

## Troop 97 Klondike Derby 2023

On January 19 - 21, 2024, Troop 97 BSA met up at their scout building to do their Klondike Derby. It had just snowed about 7 inches and it was going to be very cold at night, about 15 degrees. When we had arrived, we started shoveling out areas for our tents, eager to start the adventure.

We had quite the night. After we set up our tents, we buried someone in the snow. Then we buried two people together, and one more person. That person had probably about 10-30 pounds of snow piled on them. *Please do not try to do any of that at your home, we were being foolish.* We had no idea what we were in for the next day.

Saturday comes, and we are all excited for the adventure. We line up, and split into patrols for the contests. The contests were: Fire Building, Axe throwing, Trivia, and Pea shooters. The three patrols, the Iron Jaguars, Bumbleboys, and the Cheesesteak Champions, all split up into their different contests. We rotated 4 times to get all of them done.

The fire building was an activity where each patrol would have five minutes to plan and gather as much supplies as they could, but they could not build anything. As soon as it was up, they had the rest of their time to make a fire that could sustain itself for at least 5 minutes and reach a bit of string to break it with fire.

The axe throwing was a competition where each patrol had all of the time to practice their throws. But everyone had to make a competition round at least once. The best score of the patrol's members was counted as their final score. After that, we moved on to trivia, where we would be asked various questions based on scouting. There were about 300 questions, so we could not finish them all. The goal was to have the patrol finish as many questions as they could, and each one would count as a point if they got it right.

Pea shooters was held in a field nearby that was covered in snow. There were various dishes put into holders made of snow on the ground. As well as straws and *peas* on a table next to it. Everyone was allowed 20 peas to practice shooting before their competition round. Again, everyone was allowed 1 competition round each and the highest score was the one that was counted.

After that, we had a potluck and court of honor, and the food was delicious. There were 4 or 5 different mac n' cheeses if I remember right! The court of honor was as usual, but as always, really fun! Later we were called to line up and talk about what was next. We were told that we had 45 minutes to play around and prepare for the adventure race. We messed around with snow for a bit and got ready for the adventure race. Previously, we had totally decked out wooden sleds for the adventure race, to carry our gear around.

Starting at 1 PM each patrol was sent off to the adventure race 30 minutes apart, with their own stopwatch timer each. Each patrol had a backpack, logs, water, a compass, and a tent. The goal was to go through a series of waypoints, some of which were stations where you had to accomplish something to go onto the next. At each waypoint, whether it was a station or a regular spot, every one had a piece of paper that had a set of degrees, a distance, and a letter. You must orienteer yourself a course based on the degrees with a compass and take note of the letter to confirm that you actually went to each waypoint.

The first station was Knot tying. Each patrol must tie a clove hitch and a two half hitches knot to display their skills before moving on. The second was a station where you had two logs and a bunch of rope to tie a stretcher that could carrus someone. After that was done, you had to go around the building's yard into a forest clearing where you must explain how to help someone's injury with first aid. After doing that, each patrol was meant to have had their stretcher with them by that point, but no one did. It was already such a pain to carry the sled that some people dropped it off at a place. No one was told we had to bring it there anyway. Once that was done, you must go to a final spot and set up and take your tent that you had. As soon as that was done, your timer was stopped.

The race itself was very difficult. It ended up being more difficult than it was supposed to be, because it was planned out on a map instead of going in real life. Most of it was trudging through the snow at about 0.1 MPH. In the end, we had learned some things like don't give up, and how to tie a stretcher. We came in exhausted and were not eager to make dinner. However, we got it done and it was delicious, not so much so in the fact that half of the potluck was mac n' cheese, and our dinner was also mac n' cheese. We had coincidentally done the same thing. I guess mac n' cheese really is a winter meal.