

Session 514

Webelos to Scouting Transition



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Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Differences between Cub Scouts and Troop Scouting
 - Scouts BSA is not Cub Scouts 2.0
3. Pointers for doing a Troop search
4. Things to look for in a Troop
 - Questions to ask, etc.
5. Bonus Slides (optional)
6. Q & A



Introduction



- Who I am...
 - Patrick McCann, Scoutmaster, T100 Ballard
 - ~1 year as SM, 5 years as Den Leader, Eagle Scout, Girl Scout Leader
- A Promise
 - Not here on a T100 recruiting call
- Material:
 - Full presentation will be available online.
 - Email me for questions, for link to this presentation, or if you'd like to have this discussion at your pack/den - mccann101@gmail.com

Differences: C.S. Badges vs Scouts BSA Ranks

1. Advancement

- CS Badges do not require the previous badge.
 - Example: Bear badge doesn't require Wolf
- In Troops, all scouts start at the first rank and work their way up.
 - Leadership skills: initiative, involvement and ownership.

2. Seven ranks in Scouts BSA:

- Two significant ranks: Eagle and First Class
- Achieving First Class (FC): Scout crosses into leadership
 - Single biggest milestone on way to Eagle
 - More responsibility, privilege, recognition
- First four ranks: Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, FC
 - Together they're called "Trail to First Class"
 - TTFC requirements are checklist of scout skills
 - Camping, first aid, citizenship, swimming, etc..
 - Rank requirements can be done in parallel
 - Can be done as fast as a Scout wants
- After First Class: Star, Life, Eagle
 - Leadership ranks
 - Require leadership and merit badges



Differences: Dens vs. Patrols

A patrol is:

- Scout led
- A self propelled group of Scouts
- Choose their own leaders
- Independent of adult control



Robert Baden Powell: “The object of the patrol method is not so much saving the Scoutmaster trouble as to give responsibility to the boy.”

Differences: Dens vs. Patrols

	Den	Patrol
Size:	6-9 Scouts	6-9 Scouts
Leader:	Den Leader: Adult	Patrol Leader: Scout
Ranks:	Scouts are working on same badge	Scouts are different ranks
Ages:	All same grade	Can be all ages
Teaching:	Scouts learn from adults	Scouts learn from each other (EDGE method)
Names:	Similar names: Den 1, Den 2, etc.	Cool and crazy names: Falcons, Knights, Battle Turtles, etc..
Activities:	Do stuff that gets them to their badge	Scouts decide what to do

Differences: Troops camp... a lot

- Most troops camp each month
 - Car camping, backpacking, canoe camping, etc.
 - Most will have an activity:
 - Biking, merit badges, camporee, cave hikes, etc.
- Camping teaches leadership skills:
 - Preparation, teamwork, problem solving, resiliency.
- Patrols operate independently on camp outs
 - Cook & eat together, tent together, & responsible for their own camping area (“leave no trace”)
 - Patrol leader is responsible for his patrol on a campout
 - Adults have a camp area away from the Scouts.
- Summer Camp is 1 week long
 - Scout can make significant progress on TTFC
 - Most scouts usually get multiple merit badges
- High Adventure: 13 y.o. & 1st class
 - 50 mile backpack, 60 mile canoeing, whitewater rafting, etc..



Differences: Uniform

Merit badge sash: worn for special occasions

Merit badges: Silver trim means Eagle required MB. Green trim are non-Eagle.

Temporary patches: for things like summer camp. Hung from right pocket (over district patch)



Neckerchief: Often indicates troop

World Scouting patch: All Scouts around the world have this.

Achievement Knots: this is the religious emblem

Rank: This is Life rank

Arrow of Light

Differences: Uniform

Green shoulder loops:
Indicates Boy Scouts

Patrol Patch



Council patch: Yours
will be Chief Seattle

Troop number

Leadership patch:
this is SPL

Differences: Parent Involvement

- Parents don't sign off rank requirements
 - Sign offs are by SM, ASM & older scouts, depending on troop rules.
 - Leadership: Builds confidence to speak to adults
- Parent guide and encourage their sons
 - But do not do the work for them
 - Scouts lead themselves
- Parental involvement is critical to the success of the troop
- Find a way to get involved:
 - A few ways that parent can be involved:
 - Signing up to be an ASM or on committee
 - Merit badge counselor
 - Fundraising
 - Going on campouts

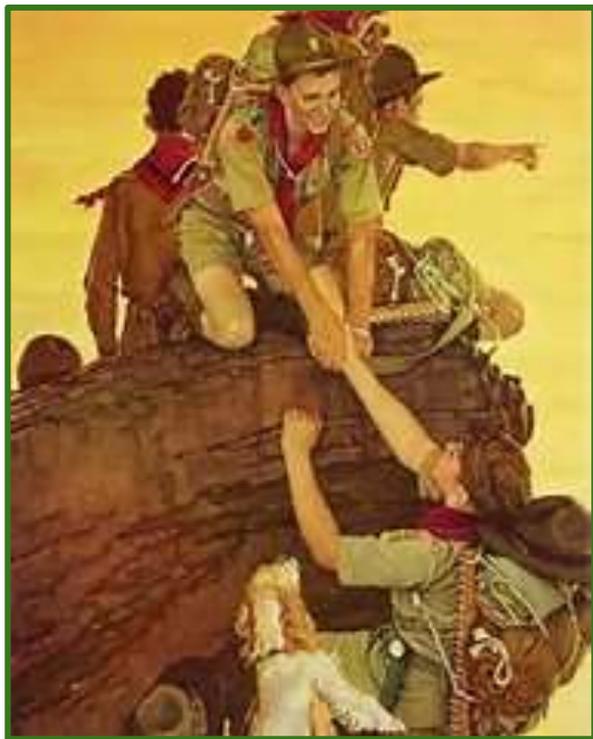


Differences: Leadership Organization

- Cub Scouts have two leadership organizations:
 - Committee: Chair, treasurer, secretary, etc.
 - Program: Cubmaster, Den Leaders
- Troops have three leadership organizations
 - Committee: Chair, treasurer, secretary, etc.
 - Program: Scoutmaster and all ASMs
 - Camp outs, oversee patrols, & sign off requirements
 - Youth Leadership: Typically higher rank scouts
 - Sr. Patrol Leader (SPL): leads the troop
 - Elected, reports to Scoutmaster
 - Leads weekly troop mtg & monthly PLC
 - Patrol leaders: lead the patrols
 - Reports to SPL
 - Leads on camp outs and weekly “patrol corners”
 - Other roles: Assistant SPL, Quartermaster, Chaplain’s Aide, Scribe, Librarian, Webmaster, Bugler, Den Chiefs, etc..



Pointers for Visiting Scout Troops



1. Visit 3-4 troops
 - Like shopping for a pair of jeans:
 - Try on a lot of them.
 - Choose the one that fits best
2. Spend at least 3 hours with your favorite troops
 - At least 2 troop meetings (~1.5 hours each)
 - Outings and campouts are better
3. As much as it can be, troop choice should be the Scout's decision
 - Leadership skills: Ownership, decision making
4. Parents should guide the Scout:
 - Interview after each troop visit
 - Take notes of each conversation
 - Compare and contrast based upon conversations and notes

Choosing a Scout Troop: Some obvious things...

There are a few obvious things to look for in a troop:

- Is it close to you?
- Does it fit your schedule?
- Does the Scout have friends that go there?
- How frequently does it meet?
 - Some meet once per week, others twice per month.



Choosing a Scout Troop: Look for a “Right Sized” Troop

What size troop do you want?

- There is a wide range of troop sizes
 - As small as 8-10 Scouts
 - As large as 100 (or more)
 - Advantages to both
- Small Troops:
 - Advantages: Individual attention & scout won't get lost in the crowd
 - Disadvantage: Maybe not as many opportunities. (E.g. TTFC, Merit badges)
- Large Troops:
 - Advantages: Lots of opportunity (Merit badges, TTFC, etc.), Lots of variety, lots of friends
 - Disadvantages: Can be loud & chaotic, scouts can get lost in the crowd



How to Choose a Scout Troop: Things to Look For



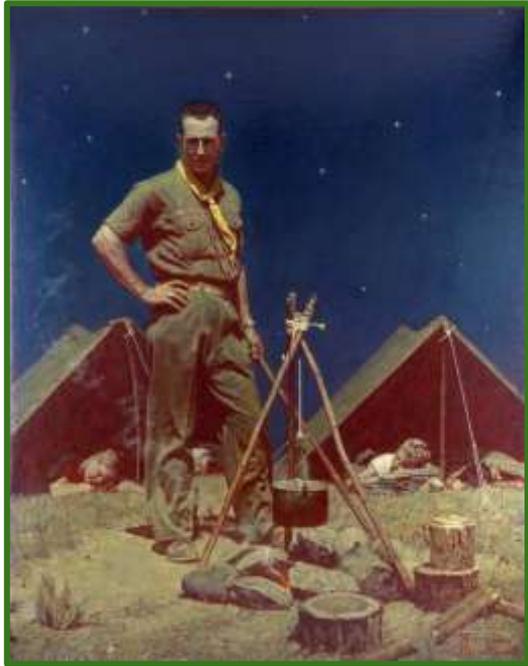
- Are there plenty of adult leaders?
 - Even though a troop is Scout led, there should be plenty of adult leaders at troop meetings and outings
 - Are adult leaders paying attention to what the scouts are doing?
- Are the adult leaders enthusiastic, skilled and knowledgeable?
 - Do they seem to enjoy talking about Scouting?
 - Can they answer most or all of your questions?
 - Is the Scoutmaster available to talk and does he seem to enjoy his role?

How to Choose a Scout Troop: Things to Look For



- Is the troop Scout led?
 - Are older Scouts teaching younger Scouts?
 - Is the SPL leading the meeting or outing?
 - Do the Scouts seem to fix their own problems?
 - Are adults intervening a lot and doing things for the Scouts?
- Is there a good distribution of ages?
 - Due to attrition, there will usually be more younger Scouts than older Scouts in a troop
 - Are enough Scouts at each age level to provide leadership for the next 3-4 years?
 - Enough younger scouts (11-12) so the Scout won't feel like they are the only young Scout?

Choosing a Scout Troop: How to Ask Questions



How to ask questions:

- Ask during a troop meeting or outing
 - Outings are generally better since they are less hectic
- Parents/guardians should ask the questions
 - While the Scout is involved in the meeting or outing
- Bring a list of questions you want to ask
 - Maybe a pencil to jot down things you want to remember
- Look for an experienced, enthusiastic leader to answer your questions
 - Look for someone who's been directly working with the Scouts for a year or more
 - They'll know the most about camp outs, ranks, boy-led, etc.
 - This will probably be an ASM
- Talk with the Scoutmaster if you can!

How to Choose a Scout Troop: Questions to Ask

- What the troop does for Trail to First Class (TTFC)
 - Do they have planned activities and structure to guide a new Scout on TTFC?
 - More planning and structure makes it easier for Scouts to reach 1st Class
- How do they organize their patrols?
 - Same age patrols:
 - Advantages: Scouts have more in common & easier to become good friends
 - Mixed age patrols
 - Advantages: younger scouts learn from older scouts & patrols are approximately equal
 - Hybrid
 - e.g. First year patrol, followed by mixed age patrols



How to Choose a Scout Troop: Questions to Ask



- Ask how often they camp.
 - Most troops camp about once per month
- Ask what “Scout-led” means in their troop.
- All troops do “Scout-led” slightly differently.
- Ask what the challenges of a troop are.
 - All troops have challenges...
 - Involved adult leaders should be aware of what the challenges are.
- Ask what the strengths of the troop are.
 - All troops have strengths
 - Involved adult leaders should be eager to brag about the strengths of the troop

How to Choose a Scout Troop: Questions to Ask

- Ask what they do for fundraising
 - Do they have one big fund raiser or lots of smaller fund raisers
 - Do they do Christmas Tree Recycling?
- Ask what the troop pays for
 - Badges? Dues? Etc....
 - How much do camp outs cost?
 - Strong fundraising makes Scouting more affordable for families
- Ask what the troop does for High Adventure
 - Again, High Adventure is for Scouts that are 1st Class (or higher) and 13 (or older)
 - What have they done recently and what are they planning?
 - Do they do at least one HA trip per year?



How to Choose a Scout Troop: Questions to Ask

Troop Involvement with the rest of the Scouting World:



- Ask if they are involved with Order of the Arrow
 - Honor society for Scouts
- Ask if they are involved with NYLT (National Youth Leadership Training)
 - Leadership training for older Scouts
- Ask if they are involved with Round Table
 - Monthly district information session for adult leaders
- Ask if they are involved with Wood Badge
 - Leadership training for adult leaders

Bonus Slide: Bad Assumptions

Questions & assumptions that are not that helpful:

- **Bad Assumption: Small troops are unhealthy troops**
 - Some troops are small by choice
 - Small troops have several real advantages
- **Bad Assumption: Few Eagle scouts means an unhealthy troop.**
 - Low numbers of Eagle Scouts can be because of low recruitment numbers 4-5 years ago.
- **Bad Assumption: Fund raising and service projects are not good times to visit with troops.**
 - Fund raising and service projects can be fun team building activities and a great time to visit



Bonus Slide: What to buy for Boy Scouts

- **Priority 1:** (First week)
 - Dues, Book
 - Uniform:
 - Class A shirt, pants, socks, belt, loops, woggle
 - Patches: troop, district, patrol, World Scouting
 - Optional: Sash, AoL patch, hat, class B.
 - Troops commonly supply a neckerchief.
- **Priority 2:** (Before first camping trip)
 - Mess kit: Keep it simple. It will get lost.
 - Sleeping bag:
 - Warm enough for 30F nights
 - Should pack small & light.
- **Priority 3:** (first 1-4 months)
 - Backpack: Youth size, well built, easily expandable for growth. (Ask if packs are supplied by the troop)
 - Boots: tough, waterproof.
- **Priority 4:** (after first year)
 - Tent: Troops commonly supply tents

**LABEL
EVERYTHING!!!**



Bonus Slide: Scouts BSA Terms (page 1)

“Ask your SPL”: An ASM’s answer when a Scout asks a question that the Scouts should figure out on their own.

ASM: Assistant Scoutmaster- Adult leader that works directly with Scouts. Attends troop meetings & camp outs, signs off requirements and oversees patrols. **Board of Review**: Meeting between a Scout and 3-6 committee members. This is the last requirement for a rank.

Court of Honor: Awards ceremony. Commonly used to present merit badges, etc..

Eagle Palms: Awards beyond Eagle badge for extra merit badges and time in Scouts. Bronze → Gold → Silver

Bonus Slide: Scouts BSA Terms (page 2)

EDGE Method: Explain, Demonstrate, Guide, Enable. Four step method of Scouts teaching Scouts.

PL: Patrol leader: Elected scout that runs a patrol. 6 month term.

PLC: Patrol Leader's Council- monthly meeting of SPL, Patrol leaders and other youth leaders. Used to plan upcoming events and talk about issues in the troop.

SPL: Sr. Patrol Leader: Elected Scout that runs the troop.

Scoutmaster conference: 1-1 meeting between SM and Scout. This is the next to the last requirement for a rank. (BoR is last)

TTFC: Trail to 1st class- All requirements for ranks from Scout to 1st class.

Bonus Slide: Additional Scouting Opportunities

- Venturing (Crews)
 - High Adventure
 - White water rafting, shooting, rock climbing, etc.
 - Co-ed, ages 14-21
 - Counts toward troop rank advancement
 - Find one: Beascout.org.
- Sea Scouts (Ships)
 - Maritime scouting
 - Co-ed, ages 14-20
 - Counts toward troop rank advancement
 - Find one: beascout.org

