

NOTE: The following Klondike Derby plans are not—repeat—not presented here as an official BSA program or event. They are, instead, offered as a suggested activity simply for kids to enjoy. These instructions are based on original ones published as program helps in the 1960's; ideas from derbies staged since then have been added. —*Boys' Life*

PLAN AND RUN A KLONDIKE DERBY

In a Klondike Derby, Scout patrols acting as huskies pull specially designed homemade sleds around a field course marked by stations named for towns or cities, such as Dawson or Fairbanks. At each town the Scouts tackle exercises in problem-solving, as well as contests and other activities in which the patrols or teams earn spendable "gold nuggets" and credits toward Scouting patches.

A little history.

Just before the turn of the last century, gold prospectors traveled the sub-zero reaches of Alaska by means of dogs and sleds. They camped out in all kinds of winter weather, and therefore needed adequate survival skills, which they learned from the native Eskimos. Scouting has incorporated this theme in the Klondike Derby.

The point of a Klondike Derby, which usually is held in late January, is to make Scouts use their heads, to put their Scouting skills to work in the field, to demonstrate teamwork and Scout spirit, and to have fun outdoors on winter days.

THE FIELD COURSE

The field course of 6 to 12 towns can be laid out over any large open terrain—a park, field, meadow or farm pasture. An area of about one square mile works well. Make your course a large loop or whatever shape takes best advantage of the terrain.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Each patrol or "dog team" (so-called because Scouts act as huskies) follows a course in numerical order as outlined on a map or score sheet given to the unit leader at registration. The map guides the teams around a circuit of the simulated towns.

As they arrive at each town, the patrols should demonstrate their Scout spirit by giving their patrol yell. It'll cost the boys points if they don't yell.

They'll encounter a practical problem involving basic Scouting skills. Depending on how well the team works out this problem, it is awarded a number of nuggets. The team then has its score sheet marked and sets off for the next town. Each stop also may offer additional challenges for additional points.

A shotgun start is a good idea, with two or more patrols starting at each town, then proceeding in order, ending where they began.

Towns must be visited in the correct rotation. All patrols must visit all towns, but may not have time to participate in all activities at all stops. Upon finishing the course, each patrol reports to the scoring tent town to have its score sheets checked and recorded.

The patrol then heads for "Klondike Pete's" store to purchase trinkets and goodies with their nuggets. Patches will be awarded to each dog team member along with a ribbon based on their total score.

SOME SUGGESTED KLONDIKE EVENTS

Blindfolded Target Touch: Scouts using 6-foot poles try for a bull's-eye on archery-like targets suspended from trees.

Survival Rope Throw: Tie and throw rescue rope to "victim" on cardboard ice floe or simulated ice break-through.

Inner Tube Rescue Variation: "Victim" sits on inner tube. Rope is thrown and he is pulled by patrol across finish line.

Pioneering: This is a timed lashing project, such as an entrance gateway, to be built by each patrol. The necessary materials are at hand. A sample project stands nearby.

Toxic Flood: A chemical plant above the dam has blown up. Patrols have seven minutes to secure their sleds at least as high as their shortest Scout.

Knots: Patrols have five minutes to produce ten specified knots.

Snowblind: All patrol members but one are blinded (blindfolded) in a snowstorm. But the Scout who can see is injured. He must direct his fellow Scouts in raising a tent as a team within a specified period of time.

Ravine Crossing: Each patrol must get their sled over a ravine (creek) without getting the sled wet.

Signaling: Patrols have five minutes to decide on a method of signaling a silent message to a line-of-sight outpost.

Scorers give two Scouts a short message and send them to a visible point—for example, a point 75 yards down the trail—and instruct the boys to signal the message back to their mates.

Fishing for Snapper: No Scout skills involved here, just fun. Set a bunch of mousetraps about five yards beyond a "shoreline" which Scouts may not cross. Equip them with "fishing rods" (bamboo poles), "line" (twine) and "bait" (nuts and washers). Patrols must cast and "catch" two "Snappers" in five minutes.

Wall Crawl: Patrols must work together, against time, making a human ladder to get all members over an eight-foot plywood wall. Make sure adults are nearby for safety.

Orienteering: This is another timed event that requires the starter and finish-line judge to synchronize their watches. Lay out a course with various problems (such as determining an object's height) with written instructions.

Log Saw: Provide the Scouts two-man saws and improvised sawbucks. They must saw through a six-inch log against the clock. They can keep the chunk they saw off.

Rope-Making: Set up a number of rope-making machines. After the Scouts make the rope, they should use it down the line in a rescue situation that tests their knot-tying ability.

Search & Rescue: Patrol leaders are given the hiking plan of a missing solo hiker. This plan can be as simple or detailed as you like. Customize it to the terrain.

Patrols follow the hiking plan to find a partially buried dummy that is too severely injured to move. Scouts must diagnose the dummy's medical problems (pin a list of symptoms to the dummy's shirt) and determine its exact location. They then send for help.

Grade teams on their navigational skills, knowledge of first aid, use of the buddy system and the speed with which they report the dummy's correct position back to HQ. Multiple maps and dummies allow running several patrols at the same time.

Slingshot Turkey Shoot: The boys fire frozen kibble at pie plates decorated as turkeys. (Don't worry about picking up kibble afterward; it becomes critter food.) Grade shooters on accuracy.

Sled Race for Speed: The ultimate Klondike Derby event. Lay out an enclosed course of about 500 feet, then time the patrols as they compete for the title of fastest sled.

SCORING

You may want to begin with inspection of the patrols' campsites, with a maximum possible 100 points for perfection.

Before starting the derby itself, inspect each sled to see that the patrols have all the equipment and gear they were told to bring. Maximum points: 100.

For the events themselves, maximum score per patrol per town should be 20 points: 13 for the task, 4 for teamwork, 3 for Scout spirit.

Use the patrols' elapsed time on the orienteering course as your tie-breaker.

Note to Klondike leaders: Since scoring is subjective, the person who scores a town should score that town all day. Also you should plan each town so that at least two patrols can be completing the event, or events, simultaneously.

All towns should have hot water available for soup or hot chocolate.

SAMPLE DERBY #1
(Traditional Scouting Skills)

Some successful Klondikes simply test boys on Scouting requirements and award nuggets for correct answers. The patrol with the most nuggets wins. Here's a sample line-up:

- Town 1-First Aid/Ice Rescue
 - Town 2-Nature
 - Town 3-Norwegian Skiing (team building)
 - Town 4-Knots
 - Town 5-Shelter Building (provided with tarp, twine and poles)
 - Town 6-Winter Survival (camping in the winter)
 - Town 7-Wildlife (expert talk on radio collars with demonstration)
 - Town 8-Blindman Obstacle Course
 - Town 9-Ax and Knife Safety
 - Town 10-Compass Course (get bearings and distances among three objects)
- In the afternoon: Klondike sled races and awards ceremony.

SAMPLE DERBY #2
(Scouting skills and then some)

This Klondike is structured with 6 towns and 16 events.

Scoring starts at registration (clothing and footwear inspection), and includes camp inspection.

Town 1: "ATTU"

Sinking Sled Rescue

Tree or Mountain Measurement

Patrol Ski

Town 2: "KODIAK"

Snowshoe Race

Spear Throw

Firestarting

Town 3: "POLAR COVE"

Three Survival Problems

Stretcher Race

Town 4: "SKAGWAY"

Compass

Bows and Arrows

Town 5: "JUNEAU"

Junior Iditarod

Lumberman's Log Lift

Knot Competition

Town 6: "FAIRBANKS"

Pioneering Projects

Sled Inspection Town

EQUIPMENT LIST

A list of things each patrol must have on their sled should be distributed as early as two months before the Klondike. The boys can use anything on their sled to complete any given task. Those running the towns should provide any special gear the boys may need.

THE SLED

- One can of soup per boy (no "cream of" soups)
- A complete extra set of warm dry clothes and socks (wrapped in a waterproof covering) for each patrol member.
- Patrol flag
- Patrol roster
- Pencil & paper
- Clipboard & cover (or equivalent)
- Watch
- Compass
- Flashlight
- Two (2) six-foot-long staves (or equivalent)
- Blanket
- Padded splints for arms & legs
- First-aid kit including four (4) cravats, gauze pads
- Pocketknife
- Two (2) foot-long 2x4 lumber
- Tin foil
- Three (3) gallons water in container
- Flint & Steel or Hot spark kit
- Lunch for each Scout
- Eight (8) foot length of rope (whipped)
- Scout Handbook
- Rain gear for each Scout
- Cup for each Scout
- Waterproof ground cover (visqueen or canvas)
- Tarps for shelter
- Trash bag

CLOTHING

One of the most important parts of a Klondike Derby is to keep warm and dry. Each Scout must know what to wear. Winter weather is very changeable, requiring preparedness for almost any condition. A nice day can turn into a raging blizzard.

Your best protection is your common sense. Dress in layers. Avoid working up a sweat, and keep yourself comfortable by removing or adding layers of clothing. No cotton clothing!

Waterproof boots are essential. Wear socks of wool or other material that wicks away perspiration.

A wool stocking cap or similar head gear with ear coverings is necessary both during the day and at night in the sleeping bag to retain warmth. Scarves are recommended to protect the face from the cold and biting wind.

Boys should wear wool mittens covered with a water repellent shell. Gloves may be worn, but they are not as warm as mittens.

Scouts are more vulnerable to the cold at meals, because they do not move around as much. Prior to any meal, ask every boy if all his clothing is dry. If not, have him change into dry clothes before eating.

Clothing Inspection: Unit leaders should visually inspect each boy before he takes off on the trail. The unit leader should be required to file a form indicating that his unit is ready for the trail.

If any boy is not adequately dressed, he ought not be allowed on the trail.

ADVANCED KLONDIKE CHALLENGE SLED RACE

Instead of using the typical sled, each patrol will have a basic platform, 2 x 4's curved in front for runners and fitted with dowels for attachment to a plywood deck.

Scouts should also have poles and rope. At the starting signal, the teams lash the poles together and to the sled, load on their dummy, and proceed around the race course.

Sleds may be pulled, pushed, carried or some combination of the above. There will be a few small obstacles on the course. Sleds may be "repaired" up to the midway point of the course. Score will be a combination of time and judging of the sleds at the finish line. It may pay to spend a little more time on the lashings to get the points at the judging. The patrol will have to work well together.

A CUB SCOUT KLONDIKE

Here's a game-oriented day for Cubs. Each pack registers to bring a game that can be played, snow or no snow, outside in a large field. The boys circulate around through 15 to 20 games for 2 to 2 1/2 hours. Hot chocolate is served by a troop or an OA lodge. Patches are awarded to participants.

Events can include tug-of-war, catapults, stilt walking, snowshoe races, tire bowling, Frisbee golf, and monster ski walking.

ALTERNATE KLONDIKE DERBIES

What if there's no snow?

Require the Scout patrols to navigate cross-country to find each town. Make sure you have plenty of maps, especially on the day of the event. (Some troops will show up without theirs.)

Events may include:

- o fire building,
- o constructing survival shelters,
- o ice rescue on dry land, and
- o how to recognize and treat cold weather injuries.

The real competition is in getting from one point to another. Give the Scouts a grid location and also have the points on a master map they can copy from.

DERBY PREPLANNING AND EARLY PREPARATION

Pre-planning really makes the difference. It is your opportunity to direct what happens at your Klondike, to determine what skills are imparted and what activities are prepared and staged.

At your initial planning meeting—after the first snowfall is often a good time—ask leaders and volunteers to come prepared with a list of activities (preferably with drawings, typed explanation, and actual samples, if applicable) that they have found successful, rewarding and fun for boys to accomplish at events like Klondike Derby.

Promote your Klondike. Ask your local council service center for the BSA Clip Art Disks for insignia or logos you need.

Provide lists of responsibilities to which Klondike leaders and volunteers need to commit in order to make sure everything gets done by Klondike Day:

Klondike Chairman Duties

1. Establish the derby theme.
2. Select site and obtain camping permits.
3. Prepare map of site showing towns, toilets, parking areas, registration, first aid, staff and any off-limit areas.
4. Design and order patches.
5. Prepare staff identification.
6. Procure food tickets.
7. Order and have available staff neckerchiefs.
8. Order and have available trophies and ribbons.
9. Prepare critique forms.
10. Prepare advance registration forms and pre-registration packets.
11. Arrange for pictures of events and for suitable releases to be given to local newspapers.

Town Mayor Duties

Town mayors make sure all is going smoothly. They do not work or run their events. It is sometimes hard to get this across. Running events is fun, but mayors can't look after all the events if they are overseeing one.

Town mayors should:

1. Recruit one adult leader to do your job if you cannot!
2. Recruit adults to run the events at your town.
3. Obtain and install the town signs at your site.
4. Prepare title and direction signs for your program areas
5. Schedule your staff's time; i.e. food and rest breaks.
6. Obtain supplies needed for your town's events.
7. Find a fair way to accommodate Boy Scout Patrol priority (over Webelos Scouts, for instance) at events during the hours between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.
8. Supply hot coffee and snacks to your crew throughout the day.
9. Supply trash containers/bags and arrange for the cleanup of your town. Have all refuse bagged and brought to the dumpster.

Webelos Scout Coordinator Duties

1. Recruit an adult leader to do your job if you cannot!
2. Recruit one adult to work the Registration Table.
3. Recruit two adults to work the Scoring/Award town.
4. Work with each mayor to make sure each town has an adult responsible for Webelos Scouts.
5. Make sure everyone realizes that Boy Scout patrols have priority at certain town activities at certain times.

Food Chairman Duties

1. Recruit an adult leader to do your job if you cannot!
2. Provide food and snacks for the staff (both full-time and volunteer).
3. Provide staff food for Friday night cracker barrel; Saturday breakfast; lunch; late dinner; and Sunday breakfast.
4. Arrange for the clean-up of the staff cabin and staff area. All trash must be bagged and put in the dumpster prior to departure.

First Aid Chairman Duties

1. Recruit an adult leader to do your job if you cannot!
2. Early on derby day determine with Klondike chairman whether weather is clement enough for the events to take place.
3. Obtain first aid medical supplies and equipment.
4. Identify the closest hospital and closest available phone.
5. Arrange for an adult to run a first aid and warming town to be located in the staff kitchen.
6. Supervise inspection of all boys and registered adults. Forbid any boy without adequate clothing to participate.

Registration Chairman Duties

1. Recruit an adult leader to help you and do your job if you cannot!
2. Handle the pre-registration forms, on-site registration, cash box, and receipt forms. Coordinate all these on site to ensure accurate financial records.
3. Hand out map-score sheets to patrol leaders (one per patrol).
4. Hand out Klondike patches, food tickets, certification of patrol readiness forms (one copy to adult leader and one signed by the adult leader and retained), and critique sheets to unit leaders.
5. Collect completed score sheets, post scores as they arrive, inform unit leaders of winning patrols, collect critique forms from unit leaders.
6. Prepare ribbons, trophies, and prizes for distribution at the campfire.

OA Food Chairman Duties

1. Recruit several adult leaders to help and to do your job if you cannot!
2. Make all arrangements to:
 - o prepare "soup" from donated cans of tomato-base soup.
 - o arrange for the transportation of cans to the soup preparation area
 - o provide for the additional materials to be used with the soup base (ie. beans, meat, etc.) to make this a nourishing and healthful meal.
 - o serve the Scouts and adults in an orderly, efficient, and healthful way.
 - o clean up the serving area after the meal.
3. Provide bread/rolls/crackers (donated, if possible).
4. Prepare hot chocolate and have it available all day long and delivered to program areas by the OA Staff.
5. It is expected that everyone will bring his own cup and bowl, but the OA chairman should provide some styro-foam cups, spoons and bowls, just in case.

Ceremonial Camp Fire Commissioner Duties

1. Provide a large ceremonial fire (ignited dramatically) for Saturday evening.
2. Contact mayors and registration chairman for awards and ribbons.
3. Contact Eskimo or outdoors speaker and arrange for any special equipment that is required.
4. Arrange for any special clean-up of the fire area. Have all refuse bagged and put in the dumpster by the tracks on Sunday morning.

Volunteer Duties

1. Each volunteer will be given a sheet outlining his responsibilities for the day. Instructions should include when the volunteer is to report to his morning event, when to eat lunch with his troop and when to report to his afternoon assignment.
2. Write a description of the activities that he plans for his town. This will be compiled into a book to be given to all volunteers when the Klondike is over. The description must be short, but must include exact instructions on how to run and/or score each event. Pictures are mandatory and clear text imperative. On Klondike day, every adult judges and runs the events.

Each mayor greets his volunteers and gives them their instructions. Volunteers are free to exchange sheets with one another to get a different assignment. Some volunteers are free for a period of time so they can follow their own boys, some are free all day, but get duty like cleanup at the end of the day.

Complaints will be rare, as everyone knows that everyone is needed to make a Klondike Derby successful.

MISCELLANEOUS USEFUL IDEAS

Commissioner's Soup: Each boy brings a can of soup as part of his derby inventory (though no "cream of" soups). The beef-based soups (red) soups are mixed together, as are the chicken-based (yellow) soups. They should be heated and made available at or near one of the towns, for lunch or other break. A mug of hot soup is great on a cold day.

Gold Nuggets: Each town awards up to 10 nuggets per patrol. Spray paint gravel in large quantities using a gold color.

Claim Jumpers: A Klondike once featured "claim jumpers" who would "hold up" patrols as they passed. (The patrols were forewarned of the possibility.) The claim jumpers asked Scout-related questions, such as "What are three points of Scout Law?" Or, "What do stars on a badge stand for?" For each question the Scouts missed, the claim jumpers "stole" a specified amount of gold (usually five nuggets). Sleds were then marked with a ribbon so they wouldn't be jumped again. Every team gets jumped.

Stocking Caps: These are useful to designate official personnel. Purchase a gross of hats and have the Klondike Derby patch sewn on them. Choose a distinctive color that is easy to see from a distance.

Lunch Break: All patrols should take at least a 30-minute lunch break, or up to an hour if they wish. This break doesn't count against their overall time. The lunch break also gives leaders an opportunity to check for frostbite, or other problems.

Large Towns: If you set up towns that can handle at least five patrols at a time, patrols have minimum waits and can compete in the order they arrive. Keeping towns spread out helps. To avoid the big circle approach, have a couple of towns that require people to transport someone or something to the central area. An official there can also tell patrols where the shortest lines are.

Central Area Activities: Consider a selection of events, contests and challenges to keep early finishers occupied and having fun. These can include displays—snowshoe-making, sled dogs, igloo-building—or games such as snow soccer and multiple-end tug-of-war.

Create-a-commercial skit kit: Give the patrols or dens boxes with identical contents; a log, a coat, a roll of toilet paper, string, newspaper, cans, a wide marker, plus any items (besides money) the boys have in their pockets.

Challenge them to make up a commercial using the kit. Have the boys judge their favorite. Suggest titles, such as "The Goofy Patrol Demonstrates How Not to Use Floss." Or "The Whiners Are Cold Without This Coat." Videotape all the ads to show at evening assembly.