



FEATURE EVENT

Shooting Campout

The primary purpose of this campout will be to give the Scouts in your troop a positive camping experience and introduce them to a sport that is both safe and fun.

The campsite might be at your council camp, or perhaps you could use a military reservation or other site that is open to the public. This means you will need to present your campout as a clean and organized operation.

To encourage patrols to keep a safe, orderly campsite, conduct a formal site inspection sometime during the weekend. Scouts working on First Class rank will have an opportunity to complete a number of the outdoor-related requirements.

Campout Activities

There are many other possibilities for campout activities. The troop might concentrate on one Scoutcraft skill, such as pioneering, star study, fishing, orienteering, conservation, tracking and trailing, bird study, or nature. Or, especially if you have a lot of young Scouts, the patrol leaders' council might plan to have instruction and practice in a variety of basic outdoor skills—campcraft, outdoor cooking, estimating heights and distances, bow saw and ax safety, map and compass, and so on.

For good practice in basic skills, try the following contests from the "Program Specialties" section of this book:

- String-Burning Race
- Knot-Tying Relay
- Blindfold Compass Walk
- Nature Scavenger Hunt
- Wet-Weather Fire-Building
- Flagpole Raising
- Bow-Saw Relay
- Remote Clove Hitch Tying

If your site has a large wooded area, the patrol leaders' council may plan a wide game, too. Most wide games require at least a half-mile-square territory and last at least half an hour. The best known is Capture the Flag, which is explained in the *Scoutmaster Handbook*. Another good wide game is described below.

COMMANDANT. The object of this night game is for one person, the Commandant, to keep the rest of the players from making it back to home base in the dark. You will need a powerful flashlight. Establish a home base for the Commandant—a shed, boulder, or the Scoutmaster's car. The field area that you choose for play should be free of rocks, stones, and whatever else could injure Scouts.

The Commandant stands at the home base and counts to 50 slowly, while the rest of the players scatter. Each player must touch two large, announced objects (tree, cabin, etc.) in the field of play before he is allowed to try to get back to home base. These two objects must be in the Commandant's field of vision and at opposite ends of the field (or at least 90 degrees apart). The Commandant turns on his light at the end of the 50 count, which starts the game. Players at this point may be no closer than 10 yards to a mandatory-touch object. The light may then be turned off or on as the Commandant chooses.

The Commandant may either stay near the base or roam far afield to try to catch someone. A catch is made if the Commandant spots someone and can call his name. In the initial stages of the game, a name must be used. Toward the end of the game, as Scouts are dashing toward home base, simply "hitting" a player with the light beam is enough for a catch. A successful player, upon touching the home base, yells, "Free!" A caught player walks back to home base and shares humorous insights with the growing number already there. The first person to make it back free is the next Commandant if the game is to be played again.