

Vicious Cycle 2012

201 Grade 10 students took part in the third annual KCBS “Cycling around Taiwan” event

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The gloomy sky in Taipei signified the third annual “vicious” cycle for the tenth graders. Breaking through the heavy mist, the bikers began the first ride on their 12-day 1000km journey.

On April 16, the tenth graders, including students from both the international and the secondary departments, went on a cycling trip around Taiwan. They were expected to return, looking exhausted but cheerful, on April 27. However, things planned never turn out exactly as planned.

On the second last day, the pouring rain haunted the bikers from LuGang to Shinzu.



“The raindrops were like bullets,” exclaimed Adam Chang, “shooting heavily at the injuries that were already on my legs.”

Although the last day started out with benign weather, it ended with heavy rainfall. Eventually, fatigued and rain-soaked, all of the bikers rested at the gasoline station which was half way on that day’s trip. Due to safety concerns, Principal Wu and the other staff members made an urgent decision to cancel the remaining leg of the trip.

Many viewed the toughest part of the journey as Shouka, located in Pingtung County. The route consisted of many uphill challenges. The climbing not only abused the bikers but also the tires of the bikes, because the roads were covered with rubble.

The hardships were rewarded by a proud sense of accomplishment and the “relief on their (students’) faces” said Mr.Lin, “when they succeeded in conquering the hills.”

If it is to say Shouka had foreshadowed an attitude change, then the

Coming of Age Ceremony would be the actual change.

Based on the blog posts written by students during the trip, parents and teachers have come to the conclusion that the Coming of Age Ceremony was the turning point of attitude for many participants—from drowsy and grumbling to appreciating. The Ceremony was held at the Kailong Temple in Tainan City.

Adam Chang, who participated in the ceremony, dressed in traditional Chinese costume and climbed under the altar as a part of the rituals.

“It was funny. The hat kept falling off my head while I was going under the altar,” laughed Adam, “and the staff at the temple was almost mad at me as they had taken the ceremony so seriously.”

Many students enjoyed celebrating their metamorphosis from teenagers to adults.

The cycling experience became more interesting than students had previously expected it would be.

“After tedious repetitions of



grasses, trees and blowing wind,” remarked Waverly, “I realized it is possible for one to fall asleep on a bike!”

A student who will remain unnamed created entertaining anecdotes and gained an interesting nickname on the journey after he bumped into an old woman on a motorcycle. Fortunately, both were not injured and were able to go to the police station to settle their serious business.

Another student recalled his experience of a lifetime when he encountered his first poisonous snake. It took place in Taitung, where he tried to open the back door in the hotel, and “the snake just fell beside my feet. I ... screamed! But nobody took me seriously. It was poisonous! When the hotel staff tried to drag it away, it moved towards us.



I almost wet my pants!”

Undoubtedly, the trip demanded a higher amount of teamwork between individuals in each class than was anticipated. Throughout the journey, some struggled to adapt to the new environment and challenges. Others expressed the thought that the journey had elicited the worst conflicts within their classes.

Ms.Rinaldi, the supervisor of 10D, noted that after a meeting one night where everyone openly discussed their complaints, the class became more united. They came up with a special strategy: the class would follow a boy-girl-boy-girl pattern, so the skilled students could take

care of the unstable ones. The strategy proved to be effective and won the class several second places and a championship in the daily competitions.

The cycling was vicious for the ones who did not know how to ride a bicycle before the training sessions; the ones who had never experienced such a long and demanding journey; and the ones who were unfamiliar with traveling without their parents’ protection.

Despite the different attitudes toward the trip, many thought it was truly a once in a lifetime experience.

The vicious cycle should continue next year – same cycle, different victims!



The trip demanded teamwork: here the team of 201 students take a well-deserved rest in Hualien



Grade 9 students’ trip to Malaysia and Singapore

3



Science Fair Competition

4



Honoring an Eagle Scout

5



Surreal Art and Literature

7