visit the T.V. room, but all we saw there was the test card. Norwegians have no afternoon tele - shock, horror!

The mountain party stopped off at the first shop up the road for a couple of blocks of chocolate, then headed up the valley side to make for a distant radio mast on a hill top. We began on a winding road through the forest on the way to the ridge, before crossing a stream and heading off into dense forest. Hours later after battling through the woods we still hadn't reached the road crossing the ridge and the radio mast appeared to be getting no closer.

After more battling e decided to stop for lunch, nuts raisins, Husman and chocolate. It was then ecie to take a circular route back down the hill as the clouds had closed in and the radio mast still hadn't got any closer. We crashed through the undergrowth and found a vague track and eventually reached the main road as it started to rain - for a change.

Thursday 6th August

It rained in the morning. Heavily. We packed with out any great urgency and went. Driving on generally south east the country became less mountinous, and eventually we were travelling through woods and farmland, Suddenly it wasn't raining! Unbelievable! We arrived on the western side of Mjosa, the biggest lake in Norway. Our destination was Gjovik, and we found a site on the outskirts of town. Unfortunately our next door neighbours included a young man who had had a lot to drink! After the meal he old hands decided to hit the town. It was pretty dead, except for a few boy racers in souped up beetles, but we did witness the big event of the evening, the arrival of the last train from Oslo at 9.30p.m. After that all the inhabitants apparently went to bed. We toured the town centre, and Matt and Mike marked out territory in the city park before we walked back and

discovered a "chippie" open to 11 p.m. not far from the site. On our return we gave this information to Kev, who acted upon it!

Friday 7th August

We didn't mean to wake early, but we had not taken into account the workmen who started to put a metal roof on a nearby building at 6.30 a.m! Before long we were back at Krattebol, and as we sat down to eat that evening Margaret drew our attention to two elk in the neighbouring field. (The same two we saw in 1990, perhaps?). This triggered off an elk hunt in the nearby wood, and using our true scouting tracking skills we made enough noise to drive out of the entire animal population of Nord Odal.

Kewwent fishing. He caught nothing.

Saturday 8th August

We bid goodbye to Margaret and Alf Johan Holt, the landowner. We headed for Eidsvoll where Phil attempted unsuccessfully to use his credit cards for a final pressie, then rolled out onto the E6. As the afternoon drew on we passed a small sign which told us we were in Sweden. A good site was found at Unda. That evening the party broke up, some to fish, some to swim, some to rock climb, and some to take photographs. A misunderstanding about the site facilities led to the assumption by the older members of the group that the other adventurers had gone off and got lost. They were in the TV lounge watching something very Swedish...

Sunday 9th August

We hit the road for the final run down to the seaport. Spice was added to the proceedings

by the absence of an open filling station but as the needle reached the red line and we found one. We were at the terminal well in time. No problems like 1990! The crossing was calm, and the old hands, plus Charlie, made for the cold table, stuffing themselves before waddling off to night clubs, bars, casinos or bed.

Monday 10th August

The last day dawned, and before long Britain was sighted. There was no problem at the customs - no big knives! We were soon at the filling station buying petrol, crisps, sweets etc. It was about 1.30p.m. that we set off and just after 5.00 p.m. when the bus rolled up at school after a trouble free journey.

POSTSCRIPT

This is the part of the account where all the thank-yous are made. The unit owes a lot to all the time, help and generosity given by a few very dedicated people. Firstly I would like to thank Frank for the organisation of the whole affair and for putting up with us lads. Secondly I would like to thank Phil for all his help at each camp site and for putting up with us and Frank, and lastly, I would like to thank all the lads for putting up with each other, Frank and Phil... Seriously though, it was a great trip which would not of been such a success without the hospitality of our good friends Margaret, Ernest and Ben at Krattebøl.

Matt Wilton.

