

## Shawnee Mountain Ski Adventure

Shawnee Mountain Resort, East Stroudsburg, PA  
February 29-31, 2009

Give Troop 76 a snow covered mountain, a couple dozen 30 degree below zero snow suits, snow boards, skis, and a log cabin, and you'll get one great Boy Scout adventure. Departing the Presbyterian Church Friday at 6:30 pm, our unmistakably outfitted monster truck convoy rolled down the highways intimidating every other car as it went. We arrived in total darkness at our familiar summer camp, No-Be Bo-Sco, for a unique winter cabin ski weekend.

Being out under the night sky with some 25 odd scouts and fresh snow can cause quite a commotion and a spontaneous snowball fight soon broke out among the younger scouts. Older Green Bar members had to negotiate a cease fire long enough to unpack the trucks. Terms were set and included the promise of a manhunt/ snowball game later in the night. Unpacking presented a bit of a problem with finding everybody's stuff. People who were first in line had all of their stuff in the back of a truck, and people who's things were out first were somewhere else. We eventually organized a sort of "auctioning" program where an older scout would hold up someone's bag and someone else would

call it. Disorganized, yet somehow effective.

We made it to the cabin in two trips. A few scouts had already claimed beds in the younger scouts section, until our acting senior patrol leader for the weekend decided to prevent bunk selection mayhem by instituting a very fair and impartial system. He decided to call it by who was his favorite. As soon as this left his lips, he was met by a barrage of "We love you, SPL!" I thought this was very funny but somewhat dishonest, so I didn't say a word. Turns out, I got last choice and there were no bunks left. Note to self: learn to schmooze. After much disagreement, an adult moved out an extra bunk bed from their room into the main room for me to sleep on. "Best seat in the house!" Mr. Wilson said. "Best seat as long as my snoring and moaning doesn't wake you all up!" I replied to the groans of all present. It wasn't clear to me at this point whether I would actually wake up still inside the cabin or not, but I had to chance it.

My scouting buddies, John, John, and I stayed up most of the night playing card



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games. Being an expert at multiple card deck games, I tried to teach one called Nertz, which is like multiplayer Solitaire. But being late at night, and my teaching skills not quite energized to sugar rush level perfection, we soon gave up on that particular one. After what seemed like several hours of easier but fun card games, we tried in vain to get some needed shut-eye. However, the returning manhunt crew put an end to that plan when

they initiated a late night cracker barrel. We soon brought out soda and cookies resulting in an appropriate sugar rush. Thanks to the sugar rush, everything after the brushing and flossing was a blur (honest Mom). I have no idea when I went to sleep, but I did wake up halfway through the night with a headache. I looked up to see crumbs of chips and soda spilt all over the place. Timmy, who ended up on the top bunk, said “we’re in trouble...” “We’ll get it in the morning...” I mumbled in reply.

The morning after was very eventful and went more slowly than any of us had hoped. After a fast breakfast and cabin cleanup, the Greenbar rounded up all the scouts to get into trucks. Some scouts had to load up snow boards and helmets, which took too long. The obligatory group picture wasn’t helpful

to our timing either.

We were raring to get skiing - what were the adults thinking!?!



Eventually, after a car ride which seemed to take forever, we unloaded our stiff legs and sweaty bodies at Shawnee Mountain aka ‘Land of all things scout-ish snow fun!’ We rounded everybody up and herded through the rentals in an orderly free for all. Immediately the more

adventuresome scouts were off to the harder intermediate and black diamond trails. Already a decent skier, I chose to try snowboarding for the first time on this trip. After my quick snowboarding lesson, I hit a green trail and quickly learned that snowboarding wasn’t my thing. Cartwheels, flips, rolls, back rolls, slides, you name it! About halfway down, I eventually said to Mr.

Reilly, “Lets get something different...” “Mr. Schaffer can help you on that one, I’m having too much fun!” After a long line in the exchange rooms for the second time, I was ready to hit the intermediate trails again, this time on skis. “Not so fast skipper, go down the bunny trail first,” Mr. Schaffer suggested.



“That’s the most dangerous one! You have to watch out for novice skiers!” I replied. “You have a point there” he said, and I was free.

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An hour later, after barreling down mounds of snow and even hitting terrain park a few times, we ate lunch at the lodge. Lunch consisted of everything greasy and fried. During the afternoon I met up with two Kevins and John and the four of us shred the mountain side for another hour and a half. Mr's Reilley, Leo, and Wilson also gave us a good skiing merit badge skills check.

Before we knew it, it was time to go. We almost lost a scout as we were ready to leave, but the buddy system prevailed. We stood with our coats and whatever snowboarding equipment and skis we had for pictures. I remember thinking to myself, "Take the picture already before my face or other appendage freezes!"

We got to stop for dinner on the way back to the cabins. I'm sure the faces of the employees at Wendy's were pleasantly surprised to see some 30 odd scouts come in, each with an individual order. Dinner also consisted of everything greasy and fried - I love scout food. We sat there in silence, just enjoying our food, and then after a few minutes of chewing, the thunder of scout chatter began. "Did you see my flip?" "We found this amazing trail for snowboarders!" "Pass the fries?" "We crashed into this one

group..." "Anybody not drinking their milkshakes?" Soon after that, soda straw spit balls started flying, although it was quickly stopped when some unfortunate scout happened to land one right on a Patrol Leader's neck.

After a long car ride back to No-Be another snowball fight erupted. This time it ended early as we were all tired. Inside the cabin, the older scouts taught a few younger ones a new game called President. This game involves laying cards down in order from highest rank, where a two is a "Nuke" and a 3 is the lowest card. After having a bit too much fun with the nuclear bombs (which included card throwing, mushroom clouds, and a very random pillow fight), we all eventually crawled into bed. But not before eating more sugary sweets and of course performing the obligatory brushing and flossing.

The next day wasn't as eventful or as fun as the first, because, hey, who likes to clean up? We had to sweep, wipe, fold, rearrange, and break backs to get the cabin to look completely perfect. But we did have Taylor ham and egg sandwiches for breakfast and Mr. Cruz showed me the secrets to making just the right sandwich. We then all piled into our cars, and our monster truck convoy rolled out of No-Be and back home. No patch for this event, but skiing all day with my Scout buds, now that's a fun time. And several of us did ultimately complete the snow sports merit badge, so that's almost like an event patch. ■



*G. Bedard is a First Class Scout and Bugler for Troop 76 in Ringwood, NJ. He guest authored this Tails from the Tails edition with some help from the regular series editor, T. Bedard.*