

Life & Times

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Sunday,
July 6,
2008



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHUCK POOL

Jacob Pool, Scotty Weishar, Chuck Pool and Randy Weishar are shown white water rafting on the Youghiogheny River in Ohio, Pa., during Boy Scout Troop 735's High Adventure.

High adventure

Scouts make 317-mile journey from Boston, Pa., to D.C.

DAY-BY-DAY

Boy Scout Troop 735 based in Gamber recently biked 317 miles from Boston, Pa., to Washington, D.C., via the Great Allegheny Passage and the C&O Canal.

Day 1: Boston, Pa., to Perryopolis, Pa., 27 miles

Highlight: The campsite was near railroad tracks. Trains traveled by every 20 minutes until 8 p.m.

Day 2: Perryopolis, Pa., to Ohiopyle, Pa., 28 miles

Highlight: After completing the bike ride, the Scouts participated in bicycle jousting and prepared their own meals.

Day 3: Rafting adventure

Highlight: The Scouts biked about three miles then rafted down the Youghiogheny River and played touch football.

Day 4: Ohiopyle, Pa., to Meyersdale, Pa., 52 miles

Highlight: After waking up at 4 a.m. to bike and beat the heat, the Scouts saw windmill farms on mountaintops and reached the Eastern Continental Divide.

Day 5: Meyersdale, Pa., to Paw Paw, 50 miles

Highlight: The Scouts reached the C&O Canal trail, swam in the Potomac River near Paw Paw and explored the Paw Paw tunnel.

Day 6: Cumberland to Fort Frederick, 45 miles

Highlight: Each patrol performed a skit, sang and told a story during a campfire.

Day 7: Fort Frederick to Washington, D.C., 112 miles

Highlight: After almost 13 hours of biking, five adults and three Scouts finished the 112-mile "centennial day," stopping at Mile Marker 0 on the C&O canal.

BY BRANDON OLAND
TIMES STAFF WRITER

GAMBER — J.P. Hudson was hungry, tired and running low on energy.

When the 16-year-old from Eldersburg looked ahead, he could see trees, the C&O Canal to his left and a dusty towpath ahead of him with no end in sight.

But Hudson kept pedaling on his bicycle, determined to lead his fellow Boy Scouts to the desired destination: Mile 0, the end of the C&O Canal.

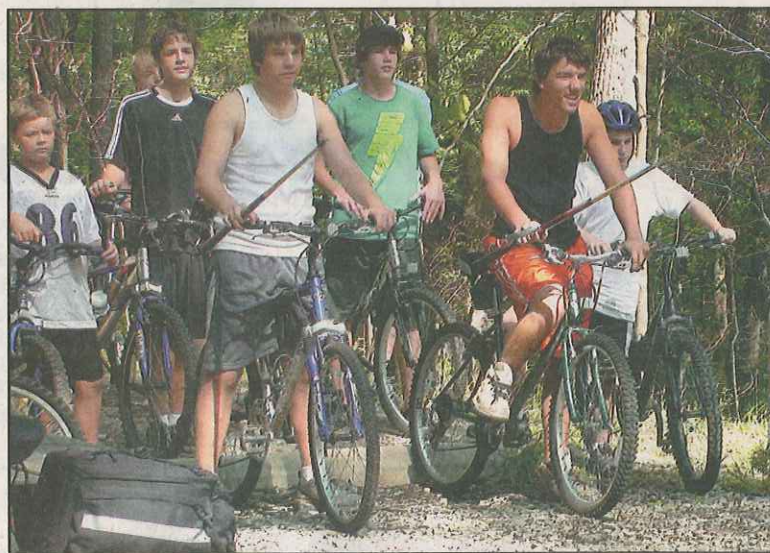
It was not easy. The heat and humidity

were, at times, unbearable. But members of Boy Scout Troop 735, based in Gamber, biked 317 miles from June 22 to June 28, journeying from Boston, Pa., to Washington, D.C., to complete its 2008 High Adventure.

Three Scouts — Hudson, Gerard Edwards and Brandon Wheeler — were able to complete the entire journey, which took the Scouts on the Great Allegheny Passage and the C&O Canal.

Six other Scouts made it to the final

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J.P. Hudson and Max Ibex prepare for bike jousting during a break in Boy Scout Troop 735's High Adventure.

Adventure

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day before stopping short of the finish line on a grueling 112-mile journey on the seventh day that took the troop from Fort Frederick to Georgetown. Hudson said every Scout biked at least 90 miles on the last day.

"Completing the whole thing, especially 112 miles on the last day, was a huge accomplishment for me," Hudson said.

Six adults joined the Scouts on the journey. Several others were on hand every 10 to 12 miles to offer them food and water.

Hudson said the hottest day of the trip was the seventh and final day.

At one point on the last day, Hudson said he was hungry, thirsty and running short on energy. But after taking a food break, he said he was refreshed and ready to push forward.

After all, he's had plenty of experience overcoming phys-



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHUCK POOL

Scout Troop 735 is shown crossing the Youghiogheny River during their High Adventure.

ical exhaustion on High Adventures.

Troop 735 plans an ambitious High Adventure trip each year, alternating between hiking, biking and canoeing.

High Adventure trips challenge and inspire Scouts and broaden their

appeal for Scouting, according to the Boy Scouts of America Web site.

Previously, Hudson said he has biked 100 miles on Skyline Drive and hiked to the top of Mount Washington in New Hampshire on other High Adventures.

The troop also camps once a month at various sites throughout the region.

Some of the camping trips leading up to the High Adventure offered opportunities to train for the difficult bike ride.

The Scouts had plenty of time for fun during their trips, including a few football games, cookouts and even a day of white-water rafting on the Youghiogheny River near Ohiopyle, Pa.

"The rafting was fun," said Jacob Pool, 11, the junior patrol leader. "I think that was probably my favorite part."

Hudson said he got a thrill out of biking through the milelong Big Savage Tunnel in Somerset County, Pa.

The Scouts also got to see plenty of sites, including historic lock houses, giant wind turbines on mountaintops in southern Pennsylvania and the "0" mile marker on the C&O Canal at the end of the long journey.

Assistant Scoutmaster Carl Larkin, who planned the trip, said the self-esteem youths can build for completing such a difficult journey is invaluable.

"If you can complete something like this," Larkin

said, "what can't you do?"

Reach staff writer Brandon Oland at 410-857-7862 or brandon.oland@carrollcountytimes.com.