

THE MANCHESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
FOREIGN TREK 1991 VANOISE



On Pointe de la Sana (3436 m, 11,270 ft), the highest of our six 3000 m summits



Crossing Lac des Vaches, with Grande Casse



On the ascent to Grand Roc

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I originally word-processed the text of this log in the autumn of 1991 on an Apple LCII using ClarisWorks. I completed this version with a detailed walking route summary, digital sketch map, scanned images and various appendices in 2020, using an Apple Macintosh and Microsoft Word, with iPhoto and Preview to edit the images.

I scanned some images from 35 mm slides taken for the Trek Reunion in November 1991, and some from 6" x 4" prints. Time has taken its toll on the images, particularly the slides taken in high contrast. Editing has improved them somewhat, but there remains a mismatch in colour balance between slides and prints (particularly the blue skies and green grass) that my simple editors cannot correct. Where I have been unable to produce a reasonable colour balance I have converted them to monochrome.

To keep the overall file size down, all the images are low resolution, but of sufficient quality to display fairly well at A4 page size. The average size of the 172 images used is about 53 kB, giving a file size of about 10.5 MB, the size of about 4 medium digital compact camera images.

After such a long time it has obviously been impossible to obtain permission from individuals to use images which include them. Anyone who finds this a problem should contact me.

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Grande Motte from Col de la Leisse

<b>LEADER</b>	Allan Witton	
<b>STAFF</b>	Adrian Dobson Graham Seel	
Sadly Simon Duffy had to withdraw from the party with a back injury shortly before departure and I am very grateful to Graham Seel for stepping in at such short notice.		
<b>TREKKERS</b>	7Md David Gilpin* 7Mm Stephen Waite 6Ma Andrew Hesp** 6Mb Grant Mitchell 6Mb John Savery 6CG Matthew Higginson* 5R Nicholas Taylor 5S Nick Gartside* 5U James Marks* 5V William Manning* 4E Christopher Willson 4M Marek Petecki	(* denotes a previous Foreign Trek)
		12 Trekkers
<b>DATES</b>	Monday 8th July to Monday 22nd July (15 days)	
<b>COST</b>	£290	



By the snout of the Glacier de l'Arpont

Standing: Nick Gartside, Grant Mitchell, Nicholas Taylor, Adrian Dobson, James Marks, Matthew Higginson, Andrew Hesp, David Gilpin, Steve Waite, Christopher Willson, Allan Witton  
Kneeling: Marek Petecki, Graham Seel, William Manning, John Savery



The whole party on Pointe du Pisset, with Dôme de la Sache in the centre and Mont Blanc on the right

## THE ROUTE

The Vanoise was chosen as the venue for this first MGS venture into hut-to-hut trekking principally because:

- there is a main line railway station at Bourg-St-Maurice, with easy access to Arc 2000;
- it has an excellent network of paths and lots of conveniently situated huts;
- there are numerous easy walkers peaks, and I planned to bag as many as we could;
- we would be able to access areas of the park we couldn't when camping in 1986.

The route was broadly similar to that of the 1986 camping Trek, without the need to keep dodging out of the National Park to camp, and without the excursion to Aiguille de la Grande Sassière, which really requires a camp in la Grande Combe and glacier travel equipment. The route was in 3 sections between village supply points:

1. 4 days from Arc 2000 to Pralognan, going round the east and south of Grande Casse, rather than the north and west;
2. 3 days from Pralognan to Termignon, along a similar route to 1986 but with a more ambitious excursion;
3. 4½ days from Termignon to Val d'Isère, this time through the Rocheure valley.

## OUTLINE ITINERARY AND WALKING ROUTE SUMMARY

		15 days	2 days travel	1 free day			12 walking days				
July		All heights in metres			Height	Distance	Ascent	Daily totals			Naismith
					m	km	m	km	Ascent	Descent	Time
8/9	Rail/coach	Manchester to Bourg-St-Maurice									
9	Coach	Arc 2000	2100								
	Trek	Refuge Mont Pourri (CAF)	2370		8	480					
	Excursion	<b>Aiguille Grive</b>		2732	3	280		11	760	490	3-00
10	Trek	Refuge du Col du Palet (PNV)	2590		10	520					
	Excursion	<b>Pointe du Chardonnet</b>		2870	3	280		13	800	580	3-45
11	Trek	Refuge de la Leisse (PNV)	2487		14	760					
	Excursion	<b>Pointe Boussac (N)</b>		3090	3	370		17	1130	1230	6-00
12	Trek	Pralognan (Gîte)	1418					20	450	1520	4-30
13	Free day	Pralognan (Gîte)	1418								
14	Trek	Refuge du Fond d'Aussois (CAF)	2324					17	1570	670	5-40
15	Excursion	<b>Grand Roc</b> and <b>Rateau d'Aussois</b>	3316	3131	13	1070		16	1250	1250	6-20
					3	180					
16	Trek	Termignon (Gîte)	1302					20	490	1510	4-40
17	Trek	Refuge de l'Arpont (PNV)	2309					9	1170	160	3-00
18	Trek	Refuge Entre Deux Eaux (Priv.)	2130					16	780	960	4-30
19	Trek	Refuge de la Femma (PNV)	2352		8	320					
	Excursion	<b>Pointe de la Sana</b> (11,274 ft)		3436	9	1100		17	1420	1200	5-30
20	Trek	Refuge Fond des Fours (PNV) via <b>Pointe du Pisset</b>	2537					15	1260	1080	4-10
	Excursion	<b>Pointe des Fours</b>		3033	10	720					
				3072	5	540					
21	Trek	Val d'Isère	1820					7	--	720	1-40
21/22	Coach/rail	Val d'Isère to Manchester						Naismith daily average			4h-45

Grand Totals:	Distance	Ascent	Descent	Time
(All 12 days walking)	178 km 111 miles	11,080 m 36,400 ft	11,360 m 37,300 ft)	53 hours
<b>Daily average:</b> (excluding 21st)	15.5 km 9.7 miles	1010 m 3300 ft	970 m 3200 ft)	4h-40

A Trek is a walk from one place to the next (with full packs).

An Excursion is a return walk without full packs

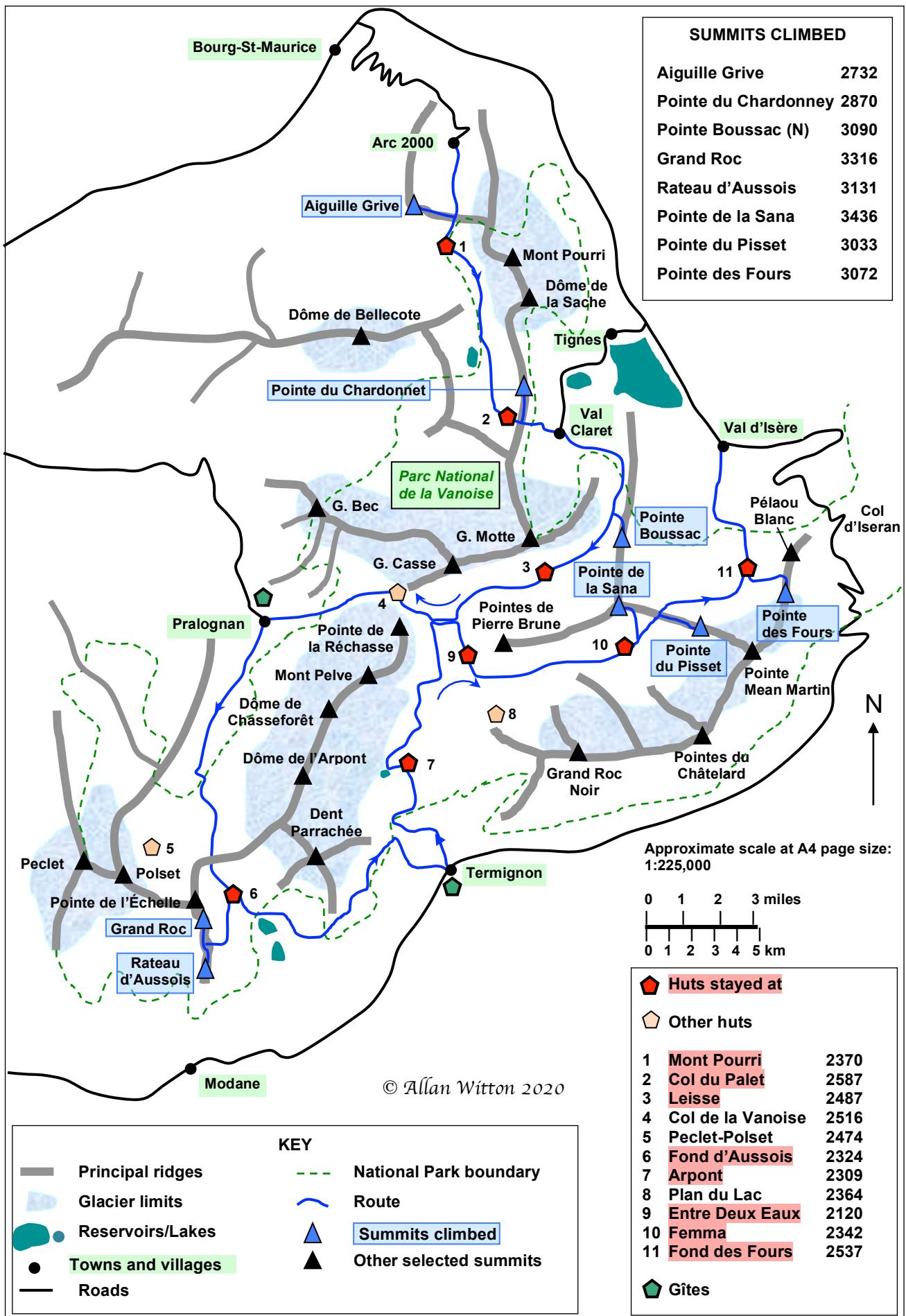
**Grand Roc** Summits are in bold

CAF French Alpine Club hut

PNV Vanoise National Park hut

Naismith Times according to Naismith's Rule: 12 min/km and 10 metres/min for ascent

## SKETCH MAP OF THE ROUTE



## MAPS

All maps are Institut Géographique National (IGN)

### Scale Sheet

**Carte Topographique** 1:100,000 53 Grenoble - Mont Blanc

This covers the whole route and gives a good overall view of the area. It's fine for general route planning and logistics, but it lacks the fine detail of paths and contours.

**Didier & Richard Edition** 1:50,000 11 Vanoise

This also covers the whole route and is an excellent map with sufficient detail that the 1:25,000 maps were hardly needed. It was the recommended map this year.

**Carte Touristique** 1:25,000 235 Vanoise Tarantaise  
236 Vanoise Grande Casse - Dent Parrachée  
237 Vanoise Haute Maurienne

These have excellent and accurate detail and are ideal for following the route when off waymarked paths.

[2020 Note: The coverage and numbering of the three 1:25,000 sheets have changed.]

## GUIDES

**Walking the French Alps: GR5** **Martin Collins** **Cicerone** **1984**

A section of this long distance footpath passes through the Vanoise

**Vanoise Park** **Robin G Collomb** **West Col** **1988**

This is essentially a climbing guide and was used to decide which summits MGS treks might be able to attempt.

[2020 Note: The following is a more recent and comprehensive guide which includes the Vanoise.

**Walking in the Tarantaise & Beaufortain Alps** **J. W. Akitt** **Cicerone** **1995**

The Old Trekkers have done two short, circular hut-to-hut tours in the Vanoise, in 2017 from Pralognan round the Vanoise Glacier Field and in 2019 from Val d'isère through the Fours, Rocheure and Leisse valleys. The illustrated Logs for these Treks are available.]

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## WALKING TIMES

In the following itinerary, for each day's walking a table of times taken (in hours and minutes) between points along the route is given, together with the cumulative time. These are times spent on the move and exclude stops. The time given in brackets is the total time for the day including stops. A 'leg' is normally about 50 minutes walking (followed by a break of about 10-15 minutes), though this varies if the walking is exceptionally hard or easy or if there is a particular objective such as a hut, stream or summit ahead. The distance walked and height climbed each day include any optional excursions.

## ITINERARY

Monday 8th July	Rail/coach	Manchester > Paris
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We assembled at Piccadilly station at 7.00 a.m. to catch the 7.40 train to Euston, followed by the 11.30 train from Victoria and the 13.30 sailing from Folkestone. At Boulogne a local rail strike meant that we had to be taken by coach part of the way then catch two other trains and we reached Paris Gare du Nord well behind schedule.

We thought we still had time to do as originally intended and walk through Paris to take in some of the sights rather than using the Metro. As someone had forgotten a Paris map navigation was a little tricky, and we had to take bearings from wall-mounted street plans and follow the stars in a generally southerly direction. The planned leisurely stroll turned into a strenuously brisk training walk in order to arrive at Gare de Lyon with time in hand.

In the station thronging with people who were boarding the numerous night trains there was poor departure information and officials were hard to find, and it took some time to establish which platform our train was due to depart from. Just as we were about to board the train a display flashed up to indicate that 'our' train was to depart from a different platform on the far side of the station two minutes later.

A sprint through the crowds got us to the correct train precisely at the departure time of 11.30 p.m., but then it didn't pull out for another 15 minutes. We found our booked couchettes and although the compartments were hot and noisy, we all managed to get some sleep.

<b>Tuesday 9th July</b>	<b>Rail/bus</b>	<b>Bourg-St-Maurice &gt; Arc 2000</b>	
	<b>Trek</b>	<b>Refuge du Mont Pourri</b>	<b>2370</b>
	<b>Excursion</b>	<b>Aiguille Grive</b>	<b>2732</b>

Our day began at 6.30 a.m. as the train pulled into Chambery station where we had to change to a local train to continue to Bourg-St-Maurice. We had time to buy coffee and croissants before the train left at 7.17, and we arrived in a sunny Bourg-St-Maurice at 9.26.

The cable car which in 1986 linked Bourg-St-Maurice to Arc 1600 has been replaced by a funicular railway, which on the day we arrived was closed for maintenance. However, there was a regular bus service up to the ski resorts, so after a quick trip into town for coffees and supplies of fresh bread, we boarded the bus which took us beyond Arc 1600 (where I had assumed we would have to start walking) and all the way to Arc 2000. This extra convenience of a 400 m higher starting point was almost cancelled out by losing several rucksacks en route: as we rounded a hairpin approaching Arc 2000, a side-locker door sprang open, discharging the rucksacks, and only collisions with the crash barrier prevented them rolling down several hundred feet of mountainside.

We arrived at Arc 2000 at 11.30 where it wasn't as sunny as in the valley, and the Mont Pourri peaks were hidden by cloud. We set off at 11.50 and in one leg were just short of Col de la Chal.



At Arc 2000, ready to start the walking

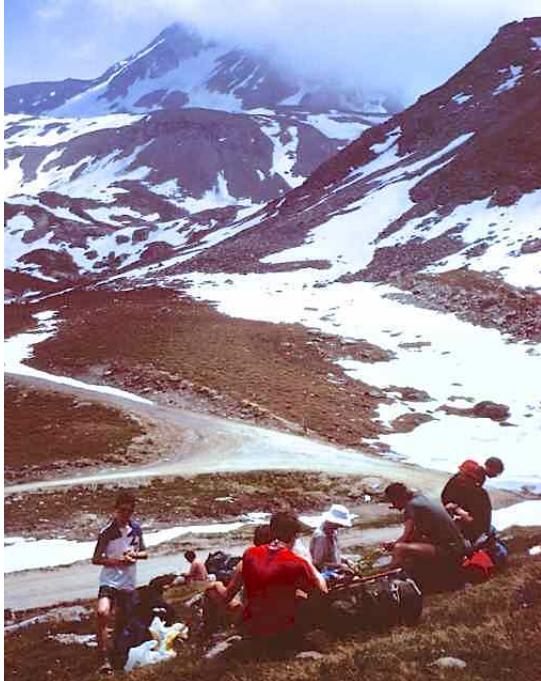


The track up to Col de la Chal with Aiguille Grive ahead

At the col Adrian volunteered to be 'guardian of the rucksacks' while the rest of us went off to bag Aiguille Grive, an easy ascent along a good path with a bit of a scramble along the ridge to the summit.

When we arrived the cloud lifted and the sun came out giving fine views over the Isère valley, but it was overcast and gloomy looking south towards Grande Motte.

On Col de la Chal



On the summit with a sunny view over the Isère valley

We returned to the col and continued south along the track and just as we crossed Crête de Lanchettes a storm broke and for the last 20 minutes of our descent to the hut we were caught in a violent hailstorm.



View over the hut with Mont Pourri on the left and distant Grande Motte hidden by cloud

As we were quite a small party and it was early in the season I had assumed that the huts wouldn't be very busy and so hadn't booked our hut accommodation in advance. This was so we could vary our route easily if required. The friendly and helpful hut warden expressed surprise at my decision and said that the main huts were likely to be quite busy, and she later phoned the Col de Palet and the Leisse huts to book us in for the following two nights.

Fortunately the Mont Pourri hut did have room to take us, all sleeping in one rather cramped dormitory with bunks on three tiers - not quite the black hole of Calcutta, but a reasonable approximation. The self-cooking facilities in one corner of the day room were adequate to cook in relays, but the washing facilities were crude - a log trough by the front door filled by a hose pipe!



The 'washroom'

<b>Times:</b>	Col de la Chal	1-05	1-05	<b>Distance:</b>	11 km	<b>Ascent:</b>	760 m
	Aiguille Grive	40	1-45			<b>Descent:</b>	490 m
	Col de la Chal	25	2-10				
	Mont Pourri hut	50	3-00	(5-00)			

<b>Wednesday 10th July</b>	<b>Trek Excursion</b>	<b>Refuge du Col du Palet Pointe du Chardonnet</b>	<b>2590 2870</b>
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Early morning sun on Grande Motte

It was a beautiful morning when we left at 9.00 for the idyllic walk in superb surroundings towards Lac de la Plagne, with the snow dome of Grande Motte clear on the skyline. We kept to the Col du Palet path and in two legs were just above Lac de la Plagne.





Leg stop above  
Lac de la Plagne,  
with Pointe de la  
Vallaisonay (3003)



View over Plan de Janin to Aiguille des Aimes (2822) on the left

We could easily have made the Col du Palet hut for lunch, but stopped just short on the shore of Lac du Grattaleu, by which time it was rather cloudy. As we looked across the lake up to our afternoon's objective of Pointe du Chardonnet, Graham suggested that the complete ridge might make an ideal 'Seel' horseshoe; a nice idea, but for the fact that it was much too rocky along its northern sweep.



View over Lac du Grattaleu to Pointe du Chardonnet, with our ascent route from Col du Palet on the right and the much rockier northern ridge on the left

At 2.00 we arrived at the hut, a large stone building with a separate wooden dormitory cabin, and left our packs there while we did the excursion to Pointe du Chardonnet. We had to kick steps in snow up to Col du Palet, from where the ridge walk was as easy as I had anticipated from the map, and contrary to the map there is a clear well worn path to the summit.

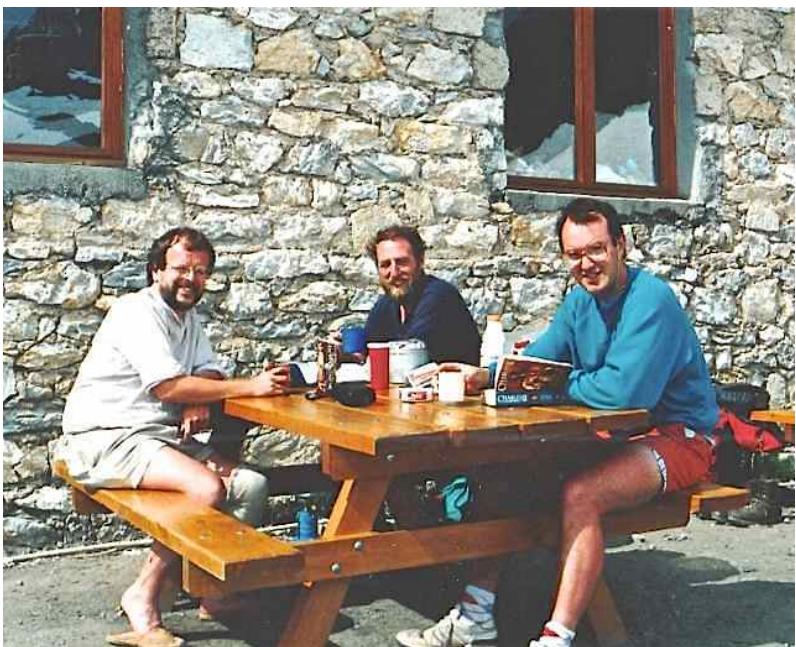


On the summit

The views were extensive and showed that there was a considerable amount of snow lying on the higher ground. Unfortunately the snow below Col du Palet was rather too soft to practise ice-axe braking on our return.



View south over Col du Palet (bottom right) to the rocky Aiguille Noire de Pramecou (2977), with Grande Motte on the left, Grande Casse on the skyline



The warden of the hut was rather officious, and there were notices prohibiting entry to the dormitory before 4 p.m. and self cooking before 5 p.m. There was also an interesting notice from the PNV park authority indicating that camping by some of the huts within the National Park was now permitted on payment of a fee. This wasn't the case in 1986, when in response to my letter I was told there was strictly no camping anywhere.

<b>Times:</b>	Lac de la Plagne	2-00	2-00	<b>Distance:</b>	13 km	<b>Ascent:</b>	800 m
	Col du Palet hut	1-00	3-00			<b>Descent:</b>	580 m
	Pointe du Chardonnet	30	3-30				
	Col du Palet hut	15	3-45	(7-00)			

<b>Thursday 11th July</b>	<b>Trek</b>	<b>Refuge de la Leisse</b>	<b>2487</b>
	<b>via</b>	<b>Col de la Leisse</b>	<b>2761</b>
	<b>Excursion</b>	<b>Pointe Boussac</b>	<b>3090</b>

It was another cloudless morning as we set off at 8.45 to plod our way up the snow again to Col du Palet.



View from Col du Palet over the Palet hut to the rocky Aiguille de Bacque (2651) and the snowy Dôme Pichères (3319)

The descent to Val Claret is steep in places and was made more difficult because the mountainside was much scarred by bulldozers making preparations for the 1992 Winter Olympics.



Starting the descent to Val Claret with Aiguille Noire de Pramecou again



Following a new piste with Val Claret and Lac de Tignes below, and our first view of Aiguille de la Grande Sassière (3747) (climbed in 1986) on the skyline

We restocked with supplies in the village then took the GR55 path and after the initial steep pull out of the village the 500 m ascent to Col de la Leisse is at a pleasant gradient with improving views of the big peaks all around.



Re-stocking in Val Claret



Leg stop on the walk up to Col de la Leisse



The summit of Grande Motte comes into view



On Col de la Leisse with Grande Motte

From evidence from the 1:25,000 map (and photos of the Leisse valley from the 1986 Trek) I thought it would be possible to reach one of the 3000 m peaks on the Rochers du Génépy ridge, with Pointe du Grand Pré appearing the easiest from the map.



View up to the Rochers du Génépy ridge, with Pointe du Grand Pré (3059) on the left and Pointe Boussac N (3090) on the right

While the keepers of the bags rested on the col, Graham and I and seven lads set off to investigate. We headed east between the two most northern of the Leisse lakes and then took a line slightly east of south rising diagonally over scree and soft snow slopes. We picked out the easiest line of ascent without reference to the map, and it brought us onto the ridge almost directly at 'the summit' where it was breezy and quite cool with some high cloud.

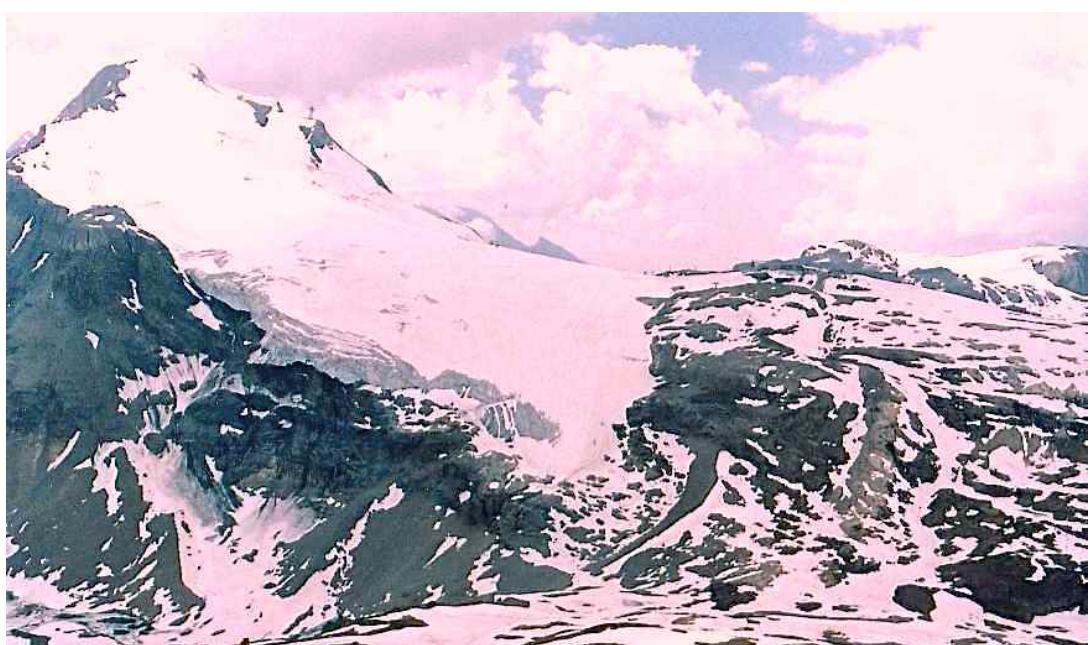
It was a fine viewpoint, particularly towards Grande Motte and down the Leisse valley, and along the ridge to Pointe de la Sana that we were to climb in 8 days time. To the south-east we could see that the high ground we would cross beyond Col de la Rocheure to reach the Fond des Fours hut still held lots of snow cover.



On the pathless ascent to Pointe Boussac, with Col de la Leisse below



On the summit of Pointe Boussac: Grant Mitchell, Nick Gartside, Graham Seel, Andrew Hesp, Steve Waite, Christopher Willson, Allan Witton Front: Marek Petecki, David Gilpin



Grande Motte and the glacier du Motte



View south along the ridge to Pointe de la Sana the prominent summit of Grand Roc Noir, and the distant, hazy Dent Parrachée



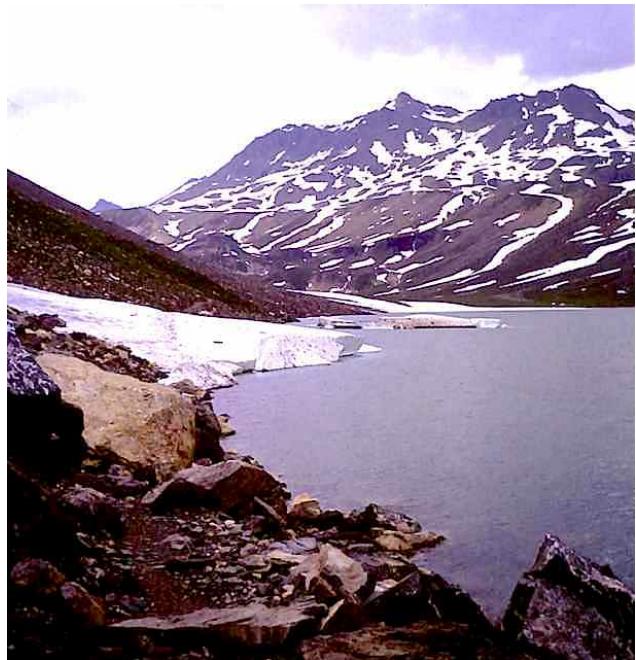
View down the upper Leisse valley, with Dent Parrachée behind Rochers de Pierre Brune on the left, the Vanoise Glacier Field in the centre, Grande Motte on the right, and Lac des Nettés in the valley bottom

Care was needed as we descended by the same route, as some of the scree was quite loose and most of the snow was too steep for safe glissading. When we reached the col and looked back at our route, a compass bearing confirmed that we had climbed to the northern summit of Pointe Boussac (3090) rather than Pointe du Grand Pré that we had set out for!

We left for the walk down to the hut in two groups, with the excursionists taking a short break before following the rest down for the long leg to the hut, where the back-markers arrived at 6.00.



View over Lac des Nettes to Pointes de Pierre Brune



Retrospective view to Pointe Boussac

The hut comprises 3 buildings: a warden's hut (with a shower room below - 10 francs for not much tepid water); a kitchen/day/dining room; and a separate dormitory.

The weather had been glorious for most of the day, with some cloud developing during the afternoon. We had a shower of rain while we cooked dinner, and at 9.00 it began to rain hard.



Cooking dinner under the eaves of the hut



Al fresco dinner during a pause in the rain

<b>Times:</b>	Val Claret	1-00	1-00	<b>Distance:</b>	17 km	<b>Ascent:</b>	1130 m
	Col de la Leisse	1-50	2-50			<b>Descent:</b>	1230 m
	Pointe Boussac	1-05	3-55				
	Col de la Leisse	50	4-45				
	Leisse hut	1-15	6-00	(9-15)			

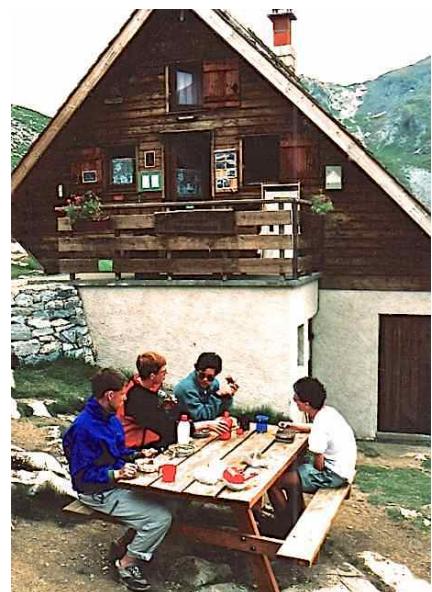
**Friday 12th July**

**Trek  
via**

**Pralognan  
Col de la Vanoise**

**1418  
2522**

Adrian had a pan of water boiling by 7.00 so that we could all have a cup of tea as soon as we came over from the dormitory.



The previous evening's cloud had dispersed and it was a beautiful day as we set off at 8.00 for the easy walk down the broad Leisse valley.



View over the hut and down the Leisse valley with Pointes de Pierre Brune and the distant cloud-topped Pointe de la Réchasse



The Leisse hut has a washroom similar to the Mont Pourri hut!



Our cracking early pace down the gently sloping valley slowed only when we reached the zig-zags beyond Pont de Croé-Vie which lead up to the blockhouse at the lip of the hanging valley above. From that point there's a fine retrospective view up the Leisse valley.

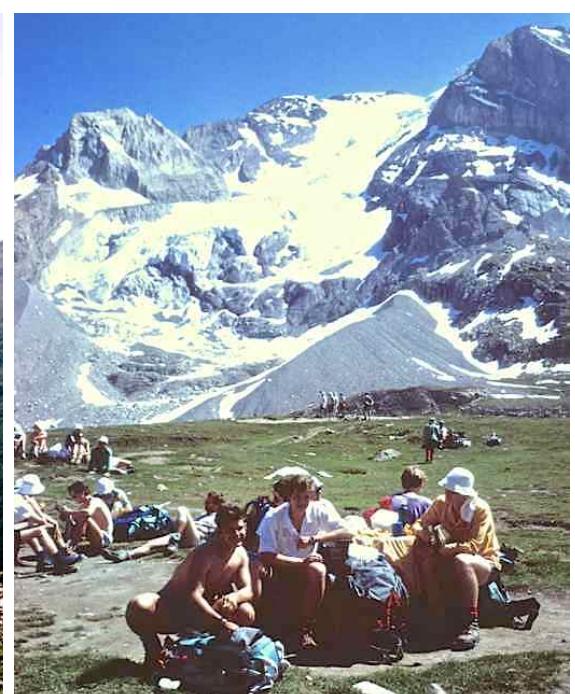
We could also see Grand Roc Noir (3582), which was included as a possible excursion on the provisional itinerary. It would have been a very long day to have attempted it from the Entre deux Eaux hut and the west ridge approach looked formidably steep so we decided we would give it a miss.

The path then leads gently to Col de la Vanoise, where we arrived at 11.15 for an early lunch. The eyesore of a hut is situated in a superb position on the broad level col and beneath the glaciers and moraines coming down from Grande Casse.

Grand Roc Noir

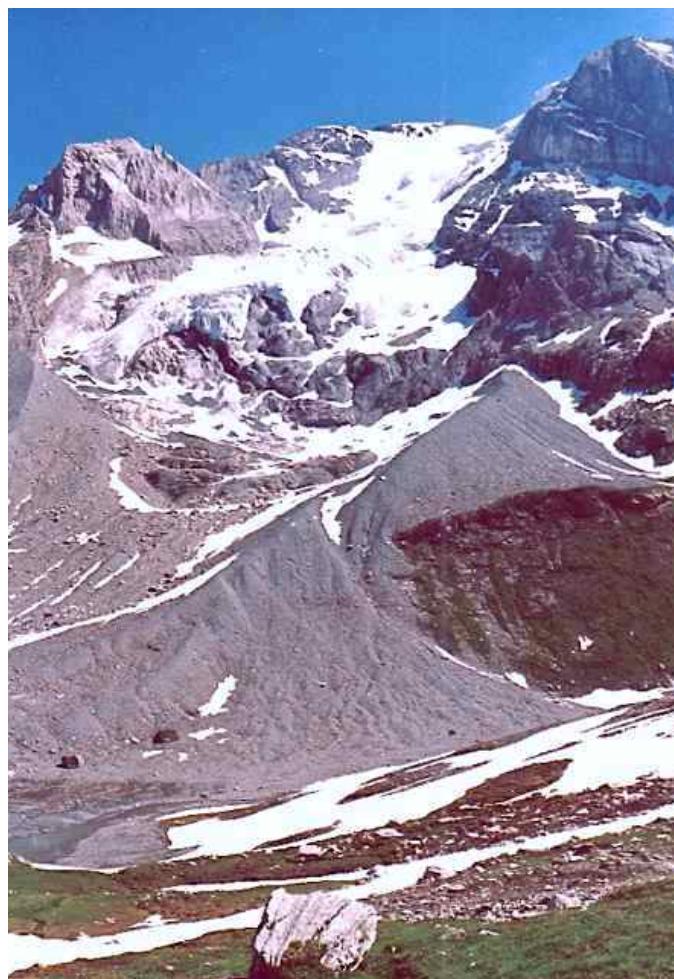


The upper Leisse valley with the dome of Grande Motte



Outside the Col de la Vanoise hut with Grande Casse

We left at 12.00 for the knee-jarring 1100 m descent via Lac des Vaches to Pralognan.



The Glacier des Grandes Couloirs tumbling from Grande Casse



Crossing Lac des Vaches



Heading down towards Pralognan with Dents de la Portetta (2844) across the valley

We had a leg-stop with drinks and ice creams at Refuge les Barmettes and arrived down in the village at 2.40 where it was very hot.



Rest and refreshment at the Barmettes refuge at Chalets de la Glière

The lads rested in the shade while Adrian and I went to the Tourist Office to enquire about gîte accommodation. We were directed to la Chevrerie which was easy to find 200 m north of the main square. There was no one there when we arrived to enquire, just a list to sign to book in for the night.



la Chevrerie

Though still fairly basic, the accommodation was luxurious compared with huts and comprised bedrooms, each with three double bunks, a large, fairly clean dining room and free hot showers in the bathroom. The main drawback was the kitchen; although it was large and had adequate cooking facilities it was very grubby.

We settled in and showered and then most lads went into town for a look round and to have a meal out. A choice of two excursions for the following day was offered: Petit Mont Blanc with its fine view of the Vanoise glaciers; and the Crête du Mont Charvet, an interesting ridge walk. However, after a rush of just two not-very-enthusiastic volunteers, a free day was declared instead! It sprinkled with rain from 4.30 with occasional rumbles of thunder.

<b>Times:</b>	Vanoise hut Pralognan	2-30 2-00	2-30 4-30	(6-40)	<b>Distance:</b>	20 km	<b>Ascent:</b>	450 m
							<b>Descent:</b>	1520 m

Pralognan is a picturesque village in a superb mountain setting, and one of my favourite places in the whole Alps. There is some skiing, accessed by the Mont Bochor cable car, but the landscape has not been scarred like that around Val d'Isère, Tignes and Val Claret.

It was a glorious day for a walk round the village, doing the washing and the shopping for supplies for the next 3 days, or even doing some mountain biking down real mountains!

The main square, with a view towards the Crête de Mont Charvet



Grand Marchet (2651) which towers over the village





Breakfast washing up done ...



... and the washing out to dry!

Some of the lads hired mountain bikes and discovered that the hire fee included one free ride up to Mont Bochor in the cable car in order to make the 600 m descent back to the village (fortunately without major mishap!), and there are lots of routes to follow around the village and into the Chavière valley.



Real mountain bikers

The guardian at the Mont Pourri hut had phoned to book our stays at the Col du Palet and Leisse huts, and during the afternoon we phoned to make hut bookings for the rest of our route. Unfortunately our proposed route of Termignon > Arpont > Femma (2 nights to include the Pointe de la Sana excursion) > Fours had to be changed to Termignon > Arpont > Entre Deux Eaux > Femma > Fours. This had the disadvantage that we would have to walk from the Entre Deux Eaux hut to the Femma hut on the morning of the Pointe de la Sana excursion. In fact this turned out to be a minimal disadvantage.

<b>Sunday 14th July</b>	<b>Trek via</b>	<b>Refuge du Fond d'Aussois Col d'Aussois</b>	<b>2324</b>
			<b>2914</b>

For the first time we didn't awake to a clear morning - it was dull and damp with low cloud as we resumed our trekking back through the village at 7.10. Instead of clearing as we hoped, it soon began to drizzle, and it rained on and off for the whole of the easy walk up the Chavière valley to Ritort. The wet conditions coupled with poor visibility made it a rather tedious and dreary morning's walk.



Heading up the Chavière valley in gloomy conditions

Just before we reached Ritort it began to pour and we took shelter in the large herdsman's hut there. Though the herdsman was busy making cheese, he made us welcome and we took the opportunity to have a snack for elevenses and to buy some cheese for lunch. The weather still didn't look like clearing so in a brief lull in the downpour we set off in full waterproofs for Col d'Aussois.

The steep path climbs without difficulty and we made good progress for the first half of the ascent, but the final 500 m was a bit of a struggle, especially for Matthew Higginson who was finding the gradient and the conditions particularly difficult. The rain had stopped by then but the higher we climbed the stronger was the northerly wind and it was very cold.



First leg stop on the ascent to Col d'Aussois



At the second leg stop just short of Col d'Aussois

For the final part of the ascent we shared carrying Matthew's rucksack between the rest of the party and we made slow progress over snow patches to the col where Matthew arrived pretty exhausted. Given the poor conditions we decided to omit the short excursion to Pointe de l'Observatoire and head straight down and out of the wind.

There was a remarkable change in conditions over the col; out of the wind it was much warmer and the cloud blowing over the ridge was dispersing over the sunlit mountainsides below us, giving us a clear view of the Amont and Aval lakes.

Matthew quickly warmed up and recovered his strength and we walked down to where the sun broke through to stop for lunch.



Sunlit mountainsides beyond Col d'Aussois



By the time we had walked down to the hut it was sunny and warm, which gave us a chance to dry out our clothes and boots.

The stone-built CAF hut is much older than the wooden PNV huts and has a real 'hut' atmosphere with a cosy day room above a large basement dormitory.

The almost subterranean dormitory has a door and just one small window at one end, and when full of sleeping bodies it was an even closer approximation to the black hole of Calcutta than the Mont Pourri dormitory.

<b>Times:</b>	Ritort	2-25	2-25	<b>Distance:</b>	17 km	<b>Ascent:</b>	1570 m
	Col d'Aussois	2-15	4-40			<b>Descent:</b>	670 m
	Fond d'Aussois hut	1-00	5-40	(8-00)			

<b>Monday 15th July</b>	<b>Excursion and</b>	<b>Grand Roc Rateau d'Aussois</b>	<b>3316</b>
			<b>3131</b>

Having booked in at the hut for two nights the guardian was interested in our objective for the day which was to climb Rateau d'Aussois. He made two suggestions, firstly that Pointe de l'Echelle was a better summit and just as easy as Rateau d'Aussois 'just like as the path outside the hut' he said, and secondly that there was a shepherd's path not shown on the maps which contoured the south-east flanks of Grand Roc to join the Col de la Masse path and avoid the loss of height down to Pont de la Sétaria.



A beautiful day as we were about to set off from the hut

Leaving John Savery at the hut for a rest day we set off at 9.20 under clear skies with just wisps of cloud still dispersing from the previous day's storm. We crossed the marshy plain south of the hut, crossed the stream and headed up above point 2239 where we did find traces of a path leading round to the main GR5 path junction at about 2400 m..



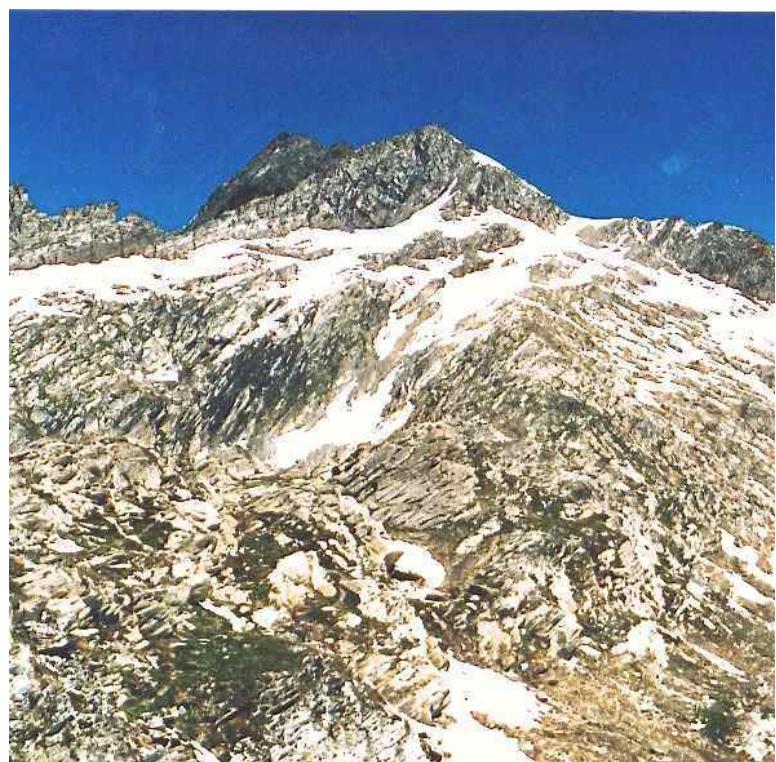
First leg stop where the shepherd's path meets GR5 path, with a view of the Pointe de Labby - Dent Parrachée ridge

It was then a steep and strenuous 500 m climb over broken rock and snow patches up to the col. The view from the col came as a brilliant surprise; in perfect visibility we could see as far as the Ecrins massif 25 miles to the south-west, with all the big, snow-capped peaks, Barre des Ecrins (4102), Mont Pelvoux (3932), la Meije (3983) and others, crystal clear on the skyline.



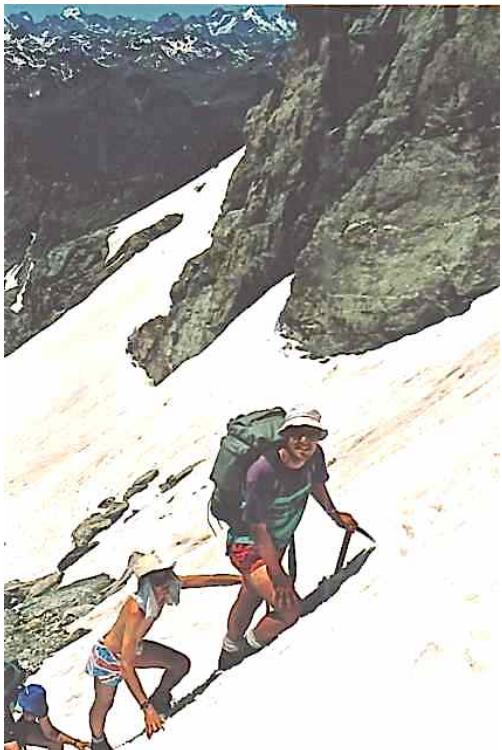
On Col de la Masse with the surprise view south west to the Ecrins

The ascent to Rateau d'Aussois looked easy enough, so we thought we would try Pointe de l'Echelle first. The path promised by the warden wasn't in evidence so we followed the crest of the broad ridge leading north up to a T-junction with the east ridge of Grand Roc, where there was a snow bank to climb to gain the east ridge. It was easy going over snow patches and rocky outcrops until we had almost reached the Grand Roc ridge.



View of Pointe de l'Echelle (3422) on the left, Grand Roc (3316) and the broad ridge leading to the horizontal 'arête' to its right

There our progress seemed to have come to an end; cliffs blocked the direct route to the summit of Grand Roc and ahead was a very steep wall of snow leading to what appeared to be a snow arête on the east ridge. The steep 10 m snow bank leading up to the ridge was soft enough to easily kick steps up, and I discovered that the top was a flat area of snow and not an arête. So the rest followed on, using my steps, without difficulty.



Graham and Steve Waite near the start of the snow climb ...



... and Marek Petecky and David Gilpin near the top

An easy scramble over large boulders then led us along the ridge to the summit, from where there was a superb panorama.



Arriving at the summit



View north-east to the Vanoise Glacier Field



View east to Dent Parrachée and peaks on the Italian frontier, 25 miles away



View north to the Vanoise Glacier Field to Mont Blanc, 25 miles away



View west to the Aiguille de Péclet (3562)- Aiguille de Polset (3528) Group



View south over our approach route to Col de la Masse, the dark peak of Rateau d'Aussois and peaks beyond the Arc valley

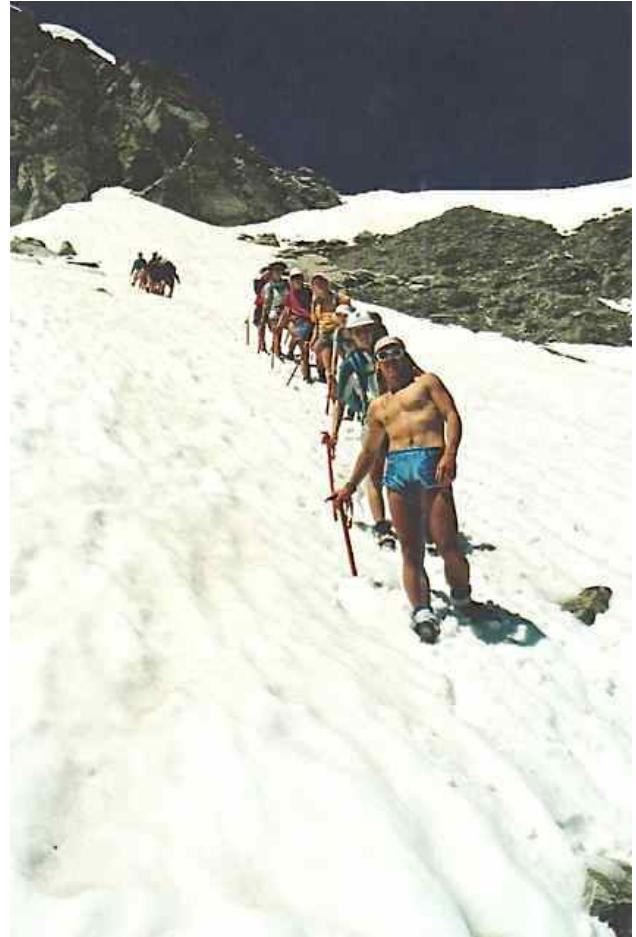
The route along the ridge which continues north towards Pointe de l'Echelle is a much more serious proposition. It is sharp and rocky and descends a little to a really narrow snow arête part way along it. We observed a guide roped to a single client making very slow progress along the ridge towards us. It was not a route for us I decided.



The ridge and narrow snow arête continuing towards Pointe de l'Echelle

We descended by the same route without difficulty, and took advantage of the soft snow on the lower snowfields to arrive at the col for lunch.

Four remained on the col while the rest of us headed off for Rateau d'Aussois. We lost the waymarks ascending the northern flanks, but the way up over large boulders and soft snow is easy enough by any route, and the broad, gentle ridge then leads to the summit with a large cairn, another excellent viewpoint overlooking Modane, 2000 m below

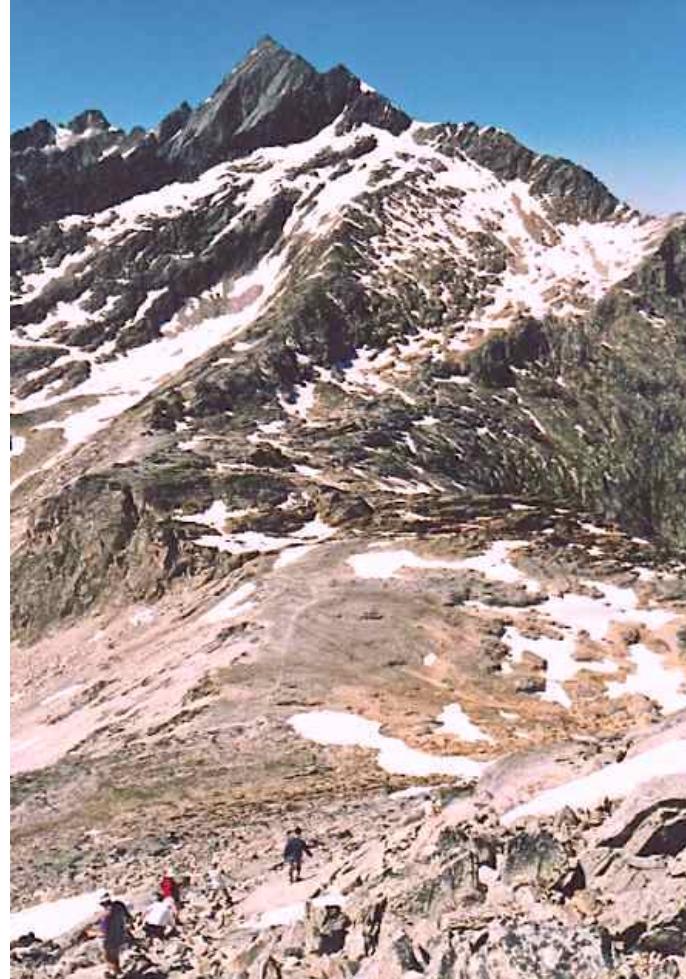


View from the summit of Rateau d'Aussois down to Modane

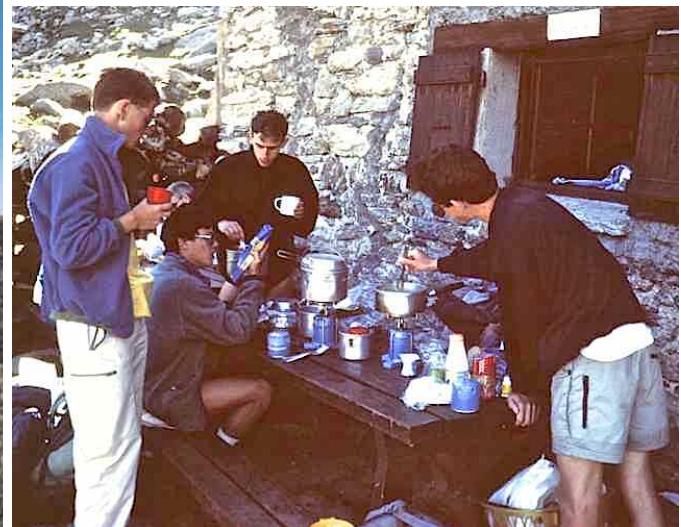


On the summit with a view of Pointe de l'Eschelle (top left), Grand Roc below it to the right, Mont Blanc (centre) and Pointe de Laby on the right

We returned to the col to collect the others and then took the same route back to the hut and arrived after one long leg at 6.10. On the descent to the col we met a small group who were on a Waymark Holidays hutting tour making the ascent. One of their number was an Old Mancunian who had trekked with Ian Bailey, and he was very pleased to hear that trekking at MGS was still going strong. Sadly I forgot to note his name.



Descending to Col de la Masse

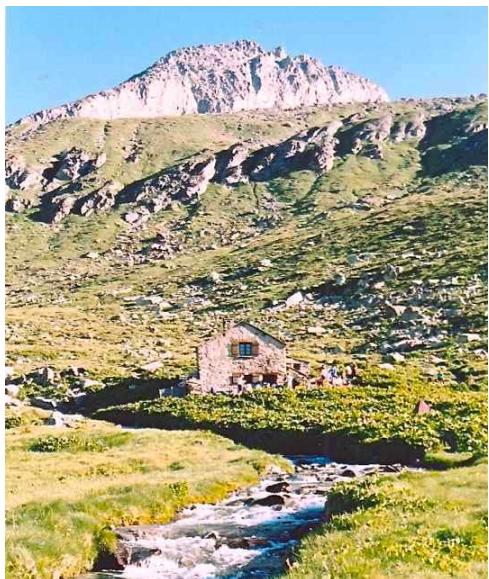


Cooking dinner outside the hut

<b>Times:</b>	Col de la Masse	1-30	1-30
	Grand Roc	1-25	2-55
	Col de la Masse	1-10	4-05
	Rateau d'Aussois	40	4-45
	Col de la Masse	20	5-05
	Fond d'Aussois hut	1-15	6-20 (8-50)

<b>Distance:</b>	16	km
<b>Ascent:</b>	1250	m
<b>Descent:</b>	1250	m

It was another beautiful day as we set off at 8.30 to join the balcony section of the GR5 as it loops right round the southern flanks of Dent Parrachée, easy and enjoyable walking with fine views. As we found in 1986, the only trickle of water was in Grasse Combe and Ruisseau de Bonne Nuit, and the only significant ascent was at la Turra.



Early morning sun on the hut



Nearly ready for the off



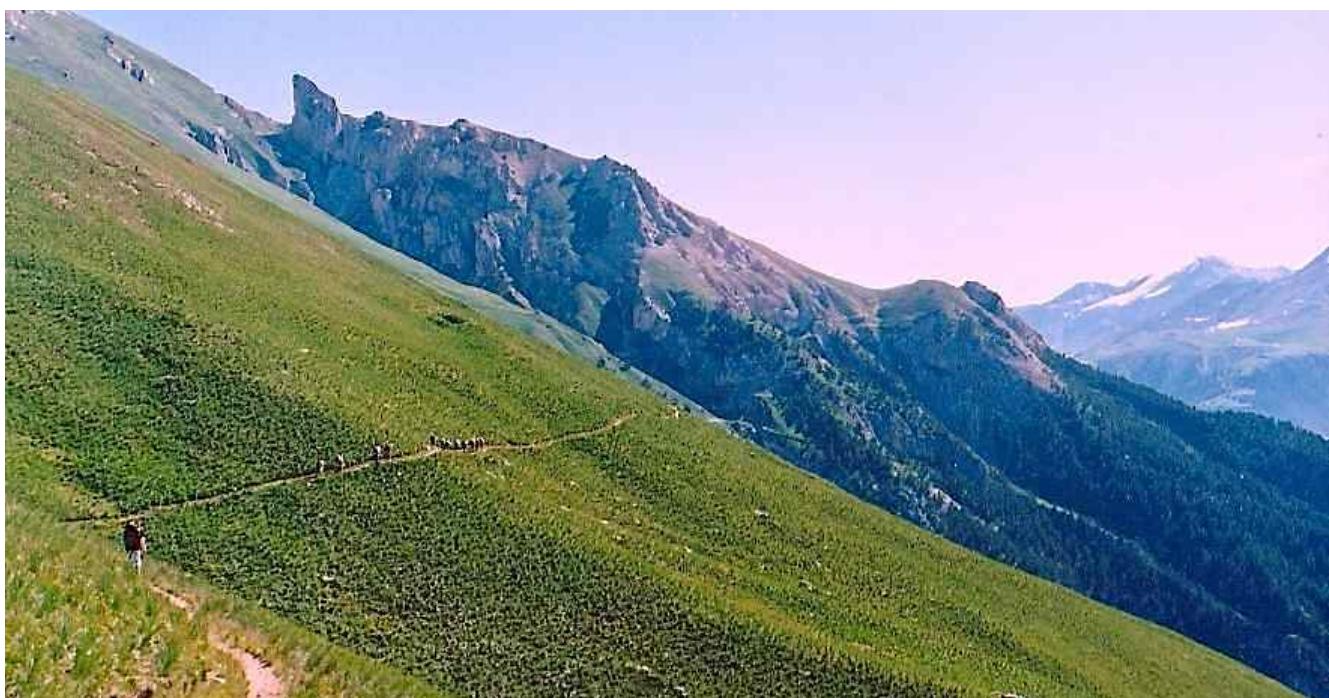
View across the Arc valley to the pointed Aiguille de Scolette



The Amont and Amal reservoirs



Our first view down into the Arc valley



View ahead to the shoulder of la Turra, with the pointed Roc des Corneilles (2679)



Retrospective view of Rateau d'Aussois on the left and Grand Roc and Pointe de l'Eschelle on the right



The upper Arc Valley with Grand Roc Noir on the left



Plenty of time for a post-lunch siesta today



Grande Casse, Grande Motte and Pointes de Pierre Brune come into view on the left, with Grand Roc Noir on the right

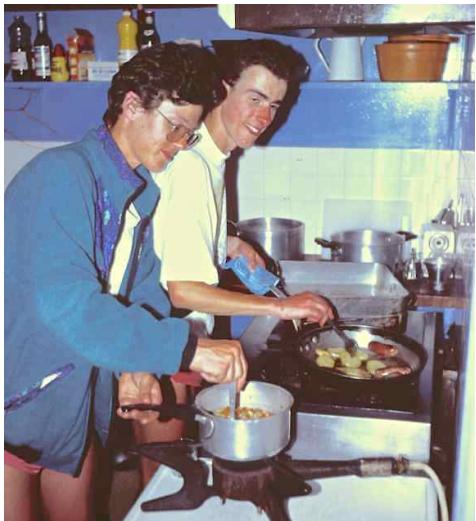
It was such easy walking with such fine views that we continued along the GR5 all the way to Montafia before turning off to descend to Termignon. It had been cool with a pleasant breeze at altitude, and it was very noticeable how the temperature rose as we made the 900 m descent to the sheltered village, where we arrived at 3.40. We easily located the gîte (la Rama) in the centre of the village and the warden's house nearby.

Termignon is a very rural village and quite a bit smaller and quieter than Pralognan. I had determined in advance that there was a shop in the village and there we stocked up with food for a slap-up evening meal with lots of salad, and with supplies for the following four days in the mountains.

The gîte offered really comfortable accommodation; lots of bedrooms with bunks for about 6, good showers and cooking facilities, and all very quiet.

An amble round the village after dinner had to be curtailed when it started raining quite heavily.

Termignon, with the flanks of Dent Parrachée that we had walked along that afternoon



Chefs Steve Waite and David Gilpin ... ... and the diners are Grant Mitchell, David Gilpin, John Savery and Steve Waite



<b>Times:</b>	Grasse Combe	1-30	1-30	<b>Distance:</b>	20 km	<b>Ascent:</b>	490 m
	Montafia	2-00	3-30			<b>Descent:</b>	1510 m
	Termignon	1-10	4-40	(7-10)			

The day was to be a fairly short one, but all uphill to the Arpont hut. Heavy overnight rain had stopped by the time we set off at 9.00 and occasional breaks in the heavy, low cloud gave hints that the weather might clear.



Adrian outside the Gite



A hopeful sunny interval

For variety we headed north to Pont du Chatelard to then follow the steep path up to le Mont. Drizzle set in during the first leg, then dense mist, and by the end of the second leg it was raining hard so we took shelter in a stone byre at l'Esseillon as a thunderstorm rattled hailstones the size of marbles on the roof for an hour.



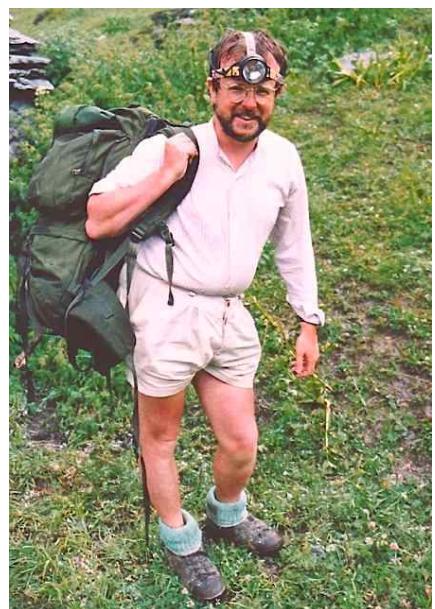
Second leg stop in the byre



Warm and dry sheltering from the thunderstorm



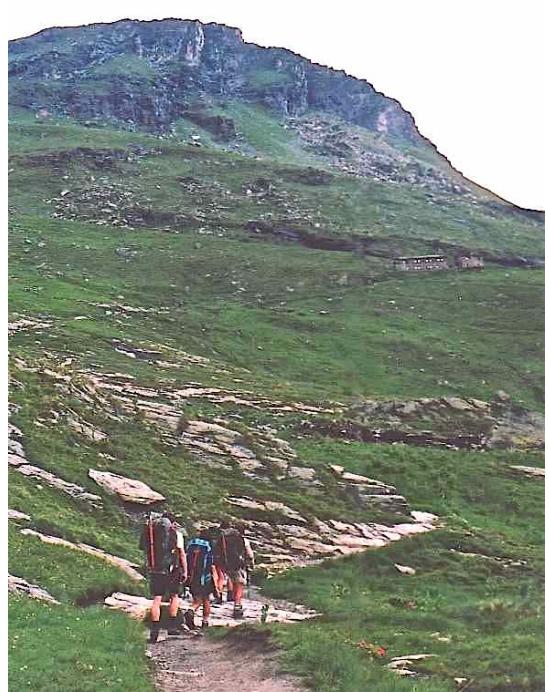
Hail the size of marbles



Two short legs - all uphill - to the hut



Third leg stop in the drizzle



The hut comes into view

The rest of the ascent saw the weather improve and when we arrived at the hut at 2.00 the clouds were breaking up to give sunny intervals and good views across the valley. We spent the afternoon drying out and then had a short walk to the edge of the Doron Gorge.



Sunny intervals at the hut



View back down towards Termignon from the edge of the Doron Gorge



View up the gorge to Grande Casse and Grand Motte in cloud and Pointes de Pierre Brune

The hut is large and has good cooking facilities, and was very busy on the night we stayed. Having made a booking we were allocated bunks in the basement dormitory, but there were so many people staying that after dinner the dining room was cleared and mattresses were placed on the floor with three people allocated to each pair of mattresses!



Our spacious and comfy dormitory

<b>Times:</b>	Arpont hut Exc. Doron gorge	2-45 15	2-45 3-00	2-45 (5-00)	<b>Distance:</b>	9 km	<b>Ascent:</b>	1170 m
							<b>Descent:</b>	160 m

It was a beautiful morning with just a layer of light cloud in the Arc valley below us and clear blue skies above. The hut had for sale postcards of the nearby Lac de l'Arpont and the glacier above it, and Graham suggested it looked interesting enough to take a look, and it turned out to be a really worthwhile diversion.



Early morning sun on the hut with Pointe de Ronce (3610) across the cloud-filled Arc valley

So when we set off at 9.00 we followed a fairly clear path (not shown at all on the 1:25,000 map) westwards through a break in the crags (where we had a reasonably close sighting of an ibex) which leads to a small tarn. There we left rucksacks and turned south-west to cross a low ridge (the path was by then less clear) and drop down to Lac de l'Arpont.



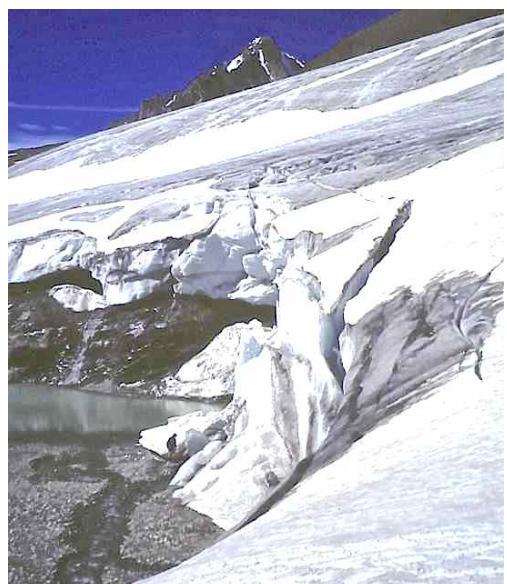
It is a really stunning spot with striated bedrock caused by the receded glacier, and the vertical walls of the glacier's snout about to collapse into the surprisingly clear waters of the lake. We spent an hour walking round the lake and investigating the fissures in the snout (and having a 'Trek Photo' with the glacier as a backdrop).



Our first view of Lac de l'Arpont and the Arpont glacier



6



We returned to collect our rucksacks and once down through the gap in the crags we contoured pathless above the hut to rejoin the GR5. In the perfect visibility we enjoyed, this balcony section of the GR5 leading to the Entre Deux Eaux is an unsurpassable walk; undulating almost along the 2500 m contour line without much significant climbing and with superb views west to the great sweep of glaciers coming down from Dôme de Chasseforêt and ahead to Grande Casse and Grande Motte. We also got a remarkably close up view of a marmot which emerged from a hole under a rock as we were having a leg stop.



Leg stop with a view of Grand Roc Noir



Below Dôme de Chasseforêt and its glaciers



View back to Dôme de Chasseforêt



Grande Casse and Grande Motte come into view



Leg stop beneath Mont Pelve (3260) ...



... with close up views of some marmots

It was still quite early when we reached the path junction at 2329, where a right turn leads directly down to the Entre Deux Eaux hut. But we were so enjoying our high level traverse that we *did* adopt the 'Seel Horseshoe' and continued along the high level path to descend to Pont de Croé-Vie, along the path we had climbed 6 days earlier, and looped back to the hut, where we arrived at 5.30.

The hut has had considerable improvements since our stay in 1986: a small kitchen extension has been built at the front and at the lower end there is an additional toilet and shower block.

It was a beautifully warm evening with a gentle breeze, ideal for relaxing, doing a bit of washing and having dinner on the grass in front of the hut.



View over the hut to the prominent peak of Dent Parrachée, and Dome de l'Arpont now in cloud



Al fresco dinner in front of the hut

<b>Times:</b>	Lac de l'Arpont	45	45	<b>Distance:</b>	16 km	<b>Ascent:</b>	780 m
	Lacs des Lozières	2-00	2-45			<b>Descent:</b>	960 m
	Entre-deux-Eaux hut	1-45	4-30	(8-30)			

Friday 19th July	Trek Excursion	Refuge de la Femma Pointe de la Sana	2352 3436
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Early morning sun on Dent Parrachée and Dôme de l'Arpont



Huge contrasts between sunlit Grande Casse and the hut in deep shade

With the additional walk up to the Femma hut and then the Pointe de la Sana excursion we had a long day ahead of us, so we were off early at 8.00 and in two brisk legs under cloudless skies we had completed the easy walk up the broad Rocheure valley to the hut. On the way we met the warden who had come down to collect supplies delivered by vehicle to the end of the track at Chalet de le Rocheure.



On the track up the Rocheure valley with Dôme de Chasseforêt, Mont Pelve and Pointe de la Réchasse

At the hut we reorganised rucksacks with day supplies and set off for Pointe de la Sana at 10.50, leaving John Savery to have another rest day.

Initially we followed route 184 given in Collomb, up over steep grass slopes past Rocher Rond and up the east side of the Femma stream to a small stony plateau area at 2745. The slight traces of a path at the start had disappeared when we reached the plateau.



From the plateau the easiest line of ascent wasn't obvious; the scree to the north-west (route 184) looked steep and troublesome and directly north a line of crags running east from point 2896 seemed to bar the way. However we spotted a lone walker descending the centre of the rock band without difficulty, and when we approached to take the same line we found it an easy scramble without the need for a safety rope.



Crossing the plateau towards the rock band

The combe above these crags and below Rochers des Barmes de l'Ours was entirely snow-filled and we plodded our way up past point 2975 to then turn west to Col des Barmes de l'Ours, on easy soft snow all the way.

From the snow-free knoll at 3105, where we had a leg stop, we had a clear view of the summit pyramid of the mountain and found that most of the southern flank was snow covered, to a height well above the glacier marked on the map. As I suspected from the map, the easiest line of ascent did seem to be the eastern ridge rather than route 184 along the southern edge of the glacier.

We headed slightly north of west across easy snow to the east ridge proper and ascended over slushy scree to a point about half way up where we were obliged to cross some hard-packed icy snow.

We had to cut some steps for a few metres before reaching kickable snow which took us all the way to the summit. We arrived at the summit at 2.00 in a walking time of 2 hours 35 minutes from the hut. (Collomb gives the time by route 184 as 3 hours 15 minutes.)

With glaring reflections from the snow and a deep blue sky this poorly exposed image shows the view of the final summit pyramid from the knoll at 3105. Our ascent route was up the right hand side of the upper snowfield





Ascending the final snow slope to the summit with the peaks along the Italian frontier beyond Val d'Isère



On Pointe de la Sana (3436 m, 11,270 ft), the highest of our six 3000 m summits

Standing: Nick Gartside, Steve Waite, Grant Mitchell, William Manning, David Gilpin, Andrew Hesp, Graham Seel  
Front: Marek Petecki, Nicholas Taylor, Christopher Willson, Adrian Dobson, Matthew Higginson, James Marks

It had been a really interesting, quite challenging and very enjoyable ascent and being such an isolated peak we were rewarded with a superb panorama which included most of the big peaks of the Vanoise and along the Italian frontier.



View over the upper Leisse valley with Lac des Nettes in the valley bottom, the Leiss hut just discernible to the left of the knoll, and Grande Casse and Grande Motte above



View south over the Rocheure valley with Pointes du Châtelard (3479) on the left and Grand Roc Noir on the right



View west along the ridge to the Vanoise Glacier Field



View north-east with the bottom of the Grande Motte glacier on the left and Col de la Leisse below it, cloud-topped Mont Pourri and Dôme de la Sache and the grey Rochers du Génépy ridge with Pointe Boussac somewhere along it

The descent was enjoyable too, and accomplished in just half the ascent time. Now that the snow was softer with no stretches of ice the descent down the upper snowfield was easy, and the snow leading down from Col des Barmes de l'Ours was safe enough for some exhilarating freestyle glissading. Care was needed down the rock band, but then it was a gallop down the grassy mountainsides back to the hut.



Another poorly exposed image due to glaring reflections and a deep blue sky, this one showing the descent of the steepest part of the upper snowfield



Easy glissading down the soft snow



Rock, snow and ice all day, but flowers in Vallon de la Rocheure

We arrived back at the hut at 4.30 and celebrated completing an outstanding excursion with pieces of the warden's home-made myrtle tart.



<b>Times:</b>	Femma hut	1-40	1-40	<b>Distance:</b>	17 km	<b>Ascent:</b>	1420 m
	Pointe de la Sana	2-35	4-15			<b>Descent:</b>	1200 m
	Femma hut	1-15	5-30	(8-30)			

<b>Saturday 20th July</b>	<b>Trek via Excursion and</b>	<b>Refuge du Fond des Fours Col de la Rocheure Pointe du Pisset Pointe des Fours</b>	<b>2537 2911 3033 3072</b>
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It was another beautiful day as we breakfasted in the warm sunshine and set off at 9.00 to take the easy path up to Col de la Rocheure, with fine views of the arc of glaciers lining the southern flanks of the valley.

View down Vallon de la Rocheure, with the distant Vanoise Glacier Field and Mont Pelve



Easy walking up the Rocheure valley, with Pointes du Châtelard and the Glacier du Géfret

We reached the picturesque, snow-fringed Lac de la Rocheure in two easy legs and just beyond the lake we left our rucksacks for the excursion to Pointe du Pisset.

Apart from one short rocky section on the ridge just before the summit which needs care, it's an easy 15 minute stroll to the top, which is another excellent viewpoint and the only 3000 m peak climbed by the whole party.

Pointe du Pisset on the left with Pointe de Méan Martin (3330) beyond





The whole party on Pointe du Pisset, with Dôme de la Sache in the centre and Mont Blanc on the right



View back over the Rocheure valley with the distant Vanoise Glacier Field, Lac de la Rocheure, and our whole ascent route up Pointe de la Sana from the Femma hut in the Rocheure valley far left to the summit above the snow



Grande Motte on the left, Dôme de la Sache on the right with the Rochers du Génépy ridge (including Pointe Boussac) between



Mont Blanc, Aiguille de la Grande Sassière and Tsanteleina



We had lunch back at the col and then set off for the Fond des Fours hut. The plateau at about 2900 m just east of the col is an undulating mixture of scree, rock outcrops and snow beds, and in the absence of a clear path (the map indicates 'possible route' rather than 'waymarked path') some intermittent cairns were helpful in indicating the way across to the Fours valley.

The plateau beyond Col de la Rocheure leading over to the Fours valley

I had been dissuaded from including a continuation of the excursion to Pointe de Méan Martin on the itinerary by the route description in Collomb, which gave a grade of F/F+ and a time of 4 hours from the Femma hut by the north-west ridge.

Viewed from Pointe du Pisset the ascent looked fairly straightforward, and I regretted not having left earlier to allow time to fit it in; the Pointe des Fours excursion could have been done the following morning, before descending to Val d'Isère

View south along the ridge to Pointe de Méan Martin



We picked up a clear path at the break in the line of crags just east of point 2917 and this led down in zig-zags to the moraine-strewn valley floor near point 2717, with striking views of Pointe de Méan Martin and the Glacier des Fours on the way.



Pointe de Méan Martin and the Glacier des Fours

Leaping across the glacier's raging outflow stream was the only incident on the easy walk down the clear path to the hut where we arrived at 2.40. *[In 2019 when the Old Trekkers came this way they crossed by a newly constructed bridge.]*



Aiguille de la Grande Sassière on the skyline again



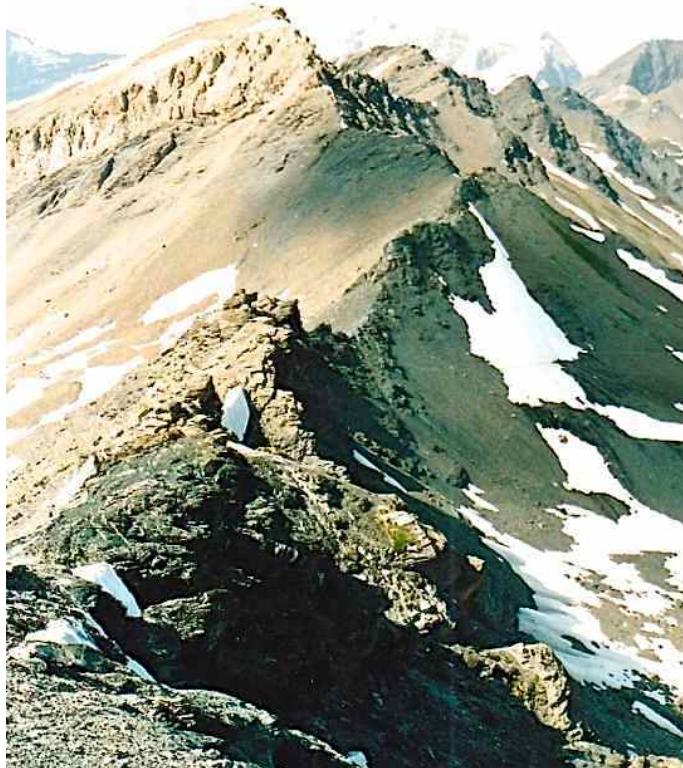
We had an hour at the hut which is situated in a beautiful position amongst grassy hillocks with fine views.

As the weather was clear, still and obviously settled, we left rucksacks at the hut and set off for Pélau Blanc via Col de Fours. As we were by then pretty fit and carrying minimal equipment we stormed up the 440 m to the col in 35 minutes.

The final descent to the hut in the middle distance, with Aiguille de la Grande Sassière on the skyline



The un-named tarn below Col des Fours, with snowy l'Alberon (3637) on the Italian frontier across the Arc valley



Unfortunately the south ridge of Pélau Blanc leading up from Col des Fours has a steep rock step in it which looked as if it would cause us difficulties.

Fortunately there was a path leading south along the ridge, and when we followed it (keeping just to the west of the crest) it led without difficulty in 10 minutes to Pointe des Fours, another fine viewpoint, particularly of Pointe de Méan Martin and its glaciers and south-east to the peaks along the Italian frontier.

View back along the ridge over Col des Fours to Pélau Blanc and the rock step on the ridge leading up to it



The 4 peaks are Pointe des Roches (3176) and Pointe des Buffets (3233) above the Roches glacier on the left, and Signal Méan Martin (3315) and Pointe de Méan Martin (3330) above the Fours glacier on the right

We were unfortunate again when we found that a large rock step to the south-east of the summit prevented us from continuing along the ridge to bag Pointe Nord de Bézin (3026) and loop back to the hut by Col de Bézin.

Back at Col des Fours a sign read 'Refuge du Fond des Fours 40 minutes' but by cutting the zig-zags, and glissading down the easy snow the leaders were back at the hut in 12 minutes and we were all down in 15 minutes.

The hut is a modern PNV one and we received a warm welcome. Press cuttings on the wall of the hut indicated that the lady warden had quite a reputation for her sumptuous cuisine, and as it was our last night in the mountains we took full advantage of her skills!

<b>Times:</b>	Col de la Rocheure	1-25	1-25	<b>Distance:</b>	15 km	<b>Ascent:</b>	1260 m
Exc. Pointe du Pisset		30	1-55			<b>Descent:</b>	1080 m
Fond des Fours hut	1-10		3-05				
Pointe des Fours		45	3-50				
Fond des fours hut	20		4-10	(8-00)			

**Sunday 21st July****Trek  
Bus****Val d'Isère  
Bourg-St-Maurice****1820**

That's where Marek gets his energy from ...



... TWO breakfasts!

This time it was literally just 'two short legs all downhill' to Val d'Isère where there was much new building work underway. We arrived at 10.15 with an hour in hand to look round before the bus departed for Bourg-St-Maurice, at £90 for the 15 of us a rather expensive 45 minute journey.



At Bourg-St-Maurice we dispersed to buy lunch and look round the town for the afternoon. We met up in the evening again for an alfresco pizza. As it was a small party, with no tent groups, no cooking prize etc, it wasn't a 'traditional' Trek Dinner with speeches and prizes, but some words of thanks were exchanged. We then boarded the train for a 9 o'clock departure for Paris.

The train had been standing in the blazing sun for some hours, and inside it was like a furnace. Some of the carriages had windows which were jammed shut and even with ice axes we couldn't prise them open. It wasn't until we had been moving for some time that the airflow cooled us down.

**Times: Val d'Isère****1-40****(2-00)****Distance: 7 km****Ascent: -- m****Descent: 720 m****Monday 22nd July****Rail/Ferry****Bourg-St-Maurice > Manchester**

We pulled into Gare de Lyon on time at 7 a.m. and as we had almost 4 hours before our departure from Gare du Nord we took a long and leisurely walk along the bank of the Seine. We had a leg stop and a breakfast brew up by Notre Dame (or a cafe breakfast for those without stoves) just before coaches loaded with tourists began to arrive, and then walked via the Pompidou Centre to Gare du Nord.

The train ran on time but there were long queues and an unexplained delay at passport control before we could board the ferry. This meant that we docked after our train to Victoria had been due to depart. However, the train had been held to meet the ferry, and we made up time, made our connection at Euston and arrived back in Manchester on schedule at 9.30 p.m.

## SUMMARY AND COMMENTS

As we found in 1986, the Vanoise is an outstanding trekking area, and with easy access, a fine network of easy paths, conveniently situated huts and some big mountains to climb. It was an ideal choice for a hut-to-hut Trek.

### Hut-to-Hut Trekking

The catalyst for this year's change in format from traditional back-packing and camping was the wish of Alan McDonald and Damon Powell to take a mountaineering/climbing trip to Norway, which was likely to be of interest to boys who would have otherwise gone on Foreign Trek. A smaller party going to the Alps could not justify back-up transport (except perhaps a self-drive minibus as in 1977 and 1984) and it opened up the possibility of staying entirely in mountain huts.

Trek has stayed in mountain huts for some nights on previous occasions, most recently in 1976 in the Dolomites and in 1986 in the Vanoise, but as far as I am aware this was the first Trek based entirely on 'hutting'. As noted in the itinerary, even this early in the season the huts were busier than I had expected and booking by phone a few days in advance is advisable.

### Route

With the experience of the 1986 Trek the route was easy to plan, especially without having to keep leaving the National Park to camp, and we were able to trek through all the Park's main valleys. It was also easy to build in excursions to some fairly big summits and the plan was to climb as many accessible walkers' peaks as possible.

With the exception of the dismal walk out of Pralognan the weather was very kind, allowing us to complete the whole planned route and all the planned summits with the exception of the minor 3000 m peak of Pointe de l'Observatoire, and with the un-planned Grand Roc as a bonus.

With a daily average of almost 10 miles and over 3000 feet of both ascent and descent, and with just 1 free day, it was quite a demanding route. But of course without camping equipment our packs were lighter which reduced the effort.

The combination of a pretty fit party, mostly easy-walking paths and lighter packs meant that our walking times were generally within Naismith from the very start. The two exceptions were the ascents to Pointe Boussac and Grand Roc/Rateau d'Aussois where we weren't on 'paths' at all and the routes involved some scrambling.

### Party

With a small party of keen and mostly experienced and very fit trekkers, half of whom were already acquainted as members of the cross-country club, and half who had been on Foreign Trek before, an excellent party spirit was evident from the start, and the bonhomie throughout the trip was splendid. A couple of boys were a bit slower than the rest, but they coped well even on the longer days.

### Catering

It was up to the boys as individuals or in groups to plan, buy and cook their own food for the entire trip.

A comprehensive advice sheet was provided with details of hut facilities and suggested menus, portion sizes etc. A few boys, the 'lightweights', relied entirely on meals and provisions bought at the huts, whilst the majority self-cooked in small groups using Trek gaz stoves and billies. These arrangements worked well for everyone.

### Gîtes

The two gîtes we used were fine. They were broadly similar to mountain huts, with bunks in dormitories and self-cooking facilities, with the additional bonus of free hot showers and proper toilets.

Altogether it was a very successful and hugely enjoyable Trek.

My sincere thanks go to Adrian and Graham for their help and support both in planning the Trek and on Trek itself, and for their very good company.

Allan Witton   November 1991



Old trekker

New trekker

## ARTICLE FOR THE SCHOOL MAGAZINE, ULULA

Graham Seel

It was the first British Open Golf Championship that I had missed for several years, but it was a sacrifice well worth making. Trek '91 was to visit the beautiful Vanoise massif in the Savoy region of the French Alps. Just a week before departure Mr. Duffy had to withdraw with an unfortunate back injury, and I was honoured to receive a late call up. As I looked down the list of those taking part I noticed that the majority were experienced Foreign trekkers, and I began to fear that my recent walking experience (occasional trips to the post box) might prove to be inadequate.

However, any deficiencies in physical preparation were soon remedied when we reached Paris. My personal preference when crossing this city is to use the Metro - but Trek is not so soft. Using stars for navigation we chased through the streets, and with full rucksacks and ice-axes bobbing on our backs we were clearly the focus of some bemusement. It was during this 'warm-up' walk that I discovered, to my alarm, that half of the lads were members of the school cross-country team. At Gare de Lyon we had sprint training when we were told that our sleeper to Bourg-St-Maurice was due to leave from a different platform at the far side of the station in one minute!

One advantage of the Vanoise is that walkers can make use of the infrastructure serving the high level ski resorts on its northern perimeter. We were thus whisked effortlessly to a sunny Arc 2000 and the start of the walking. Within two hours we were standing on our first peak, Aiguille Grive (2732 m), with the first of many fine panoramas. On the second day we bagged another, though the 'horseshoe' ridge was considered too tricky for the complete traverse. And so our route continued, a succession of high cols, delightfully secluded valleys alive with marmots and ibex, and a record six 10,000 ft snow peaks climbed.

This year saw a change in style for Trek, with a smaller party of 15 making use of mountain refuges ('huts') instead of the traditional camping (which is prohibited within the Vanoise National Park). 'Hutting' is an interesting experience and these unobtrusive buildings permit access to the more remote corners of the National Park. Some huts are in spectacular locations, and one of my abiding memories of Trek is the early morning view from the Arpont hut; snow-clad peaks, wreathed in cloud, and deep, verdant valleys below.

We didn't always stay in mountain huts, but spent two nights in a Gîte in the delightful village of Pralognan. On our free day the 'Krypton Factor' group led by Marek Petecki organised hair-raising mountain bike excursions whilst David Gilpin and Grant Mitchell continued research for their forthcoming volume 'Two Thousand Recipes from the Vanoise', and the rest just rested.

The weather was unkind on just two occasions. The first was a long, 1500 m climb to Col d'Aussois in cold, driving rain, relieved only by a brief respite in a herdsman's hut and freshly made cheese for lunch. The second was one of Nature's great displays; an alpine electric storm, with hail the size of marbles rattling from the roof of the byre where we had taken shelter.

Not all the challenges were physical. Planning, buying and cooking sufficient quantities of varied and edible food consumed much mental energy, and some recipes lasted for several miles. 'Tin Man' Higginson resorted to a seemingly endless supply of tinned delicacies, while others were more inventive and adventurous.

It was a thoroughly memorable Trek, not just because of the superb scenery (who will forget the walk below the snout of the Arpont glacier, or the snow climb to Pointe de la Sana (3436 m) and the sheer drop from its summit), but also because of the characters and camaraderie which make Foreign Trek such a marvellous experience. Thanks and appreciation must go to L.A.W. for his organisational talent and enthusiasm.

## ARTICLE FOR THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER, THE NEW MANCUNIAN

Allan Witton

What! No tents? No sleeping bags, no Karrimats? Has Foreign Trek gone soft? It's true that we left our traditional camping gear behind, and yes, we have to admit that we stayed in mountain huts. But those who experienced our 12-day tour of the Vanoise will testify that it was no mere stroll.

It was comforting to know that we had a dry bed at the end of each day, whatever the weather did (but as usual it didn't, and it was fine enough to have bivouacked most nights). But four bunks to a dormitory, and twelve people to a bunk? It was cosy! And the showers? £1 for a 5-minute shower which provided 30 seconds of luke-warm water - sheer luxury!

But enough about the accommodation, we came for the mountains. The 12 young, fit and good-looking trekkers, accompanied by their 3 not-so-young or fit or good-looking leaders, were whisked by train in 24 sweaty hours from Manchester to Bourg-St-Maurice, and then by bus up to the mountains.

Within 2 hours walking we were standing on our first peak, and on the second day we bagged another. Easy going so far, but the third day was harder with 6 hours walking and the first 10,000 foot snow peak for some. Then it was down to Pralognan for a free day, some intensive eating and some dare-devil mountain biking down real mountains.

And so it continued: a 5-hour struggle to a 9500 foot col in driving rain; a huddle in a barn during a vicious hailstorm; but the rest was all sunshine, big peaks and glaciers, ibex and marmots, good company and .... Graham's speciality tuna and pasta!

And in the end? Well we all survived (that always pleases the parents) and came back bronzed and much fitter. In terms of height climbed and distance walked it was the most demanding Trek for many a year, and with a record six 3000 m peaks climbed I don't think we are getting soft yet.

As in the last few years, members of the party were asked to write a diary for one of the days on trek. For whatever reason, only nine contributions made it into my file. These offerings have been censored, edited, expanded, spell-checked and otherwise rendered into a moderately readable account of life on Trek which captures some of the fun, excitement, good company, sweat, toil and agony of it all.

So here it is, an alternative view of life on Trek '91.

## THE 1991 VANOISE DIARY

**11th July**  
**The first 3000 m peak for some**

**Andrew Hesp**

We woke to a beautiful day with not a cloud in the sky. Cries of "Man we've got no breakfast" suggested for a few minutes that one cooking group were to go hungry, but after considerable digging in more than one rucksack, the breakfast concerned was located, and the panic was over. Departure time was set at 8.30. At 8.08, and after considerable thought, APD concluded that gave him a good 20 minutes to use the toilet. (On trek good toilets are few and far between so such chances cannot be missed!)

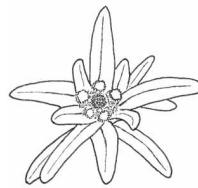
It took only a few minutes to plod up the snow slope to Col du Palet before beginning our descent into Val Claret. The path was clear and we enjoyed a leisurely descent interrupted only once when the whole party stopped to watch a small plane spectacularly miss a vertical cliff before landing nearby.

Lower down the path vanished and the mountainside began to resemble a building site with bulldozers and dumper trucks driving around, presumably involved in preparations for next winter's Olympics. I suppose what walkers say about skiers spoiling the mountains is true to some extent if this was anything to go by. We elected to go down the direct way as Val Claret was in view, so we went straight down a very steep grassy bank. At one stage one member of the party became convinced he could smell gas, and so emptied his rucksack in search of his stove, only to find it was not leaking and perfectly O.K.

Val Claret provided a good stopping place to restock with fresh bread etc. before setting off on the long slog up to Col de la Leisse, a good two leg's climb. At the Col there was no water and so we resorted to putting snow in our water bottles and shaking them.

The excursion party set out to conquer Grand Pré, leaving a few tired trekkers to rest/sunbathe/play with a tennis ball at the Col. The excursion was spectacular and hard work as we crossed snow fields and scree slopes, but it was all worth it at the top, and the best bit, descending the snow fields in a run / attempt to ski / slide on your backside fashion was still to come.

On arrival back at the col a most unusual sight was seen. LAW had a compass in his hand (this had rarely before been seen on Trek.) After consulting the map he announced that we had climbed the wrong one, and had actually been up a higher peak, the North Summit of Pointe Boussac.



The day's walking ended with a pleasant walk down to the hut, which was in theory just over the next lump, but in practice a little further.

In the evening it rained for a short time forcing the cooking groups to cook under the eaves of the hut, and one trekker's day was rounded off by paying ten francs for a 5 minute hot shower which only lasted 20 seconds. Never mind!

**12th July**  
**A gallop down to Pralognan**

**Grant Mitchell**

**Those who had not been woken by flies** buzzing around the dormitory at about 5.30 were woken instead an hour later by the cheerful cry of Uncle Adrian. Those who roused themselves sufficiently to answer his call found that three pans of water were already boiling to make tea.

Such admirable devotion to the cause on the part of APD enabled us to have left the hut and be walking down a pleasant river valley by the time eight o'clock struck. The early pace was set by John Savery, who positively stormed down the valley, followed by a few he-men trekkers but leaving most of us trailing in his wake. To the surprise of some he maintained this pace for the whole of the first leg, and despite frequent warnings that the back of the party was way out of sight, John paused, surveyed the horizon and proclaimed that he could see a small, black dot which might be the back-marker. In spite of comments "I can see the sun, but that's 93 million miles away" or "Could you hear the black dot if it asked you to stop?" from one of the elite group close enough to John to pass comment, he would stride away again with renewed vigour.

A leg stop was eventually called and ten minutes after the back-marker arrived, about a further ten minutes after the leaders, 'two minutes' was duly called, at which point John decided that it was time to adjust and retie his boots, liberally apply his factor 20 suncream, have a drink, repack his rucksack and do all the other things which the rest of the party had been doing for the last quarter of an hour or so.

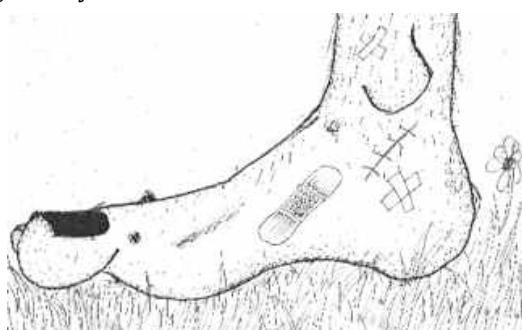
Nevertheless, he was eventually ready to lead on the next, hard, uphill leg. Much to the amazement of most, who had seen John fade away after a promising start several times previously, John, encouraged not to say dragged by Dave Gilpin, maintained a good pace up the zig-zagging path amidst a sea of pink dwarf rhododendrons as the heat of the sun on our backs became more intense.

Two legs later we reached the Col de La Vanoise and had a prolonged leg stop on picnic tables conveniently placed outside the hut. GES ate yet more tuna, accompanied this time by the heavy rye bread which Matthew had been given the previous evening by a lady who claimed that 'she had too much and couldn't carry it any further' and felt sorry for him. Matthew had then carried it all the way up to the Col, only to see most of it ravaged by GES.

We set off down the other side of the Col and GES, obviously adversely affected by an overdose of tuna, started a snowball fight with Andrew and Marek which was still unresolved when we came to the end of the short stretch of snow. We crossed Lac des Vaches via a stone path across the middle and reached Refuge des Barmettes, which was to be our lunch stop. Fifteen trekkers collapsed on the chairs on the terrace and ordered cold drinks and ice lollies, until Dave shocked me by pointing out that the rope which I had been carrying was no longer in the top of my rucksack, and was in fact about a mile and a half back up the path. I got up wearily to go and find it, but instead found Steve Waite laughing at my worried face and holding the rope which he had picked up off the path.

A steep downhill leg into Pralognan in stifling heat followed lunch, and John eventually found that the early pace had been too much for him and led at a leisurely pace from the back, stopping at several water troughs en route. We got to the village and sat in what shade we could find while LAW and APD went to find the gîte and see if it had room for us. Despite LAW's report that it was full and we'd have to walk another 3 miles to the next one, it was, in fact, practically empty, it had showers with free, unlimited hot water, individual beds, small dormitories and was really very nice except for the kitchen which was infested with flies and, said Adrian optimistically, probably cholera. Most of the party decided a pizza in the village was a better idea for dinner.

Meanwhile, Nurse Gilpin was treating anyone who needed medical attention mainly for blisters, including John and the medical officer APD himself. John, possibly because it was more hygienic than the kitchen but more probably due to the influence of a long, hot day or other artificial things, decided that he would wash up in the rain. He apparently found this very funny, but, whatever the reason, when he had finished he found that his three remaining bottles of beer had been confiscated "for his own good" by various other trekkers.



By ten o'clock (quite late by Trek standards) we had all retired to comfortable bunk beds with the promise of an unexpected free day to come.

13th July  
Mountain bikers ahoy!

Steve Waite

**When we reached Pralognan** with a week's walking under our boots we found accommodation which was a step up from the mountain huts. There were free hot showers, we were not all crammed into the same dormitory, and there was a well equipped kitchen (lucky Dave), albeit with a large tub of stinking fat and bones.

On Saturday morning, having walked so far and surrounded by such luxury, what else would we want to do but stay in bed? There had been wild stories of an excursion up Petit Mont Blanc, but these simmered down to a mere walk along a nearby ridge. A handful of people believed the story. Even Mr. Witton thought there was going to be a walk! However, we habitual sleepers knew what was happening and when the inevitable free day was announced we were up and dressed in seconds.

We were determined to make the best of the day, which was already a scorcher, and the decision between Marek, Nick and myself was unanimous - hire mountain bikes! (How apt) For just 60 francs we had the bikes for 3 hours, with one cable car ride thrown in. After a little negotiation with the tourist office lady whose English was a lot better than our French, it was straight to the top.

Now, I had never had the fortune to ride a mountain bike before, especially not down a mountain. So, as Marek sped off and cycled up the nearest cliff, I was lurching and bunny-hopping down the path which was strewn with stones the size of small boulders. Fortunately, he passed on some important information: "Don't use your front brake much lest you lurch or perform a cartwheel." Then it was easy, and with heavy application of the back brake, we began to skid down the mountain trailing a cloud of dust.

The stony path was a tricky route since a moderate sized rock could cause the bike to veer excessively. Trying to keep control was an art and a half, but the experience was sheer enjoyment. Halfway down the mountain the track turned to tarmac and speeds immediately increased. This was much to the detriment of Marek when he came to a particular corner. The tale told of a precipitous drop over which he was dangling by a twig was true in part. Hence caution was increased, but it still only took us ten minutes to reach the bottom.

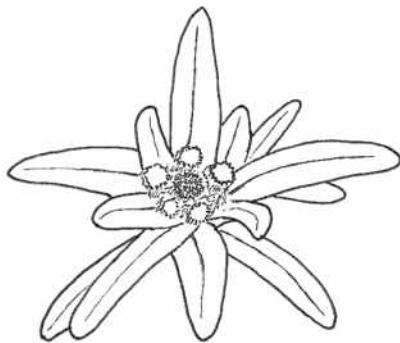
We roamed the town for a while before riding past our gîte to tell the others what a great time we were having and watch them turn green with envy. No sooner had we posed for photos than we were heading off again in the opposite direction.

Having taken a road leading out of Pralognan we came to a sign reading: 'Bistro - 8 min'. Since it was such a hot, sunny day and we were dying for a drink we didn't need a second look. However, 8 minutes in a car is not the same on a bike, uphill, on a hot day. Eventually, after a tiresome struggle, I reached the other two who were milling around in front of the cafe. Why didn't they enter? It was closed, of course. Well, at least it was all downhill on the way back.

The return leg lasted maybe 4 minutes on account of the road being so straight, enabling high speeds to be attained with ease. Even more so when we made the major discovery that by putting our heads down we reduced aerodynamic drag, and also looked pretty mean. At the bottom we encountered a strange, but stupid, dog who obviously enjoyed the idea of being run over by cyclists. On the spur of the moment I decided against returning the bike to the tourist office with canine chunks in the spokes, so I took the necessary evasive action to avoid the mutt.

The last excursion we made led us past a campsite and up a winding track into some woods. The track came alongside a river which Nick and I crossed by a bridge, but for some reason Marek had a desire to cross further up. Next time we saw him he had given up trying to cross the river and was sunning himself on the bank. With the afternoon sun blazing down and the river looking so inviting we quickly joined him.

We were on the edge of a pool of clear water, where water was cascading in at one end and slipping quickly out through rocks at the other end. The surrounding rocks were warm and large enough to lie back on and sunbathe, which we did, but the river must have flowed from a nearby glacier because it was freezing. Still, Marek the madman took the plunge, and regretted it immediately. We spent ages there taking a dip when we felt a surge of madness, but mostly sunbathing. It was an incredible place, akin to paradise. The only sounds were the churning waters and the sun's rays bronzing our bodies. We were oblivious to any walkers on the path only yards away.



It was with great reluctance that we left to take the bikes back. On returning the bikes, I noticed the bike stand looking quite empty. When a hoard of trekkers sped past on the missing bikes, it was obvious that they wanted a piece of the action after seeing what fun we were having.

We were wondering what to do next, but Marek had only one thing on his mind (not the usual thing!). He was still thinking of our paradise found and suggested we returned on foot. We took provisions: bread, cheese, and a bottle of wine. On our return we were dismayed to find some other people had invaded our spot. We hid close by, praying they would leave quickly. We had already started on the cheese by the time they went.

The sun was threatening to disappear behind the trees at that time and the water level had risen so we just ate, drank, and were mellow. Marek the athlete suddenly took it into his head to practise a little rock climbing.

There was a gigantic boulder at the river's edge, which could be jumped onto from the bank, but was very steep on the other side, so he started to ascend that side. His only problem was the lack of hand holds at the bottom so he could not even get on to the rock. I hopped onto the top of the rock and watched him from above. When I looked up, some kids had gathered on the other bank who were watching Marek and were waving to me. I gestured to them, they giggled a lot, then ran off. Marek was still struggling below when the kids appeared behind me, with a rope. We offered Marek the rope, but he had given up and came the easy way.

We started to talk to the kids. There were four or five of them, all French, but a couple of them knew a little English. We started to communicate in a mixture of English and French and asked where the rope came from. Apparently their cottage was around the corner. "Would we like to come and see it?" they asked. What did we have to lose?

Their cottage was situated by the river and was quite big. We asked who they were staying with.

"Parents and friends," they replied.

"Are they in?"

"No."

"Oh."

Marek looked a little uneasy. He whispered that he thought he had had too much wine. I thought he was whispering too loud. The kids beckoned to us to sit round their table and we started to tell each other who we were. They were from Paris actually and were staying there for a few weeks. One of the girls, the oldest, sixteen, was doing most of the talking on their side. Marek wasn't doing much on ours. I told them of our trek and one of the little girls gave us sweets and showed us her paintings.

After a while some adults appeared. Marek got restless. One of them was apparently the owner of the cottage. He started making some saucy remarks to the girl. She bashfully indicated what he had said with the aid of a French-English dictionary. Marek started making for the door and we quickly left with a nod in the direction of the parents.

We wondered on the way back how we had the ability to get into that situation and get invited to their home. It must be some natural charm we have.

Feeling somewhat peckish and since it was getting dark we looked for somewhere to eat. Being France what food were we going to have? Pizza and chips, of course.

Finally we got back feeling exhilarated by the day's events, bumping into LAW who asked us about some dodgy substances being passed through windows of our lodgings which had been seen by the guardian. Being honest and not wanting to tangle with the guardian whose arms had never touched his sides since the day he grew those enormous muscles (even Marek wouldn't want to mess with him) we claimed ignorance. We had been chatting up young girls at that time, after all. The only thing left for us to do was convince everyone else when we told them our tale.

**15th**  
**Which peaks today I wonder?**

**Allan Witton**

**What a night that was!** The large basement dormitory with bunks for about 30 was totally enclosed but for a door and one small window at the end. There was some debate about 'fenêtre ouverte' or 'fenêtre fermée', but fortunately the guardian shared my views about fresh air and the window had been nailed firmly wide open. Even so it was a very hot and stuffy night without much sleep.

Never mind, we emerged squinting into brilliant sunshine, and as we were doing an excursion we would carry just light packs. We set off to find the shepherd's path suggested by the guardian and found it an easy and enjoyable first leg with marvellous views. Evidence from the map indicated that the guardian's other suggestion about Pointe de l'Echelle was rather ambitious for us.

The main GR5 path was largely covered in snow, though most of the waymarks on rocks were still visible and the leaders set a good steady pace for the strenuous climb. I really enjoy an easy snow climb, and the lads seemed to find it an exciting challenge too. It was good practice for what was to come on the next leg, and on the ascent to Pointe de la Sana in 4 days time.

I'm really pleased we managed to get up Grand Roc, though as I suspected, Pointe de l'Echelle is beyond our grade. But 2 summits instead of just the one planned, and in such glorious conditions, what a splendid excursion!

**16th**  
**Termignon or bust**

**David Gilpin**

**Today was to be one of those days.** None of that scrambling up yet another 3000 m peak, ice-axe up the snowy bits and both hands up the scrambly bits (that was the previous day). Today it was to be a more gentle day, contouring round Dent Parrachée and then down to the fleshpots of Termignon in the valley.

With an easy day in prospect, we had a late leisurely start at 8.30. The path took us high above the very green reservoirs of Amont and Aval serving Modane in the Arc valley below. In spite of the previous day's storms the streams we crossed were all dry and at the end of the first leg those who were well prepared bartered water for assorted delicacies.

As usual when group 1 were leading for the day, John was at the front setting a 'steady' pace. The second leg ended at a trickling stream with plenty of spray but little collectable water. LAW (who had been this way in 1986) told us that there was a far larger stream just round the corner, so the leg stop was adjourned to the said stream for a welcome water stop (It was another very hot day).

After a short, steep climb, the path resumed contouring for another two legs to lunch. Long distance views across the Arc valley to the Italian frontier were splendid and conversation and peak-spotting replaced the more usual sweat and toil of ascents.

We had covered 13 km by lunchtime without much gain or loss of height. Now came the hard bit. It was indeed just two legs all downhill, but it was very steep and it got hotter and hotter as we approached the valley floor.

In the village we collapsed by a water trough while the staff enquired for the whereabouts of the gîte where we had booked in by phone. By good chance (or was it good planning?) they had enquired at a bar and felt duty bound to have a glass of cool beer, just to be sociable!

The gîte was right in the centre of the village and turned out to be pure luxury: free hot showers; a superb kitchen; proper (i.e. British-style) toilets; and comfortable, individual bunk beds in small dormitories. There was just one problem, that of a pungent and rather peculiar smell in one of the dormitories. (Had someone bought some local, ripe cheese? Was there something dead and decaying in the corner?) No, the offending articles turned out to be a certain trekker's socks and he was promptly dispatched to deal with them.

An excursion 'downtown' revealed but a single shop of the supermarket/grocery variety, so those groups cooking for themselves for the next 4 days had their imaginations stretched to find original, light and tasty food that would survive for that time before eating.

We managed to find sufficient and also bought supplies for a real gourmet feast that evening and the following breakfast. Cooking was a delight, excellent facilities, and with the gîte almost empty but for our party and no-one else cooking there was plenty of room.

And so we retired, clean, refreshed and raring to go on the last and longest stage of Trek.

**17th July**  
**Hail the size of marbles**

**Marek Petecki**

**After being dragged mercilessly from my slumber** at some unearthly hour of the morning, I felt the soft, warm bed, complete with sprung mattress, beneath me. "Thank goodness" I thought, "all this toil has been a dream."

Sadly not! I opened my eyes to the sight of one trekker engaged in a pre-breakfast blister -popping session. I was further reminded of where I was by the smell of my rucksack, where somewhere amongst the decaying remains of previous day's meals and clothes in various stages of decomposition was my ever-elusive bar of soap.

After finding it I enjoyed the triple delights of a good wash, a shave and using a proper toilet, followed by an exotic breakfast of fresh bread, real French cheese and two Mars bars.

After a good (albeit short) night's sleep, I eagerly grabbed the map, keen to take my turn at leading the party. After a pleasant start to the day it began to drizzle, and when it turned into drenching rain, which soaked our fresh bread, we wished we had remained in bed.

Our discomfort was to get worse. Waves of disorientating mist enveloped us, and then the storm began. Huge hailstones bombarded us, stinging our faces. Then Mr Witton had the bright idea of putting a roof between us and the weather. He'd spotted a stone-built byre some way from the path, and we ran towards it, round it and eventually into it when we'd found the door. It made excellent shelter, and taking advantage of a captive audience, Mr Dobson got out his tin whistle. Perhaps the hail wasn't that bad after all.

After continuing our damp upward plod, and a leg-stop beside some beautiful cascading waterfalls (the only leg-stop we had in cagoules), the weather cleared and the sun came out as we approached the hut.

At the hut we came across 2 pigs, and our conversation with them (which included 'bacon butties') was just as intelligible as those we had with the French.

We made our beds, had a little ramble around the hut and down to the edge of the Doron Gorge, and then began preparing the inevitable disaster of our evening meal.

(Addendum. Finishing this off after I got home, I feel I must add that no matter how hard it seemed at the time, in retrospect Trek was BRILLIANT, and thanks to all the staff.)

**19th July**  
**The vertical wall of snow**

**Nick Taylor**

**The day started early, at 7:00, when the guardian told us to be out of the dorm quickly.** We emerged into sunshine (as usual) and a valley teeming with a large herd of cows, and marmots everywhere.

After a brisk wash in the freezing water and a quick breakfast, it was just two legs (both on and in) to the Femmas hut, where we re-arranged rucksacks with essentials so we could carry one half-filled rucksack as a day sack between two for the ascent of Pointe de la Sana.

The initial climb up a grassy hillside was hard work and we were glad of the first leg-stop, and a chance to change rucksacks. The grass slope then led to a cliff, and the experience gained from the practice 'walk' up Tryfan paid off.

Above the cliff we crossed the snowline and there was snow to the right, snow to the left and snow up ahead, the way we were going. Ice axes were essential and made the going fairly easy - for a time. Then we came to a terrifying wall of snow that seemed almost vertical (not really - Ed.), and the less experienced members of the party quaked in their boots at the thought of trying to climb it.

Impressed by the prowess of those who went first, and making use of their boot steps, we carried on, one steady step at a time, making full use of the ice axes. One good point is that I was too busy being petrified to feel tired and this carried on until we reached the summit, which was just peeping out above the snow.

We had a lengthy lunch stop on the summit, with some of the best views you are ever likely to see. The way we had come, the glacier obscured the hut, 2/3 of a mile below us, and on the other side was the Leisse valley that we had walked down a week before, with Grande Motte and its glacier towering above. We could clearly see Mont Blanc, 25 miles away.

We were sorry to leave the summit and head back down but we enjoyed the descent - considerably quicker and less effort than the ascent - apart from James Marks, who disappeared into soft snow up to his hips and had to be dug out. On the easier bits of snow even the non-skiers had a chance to show off their freestyle skiing skills (without skis!).

We arrived back at the hut exhausted, and tucked into crepes cooked by the guardian. John had spent the day with a worthy book and was now an expert on Charles II. Having heard news of the Tour de France and how the British Open Golf was going, we retired for a well-deserved early night and were asleep in minutes.

**20th July**  
**Not TWO 3000m peaks again today?**

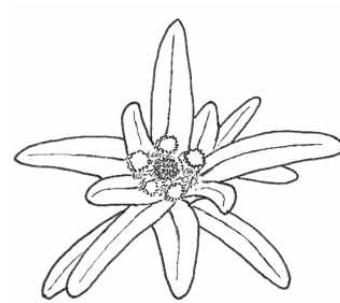
**Christopher Willson**

**The day began as usual with someone trying to quietly jump out of a top bunk** and waking everybody else with the echoing thump it produced. Having found the appropriate packets of dried milk, Alpen, sugar, coffee most were soon eating their breakfast and the 'lightweights' bought another cheese baguette.

By 8.50 we were all assembled outside the hut where we made our final adjustments to straps and clothing before setting off up the Rocheure valley, observed, and for a short time followed, by a herd of Alpine cows and a couple of furry marmots.

The initial pace was fast as we followed the dusty winding path towards Col de la Rocheure. After a leg stop by a stream, a quick munch of a mars bar or some bits of blackened dried banana, we were off again up to the snow-line and past snow-fringed lac de la Rocheure to the col.

Here a 10 minute break became a 30 minute halt as LAW got his pipe out! The short scramble to the summit of Point du Pisset (3033 m, and the only 3000 m peak climbed by the whole party) caused little problem except for loose rocks about half way up. On reaching the summit we all sat down again, admired the views and took some more photos. After a careful descent down the tricky rocky bit we ran back down the snow to recover the chocolate we had left buried in snow to harden.



Over the col, the path crossed a high plateau of moraine and snowfield then went down by the snout of the Glacier des Fours. After a bit of delicate boulder-hopping across the glacier's outflow stream the path led easily down to the Fond des Fours hut.

After a short break and refreshments at the hut we left our rucksacks and charged up to the col des Fours (450 m in 35 minutes!). The summit we set out for (Pélaou Blanc) had a difficult looking rocky arête leading up to it, but in the opposite direction a rather easier scrambly path led us up to Pointe des Fours.

Back on the col, a sign indicated 40 minutes down to the hut. By cutting the zig-zags and glissading down the soft, easy snow slopes it wasn't difficult to beat this time and the he-men like Andrew Hesp were back drinking Coke at the hut within 12 minutes of leaving the col; with the staff and the rest of us not far behind.

The hut has a reputation for its cuisine and as the staff celebrated the successful conclusion of Trek with their first hut meal (going right through the menu it seemed!) we celebrated with omelettes (again!) and a game of cards.

By 10.15 we had crashed out, the lights were out and the dormitory was silent but for the snores of the French below us.



**22nd July**  
**And so back to Manchester.**

**William Manning**

**Most diary accounts start off with a description of the weather**, however mine will start with a description of a couchette. There were six couchettes (bunk beds), three on each side of a compartment six and a half by five feet, i.e. very little space.

Typically the window in one of our compartments, the one I was occupying, was jammed shut, and the combined might of A-level physics know-how together with an ice axe and a top-of-the-range Swiss army knife couldn't budge it! The carriage had been standing in the sun at Bourg-St-Maurice station from eight o'clock the previous morning until we boarded at nine p.m. and it *was* hot!

At midnight we were travelling towards Paris. Not having had any sleep due to the high temperature in the compartment, the six of us were awake when the train pulled in at Culoz. We had drunk all our water supplies and when we asked the guard (in perfect GCSE French, *bien sûr*), we were informed that contrary to the timetable, there would be no moving sales trolley. We were not sure when the train was going to leave, so we daren't risk the walk across the bridge to the station buildings to obtain water.

When the guard walked past us again after leaving Culoz we asked how long we would be stopping in Dijon and were told it would be ten minutes, long enough to fill our water bottles. By this time the temperature in the compartment had cooled down sufficiently for us to lie on the couchettes.

After a long time we slowed down and pulled into a station. On the timetable the next station should have been Dijon, however with typical SNCF reliability, this was Macon. It was a half hour stop but we weren't to know this and couldn't get off the train in case it left again. Eventually we did arrive in Dijon and we were lucky because the door of our carriage was right opposite a drinking fountain on the platform. We thankfully filled up our water bottles and when the train left, I got the only two hours sleep of the whole journey, from about half-past four to half-past six. APD came along at a quarter to seven to make sure we were awake because we were due to arrive in Paris just after seven o'clock.

After several suggestions during the past fortnight had been rejected as being suitable for climbers only, today's 'Seel Horseshoe' was adopted.

So instead of the direct route from Gare de Lyon to Gare du Nord, we diverted to the Seine and along its banks. We arrived at Notre Dame with plenty of time in hand and were told that we could have as long as we wanted to buy some breakfast and eat it. I went off with James, Matt, John and Nick T. and found a boulangerie, with tables outside. I felt like having a good breakfast and ordered hot chocolate and croissants. John wanted to take some beer home so asked a gendarme for directions to a supermarket. Matt, being a geographer, thought it wise to accompany John so he wouldn't get lost.

We returned to base to find the staff with a stove out having a brew up for breakfast. John returned twenty minutes after everyone else, struggling under the weight of a rucksack containing 38 bottles of beer (one more than the number of crepes he ordered at the Col du Palet hut).

We still had another leg to walk through Paris to get to the Gare du Nord. We managed it comfortably, but for John it was probably the hardest leg of Trek! After a short wait at the station we boarded the train which would take us to Calais Maritime. Maybe I was jinxed, but the air conditioning in our carriage wasn't working and it reminded me of the journey on the couchette just hours previously!

We arrived at Calais Maritime, got off the train and were then kept waiting for about an hour, standing up in the building where passport checks were done without being informed why there was a delay. If this is what being a rail passenger is like on the ferries, then the channel tunnel will make a massive profit. The crossing was uneventful with the exception of the very slow service in the cafeteria.

Because of the delay at Calais we arrived at Dover after our train was due to depart, but it had been held up to await the ferry. Out of character for British Rail, we arrived in London on time at five thirty, in the middle of the rush hour. We took the tube from Victoria to Euston, an experience I do not wish to repeat. At Euston we had half an hour to buy food, phone home etc.

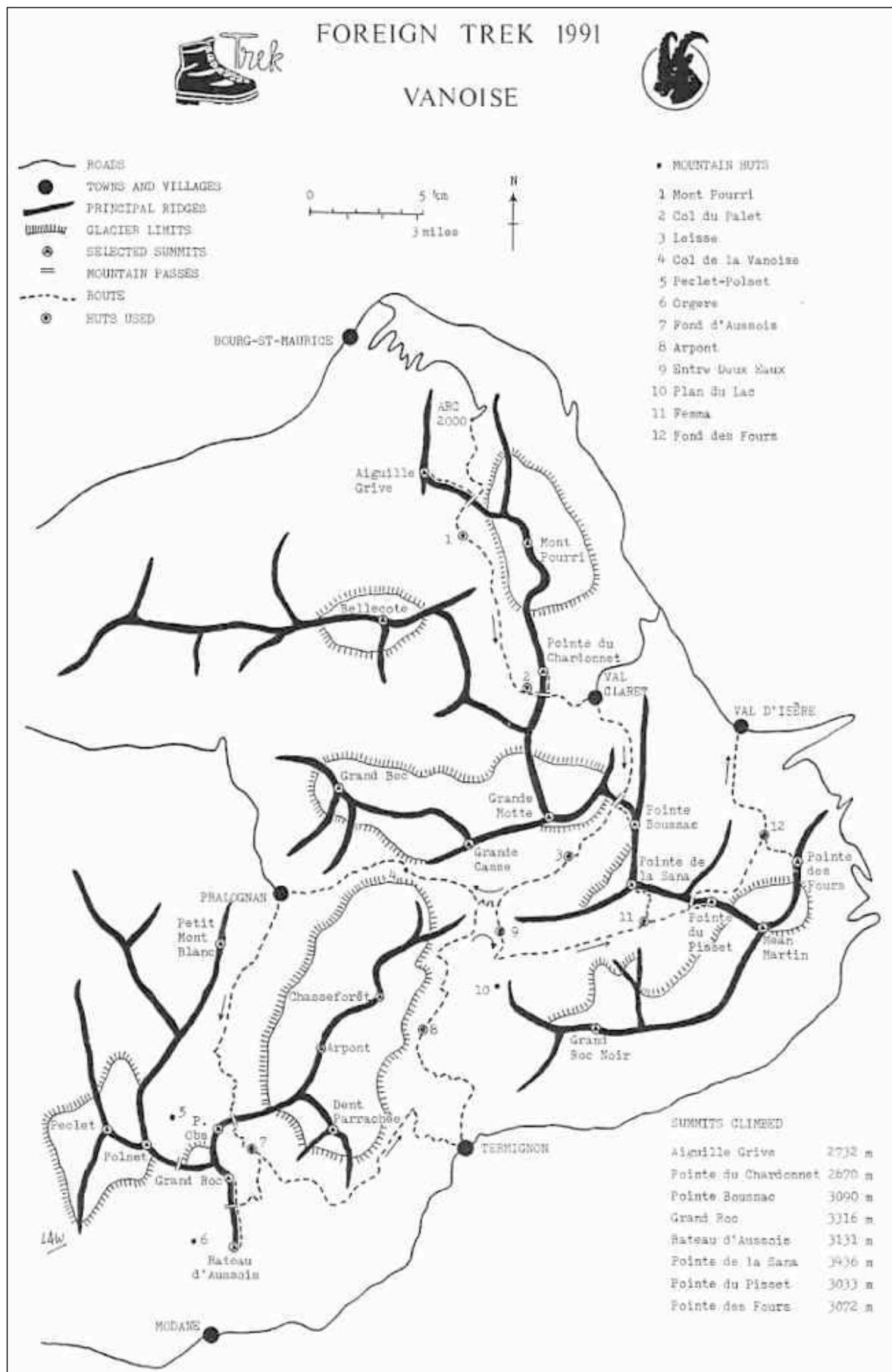
The train left Euston and arrived in Manchester at the on schedule times. All I could think of was the hot bath and food waiting for me when I arrived back home. At Manchester we said goodbyes to Dave and Steve who have now left school and walked off the platform to meet our families.

So ended a most enjoyable Trek - 1991 to the Vanoise.



## ORIGINAL SKETCH MAP

This is a scan of the pen-and-ink sketch map provided for the boys before departure. I drew the original on an A3 sheet and photo-reduced it. This copy has our amended route. Digital map drawing technology wasn't available in 1991.



## 2020 Note

I did the research for the text on this page and the summary tables on the following pages for the original 1986 Vanoise Trek Log, and have updated them each year since.

As part of the Trekking Centenary celebrations in 2004 a printed Centenary Brochure was produced which gives a comprehensive account of the first 100 year history of Trekking at MGS. It has a section listing all points above 3000 m that Trek has reached between 1974 and 2004. There is also a section on the ascent of summits from the earliest days as recorded in Ulula accounts. In 2015 a digital version of the Trekking Centenary Brochure was produced in order to make it more widely available.

## TREKKING AT MGS

MGS has a tradition of trekking which stretches back to the 1904 route marches from Alderley and Grasmere Camps and, with the exception of breaks during the wars, there has been at least one Trek almost every year since. From the earliest days trekking was distinguished from camping, a tradition established at the same time, by the fact that trekking involved carrying camping equipment from one site to the next.

The first Foreign Trek was to Germany in 1910 under the leadership of High Master J. L. Paton. From that year until 1939 the venue of Treks switched between home and abroad, though always within western Europe. There have from time to time been other expeditions to more remote areas. Ray Davies led climbing expeditions to Iceland in 1968 and 1972 and to Norway in each of the other five years from 1967 to 1973. Geographers did fieldwork in Yugoslavia in 1976 and Iran in 1968 and 1970, and there must have been other adventurous expeditions over the years.

Foreign Trek became an annual event in 1947, and an annual Scottish Trek was added by Ian Bailey in 1956. Since 1947 Foreign Trek had always been to the Alps until the first Pyrenean Trek in 1978. The Pyrenees were visited again in 1982 and are now established on Trek's list of venues. In 1984 there were two smaller expeditions each attempting something Trek had not done before. A party of 23 trekked for 11 days across the volcanic wastes of south-central Iceland, and a party of 13 explored the 'via ferrata' systems of the Brenta Dolomites.

With the advent of modern lightweight camping equipment and dehydrated foods, the routes of traditional backpacking treks have moved higher into the mountains, and it is now typical to spend at least half the nights camping in the wilds at around 2000 - 2500 metres (7000 - 8000 feet).

## AIMS OF TREK

Foreign Trek differs from many expeditions in that it doesn't rely on scientific fieldwork as a justification for its expeditions (regular Biology and Geography field trips cater for this need). The aim is simply to walk through, and live in, wild, mountainous and sometimes remote areas for the 'pleasure' of doing just that. The nature of trekking and the demands made on expedition members, both physical and in terms of such things as good organisation, teamwork and self-reliance, make it an educational experience in the broadest sense.

## EXPEDITION REPORTS

With the exception of articles in the school magazine ULULA, there seem to be no written records of the Treks before 1974, when Chris Little instituted 'Trek Log' in which successive leaders have recorded details of the expeditions they organised.

From 1983 each year's log has been produced as a separate word-processed expedition report, but still with the original dual aims of being a practical help to future leaders taking Trek to the same area, and as an historical record more detailed than Ulula. In these reports the itinerary has been essentially a brief, factual account, concentrating mainly on the route taken, times and conditions.

## RECENT FOREIGN TREKS 1974 - 1991

This list gives outline details of recent Foreign Treks from the start of Trek Log in 1974 to date. For the full list of Treks from 1904 to 2004 see the Trekking Centenary Brochure.

YEAR	COUNTRY	AREA	LEADER	STAFF	TREKKERS	COST
1991	France	Vanoise	Witton	Dobson, Seel	12	£290
	Norway	Lyngen/ Romsdal	McDonald	Hesketh, Milne, Burin	12	£570
1990	Austria	Ost Tirol	Witton	Dobson, Hand, Milne, (Witton)	26	£290
1989	Italy	Dolomites	Witton	Dobson, Duffy, Thorpe, Milne, (Witton)	36	£265
1988	France/Italy Switzerland	Tour du Mont Blanc	Witton	Dobson, Hesketh, Staufenberg, (Staufenberg)	27	£250
1987	France/Spain	Pyrenees	Witton	Stubbs, Dobson, Duffy, Hand	38	£220
1986	France	Vanoise	Witton	Leversha, Stubbs, Dobson, Souster, Duffy, Hesketh	35	£200
1985	Austria	Zillertal	Witton	Leversha, Willson, Dobson, Souster, Adams	37	£185
1984	Iceland		Witton/ Willson	Souster, Adams, Green, Orrell	17	£250
	Italy	Dolomites/ Ortler	Leversha	Stubbs, Bridges	10	£190
1983	France/ Switzerland	Mont Blanc - Grand Combin	Witton	Leversha, Stubbs, Dobson, Souster, Brierley, Kennedy	38	£180
1982	France	Pyrenees	Witton	Leversha, Stubbs, Dobson, Souster, Willson	37	£170
1981	Austria	Ost Tirol	Leversha	Stubbs, Witton, Dobson, Souster	38	£150
1980	Italy	Dolomites	Leversha/ (Little	Witton Hamment - Aylsbury GS)	16 (+15)	£150
1979	Switzerland	Bernese Oberland	Little	Leversha, Gomersall	19	£150
1978	France/Spain	Pyrenees	Walker	Little, Peacock, Stubbs	20	£125
1977	Austria	Tirol	Little	Peacock, Buckley, Walker, Hancock	21	£120
1976	Italy	Marmolada	Little	Stubbs, Buckley, Walker	25	£100
1975	Switzerland/ Italy	Monte Rosa	Peacock	Stubbs, Geoghegan, Buckley, Little	30	£79
1974	France/Italy Switzerland	Mont Blanc - Matterhorn	Wylde	Stubbs, Geoghegan, Buckley Poole, Bowyer, Peacock	40	£80

## SUMMARY WALKING STATISTICS FOR FOREIGN TREKS 1982 - 1991

Year	Area	Full Walking Days	Total distance walked		Total height Climbed		Daily averages for full walking days					
			km	Miles	Metres	Feet	Distance	Ascent	Walking	km	Miles	Metres
1991	Vanoise	11	178	111	11,080	36,400	16	9.7	1010	3300	4h-40	
1990	Ost Tirol	13	160	100	10,800	35,400	12	7.7	830	2730	4h-30	
1989	Dolomites	13	156	98	10,560	34,600	12	7.5	810	2660	4h-30	
1988	Tour M. Blanc	13	175	110	11,400	37,300	14	8.4	880	2900	4h-20	
1987	Pyrenees	12	170	106	10,800	35,600	14	9.0	900	2960	4h-45	
1986	Vanoise	11	161	100	11,000	36,100	14	8.9	995	3260	4h-45	
1985	Zillertal	12	149	93	10,100	33,100	12	7.6	840	2760	4h-45	
1984	Iceland	10	182	114	-	-	18	11.5	-	-	-	
The only extended climb was 3950 ft (1200 m) to the summit of Hekla												
1983	Mont Blanc - Grand Combin	11	140	87	11,500	37,600	13	8.1	1050	3430	4h-50	
1982	Pyrenees	12	137	86	10,400	34,100	11	7.1	870	2840	4h-45	

## FOREIGN TREK HIGH POINTS 1974 - 1991

This is a list of the highest points reached by Foreign Trek since detailed records were started with Trek Log in 1974. Many other summits and high passes have been climbed but only those over 3000 metres are listed, except when a Trek didn't reach this height in which case the highest point reached that year is given.

		SUMMITS	OTHER HIGH POINTS	
1991	VANOISE	Pointe de la Sana Grand Roc Rateau d'Aussois Pointe Boussac Pointe des Fours Pointe du Pisset	3436 3316 3131 3090 3072 3033	
	NORWAY	Galdhøpiggen	2469	
1990	OST TIROL	Kleine Muntanitz Böses Weibl Wilden Kogel	3192 3121 3022	
1989	DOLOMITES	Piz Boè la Varella	3152 3055	
1988	TOUR DU MONT BLANC	Tête Nord des Fours	2756	
1987	PYRENEES	le Taillon Petit Vignemale Grande Fache	3144 3032 3005	
1986	VANOISE	Grande Sassière Pointe de l'Observatoire	3747 3015	Pointe de la Réchasse (W Ridge) 3044
1985	ZILLERTAL	Schwartzenstein Schönbichlerhorn Richter Spitz	3369 3134 3052	
1984	ICELAND	Hekla	1491	
	DOLOMITES/ORTLER	Mont Confinale	3370	Mont Cevedale (NW Glacier) ~ 3600
1983	MONT BLANC - GRAND COMBIN	Mont Rouge du Giétro Mont Avril Pointe d'Orny Grand Tavé	3439 3347 3270 3158	
1982	PYRENEES	Vignemale Pic Perdiguère le Taillon Pic de Néouvielle	3298 3222 3144 3091	
1981	EAST TIROL	Kasteneck	2836	
1980	DOLOMITES	Tofana di Rozes La Varella	3224 3055	
1979	BERNESE OBERLAND	Wildstrubel	3244	Les Diablerets (NE Ridge) 3109
1978	PYRENEES	Vignemale le Taillon Grande Fache	3298 3144 3005	Mont Perdido (NW Ridge) ~3050
1977	TIROL	Hohe Geige Schaufel Spitz	3395 3333	Riffloch Ölgrubenjoch 3100 3095
1976	MARMOLADA	Piz Boè	3152	
1975	MONTE ROSA	Klein Matterhorn Mettelhorn	3883 3406	Gnifetti Hut Britannia Hut 3611 3029
1974	CHAMONIX - ZERMATT		Col du Mont Rouge Theodulpass Hörnli Hut Col Collon Col de Valcournera	3325 3290 3260 3087 3066

# TREK HIGH POINTS 1974-1991 in order of altitude

## 1991 High Points in blue

Feet	Metres	Height	Year	SUMMIT	Pyrenees	Other high points are in the Alps.				
	3880	3883	75	Klein Matterhorn (12,740)						
	3870					Feet	Metres	Height	Year	OTHER HIGH POINT
	3860									
	3850						3800			
	3840						3790			
	3830						3780			
	3820						3770			
<b>12,500</b>	<b>3810</b>						3760			
	3800						3750			
	3790						3740			
	3780						3730			
	3770						3720			
	3760						3710			
	3750						3700			
	3740	3747	86	Grande Sassière (12,294)			3690			
	3730						3680			
	3720						3670			
	3710						3660			
	3700						3650			
	3690						3640			
	3680						3630			
	3670						3620			
<b>12,000</b>	<b>3660</b>						3610	3611	75	Gnifetti Hut
	3650						3600	~3600	84	Mont Cevedale (NW glacier)
	3640						3590			
	3630						3580			
	3620						3570			
	3610						3560			
	3600						3550			
	3590						3540			
	3580						3530			
	3570						3520			
	3560						3510			
	3550						3500			
	3540						3490			
	3530						3480			
	3520						3470			
	3510						3460			
<b>11,500</b>	<b>3500</b>						3450			
	3490						3440			
	3480						3430			
	3470						3420			
	3460						3410			
	3450						3400			
	3440	3439	83	Mont Rouge du Giétra			3390			
	3430	3436	91	Pointe de la Sana			3380			
	3420						3370			
	3410						3360			
	3400	3406	75	Mettelhorn			3350			
	3390	3395	77	Hohe Geige			3340			
	3380						3330			
	3370	3370	84	Mont Confinale			3320	3325	74	Col du Mont Rouge
	3360	3369	85	Schwarzenstein			3310			
	3350						3300			
<b>11,000</b>	<b>3200</b>						3290	3290	74	Theodulpass
	3340	3347	83	Mont Avril			3280			
	3330	3333	77	Schafel Spitz			3270			
	3320						3260	3260	74	Hörnli Hut
	3310	3316	91	Grand Roc			3250			
	3300						3240			
	3290	3298	78,82	Vignemale			3230			
	3280						3220			
	3270	3270	83	Pointe d'Orny			3210			
	3260						3200			
	3250						3190			
	3240	3244	79	Wildstrubel			3180			
	3230	3224	80	Tofana di Rozes			3170			
	3220	3222	82	Pic Perdiguère			3160			
	3210						3150			
<b>10,500</b>	<b>3200</b>						3140			
	3190	3192	90	Kleine Muntanitz			3130			
	3180						3120			
	3170						3110	3109	79	Les Diablerets (NE Ridge)
	3160	3158	83	Grand Tavé			3100	3100	77	Riffloch
	3150	3152	76,89	Piz Boë			3090	3095	77	Ölgrubenjoch
	3140	3144	78,82,87	Le Taillon			3080	3087	74	Col Collon
		3134	85	Schönbichlerhorn			3070			
	3130	3131	91	Rateau d'Aussois			3060	3066	74	Col de Valcournera
	3120	3121	90	Böses Weibl			3050	~3050	78	Mont Perdido (NW Ridge)
	3110						3040	3044	86	Pointe de la Rechasse (W Ridge)
	3100	3091	82	Pic de Néouville			3030			
	3090	3090	91	Pointe Boussac			3020	3029	75	Britannia Hut
	3080						3010			
	3070	3072	91	Pointe des Fours			3000			
	3060	3055	80,89	La Varella						
	3050	3052	85	Richter Spitz						
<b>10,000</b>	<b>3000</b>	3005	78,87	Pointe du Pisset						
	3040	3033	91	Petit Vignemale						
	3030	3032	87	Wilden Kogel						
	3020	3022	90	Pointe de l'Observatoire						
	3010	3015	86	Grand Fache						

## ORGANISATION

## Travel

Rail travel was arranged through Ultima Travel. Apart from a rail strike with a bus replacement service, a jog across Paris, a sprint through Gare de Lyon, and a long delay on the return ferry crossing, the arrangements worked well!

## Training

All boys were given a copy of the MGS-produced booklet The Good Trek Guide which details best practice in MGS Foreign Treks, together with a copy of the excellent BMC booklet Safety on Mountains. There is a copy of The Good Trek Guide in the Trek archive.

All boys were provided with a copy of the Provisional Itinerary, a sketch map of our proposed route and they were given the opportunity to buy maps. This was to encourage them to take an interest in the route we were walking and to be able to identify features and mountains. Most bought the 1:100,000 sheet and some bought the complete set of 1:25,000 maps.

Given the fact that half the party had proved themselves on a previous Foreign Trek, and the rest were known to be pretty fit, I decided that just one Training Walk would be sufficient this year. Rucksacks with full personal equipment were carried so we could check boys' kit.

## Training Walk

Sunday 14th April

As a change from our usual training walks I chose a route over Tryfan to give the boys some experience of scrambling. It was only about half the distance of our usual walks but provided useful practice of moving over steep and rocky ground with a large rucksack. All boys performed well.

**Minibus:** School - Llyn Ogwen  
**Route:** Llyn Ogwen - Tryfan - Glyder Fach - Glyder Fawr - Devil's Kitchen (About 6 miles)

## Equipment

## Ropes, ice axes and crampons

We carried 2 ropes and everyone had an ice axe. We didn't take crampons. The ropes were not needed but the ice axes were very useful on the sections of steep snow.

## Kit list

The standard list, amended considerably this year as we were not camping. There is a copy in the Trek archive.

## Food

It was up to the boys to decide if they wanted to rely entirely on meals and supplies bought at the huts and in the villages, or to take supplies to self-cook. Most opted to self-cook in small groups. These groups were supplied with 2 gaz stoves, a set of 3 nesting aluminium billies, and an information sheet with comprehensive advice on easy-cook menus, portion sizes etc. There is a copy in the Trek archive.

## Amis du PNV

Membership of this association, which allowed discounts at five PNV huts, was taken out for the whole party.

## Insurance

The standard Commercial Union School Journey policy with an attached memorandum covered us for walking along recognised walking routes, with ropes being used only as a safety measure. This memorandum was first negotiated in 1975, with a revised version from 1986. There were no claims.

## ACCOUNTS

With a small party and a high staff to student ratio of 1:4, it was planned that this Trek would be subsidised from reserves. This turned out to be about £30 per person.

### EXPENDITURE

	See Note	Cost/head (12)
Travel	[1]	£2,561.86
Accommodation	[2]	£927.32
Food	[3]	£147.16
Insurance	[4]	£148.25
Equipment	[5]	£95.49
Maps	[6]	£17.99
Guides	[7]	£19.95
Postage, phone etc.		£41.54
Photographic	[8]	£49.20
Prizes		£13.00
Amis du PNV		£125.26
BMC books		£26.90
Staff expenses		£30.00
		£4,203.92
		£350.33

For notes see following page

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE** **£4,203.92**

### INCOME

Charges 12 @ £290 £3,480.00

Other	Deposit Account Interest	£15.06
	NSB Interest	£229.02
	Tent hire	£74.00
	Tent sale	£20.00
	Tent damage	£30.00
		£368.08

**TOTAL INCOME** **£3,848.08**

**LOSS FOR 1991** **£355.84**

<b>BALANCE at 12/2/91</b>	Current Account	£347.40
	Deposit Account	£332.82
	NSB	<u>£2,105.16</u>
		£2,785.38
	Less 1991 deposits in hand	<u>£600.00</u>
		£2,185.38
	Loss for 1991	<u>£355.84</u>

**NET BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD** **£1,829.54**

<b>BALANCE at 21/1/92</b>	Current Account	£402.48
	Deposit Account	£1,092.88
	NSB	<u>£1,254.18</u>
		£2,749.54
[9]	Less 1992 net balance in hand	<u>£920.00</u>

**NET BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD** **£1,829.54**

## NOTES

<b>[1] TRAVEL</b>	Ultima Travel	£2,370.00	
	Practice walk (net)	£9.50	
	Petrol	£35.30	
	Taxi	£9.00	
	Arc 2000 bus	£47.12	
	Val d'Isere bus	£90.94	£2,561.86
<b>[2] ACCOMMODATION</b>	Mont Pourri	£75.73	
	Palet	£67.19	
	Leisse	£67.19	
	Pralognan (2 nights)	£187.50	
	Aussois (2 nights)	£159.38	
	Termignon	£90.63	
	Arpont	£67.19	
	Entre Deux Eaux	£78.13	
	Femma	£67.19	
	Fours	£67.19	£927.32
Average of £77.28 per night, £5.15 per person per night (for 15 people)			
<b>[3] FOOD</b>	Trek meal (net)	£73.25	
	Provisions on Trek	£46.20	
	Reunion refreshments	£27.71	£147.16
<b>[4] INSURANCE</b>	Commercial Union	£128.25	
	Higginson payment	£20.00	£148.25
<b>[5] EQUIPMENT</b>	Ice axe tape and protectors	£52.18	
	Other spares	£43.31	£95.49
<b>[6] MAPS</b>	2 @ 1:25,000	£11.04	
	1 @ 1:50,000	£6.95	£17.99
		73	
<b>[7] GUIDES</b>	Collomb (Vanoise)	£10.00	
	Collomb (Atlas)	£9.95	£19.95
<b>[8] PHOTOGRAPHIC</b>	3 slide films	£15.00	
	Prints	£34.20	£49.20
<b>[9] 1992 MOROCCO ACCOUNT</b>			
INCOME	20 deposits @ £60.00	£1,200.00	
	20 second payments @ £50.00	£1,000.00	
	Ashley (£10 excess less £6 cheque fees)	£4.00	£2,204.00
EXPENDITURE	Exodus deposits: 20 @ £45	£900.00	
	Insurance premiums: 24 @ £16	£384.00	£1,284.00
		Credit	£920.00
<b>EXCHANGE RATES</b>	Weighted mean (including commission) : £1 = 9.6 FF		

Allan Witton January 1992