

## 2ND UXBRIDGE SUMMER CAMP IN CASTLEBAR, CO. MAYO IRELAND 1996

### FRIDAY 19 JULY

After collecting the trailers the Ventures helped to load them up. We left the Scout hut at about 6.15pm with the late arrival of Mike Payen who had been sharpening the axes for us. After getting stuck in heavy traffic North of Birmingham and a fuel stop near ICI's chemical works at Runcorn which looks spectacular in the dark lit up, we arrive at Holyhead at 12.45am.

### SATURDAY 20 JULY - sunny and hot

The ferry is not as full as expected and it leaves on time. The Scouts head for the arcade machines and several games of cards are started for the 3 1/2 hour voyage. It is a calm sailing. We dock in Dun Laoghaire at 5.45 am and it takes us quite a time to drive out of Dublin due to the traffic lights going against us and having no sensors. After an hour we stop for breakfast and James Wolff finds that he had picked up the full pot of Flora, rather than the empty Flora pot with his sandwiches in it.

At 9.00am we stop at Longford for coffee or orange and hot toast at the Longford Arms.

Finally we arrive at Castlebar at 11.20am and go on to the farm after stopping at the Windy Gap near the farm which gives a breath taking view of mount Nephin and valley below it.

We are met by Tony's brother in law, Michael, who shows us to the field we are going to camp in. Everyone is tired but all the tents start to go up with the Ventures putting up the latrines. Tony and Steve drive back to Castlebar to pick up the tables from 1st Mayo's HQ.

Once all the tents are up, the Patrols start to prepare the main meal of spaghetti bolognese. I am eating with Eagles and have a job to convince them that you don't cook the meat in the frying pan and the spaghetti should be put into boiling water. The meal is just about edible after being rescued. Steve starts to mark the Patrols for the camping competition, I give Eagles one Peg for not burning the water.

Later, we serve up the first load of hot chocolate after a long day.

### SUNDAY - overcast, sunny then rain - windy

I can hear the rain and strong wind outside my tent with a distant banging noise, but go back to sleep.

Get up to find the wind has blown down the Ventures and Eagles dining shelters. Tony tells me he was up at 4.30 putting up the latrines and the girls chemical tent toilet that had blown to the other end of the field. The Scouts start to build camp gadgets in the morning and we climb the hill in the afternoon which overlooks our camp site. As we get to the top it starts to rain as Joe, Tony's nephew, predicted.

When we get back it is time to start our dinner, stew in a bag followed by Steve's favourite, baked green banana and chocolate. I am eating with Eagles again. Sue and Ang return from a sight seeing tour around Westport and the Ventures spent the afternoon swimming in the lake.

### MONDAY - rain clearing to humid day

Steve is marking the first kit inspection after breakfast while Tony, Jen and I go to Castlebar for the first visit to the supermarket. Whilst in Castlebar we book up Laserworld for the afternoon, the staff are very helpful. On our return to the camp site gather everyone together, Steve opens the camp bank and we all drive back to laserworld. We book the Go-Karting and Bowling for Thursday at a special price. In the afternoon we allow everyone to go shopping in Castlebar whilst Tony, Steve and I visit yet another of Tony's relations in Castlebar (how many has he got?) to ask if our four Venture Scouts can camp in their field. Return to camp site and start to cook sausage casserole and steamed pudding and custard, I am eating with Eagles again, is there a vendetta against me?

Michael lends us his chain saw and Tony cuts up some trees, the Scouts are kept busy collecting firewood and lighting their own fires. Tony Loses his pen knife and puts up a £10 reward!

The Scouts have been spared the task of getting the water as it is quite a distant to the tap and it is easier to drive to the tap with the useless water containers that we have. Ang and Jen on one trip to the tap encounter a Bull and legged it to the car.

TUESDAY - overcast & dry

Ang and Sue go shopping to Castlebar for us whilst the Scouts encouraged to get their gadgets finished for marking in the evening. The Scouts get their fires going and use the local turf to cook toasties before getting their swimming gear together for our trip to the seaside.

The four Ventures started their overnight hike to Castlebar.

When we arrived at Inniscrone we drove on to the beach and it almost immediately started to rain. We drove to centre of the village and allowed the Scouts to go to the local arcade and to meet again at 5.00. Tony, Steve, Jen, James and I went to the local take-away to arrange our evening meal leaving the girls in a tizzy as to how they could cook such a large number of meals and we visited one of the many watering holes. We returned to the car park to find the minibus gone, with no sight of any Scouts. 5.00 O'clock passes, twenty minutes later Adam Bailey & David Mann appeared hot foot to tell us the minibus was stuck in the sand. I had visions of the minibus up to its axles with the tide rapidly coming in. Thankfully, the minibus was stuck in the sand away from the sea and after two pulls the minibus was free. Lucky Tony and I have 4x4's or we have had a large bill.

Ang & Sue in the meantime had been having a seaweed bath and had a great tale to tell. After our meal we returned to the beach for a game of rounders. Before this Adam, Simon and David Mann went swimming, what maniacs! It soon started to rain and we returned to the camp site where Gerry, Tony's sister in law, told us I had been dry all day!

The Scouts arranged a game of cricket and Sam Wadsworth's cry could be heard, they were happy and talking about the visit to the beach. We called over the PL's individually to show us their gadgets and explain how they worked. We decide that Eagle's archery range could be allowed as a gadget as everyone was getting great pleasure out of it. We also mark James Leigh's gadget which had numerous uses, including a man trap!

After the Scouts had gone to bed, we heard a lot of noise coming from the three patrols, tent raiding had started and before long two tents were down, Wolves tent was still standing as they had driven the pegs with the guylines into the ground. Unfortunately, some of the Scouts started to get out of hand and one had a bloody nose who was given first aid by Ang & Sue. Tony, Steve and I entered the battle ground to calm things down and re-erect Eagles and Lions tents. Whilst I was putting up Eagles tent, Wolves sent out another raiding party, but I managed to grab hold of a Scout's leg as he crawled back into his tent. The Scout helped me put up Eagles tent trying to convince me he was totally innocent.

The Scouts could be heard talking about their individual acts of heroism in their tents, and once again Wolves sent out a spy on the pretence of going to the toilet, on his return he was caught red handed lurking around Lions tent, we marched him up to the mess tent and we identified him to be Michael Johnson. We released him and realised we had missed a great opportunity of getting him to sleep in the First Aid tent and watch Wolve's reaction when he did not return. Eventually, all was quiet.

WEDNESDAY - Dry & sunny - windy

After breakfast we arranged a kit inspection and read the riot act to each patrol. Ang & Sue went to Castlebar for shopping and paraffin. We had a very unfortunate experience with one of the Scouts who we grounded immediately.

Ang & Sue returned with the shopping and paraffin which we later found out was red diesel!. The Scouts have made cardboard ovens and each Patrol bakes some bread, including Jenny and Helen. The boys were very tired after as busy night and we decided to take them for a long walk to make sure they sleep tonight. The four Venture Scouts returned from their overnight hike.

On our return all the patrols were involved in preparing for the Cooking Competition, I am eating with Eagles again, who wrote the leaders rota? We start to run the Volley Ball Competition. Sue & Ang judged the Cooking Competition awarding first place to Eagles, first course was Prawn Cocktail followed by Irish Stew and Angel Delight.

The Volleyball was won by the Ventures overall, but between the Patrols Wolves won.

The Scouts slept very soundly.

THURSDAY- misty

After breakfast everyone made sandwiches for lunch and Steve opened the camp bank. We left for Castlebar for the older Scouts and Ventures to go Go-Karting and the rest went bowling. We had negotiated £10 per driver for a mini Grand Prix with 15 races followed by a semi final and a final. Clive won with Martin Whitcombe second and Martin Day third, they all had a great time. Meanwhile, the bowling was won by James Wolff.

Afterwards, we allowed them to go shopping in Castlebar for the final time, we also went to the supermarket and this was the start of the bacon incident with Sue. We then returned to camp for dinner consisting of chicken supreme followed by fruit flan and cream. I took some Scouts for a quick swim in the lake.

Tony and I started to plan the incident hike around the lake for our Scouts and 1st & 17th Mayo who were going to join us. By the time we returned 1st Mayo were putting up their tents. Tony's relation was running the First Aid base with the help of some calf's blood and bones, Tony ran a radio-active base, the Scouts had to pull the minibus with the aid of pulleys at Clive's base, code cracking at the food station run by Sue & Ang, and Steve and I ran the snakes base where they lit a rocket if successful. I found that rockets are illegal in Ireland. David Mann began to feel unwell so he was driven around by Sue & Ang.

Due to the large number of Scouts and Venture Scouts we decided to mix them into five patrols. The event ended at about 2.30am and was enjoyed by all who took part.

FRIDAY- Rain to start, turning sunny - windy

The Irish Scouts left before 9.00am, our Scouts had breakfast and started to strike camp. We decided to cook the main meal at lunch time with sandwiches on route for tea. During the day Sue got her own back on Tony and I. Mash presented us with the only occasion when we had to get the First Aid kit out to treat his pinched finger. Our final task on the camp was to make our various awards, Wolves have won the Patrol competition and Lions the Pegs (weeks cooking) competition, we also thank Gerry for allowing us to stay in her field. We did not leave the farm until about 4.15pm and we had to drop off 1st Mayo's tables that they had lent us in Castlebar. We finally left Castlebar after refuelling at 5.30pm and it took us 6 hours to reach Rosslare Youth Hostel after travelling over some of Ireland's worst roads. We phoned the lady at the youth hostel numerous times on route and she was there to welcome us when we finally arrived.

SATURDAY- Sunny

We were up early at 6.00am and had our breakfast at the Hotel Rosslare at 7.00am. We were soon on the road and reached Dun Laoghaire at 10.00am where we waited for the Seacat to arrive for a 11.15 sailing. The crossing on the Seacat was very smooth and fast, we met a group of Irish Venture Scouts on board. At Holyhead we stopped and had lunch and finally arrived back at the Scout Hut at 8.00pm.

Over the week we had covered nearly 1,300 miles, camped in a foreign land and used very basic camp facilities which the Scouts had adjusted to better than we thought. We had also taken part in a joint activity with the Irish Scouts. All the leaders had a great time and I think the Scouts did as well.

***People on camp***

David Anderson	James Wolff
Matthew Ash	Martin Day
Adam Bailey	Robert Munns
David Brewer	Chris Stone
Michael Brewer	Martin Whitcombe
Chris Browne	Clive Robinson
Paul Coventry	Steve Leighs
Matthew James	Tony Wolff
Michael Johnson	Mike Day
Simon Johnson	Jade Badcock
Tom Johnson	James Leighs
David Mann	Rod Badcock
Leo Miles	Sue Leighs
Ben Milsom	Helen Leighs
Nils Sebastian	Angela Day
Sam Wadsworth	Jenny Day