



TROOP CAMP AT CAMP COUTTS

23-25/Mar/2012

Our Troop camp was at Camp Coutts, Waterfall. All term we had focused on the training requirements for the campcraft badge and this camp was designed to provide an opportunity for the Scouts to complete all those parts of the campcraft badge that can only be done in camp.

On arrival at Camp Coutts we asked the warden for a camp site that did not involve a river crossing because some of the cars and trailers could not get across. After some searching in the dark we found the spot we had been directed to at the end of the road and setup the tents. Some Scouts thought they were too tired to put up their tents, so we compared the current situation to the Jamboree conditions where they will have to put up their tents after being awake for more than 24 hours. Everyone revived when John prepared a great supper of pumpkin soup and damper.

Next morning we decided not to setup the dinning fly as we had plenty of shade from surrounding trees and fine weather was forecast. We enjoyed the morning in camp doing campcraft activities while some Scouts went to sport events. When everyone was back in camp we took advantage of the beautiful afternoon weather to go on a hike of about 6km. We walked north around Lake Toolooma, formed by a dam to provide water for the steam engines at Waterfall station. We saw the remains of an old steam pump and walked out onto the dam wall. Later we had a break at a track junction near Yellow Pool and then followed the Heathcote Creek north-west along a very wet track.



Dam wall forming Lake Toolooma



Track junction near Yellow Pool

Shortly before the waterfall into Kingfisher Pool the creek has cut a series of interconnected holes and caves in the rock bed and the Scouts enjoyed exploring the caves. We returned to camp via the western side of Lake Toolooma and explored the bubble caves formation in the Westmacott Ridge. We were back in camp by 6pm, enjoyed a good dinner and then spent hours around the campfire telling jokes and stories. Surprisingly an inquisitive wallaby sat within one meter of our campfire circle.



Exploring the creek



It was a cool night and early in the morning there was some light rain. We slept in and had a late breakfast of pancakes. The weather remained dry although there was some scattered cloud. We had a Scout Own beside the swimming hole and the rest of the morning was spent doing more campcraft tasks, including the blue level Scouts successfully completing their wet fire lighting task where we dunked all their kindling and wood into a bucket of water.



'Scouts own' beside the swimming hole



Lighting a camp fire under wet conditions – blue level campcraft



For about an hour before lunch we split into two patrols with one patrol staying in camp and the other swimming at the water hole. The water was cold.



At the swimming hole

After a sausage sandwich lunch we attended to the pack-up tasks. Unfortunately many of the Scouts found it difficult to stay on task and consequently we departed late.

We were lucky to have fine weather for the weekend when so many other weekends had been wet. Thanks to John for the catering and good food. Thanks to our parent helpers and thanks to the Scouts for being good company and for completing so many training tasks.