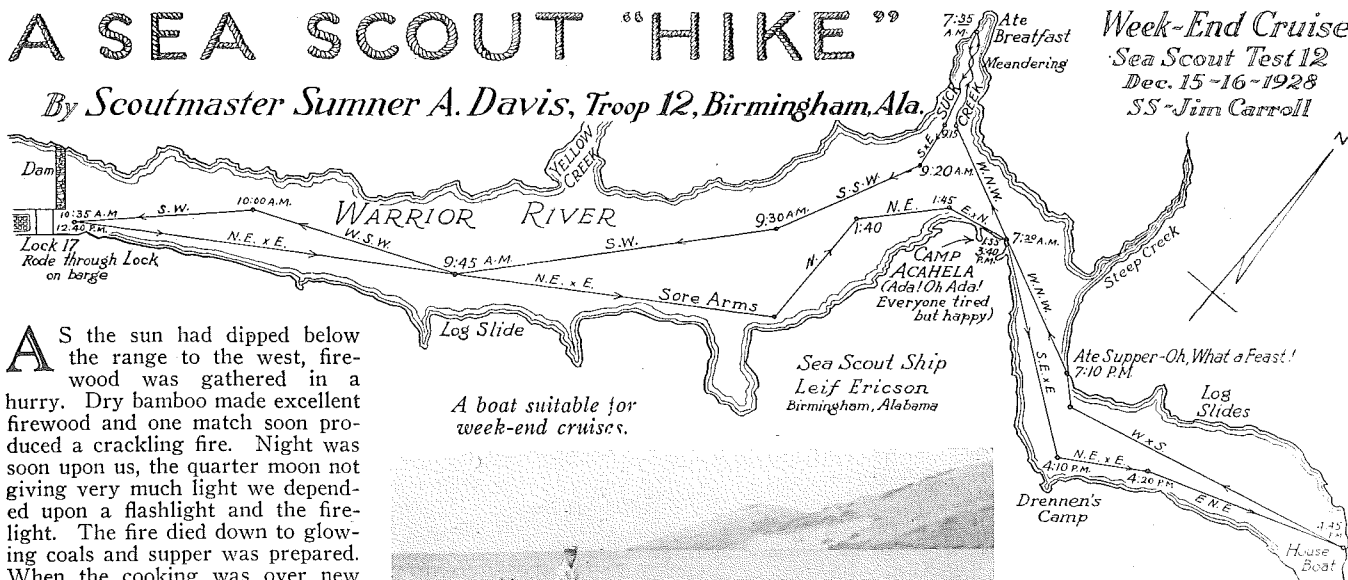


# A SEA SCOUT "HIKE"

By Scoutmaster Sumner A. Davis, Troop 12, Birmingham, Ala.

Week-End Cruise  
Sea Scout Test 12  
Dec. 15-16-1928  
SS Jim Carroll



AS the sun had dipped below the range to the west, firewood was gathered in a hurry. Dry bamboo made excellent firewood and one match soon produced a crackling fire. Night was soon upon us, the quarter moon not giving very much light we depended upon a flashlight and the firelight. The fire died down to glowing coals and supper was prepared. When the cooking was over new logs were put on the fire and the increased light added materially to the pleasure of the first outdoor meal of the crew of the Sea Scout Ship "Leif Ericson."

While the fire flared up we sat around, had a discussion, sang songs—songs of the sea. The moon had dropped below the western ridge and the majestic constellation of Orion was just sticking its head through the trees behind our backs in the east. We wrapped ourselves in our blankets and went to sleep.

So ended the first day of the week-end cruise that we are making in order to qualify for Requirement No. 12, Ordinary Sea Scout. This requirement is as follows: Make a week-end cruise along shore in a rowboat or canoe under instructions and make proper reports of same in a "log."

WE had left the city that morning. It was a beautiful day. After a drive of forty miles from the city to the river, we unloaded our cargo from the car and quarters were assigned to each one of the boys of the crew in the clubhouse at Acahela which was to be our headquarters.

At seven bells in the afternoon watch we loosed the painters of the "Leif Ericson" and started on our cruise. We successfully navigated the dangerous waters near the shore, set our course approximately southeast by east and headed in our two boats for Drennen's Camp, about a half mile up the river. We got up as far as the houseboat and decided to go ashore here and prepare supper.

The chart shown at the top of this article sets forth very clearly our cruise. Careful note was made of all our courses, everything we saw, the places we landed, and the approximate time at which we went ashore. We went down the river as far as the dam at Lock 17. At noon we turned around and made for home.

It would take too much space to describe all of the incidents that happened on this cruise, but the outstanding events are shown on the chart which was made by Sea Scout Jim Carroll as part of his log.

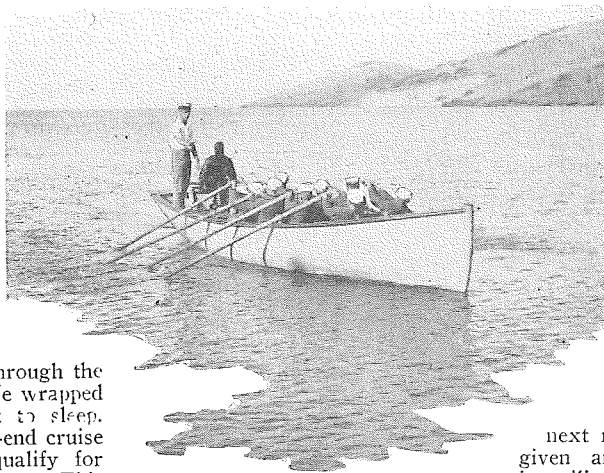
THE cruise was a wonderful experience for us. It was the maiden cruise of our ship. We learned many of the tricks of handling boats under oars. We learned to steer by compass, we learned to make proper landings—in fact it is almost impossible to tell how many wonderful things can be learned on a small cruise of this kind.

The exercise at the oars strengthened our muscles—and tired them, too. Added to this the experience we got in cooking and camping overnight the whole cruise was something that we shall never forget.

Troop 12 of Birmingham, Alabama, is a Veteran Troop. Early last year we decided to install a Sea Scout Patrol in order that our older boys would have more opportunity for adventure. The older boys in it have taken a tremendous interest in the Sea Scout Program and are working it with great enthusiasm.

THE morale of the whole Troop has been stepped up and it now looks to the Tenderfoot coming into our Troop as if there is a long series of varying adventures ahead of him. For

A boat suitable for week-end cruises.



those who pass their tests and live the Scout Oath and Law, for every single one of them, as soon as they become First Class and 15 years of age, there is this opportunity to make a week-end cruise in a rowboat, to camp out overnight, to learn all the tricks of navigation of the river and to learn the art of seamanship in small boats. Later on as our Sea Scouts advance to the

next rank in Sea Scouting, they will be given an opportunity to go for cruises in sailing boats, where they won't have to ply the oars, but can sit leisurely in the stern sheets while the winds of heaven blow their craft along the surface of the waters!

THE equipment necessary for making a cruise of this kind need not be very elaborate. The boats we used, although small, fill the purpose very well. In fact, it is a good idea to have the crew divided up into small groups so that they will all have an opportunity to handle the boats under oars and learn to make the landings. Having a large number of boats gives an opportunity for cruising in formation and for occasional races among the various crews.

For short cruises of this kind it is not necessary to carry much personal gear. Two blankets each, toilet articles, sufficient food for two days, musical instruments.

Even on short cruises of this kind, it is advisable to follow the safety precautions laid down by the National Office.



A sailing boat ideal for longer cruises.

Not the least interesting thing of the test is the making of a chart by each member of the crew. It is a very interesting project and was completed by each Sea Scout in a satisfactory manner. The one shown above is an example of what is required.

A "log" must also be kept, giving full details of the cruise, the distance traveled, the courses followed and the important events that happened during the cruise.

It may be of interest to note that Birmingham is an inland city, 45 miles from the river on which this cruise was made, showing that even that distance from the water is not too great a handicap for Troops that want to have Sea Scout Patrols in inland cities.

We are all for this game of Sea Scouting as a graduate program for the older boys of our Troop.