

Troop 354's Three Day Hike 2000

Eric Hamilton

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Well, now that the three day hike to Cliff Lake is over, here is a partial list of what we did. (If anyone else can make any changes, please let me know. So far the biggest complaint is that I didn't mention the exact quantity of mosquitoes that we met!)

1.1 Day One

On 23JUN00 we all got together at the American Legion Hall in downtown Clovis. After some discussion and repacking of packs we started out for Courtright Reservoir a little before 6:30 a.m.. The following were with us:

Scouts	Kevin Clayton	Jason Conrad	Chris Done
	Tyler Hamilton-Graves	Phillip Lancaster	Mat Richardson
Leaders	Ed Clayton	Jim Conrad	Henry Graves
	Eric Hamilton	Mike Lancaster	

We traveled in two vehicles, Ed's van and Henry's "Wonder Van", getting to Courtright Reservoir at about 9:00 a.m. (our starting altitude was about 8,200 feet).

After getting our starting group picture, we set off to Cliff Lake. The trip up was uneventful, with everyone being able to jump over Nelson Creek. We were aided in this by having another hiking family help us over the boulders in the middle of the creek.

During lunch one of the scouts pointed out to me that there was a mosquito on my forehead. Which I then slapped. He then did this about a million times more and I kept slapping my head. (I am not sure if there was a mosquito on my head, or if he just liked to see me hit my head!)

We had originally thought that it might be nice to continue over from Cliff Lake to Rock Lake. After arriving at Cliff Lake, we decided against it and spent the rest of the day making camp and acclimating to the altitude (9,500 feet).

That evening, while eating/preparing dinner, Jason started his always entertaining "Dance of the Mosquitoes". Most of the rest of us were satisfied with simply slapping the mosquitoes and applying insect repellent, but Jason was unique.

We ended our first day on the trail by hiking about four miles and climbing up about 1,300 feet to spend a nice night among the mosquitoes. We put out our camp fire about 8:30 p.m. and went to sleep.

¹\$Header: d:/354/RCS/3day00.tex,v 1.5 2000-06-30 09:20:58-07 Hamilton Exp Hamilton \$

²\$Header: d:/354/RCS/3day00.inc,v 1.5 2000-07-07 08:42:49-07 Hamilton Exp Hamilton \$

1.2 Day Two

After getting up, eating, and packing, we set out for Rock Lake at about 9:15 a.m.. There was a minor error in finding the trail but soon we were on our way up to the pass (9,875 feet), Some of us continued through to Rock Lake.

Henry climbed a nearby, unnamed, mountain peak (10,196 feet). We had a discussion with those who had gone ahead to Rock Lake as to whether or not we should stay overnight at Rock Lake or not. This discussion was started over the radios. Most of the group decided to go on down to Rock Lake and have a detailed discussion. Three of us stayed behind in the pass and had lunch.

Jason's Big Adventure

Jason discovered the fun of being partially swallowed up by quick sand (I think that it was only "fast sand", but that is easier to say when it didn't happen to you). As he was busy sinking into the sand he remembered "that when in quick sand, don't struggle because it will just make things worse". This was when he noticed a tree that was about 3 inches in diameter that he could reach. By now his legs were mostly under water/sand and his two way radio was about to get wet. Fortunately, he, still thinking about a wet radio, was able to reach the tree and pull himself out of the water. (Glad he saved that radio!)

This is a good time to point out one of the more important rules of hiking:

Never go off alone, always have a buddy with you.

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While most of the group was at Rock Lake, they decided that it might be best if they returned to Cliff Lake for the night. Most of the group then climbed the peak that Henry had climbed earlier on (Henry climbed it a second time).

I was using an insect repellent that was 26% DEET, at this point I switched over to one that was 95% DEET and the improvement was great. Before changing to the high percentage DEET, Henry was accusing me of acting like "a bug light for mosquitoes". I usually had a cloud of them around.

Following the return of the climbers, we all went down to the other end of Cliff Lake and found a very nice camp ground for the night.

During this second night at Cliff Lake we had a very nice view of bats hunting mosquitoes by skimming about a foot or so above the lake. For the fishermen among us, we saw many fish jumping out of the water. Our fishing luck was as expected. Even with Ed's help in grub finding, no fish were landed.

While watching the bats hunt mosquitoes, Jason swallowed (or breathed in) a mosquito. Watching him try to spit it out was another high point of the trip.

³At least then we would know where to look for the radio.

1.3 Third Day

Before leaving several of the scouts had an opportunity to explore the base of the huge cliff that was very near our campsite.

We then finished packing up and got going by about 9:15 a.m. Almost all of this day's hiking was down hill and everything went quite smoothly until we were crossing Nelson Creek.

While crossing Nelson Creek, I went straight ahead, slipped on a rock and twisted my ankle and knee. Fortunately, we were just a mile from the cars and I made it most of the way back. Everyone else carefully looked at the creek and made it across completely dry and safely under Jim's watchful eye.

Use care and thinking when crossing water.

A couple of hundred yards from the car park, Jim came back and got my pack. His son Jason came and got one of the other Scout's packs "J&J Moving". On the way back we made the traditional stop at Foster's freeze for a quick bite of "real food" (Jason's description of it).

We returned to Clovis around 3:30 p.m..

The Brown Door Knob Award

Jason Conrad is awarded the "Brown Door Knob" for all of his contributions to the atmosphere. Just glad no one had to share your tent with you!

1.4 Equipment used

Much of the camping equipment that we used was rented. Several local companies⁴ will rent equipment for weekend use at about 10 to 15 percent of its purchase price. On the trip we used a variety of camping equipment:

A. Packs

- Kelty
 - Trekker
 - Super Tioga
 - Jr. Tioga
 - West Coast (2)
- JanSport (2)
- High Peak Sinex Sport Treker (3)
- The North Face

⁴Ask your leaders for some recommendations.

B. **Stoves** It should be noted that we shared stoves constantly and it was very difficult to determine how many people were using which stove at which time. The list figures are approximate but are believed to be close. From this it appears that with normal use of a white gasoline stove requires about 11 oz of fuel per day. There wasn't enough information for the "propane" type stoves to predict usage.

In the following list I use the word "Propane" to mean any mixture of gasses that may be used to burn in a stove. Most of the modern gas type stoves use a blend of propane, butane and LP gas.

- MSR Rapid Fire "Propane" usually used by two or three people. Used most of an 8 oz container of gas.
- Optimus 8R, usually used by two or four people. Used about 15 oz of white gas.
- MSR Dragon Fly, usually used by three to five people. Used about 15 oz of white gas.
- Primus, Action Sport "Propane" used by one or two people. Used a small amount of gas.

C. **Water filters** We shared quite commonly and it was not clear how many people used a given filter. In this case it is not as important as it was with stoves. There is no problem with running out of fuel.

- MSR Mini-Works (2)
- Sweetwater
- Scout Pur (which I rebuilt without testing and did not work.)

Always carefully check your equipment before leaving on a trip.

D. **Tents** This is the area where we had the greatest variety of equipment. It should be noted that Boy Scout rules do not permit an adult to be in the same tent as scouts are. (The only exception to this rule is in the case of "father and son" in the same tent.)

- None, no tent at all, I just laid on the ground.
- Piece of plastic held up by carefully arranged pieces of rope, three users.
- Sierra Designs, Orion CD, two people in one tent.
- A "pup" tent, two scouts.
- A "White Stag" tent, one adult.
- A "Dome Tent" one scout.
- Another unnamed tent, one person.

E. **Maps** We used two types of maps.

- One was the Forest Service map "A Guide to the Dinkey Lakes Wilderness".

- The other was Geological Survey “7.5 minute quadrangles”. The quadrangles that we used were:
 - Courtright Reservoir, this was the start and end of the hike.
 - Nelson Mountain, we just crossed over the corner of this one.
 - Dogtooth Peak, this is where we spend most of our time.
 - Ward Mountain, we didn’t get this far.
- F. **Water Bottles** Many different varieties were in use, ranging from the disposable type that water is sold in through Nalgene type semi-rigid water bottles, to Platypus/Dromedary type water bags. All worked well. In addition to the trail water that we carried as we hiked along, we had two collapsible $1\frac{1}{2}$ gallon water jugs which were very useful in camp. We only had to fill them up once a night for most cooking needs.
- G. **Sleeping Bags** Most of us had mummy type bags. It didn’t get too cold (the lowest it got to was 39 degrees) so the one normal one worked just fine.
- H. **Cook Kits** These varied way from Sierra cups and a spoon to full Boy Scout cook kits with knife, spoon and fork. All worked well. Part of having everything work well involved our sharing of cook kit items, etc. The stoves each had a cooking pot that held from 1 to 4 qts of water, which we used to make large quantities of hot water.
- I. **Walking Sticks** Three of us had walking sticks, two had Leki type sticks, the other had a large 5 foot dowel about $\frac{7}{8}$ in diameter. They all seemed to work well.