



Horse Brand



Philmont Cavalcade 2000 Crew # 715 CW

Trail Report by
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Cattle Brand





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Friday 7/14/2000



This was our day to travel out west. The flight was from Atlanta to Colorado Springs, through Dallas, Texas. The initial flight left at 7:00 AM, so the participants were all asked to be at the airport by 6:00 AM. That is early. But we all made it with time to spare.

Eleven Scout were set to go on this High Adventure Trip to Boy Scout Heaven. They were as follows:

Brian Staak	Crew Chief	Rick Watson	Pathfinder
Elliott Alme	Asst. Crew Chief	Chris Vaughan	Asst. Pathfinder
Mike Morin	Chaplian's Aide	James Strozier	First Aid
Alex Jaracz	Quartermaster	Mark Manguno	Sanitarian
Michael Stong	Grubmaster	Billy Tighe	Fire Chief
Andrew Vaughan	Historian		

Four Crew Advisors also accompanied the Trek. They were as follows:

Steve Vaughan	ASM/Crew Advisor	David Jaracz	Committee Chair
Tom Morin	Scoutmaster	Bill Tighe	ASM

Once we landed in Colorado Springs, retrieved luggage and rented Vans (one 15 passenger and one mini van), we proceeded out to the Air Force Academy. We had lunch on campus at the Burger King. Afterwards we checked into the Scout Hut and then proceeded to tour the Academy.

What a gorgeous campus. There are many acres of land and wildlife all over. To the west were the Rocky Mountains, which provided a wonderful background. The campus was not exactly level. But we were driving most of the campus so it was not bad.

Lt. Colonel Marty Whelan (USAF), his wife Sue and his son Mike joined us in the afternoon. Marty is the brother of Assistant Scoutmaster Kevin Whelan. They shared with us much about the Academy, Cadet Life and the Colorado Springs area. It was quite enlightening. We certainly appreciated the generous gift of time that the Whelan's shared with us.

After dinner at the Academy Mess Hall (the one by the Scout Hut), we went to the Garden of the Gods Park. We spent over two hours there. What spectacular rock formations. We have many pictures to show the splendor of the area. We would highly recommend this diversion to another Crew.

Afterwards we stopped to pick up donuts for the next morning. We spent the night at the Scout Hut on the Academy grounds. Thanks Troop 78 for allowing us to share the space



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Saturday 7/15/2000



We arose at 5:30 AM so that we could pack up our gear and head back to the airport. There we returned the vans and got picked up by a Rambling Express van that would take us to Philmont.

It was a three hour drive from Colorado Springs to Cimarron. All along the way we could see the rise of the Rockies to the west. This was certainly different terrain from what we were used to in Georgia. Philmont Headquarters was set in a great meadow south of Cimarron. There were beautiful hills out to the west as you could see the tip of the Tooth of Time.

We went through Check-in procedures rapidly and found our tents in base camp. These would be our homes for the next two nights. Lunch was served at 11:30 in the Philmont Dining Hall.

After lunch, we met up with our Horseman Joey (Doc) Dilberto and Wrangler Jonathan (John Boy) Porter. What a great time we would have with them over the week.

Doc was a rising Junior at The Citadel. This of course hit off right away with Bill Tighe, who was a Citadel grad (Class of '83). His long sideburns and bleached hair was his summer rebellion from The Citadel. He had worked at Philmont for several years and was a real Cowboy.

John Boy was a Gator from Florida. He too was a rising Junior and only weeks away from being 21. We later learned that John had been on three Treks and had worked with the Conservation Department at Philmont for two previous summers. He really knew the trails and the Camp.

After some medical checks, pictures by the statue and some information sharing, we were free to settle in. That night we went to Mass in the outdoor Catholic Chapel. I was able to serve as a Eucharistic Minister, what a treat. Midway through Mass there was a rainbow off in the northeastern horizon. God was truly in this land.

We next gathered next for the Opening Campfire Ceremony. Here we went across the street to a campfire circle with a ranch scene built onto it. Here we learned about the Philmont story from the early Indian beginnings to the present. Waite Phillips was depicted and shared his dream for the land and his thoughts in donating it to the Boy Scouts.

After the campfire gave us a chance to go to the Snack Bar and discover the Soft Serve Ice Cream. Finally after two long days of travel and some massive afternoon rains, we were going to spend out first night in Philmont.

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Sunday 7/16/2000



David and Bill woke up at 5:00 AM to a skunk in their tent. Bill had forgotten about the Doughnut Holes left over from Saturday's breakfast. Fortunately the skunk did not spray but the two of them proceeded to wake up the rest of us prematurely.

After a 6:30 AM breakfast, we went for Horse Training at 7:30 at the Cattle Center. We learned to curry, halter, tie up the lead ropes, saddle and bridle the horse. Joey then assigned our horses too us for the week. The assignments were as follows:

Tom Morin	Major	James Strozier	Chase
Mike Morin	Minor	Rick Watson	Cisco
Brian Staak	Memphis	Elliott Alme	Double Ought
Bill Tighe	Tennessee	Steve Vaughan	Sixty Dollars
Billy Tighe	Red Wing	Chris Vaughan	Mr. T
Alex Jaracz	Denny	Andrew Vaughan	Oreo
David Jaracz	Brennan	Mark Manguno	Bocefus
Michael Stong	Joker		

We then rode on a two mile circle ride out to the old Stockade Camp. Allegedly this was a fort that Waite Phillips built for his children. It had a great view of the Tooth of Time.

Before we had lunch in the Stockade, Joey shared with us a reading from the Bible. We ducked the rain as we ate in the Stockade. After lunch, Joey shared with us some additional instruction on Bear Safety. This was a real deal as they have had six incidents with Bears over the past three weeks that had resulted in four injuries.

That night we shook down our gear and put up in the locker what was not going to be with us for the next week. The stuff sacks were smaller than promised so some adjustments had to be made with many on the Crew. We also washed Class A uniforms so that we had clean clothes to come back to.

Many staffers were curious that we were not attending the Opening Campfire again. Most Crews don't spend their first two nights in Base Camp. So we took the time while everyone else was at Campfires to hit the Snack Bar for another round of Soft Serve Ice Cream.

It was a long day and we hit the trail in the morning. Our Crew was out quickly this night.



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Monday 7/17 2000



We finally begin our Trek. Up at 5:30, breakfast at 6:30 and to the Cattle Center by 7:30. A few Scouts had to make a last Trading Post run as it opened at 7:15.

We feed our horses then saddle up. Then we received more instruction on packing our Pack Horses. The diamond Hitch was the key knot. Unfortunately I was the only one that had to tie the Diamond Hitch to pass First Class requirements. Showing my advanced age again.

Our Pack Horses were brought forward as Nibbles, Bingo and Charlie Dunn. We packed all of our belongings on the horses. Then we retied the Pack Horses, an exercise we would become familiar with, as we prepared to hit the trail.

At 11:00 AM we finally hit the trail. We went behind Base Camp and through the meadow that parallels the Tooth ridge on the north side. Out in the meadow we practiced the Barrel Races, which we would later perform in the Gymkhanna at the end of the Cavalcade.

Alex and Steve both spotted an antler shed from an Elk. What a souvenir!!! Across the meadow we could see a whole herd of Elk in the distance. There must have been a hundred of them.

We eventually saw another group of horses and riders. This was a dude ride of some of the hikers that were staying at Clark's Fork campground. The Cavalcade took the lead and the Dude Riders fell in behind us. We had over 50 horses riding in line. This represented about a quarter of Philmont's total horse population.

We spent the night at Clark's Fork. After we unsaddled, we took the Pack Horses down to our Campsite to unload while our horses ate. We had our first experience with setting up camp and the Philmont tents. Mike Morin helped Steve and I figure out how the poles went. This was also our first night with Bear Bags. Another Philmont learning experience for all.

We went to the Chuck Wagon for dinner. Good Beef Stew and Cobbler. The dinner cleanup was an interesting process to get used to. One big pot of hot water, that we all dipped from, to wash our dishes without soap and then dump in the sump. Interesting but not my idea of sanitation.

Later we all went down for the Campfire. Joey and John had promised that this would be the best Campfire that we would see all week. As we came up to the campfire ring, it started to rain. So the campfire moved to the Chuck Wagon area. There we sang Country and Western songs. We learned some new favorites such as "I Should Have Been a Cowboy" and "The Bear Song".

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Tuesday 7/18/2000

Rise again at 5:00 AM. Actually some of the Crew was up at 4:30 AM. They had to go and get the Pack Horses ready, while the rest of us broke down camp. There were some rough spots but we were all at the stables by 6:45 to saddle up our horses for the longest day on the trail. By time we retied the Pack Horses and tightened cinches several times, we hit the trail about 8:00.

David got thrown off his horse before we left Clark's Fork Camp. Took a nasty fall as the horse got spooked and kicked up several times. Cowboy Up! It proved not to be David's day as Nibbles also stepped on his toe later in the day.

We rode on the trail over the morning. At one point we stopped in a small meadow to practice the flag relay for the Gymkhanna. Otherwise we rode up towards Cathedral Rock and the Hunting Lodge. We then went along the North Fork of the Cimmaroncito Creek to Cypher's Mine.

We broke for lunch at Cypher's Mine. Brian signed us up for a Mining Program at 1:30. This gave us an hour and a half to rest and kick back. We even had to filter some water to refill water bottles that were already drained. That was one thing we were warned to do is to drink about a gallon or more of water per day.

The mine tour was neat. It was hard to imagine how they blasted out the rock short passages at a time in search of gold. In all, the mine went back about 500 feet into the mountain. At the end we all had to turn out our flashlights and work together as a group to get out of the pitch dark mine. With our right hands on each other's shoulder, Brian led his crew to safety. It was a neat team building exercise. Too bad our Crew couldn't be this together all of the time.

At 3:00 PM, we hit the trail again. We had about a 4 hour ride to get to Beaubien. As we started out of Cyphers Mine, it started raining. The further we rode and the higher we got, the more it rained. It was appropriate that the area we were at was named Thunder Ridge Camp. Finally it started to hail but we kept riding because there was nothing else we could do about it.

We rode on up to about 10,500 feet and rode on an old roadway. Across the valley we could catch some great views of Bear Mountain and Black Mountain. We all sang songs and played a name game that Joey got us started on to pass the time. It was challenging ride and I think that everyone got in enough saddle time.

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7/18/2000 (Continued)

We got into Beaubien about 7:00 PM. We rode in as a group as the other campers were gathered at the Chuck Wagon. We were just in time to get the last of the Beef Stew at the Chuck Wagon dinner. Suzanne, the staffer from Iowa, was really good to us making sure we had enough to eat.

After dinner, we still had to get our horses cared for and set up camp before the daylight left us. Everyone was tired and on edge. Teamwork was not very good. We ended the night with a good session of Thorns and Roses. It helped to get things off of peoples chests...it was a long day. We made plans for the morning and turned in about 10:00 PM.



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Wednesday 7/19/2000

What a GREAT Day for Scouting this was. There were very few thorns, mostly all roses.

The Advisors all rose about 6:00 AM and got some coffee going. It was our first coffee since we had left Base Camp, what a treat. We only had about an hour and a half ride today so everyone could sleep in and relax a bit. It was nice to have some quiet time and enjoy the beautiful ranch at Beaubien. The sky was so blue and the meadow so green. The stable, horses and cattle just helped to complete a perfect setting.

We had reveille for the Scouts at 8:00 AM so that we could fix breakfast and break camp. We all went down to the Fire ring to brand our boots and belts with the Philmont Brands. Suzanne, who fed us last night was back on duty for the Branding. We helped to get the fire started and restocked the woodpile before we left.



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It took us while to get our Pack Horses loaded today. But the Scouts realized that the loads were not right and unloaded them to fix the Packs. Bill and Steve went down to catch the horses for us all and put halters on them. Chase, Nibbles, and Oreo had to get new shoes. The other Cavalcade had been there that night too and they messed up the Tack Room good. I put my saddle on Joey's horse by mistake. With all of this it was 1:00 PM before we left Beaubien that day.

We took the road down into the valley to Phillips Junction. It was gorgeous to come down with the Rayado River below. It was hard to believe that this river cut open this gorge. At PJ, we reloaded ourselves with food and had lunch. We had to repack two of the horses to fit all of the new food supplies. PJ also gave us a chance to get batteries and other supplies.

From PJ, we followed the river south to Fish Camp. We camped upstream across the river from the stable. It was a beautiful campsite along the river. Camp was set up quickly and we organized our food and menus for the remainder of the week. Probably the biggest hit was the outdoor back-to-back latrine. There were no walls but great views.

Chase, James' horse, came down with colic that night. Joey and John worked with him and radioed for help. They gave some vegetable oil down him and walked Chase through it. James and Rick were like expectant parents during the process. By the time our dinner was ready, Joey came over to let us know that Chase was going to be alright. We all gave thanks and ate Beef Stroganoff for dinner.

After the Bear Bags were up, we sat around the campfire for a round of Thorns and Roses. It was great – mostly all Roses – very few Thorns. James thanked us all for our concerns over Chase and suggested that we sing Scout Vespers. How appropriate.



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Thursday July 20, 2000



The Advisors slept in until almost 7:00 this morning. This was our off day at Fish Camp. We all had our morning coffee in our valley campsite. I spent a fair amount of time this morning catching up on my journal notes.

After breakfast, the Crew went to Fish Camp and toured Waite Phillip's Fishing Lodge. On the way down we found John Boy sleeping under a tree with a Fish drawn on his neck. He had been had by the Fish Camp staff.

The lodge was quite impressive especially since it was built in the 1920's. The female staffers from Fish Camp actually stay there and the Staff eats their meals there. Phillips used to bring guests in here by horseback to fish in the convergent rivers of the Rayado and the Aqua Frio.

We then learned how to tie fishing flies and how to cast. We all bought fishing licenses and tried our luck. Unfortunately, no one caught anything except trees, weeds and wet clothes. But everyone enjoyed some down time on this day.

The Advisors did some laundry in the creek. The afternoon rain kept things from drying but the fire finished the drying job. I did manage to get in a quick nap in the afternoon.

That evening, David, Bill and I went up to attend the Advisors Coffee on the porch of the Fishing Lodge. A couple of the Staffers from Clark's Fork were there on their off day. We managed to get a few songs out them including the now famous Bear Song..

After we hung the Bear Bags, we took the chance to gaze up in the sky. There were more stars in the sky than I had ever seen before. No matter which direction you looked it was textbook astronomy. It was a beautiful end to a perfect day.



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Friday July 21, 2000



Wake up time today was at 5:00 AM. We had a long ride ahead of us across the Rayado Canyon Ridge. But our Scouts did not rise well at the appointed hour. It took several wakeup calls to get them moving. Even then they did not move very fast.

The Advisors went across the creek to gather and feed the horses. We left the Crew to break camp and load the Pack Horses. We got our horses saddled while they did their work. And then we waited patiently as the Crew struggled to work together. When the Pack Horses finally got across the creek, they needed to be retied almost from scratch. While Joey wanted to hit the trail by 7:30, we ended up leaving at 8:30. It was a disappointing start to the day.

Once we were on the trail, we started to ascend up the Rayado Canyon Trail. This was a steep and narrow climb. Mr. Tighe, Mike Morin and Andrew Vaughan pulled the Pack Horses along. The danger on the trail became evident when Michael Stong and Joker slipped going up some rocky uphill paths. Joker fortunately recovered quickly.

Once we climbed, we circled the ridge up and down passing Lookout Peak and Rayado Peak. Quite often we could look down to the left and down several hundred feet straight down. It made you gulp and look forward, placing your trust in your horse and the Lord. When the trees opened, it allowed some breathtaking views of the two Peaks and the surrounding areas.

Finally we reached the Notch. There was a Crew of hikers there already, so it took us some time to get the horses tied down the trail. But once we got settled, the view from the Notch was everything that John Boy had promised us. To the left you could see Rayado Peak and the river valley back towards Fish Camp. To the right was Abreu and the plains back to Texas. You felt like you were on top of the world.

We took in the view and took many pictures before we started on our descent to Abreu. The decline was easy in comparison to our ascent. Within an hour we were in our campsite after a total of four hours in the saddle.

We ate lunch and set up camp with our horses tied up around the site. The Rayado River was not 20 yards from our site. Fortunately there were no river crossings necessary. After lunch, we took the Pack Horses to the corral. Several in the Crew galloped off in front and some cut across the grassy area by the Cantina. It was not a good scene.

Then Joey and John took us out to a meadow to practice for the Gymkhanna again. We practiced the Barrel Race and the Figure 8. Then Joey let the Crew let loose and run their horses a bit. While “officially” this never happened, the Scouts really enjoyed getting the most out of their horses.

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July 21, 2000 Continued



After we put the horses away, it was time for the Mexican Feast. This was probably our best meal at Philmont – Tortillas, Refried Beans, Cheese, Tomatoes, Lettuce, Rice and Meat with Churros for dessert.

Joey and John started an incident with Cherry Pie Filling that provided yet another thorn for the day. But two more thorns would come as five Scouts decided to pack their gear to sleep in the hay loft (without Advisor approval) and another incident occurred playing cards in the Cantina.

That night we had many thorns and many roses. Brian summed it up the best when he admitted that he hadn't had a real good day. Overall we grew greatly as a Crew through the session of Thorns and Roses.

I closed the session with a Scoutmaster's Minute. In this I issued a challenge to the Crew to have us ready on time in the morning and to try to beat Joey's schedule. I also explained the "Game with a Purpose" theory of Scouting. The fun and the outdoor activities are the tools but leadership and learning are the goals. Many times one must fail in order to learn to succeed.

We closed the evening with Scout Vespers. It had been a full and tiring day.



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Saturday July 22, 2000



Those of us in Camp woke up at 5:30 AM. We quickly struck camp and lowered the Bear Bags. By 6:10 we had the gear sorted and ready for the Pack Horses. At 6:15 Elliott, Rick and Billy brought down the Pack Horses to load. By 6:45 we were back on our way back to the corral. James had fed and curried all of the horses for us before we had arrived. Working together as a team, the Crew had met the challenge. We saddled, had breakfast and were on the trail before 8:00 AM.

We rode up the trail and over the Urraca Mesa through the Stonewall Gap. It was another spectacular view. Then as we crossed over the ridge and headed back down there was the Tooth of Time in front of us. Spectacular! We proceeded past Lover's Leap and took a group shot on horseback with the Tooth in the background. Then we finished our trail ride by riding back into the Cattle Headquarters.

After returning back at Cattle HQ, we unpacked the Pack Horses and had lunch. Steve and Brian went over to check us in Base Camp again, while the rest of us rested up for the Gymkhanna. Unfortunately we would not have time to tour the Villa Philmonte before we left.

We were set to face off against the other Cavalcade from New York City that messed with our stuff in the Beaubien Tack Room. We were focused to show them who was the best Cavalcade.

We smoked them in the Barrel Race – James took 1st and Billy took 2nd. Our average time was 27.4 seconds to theirs at 55.5 seconds. Not even close.

The second event was the flag retrieval. We had several that missed the flag for a 15 second penalty. But Billy took 1st and Mark took 2nd. We had an average time of 24.4 to theirs of 29.56.

The third event was the Figure 8 or Pole Bending competition. Billy and Mark tied for 1st and James came in 2nd. Our time was 28.4 seconds compared to NYC's 33.3.

We then lined up for the Flag Relay. We took an early lead that we never lost. Even though Sixty Dollars and Brennan didn't want to get close enough to exchange flags. We finished in 4 minutes and 32 seconds and waited for NYC to finish in 6 minutes and 58 seconds.

The final event was one that we had not practiced – the Steer Roundup. Joey gave us the strategy but it was up to us to create the wall to move the steers along. Billy and Rick drove the steers. The rest of us created the moveable wall to guide the steers. Joey said that 55 seconds was the best he had seen. But we were flawless as we corralled the steers in 41 seconds as compared to 68.8 for the New Yorkers.

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July 22, 2000 (Continued)

We took one last run across the corral to celebrate winning the Gymkhanna. Then it was a sad moment as we dismounted our horses for the last time. Our Philmont Cavalcade was over.

We led the horses in where we unsaddled them and turned in our equipment. We filled the feedbags and fed the horses one last time. It was a sad time indeed. No one moved really quickly. Ben, the horse boss, brought us out two watermelons for winning the Gymkhanna. We cut one up to eat and, at his recommendation, we gave the other one to the other NYC team (who had already left).

None of us wanted to leave our horses or Joey and John Boy. But it was that time and we reluctantly loaded our gear and headed back to Base Camp. But not before several Crew Members voluntarily shoveled a few loads of horse droppings off the ground.

At Base Camp, we took our gear to our assigned tents in the Homebound Section. We retrieved our luggage out of the lockers and moved into our tents. The showers felt great, our first in a week.

There was a mix up in the Crew pictures. Steve had to call over and catch Joey before he left for Colorado to see his parents on his off day. We met back up with Joey and John at the statue ready to take another picture. But it turned out that the film was still in the refrigerator and hadn't been developed. So it was going to ready by 8:00 that evening. But we had another chance to thank and say goodbye to our Horseman and Wrangler.

We were the last Crew in for dinner. We were offered double, triple and even quadruple hamburgers. All you could eat! We all took advantage of this treat to get off of Trail Foods and back to burgers.

That night we all went to Mass in the outdoor Chapel again. There were storms in the distances that offered rainbows again as a background. At this point we were all certain that God was indeed a strong presence in the magical hills.

The storms closed in on either side as the final Campfire approached. It was quite a show in the sky as we watched as it got closer and closer. The final Campfire was held in the Equipment Pavilion because of the weather. We all got our Philmont Arrowhead Patches and said goodbye to John Boy one last time.

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Sunday July 23, 2000

We awoke about 6:15 AM. The Advisors took another shower just to get rid of any dirt we may have missed the night before. Besides it just felt good. Breakfast was at 7:00 and our bus was at 9:00. Since the Trading Post opened at 7:30 there was the last chance to go and get that last souvenir.

But it was a sad day as we drove out of Philmont. We all stared at the mountains to our left as we slowly drove towards Cimarron looking at the memories we were leaving behind. I think that I will speak for the Crew that as we were leaving, we were all dreaming of the chance to return again one day.

We stopped for a bathroom and snack break once we got back in Colorado. Rick bought the movie "The Water Boy" and we all watched it on the way back to Colorado Springs.

From there we waited for our flight back through Dallas to Atlanta. It was all in all an uneventful flight. Most of the Crew was tired and rested on the flight. We arrived in Atlanta about 10:30 PM., right on schedule.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Morin
Assistant Crew Leader
Scoutmaster
Troop 1776
I used to be a Bobwhite...SR-CS-11
Once an Eagle, Always an Eagle...Class of '69

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