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Summer Camp ’56

Ames Forestry Club

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OREGON'S Deschutes National Forest was again, for the second year, the location of the ISC summer camp where forty-eight students and four professors hung their "Biltmores" for the summer of "56."

The first two days consisted of one work detail after another, but under the directions of Dr. Yoho, who was in charge of camp, it also began looking like a camp. The speed in which the mess tent went up left little to be desired, but I'm not sure whether it was the fear of losing a meal or the excellent supervision of Dr. Thompson.

The first official day of camp found everyone working on their tents and equipment with a few necessary details spaced throughout the day. Some of these details were cinderering the roads, cutting and splitting fire wood, building Jack Creek food cooler, cleaning the area of slash, and a few dozen other odd jobs that are required for a good camp.

Then the classes began; Mensuration under Dr. Thomson, Silviculture under Dr. McComb, Forest Operations under Prof. Kellogg, and Utilization under Dr. Yoho who also had the Saturday morning camp detail, but the latter was only a class of hard work. This class consisted mainly of learning the finer points of a few basic tools; the axe for splitting fire wood, the cross cut saw for bucking up snags, the shovel for digging, and the human back for skidding and hauling these usable products to the consumer who just happened to be the mess tent fire pot. The praise of Dr. Yoho on the excellent use of the cross cut was always greeted with a grin for this meant you could be off to get a chain saw from John Berger, the storekeeper, but while the chain saw was noisier it was much easier on muscles and blisters.
The first section in mensuration claimed they made trails for the silviculture section, and the silviculture section claimed they ate all the dust; both sections were full of liars. The "menso boys" spent the days walking while the "silvic boys" spent theirs riding, but both spent the nights writing up the results of the day.

Utilization consisted mainly of two, one week trips on the west side of the Cascades, visiting all kinds of mills. A large amount of information and bumps on the backside were picked up on these trips. Even the panel truck was loaded with peanut butter so that none of the comforts of camp were missed on these trips.

A day of relaxation and picture-taking was spent at Crater Lake, where the birds and chipmunks were educated beggers and the closeness with which the mosquitoes judged a pint of blood indicated that they must have attended medical school.

Forest operations wasn’t any one subject but engulfed many different fields. It varied from fire training and safety in the woods to lectures on forest insects and herbicide mixtures. One day was spent in getting acquainted with the fire tools and building several practice fire lines around the camp; the experts seemed to feel that we were lucky it was only practice or it would have been "goodby, camp."

The never ending battle with dust, more dust, and just a little more dust was combated by three methods of which each had its advantage and disadvantage. First was the slow method of hauling and heating the water, but the advantage was warm showers. Swimming off the dust was the next method of getting
clean, but its disadvantage was the dusty trip back to camp where as much dust was collected on the return trip as was swam off previously. Last was the Jack Creek method of just jumping in the thirty-five degree water, but the bather was subject to a violent change of color, blue.

And then there was recreation for those who still weren't tired after a day in the field. The volleyball court took on the proportions of a dust storm and only occasionally would the ball or a player be seen and then only to be lost again as he dashed back into the rolling dust.

The winners of each horseshoe contest were immediately challenged and the last contest was usually decided by the light of matches. Fun and relaxation were the only rewards for would be mountain climbers and fishermen as little success was obtained by either.

Finally the tents that were up, came down; equipment was packed and loaded; trucks were serviced; a final policing of the area and that was it. A hurried last drink, that last look, a few farewells and everyone was on his way home. And as the dust settled on the road it furnished the final curtain for another successful ISC Summer Camp.