

Instructions were clear and brooked no argument: “Meet 8.30am, be on time, bus won't wait!” Those from TEDA barely had time to sleep, leaving home at 6.30am. Sleepy hashers ate breakfast in the station and on the bus as T2H3 Hash #583 got underway.

After a quiet and uneventful few hours' driving, culminating in a narrow winding lane to our destination, the driver unfathomably selected a blind corner on which to execute a painstaking u-turn and deposit eager harriers and harriettes on the side of the road. The group continued on foot to the accommodation, noting a large bus parking area around the first corner. Gasps of delight at the village environment and picturesque scenery continued until entering the courtyard of their new home. Soon finding that what had been described as a three person room actually consisted of one double and one single bed, some hasty room allocation recalculations left Just William gracefully agreeing to accommodation "in the backyard", which conjures up images of being "in the doghouse".

Lunch was an impressive spread, accompanied by welcome cold beverages. One table took a particular liking to the shrimp dish, polishing off all of theirs and then bargaining first with the other table for theirs and even the wait staff for those left behind by other guests. The polite German style of bargaining proved quite ineffective, but others successfully intervened and the prize was won.

Water bottles and snacks carefully packed into backpacks, the group set off into the hills. The going was a little steep at first, and before long cries of dismay were heard up and down the line. The sun beat fiercely down and the determined group trudged on as the trail went offroad, through a barbed wire fence, and up a steep hill with loose dry stones. The climb went from hot and steep to scorching and steeper as some resembled mountain goats (CCOC Up) and others resembled plodding mules (Nurse of the Rings).

Entering a shaded forest area was welcome as the sheer climb continued, and the first victim of the vicious exertions threw in the towel. Everyone else made it to the summit, with their reward being a vision of the Great Wall. Who was the one who completely missed seeing the Wall, and how much did she drink at lunchtime?

Descending carefully on wobbly legs after the long climb, more than one group member took (and regretted) a little slide. One kept companions waiting almost long enough for sunset while he looked for the most suitable pee stop location, and on landing back at HQ all headed for that sweet cold nectar, that delicious ambrosia, the (slightly) cold beer. Yet, immediately after arriving back from the long hike, was it our Virgin who was heard to say that she wanted a little walk? Quelle insatiable appetite!

Dinner was again superb and eaten with relish and much laughter. Following dinner was the circle, for which two usually energetic girls had to be roused from sleep and severely punished with down-downs. Our virgin learned the circle rules the hard way, and the hares drank “white beer” and received hearty congratulations on a memorable trail. This group was in large part relatively new group members, and although they struggled at first, finally they learned the words and became confident to sing “Drink it down down down down...”

Without giving too much away, the remainder of the evening held hints of zoology, with snails, horses and elephants featuring. On that note, here ends this scribe's knowledge of T2H3 Hash #583: the Dongshan Hash AKA the mountain goat hash.