

Week-Long Trip

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, July 9, 1994-B3

(Continued from Page B2)

hints. Before the end of the day, I felt better and I think my skill improved. Bruce, however, thought I was deliberately meandering with the canoe as a way to explore. By the end of the week, I could keep the canoe on a straight course.

Rain

In the midst of learning to paddle, getting adjusted to sitting in the bottom of the canoe, and sorting out where we were going, it started to rain. Some of us got our rain gear out, but I became concerned about James. He was getting wet, but would not put on the rain coat. As a fashion-conscious youngster, he considered it ugly.

The sometimes-on-sometimes-off sprinkles turned into a steady drizzle. About lunch-time we

came to a portage and Cheryl strung up a tarp for some temporary shelter while we had lunch.

We paddled about 10 miles that first day in the rain. When Cheryl pointed to a camp site, we were ready to rest. As we unloaded, I was very tired but pleased that the waterproofing on my dumb hat had kept my head dry. As the intermittent rain continued while we set up camp, drying out and warming up became our first big task. During that time, James began shivering, and even admitted that he was cold. That spurred me on to get the fire going — for him and myself.

The underside of a slanting tree yielded some semi-day splinters to get a fire going. As some of the damp wood began burning, we

were able to shake off the chills and get some food. Before settling in for some sleep, we clustered around the fire, told stories, and listened to the night sounds: far-off wolves and the closer loons.

As the morning sun burned down on that first campsite, we could hardly believe our despondency from the previous night. The sun on the warm rocks by the lake shore warmed and dried our wet fabrics. We were ready to move on again.

The Food

Protecting our food from wild animals — especially bear — presented our group with a unique challenge each time we came ashore to make camp. Our first task at each campsite was to find a limb or crossbar from a previous camper and hoist the food bags out of danger. Though on one level, it

might sound like fun to see some wildlife, Cheryl assured us that we'd rather not see a bear going through our camp looking for food. That was the kind of excitement any trip could do without.

We shared food preparation, clean-up, and other camp duties. The trick came in preparing just the right amount of food. To keep the campsite clean and discourage marauding scavengers, we did not discard any food. Some items, like the gorp we snacked on each day after an hour or two on the water, could last for months if kept dry. Other food supplies, when prepared had to be eaten.

Some Observations

The trip at times became a test of our physical endurance. The word portage has new meaning af-

ter carrying a 60-pound canoe and 30-40 pound backpack through the 179 rod portage from Insula to Kiana Lake.

Our skill and endurance were also tested as we came out of the lee side of an island and faced a fresh freeze and white caps on the waves. Ahead, the other canoes were looking small. Did we really want to face this or wait until the wind relaxed its persistent push? Virgil, at the back of the canoe, waved me on, and we started some serious paddling. The wind pushed so hard that if we stopped paddling together, we would have gone backward. Some waves splashed over the sides but we paddled on. Twenty-five strokes on the left then twenty-five on the

(Turn to Page B4)

SPECIAL

Summer Savings on SAWDUST and SHAVINGS

WALTER H. WEBER SONS, INC.

LEBANON, PA

Sawmill

PRICES

are

time only.

Delivery Available for Tractor Trailer Loads
Call for pricing and scheduling

For More Information Contact:

Wes Geib, Secondary Hardwood Products Department

Walter H. Weber Sons, Inc., Lebanon, PA

800-344-3114 or locally 717-867-2212 Fax 717-867-2271

