



GILROY HOUSE NEWS

TERM 2, WEEK 8



Mr Brett Gillett

Year 9 Camp 2021 - by Cyrus Kwok and Harry Laing

The trip started with the 2.5 hours bus ride early on Monday 24 May. It felt like ages sitting on arrival at Adventure Alternatives – Kenilworth. We all took our seats at 'Base Camp' and waited to see who our instructors would be. Group 9 and Group 11 were put into Claire's (our instructor) group and provided an even mix of Foley and Gilroy students to kick off our first day of camp. We all began packing our gear into our hiking bags, after a small brief of the upcoming camp by Claire, we had a quick, yet delicious lunch of chicken and salad wraps and did some final checks on our gear before heading out on our first activity. The first activity was mutually agreed upon as the worst of the entire camp. The 9.5 km national park walk was backbreaking as we ascended the range up the winding, very steep and narrow trail.

We all got to the top exhausted and happy to have afternoon tea and a well-deserved rest. After we all felt ready to continue, we began our descent down into Conondale National Park and onto our first campsite, Booloumba Creek. As the sun began to set, we got ready for our first night of camp by setting the tents up and stoking the fire. Just on dusk we jumped into the ice-cold water of Booloumba Creek for a swim and a light wash. When we returned to camp it was straight into dinner prep. We chopped every vegetable in the box and chucked it all in while Foley set up their own camp at a spot nearby. With the help of the meat and noodles, Gilroy and Foley tucked in for dinner around the campfire. After this both houses went their separate ways for the remainder of the trip.

A 6:30am wake up was the last thing we wanted following the mammoth hike the previous day. It took us a while to rise and face the new days challenges. Day 2 was going to be the most walking of the entire trip. We left camp at around 8:30am and headed towards Conondale Range. We followed the scenic Booloumba Creek as we climbed higher into the range arriving at the beautiful Artisan's Cascade Falls. After a long 7.5km hike we were all eager for a bucket lunch, so we got to work preparing the vegetables for our impending meal.

After 'filling our bellies', a few individuals braved the freezing waters below the fall. It was an amazing place, but all good things come to an end and soon we were backtracking our steps back to our first's night camp spot. We picked up the remaining hiking packs and followed the road as we walked back to Base Camp. Back at Base Camp, we offloaded our dirty clothes and replenished them with fresh clothing. Everyone was so relieved that the only walking left was the short walk down to "Tutie Fruitie", our campsite for the remainder of the camp. We settled in for a taco dinner and stories around the campfire as we slowly grew tired from the previous day.

The mood had certainly lifted as we prepared for the "Dangling Duo". We got there and after a short explanation of the rules and goals of the activity by Claire (Our Instructor), we were geared up and got ready for the first group to climb. The first climbers made it look easy however, this false sense of confidence was swiftly depleted as the second climbers took on the challenge. The dangling duo was truly a test of self-confidence and trust as you had to believe in yourself and trust your team to successfully complete this task.

After a quick feed and an hour or so of relaxation at 'Base Camp' we were ascending the hill to 'Big Ben'. 'Big Ben' was a medium-size hoop pine overlooking 'Base Camp' and the nearby National Park. We weren't just there for the view though, Group 11 had to climb as a team-up the tree and then work their way down. Despite how long it took and a couple of rescues in between, Group 11 successfully completed the task at hand, and we were soon heading back to "Tutie Fruity" for our third and final night for the camp.

A nice mac'n'cheese dinner and a good night sleep were bonus as we got up the following morning for our final day and activity of camp. After a quick trip to Base Camp to drop our gear off, we were headed back towards "Milk Crate Climb". In pairs we climbed higher using milkcrates. The builders on the ground stabilised the milk crates as the climbers climbed. Our best was 12 high which was a good effort for our group, and we were all pumped after that activity. After a quick detour to "Tuite Fruity" for the final time, to pack our tents away. We headed up the all too familiar hill to 'base camp' for the final time.

Suddenly after four days of camp, it was over, and the buses soon arrived. Before any of us knew it, we were on the bus heading back to Marist College Ashgrove. Year 9 camp was challenging for all of us and at times we all wanted to just give up. None of us did though and we pushed through the tough times and were rewarded with amazing experience and memories we will cherish. I would like to thank all the teachers from Marist College Ashgrove that came along with us and all the instructors from Adventures Alternatives for putting in all the time and effort to give us this amazing opportunity to let us learn the power of teamwork, resilience, courage and determination.

