

Clubs and Societies Board
10th May 2010

Outdoor Club Easter Tour 2010

Report compiled by Philip Leadbeater

Dates: 28th March-7th April 2010

Location: El Chorro, Spain



Aims and Objectives of the Tour

The primary purpose of this tour was to engage in sport climbing. Sport climbing refers to rock climbing on routes where there is permanent pre-placed protection in the form of bolts. Sport climbing is found in only limited locations in the UK but is the predominant form of rock climbing in continental Europe. This type of climbing is a good way to build stamina and confidence with a decreased risk in comparison to traditional lead climbing.

This region was selected based on the large selection of routes across the range of grades, and the opportunity to experience limestone features, such as tufas, which are rarely found in the UK.

Subsidiary objectives were to explore the local area (including the infamous Camino del Rey) and experience the local culture of Southern Spain.

Tour Activities:

The following activities took place on this tour –

- Sport climbing
- Via ferrata
- Walking
- Running
- Observing Easter celebrations in Malaga
- Visiting the beach/tapas bars

Tour successes

A large number of Outdoor Club members on a climbing tour to a foreign country is a success in itself. The logistical issues associated with large scale climbing trips via budget airlines are not insignificant. Climbing requires a large amount of equipment, in addition to personal and camping/sleeping gear.

The main successes in the view of the club were those members who were experiencing sport climbing for the first time, and engaged in an extremely positive way. The club committee and senior club members were reassured to see novices picking up the skills quickly and proficiently and using these skills to climb independently on some committing routes.

In terms of technical climbing, the standard reached was very high: 7a+ redpoints and 7a onsights being the best.

The Camino del Rey via ferrata was as much a psychological challenge as a physical one, but it is no surprise that both were overcome in style (see pictures below).

The proximity of the climbing locations to a major coastal city (Malaga) allowed rest days to be spent either at the beaches of Torremolinos or exploring the Old Town. The coincidence of this tour with the spectacular and prolonged Easter celebrations in Malaga provided additional opportunities to experience a unique aspect of Spanish culture.

Finances

At this point in time we are awaiting confirmation of a tour subsidy allocation from CSB as a result of our Tour location change.

Adverse events

No adverse events occurred during this tour. Some teams abseiled in the dark from a route when finishing late. Ideally this would be avoided but all teams were adequately equipped to deal with this eventuality. One member booked his return flight for the wrong day.

Feedback from members

The feedback on the tour was positive.

Future improvements

Photos

The following pages contain a selection of photos from this tour

Statement of thanks and the wider implications of tours

The authors, on behalf of Imperial College Union Outdoor Club, would like to express their thanks to the IC Trust and Imperial College Union for their continued support of student activities. With your help we have been able to promote the development of hillwalking, climbing and mountaineering within the Imperial College community.

Throughout our 65th anniversary year we have hoped to build upon the strengths of the club and this tour has been important for this. We hope this will encourage members to engage with future trips and tours and that this year's novices will commit to passing their newly found skills on to the future intakes of novice climbers.

Philip Leadbeater

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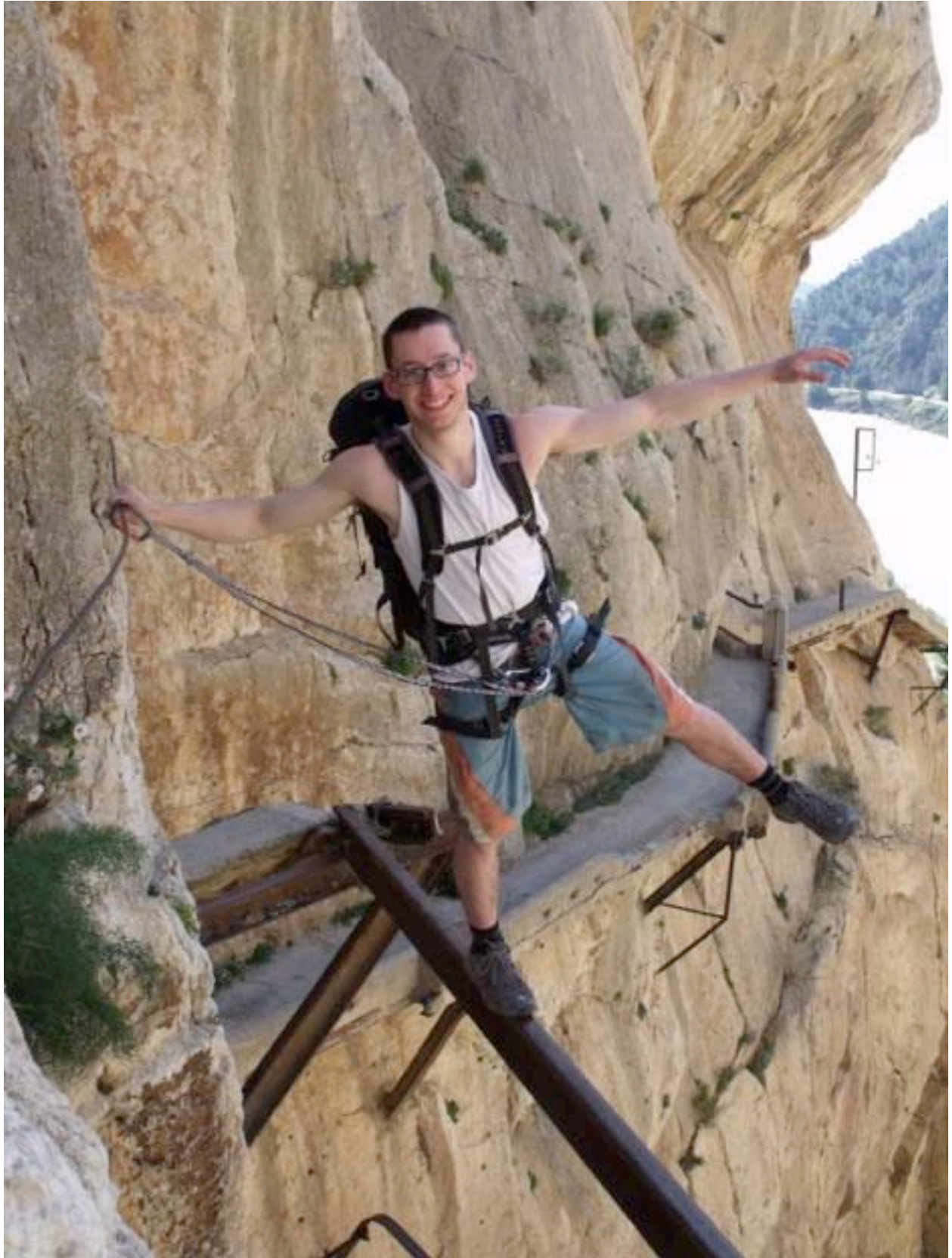
The gorge above El Chorro



The Irish Pub



The Camino del
Rey



Laybacking



Getting to grips with it all

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Beautiful views



