PHYSICAL FITNESS

Since one of the main purposes of the Boy Scouts of America is to promote physical fitness, this program feature is right on target. Besides, most Scout-age boys love physical action, so they will eagerly participate in the suggested activities.

Troop meeting instruction and practice will cover most of the physical fitness requirements for Tenderfoot through First Class ranks. There are also lots of games and contests requiring strength and agility.

Our aim, however, is not just to provide a month of fun, but to encourage the Scouts to make physical fitness a lifetime pursuit. Urge them to continue testing themselves regularly, not just this month while they are working on physical fitness skills. That does not necessarily mean that they must continue doing push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, etc., for years to come, since those who remain active in sports year-round probably get plenty of exercise. But it does mean we want to make them conscious of the importance of fitness for their whole lives.

The big event will be a Scout decathlon, a series of 10 events requiring strength, agility, coordination, and some sports skills. It will be run as an interpatrol competition.

The Scout Decathlon could be either an afternoon event or the centerpiece of a weekend campout. The site might be an athletics field or a camp with a large playing field.

SCOUTING OUTCOMES

This month's patrol and troop activities should give your Scouts

- A greater understanding that physical fitness is essential for a fulfilling life
- An awareness that they can improve their fitness with regular exercise, adequate diet and rest, and abstinence from smoking, drugs, and alcohol
- Increased self-confidence as a result of improving physical fitness

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By month's end, all Scouts should meet many of their physical fitness requirements through First Class rank. Depending on the campout activities, they may also complete all or part of the following rank requirements:

Tenderfoot

- Outdoor—hiking, camping
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law
- Physical fitness—health, conditioning

Second Class

- Outdoor—camping, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law
- Physical fitness—health, conditioning

First Class

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, nature, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law
- Physical fitness—health, conditioning

Merit Badges. Older Scouts can concentrate on the Personal Fitness merit badge this month; they should be able to complete many of the requirements. Depending on activities during the month, they may also complete requirements in Cooking, Hiking, Camping, Athletics, Swimming, Sports, Skating, Cycling, and other outdoors-related merit badges.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

The patrol leaders' council can involve parents in the program feature this month by

- Asking qualified people to assist with instruction for the fitness skills
- Inviting parents to serve as judges, scorers, timekeepers, etc., for the Scout decathlon
- Asking parents to provide transportation to the decathlon site, if necessary

PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL

The patrol leaders' council should meet during the early part of the previous month to plan troop activities for this program feature. If you don't complete all items on the following agenda, continue your planning at patrol leaders' council meetings after each troop meeting.

- Decide whether to make the Scout decathlon a one-day event or the highlight of a weekend campout. Choose a site for it and arrange to secure permissions, if needed.
- Plan the 10 events for the decathlon. See the ideas on the following pages. Arrange to secure the necessary equipment; ask the troop committee for help, if necessary.
- Inventory the troop's camping equipment, if that has not been done recently.
- Make a list of possible Good Turns for the community.
- Plan details of troop meetings for the month. Consider inviting counselors for the Personal Fitness or Athletics merit badges to help with instruction.
- Coordinate any intertroop competitions.

FEATURE EVENT

Scout Decathlon

Choose 10 of the following events or devise your own.

600-METER RUN/WALK RELAY. Measure a 600-meter course (656 yards). If your decathlon site has a football field, the course could be three laps from end zone to end zone, then three laps from goal line to goal line, making the course 660 yards long. In camp, the course might be laid out on a smooth, relatively level trail. Run as a patrol relay. Avoid having Scouts run more than one leg because it would exhaust them for later events; instead, combine patrols to make team sizes equal.

Scoring: Ten points for the winning patrol, 8 for second place, 6 for third, 4 for fourth, and 2 for fifth place.

STANDING LONG JUMP. Follow the procedure in the *Boy Scout Handbook*.

Scoring: Determine the patrol score by averaging the distance jumped by each patrol member. The patrol with the highest average scores 10 points; second place gets 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

RUNNING LONG JUMP. Score the same as for the Standing Long Jump.

JAVELIN THROW. Use a Scout stave or 6-foot pole cut from a dead sapling. Each Scout gets three throws;

score only the longest. The thrower may run up to the throw line.

Scoring: Find the patrol's average throw, in feet, from where the javelin's point strikes the ground. The patrol with the highest average scores 10 points; second place gets 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

HIGH JUMP. Use regular standards or make them from 6-foot poles driven into the ground. To hold the cross-bar, place finishing nails in the poles at 2-inch intervals above 3 feet. Give each Scout two jumps; count the higher jump.

Scoring: Find the average height jumped by all patrol members. The patrol with the highest average height jumped scores 10 points; second place gets 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

JUMP AND REACH. The Scout is given a piece of chalk and, while standing flat-footed, he makes a mark as high as he can reach on a smooth-barked tree trunk. He then leaps as high as he can and makes a second mark. His score is the difference in inches between the marks. Give each Scout two tries and score the better jump.

Scoring: Find the average of all patrol members' scores. The patrol with the highest average scores 10 points; second place gets 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

BASEBALL BATTING. Each patrol member is given five swings at pitches thrown by a leader at batting-practice speed. Score 1 point for each fair ball; 5 points extra for balls that travel more than 300 feet, including the roll.

Scoring: Find the average of the scores of all patrol members. The patrol with the highest average gets 10 points; second place gets 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

ROPE CLIMB. Hang a rope that is at least 1 inch in diameter from a large tree limb or other support about 12 feet overhead. Remember to station spotters in case of a fall. Award 2 points for patrol members who make the climb using both hands and legs; 4 points for those who use hands only.

Scoring: Find the average of all patrol members' scores. The patrol with the highest average scores 10 points; second place gets 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

SHOT PUT. Use a 5- to 6-pound rock. Scratch a circle about 6 feet in diameter on the ground. Scouts must not leave the circle as they put the shot. The shot must be put by tucking it against the chin and pushing, not throwing like a baseball.

Scoring: Find the average distance for all patrol members. The patrol with the highest average scores 10 points; second place gets 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

PULL-UPS. Use a chinning bar not more than 1 inch in diameter and about 6 feet off the ground. Follow the procedure in the *Boy Scout Handbook*.

Scoring: Find the average of the number of pull-ups done by all patrol members. The patrol with the highest average scores 10 points; second place gets 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

ROPE SWING. Hang a 1-inch-diameter rope from a large tree limb or other support about 10 feet above ground. Mark lines for takeoff and landing 6 feet on either side of the hanging rope. Each patrol member takes one swing, observing the takeoff and landing lines.

Scoring: For patrols of eight Scouts, score 1 point for each successful traverse. For patrols of six, score 1.25 points for each success. For patrols with fewer than five members, score 1.5 points for each success.

FOOTBALL PASSING. Suspend an auto tire from a tree limb at about the 6-foot level. Scratch a line on the ground about 10 yards away. Keep the tire center opening facing the passer.

Each Scout has three tries to pass the ball through the center of the tire.

Scoring: Count 1 point for each successful pass. Find the average number of passes for the patrol. The patrol

with the highest average scores 10 points; second place gets 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

FRISBEE GOLF. The course is a series of targets ("holes") spaced about 50 yards apart. Holes might be particular trees, small buildings, garbage cans, etc. Include "hazards" (ravine, small stream, marsh, wooded area, etc.). Station judges at each hole to make sure Scouts hit the targets.

Unlike regular golf, the number of shots makes no difference; the aim is to go around the course in the fastest time, regardless of the number of "strokes."

Each player must be timed separately. He tees off at the starting line by sailing the Frisbee at the first "hole," then runs immediately to the Frisbee and shoots again, and so on, around the course.

Scoring: The patrol's score is the average time by all members. The patrol with the fastest average scores 10 points; second place gets 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

SCOUT'S PACE RELAY. The Scout's pace is an old Scoutcraft skill, requiring him to learn to run and walk a measured mile within a few seconds of 12 minutes.

Use a quarter-mile track, or measure a mile on back roads at the camp. In the Scout's Pace Relay, there are eight legs of 220 yards each. In patrols with fewer than eight Scouts, some must run twice.

If you are using a quarter-mile track, each patrol stations four of its members at the start, the rest at the halfway point around the track. If you are on camp roads, one Scout would be placed at every 220-yard mark. (In that case, of course, all patrols would need eight members.)

Scoring: The patrol finishing the race closest to exactly 12 minutes (without using watches to help) scores 10 points; second place scores 8 points; third, 6 points; fourth, 4 points; and fifth, 2 points.

Everybody Up

This initiative exercise is a useful way to introduce the idea of group cooperation. Ask two Scouts of about the same size to sit on the ground or floor facing each other with soles of their feet touching, knees bent, and hands tightly grasped. From this position they try to pull themselves into a standing position. If they succeed, ask another Scout to join them and try standing with three Scouts, then four, etc. As the group grows, each player must grasp the hands of another person and must maintain foot contact with the group. An expanding group will find that thinking is required to come up with a solution that allows large numbers (50 or more players) to get Everybody Up.

Variation: Ask the Scouts to sit back-to-back and try to stand as a pair, trio, etc. To avoid possible shoulder dislocations do not allow interlocked arms.

Human Ladder

This activity helps develop trust and teaches participants to be responsible for each other's safety.

Equipment: Six to 10 smooth hardwood dowels about 3 feet long, ½ inch in diameter.

Procedure: Pair the Scouts and give each pair one "rung" of the ladder. Each person holds one end of the rung. Several pairs, each holding a rung and standing close together, form the ladder. A climber starts at one end of the ladder and proceeds from one rung to the next. As the climber passes by, the pair holding that rung may leave that position and go to the front end of the ladder, extending the ladder length indefinitely.

Note: The direction of the ladder may change at any time (make a right-angle turn, for example), and the height of the rungs may also vary.

The Boy Scout Shuffle

Equipment: A 30-foot telephone pole lying on a flat area.

Procedure: Ask a group of about 20 Scouts to split into two teams, or use two patrols. The two groups stand balanced on opposite ends of the pole so that they are facing each other in single file.

Now ask the two groups to exchange ends of the pole without any team members touching the ground. Time the action and give a 15-second penalty for every touch of the turf. After a completed attempt, encourage the group to talk it over and try again.

As with all timed initiative problems, it is important to attempt the problem more than once. The first attempt establishes a time to beat. Additional attempts invariably result in a faster time because of greater cooperation, planning, individual effort, etc. Beating a personal record or "PR" is the best kind of competition.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ Week 1

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	• Form the troop in a circle. • Hold a uniform inspection. • Repeat the Scout Law and have a Scout tell what it means. • Repeat the Pledge of Allegiance.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts work on fitness skills and practice for the President's Physical Fitness Award. • Experienced Scouts work on developing an indoor obstacle course. • Older Scouts work on the Venture program or assist younger Scouts with the fitness award.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Discuss plans for this month's outing. Practice two of the events for the decathlon. All patrols plan activities to work on advancement.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play Muscle Medley. (See the Games section of *Troop Program Resources.**)		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Assemble patrols. • Repeat the Scout benediction. • Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	Patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the Scout Decathlon. Begin work on next month's program feature.		

**Troop Program Resources for Scout Troops and Varsity Teams,* Supply No. 33588

PHYSICAL FITNESS

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ Week 2

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• For the new Scouts, have a local college athlete or health club instructor demonstrate exercises and talk about a nutritious diet and exercise plan. • Experienced Scouts continue work on an inside obstacle course. • Older Scouts work on the Venture program or practice one or more of the following from the introduction to Physical Fitness: The Boy Scout Shuffle Everybody Up Human Ladder Prepare to demonstrate them as part of the decathlon on the troop outing.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Discuss plans for this month's outing. Practice two or more of the events for the decathlon. All patrols plan activities to work on advancement.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Do Izzy-Dizzy Relay. (See the Games section of *Troop Program Resources.* *)		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	Patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the decathlon. Continue work on next month's program feature.		

**Troop Program Resources for Scout Troops and Varsity Teams,* Supply No. 33588

PHYSICAL FITNESS

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 3**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts and experienced Scouts run the indoor obstacle course developed by the older Scouts. • Older Scouts work on the Venture program or continue practice on Everybody Up, Human Ladder, and the Boy Scout Shuffle. Prepare to demonstrate these as part of the decathlon.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Discuss plans for this month's outing. Practice two more of the events for the decathlon. All patrols plan activities to work on advancement.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play Dodgeball and Jump the Shot. (See the Games section of *Troop Program Resources.**)		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	Patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the decathlon. Continue work on next month's program feature.		

**Troop Program Resources for Scout Troops and Varsity Teams,* Supply No. 33588

PHYSICAL FITNESS

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 4**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts work on fitness activities. • Experienced Scouts work on a menu that will have high-energy foods to eat during the decathlon/outing. • Older Scouts work on the Venture program.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Review all the events in the decathlon. Practice two more of the events.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Select an activity from the Games section of *Troop Program Resources.**		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	Patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and checks last-minute details for the decathlon. Finalize work on next month's program feature.		

**Troop Program Resources for Scout Troops and Varsity Teams,* Supply No. 33588

PHYSICAL FITNESS

TROOP OUTDOOR PROGRAM PLAN

Date _____

TIME	ACTIVITY	RUN BY
Friday evening	Load gear at meeting location and leave for campsite. Plan only a light meal en route.	SPL
	Arrive at campsite. Off-load equipment and set up patrol sites.	SPL/PL
Saturday 6:30 A.M.	Cooks and assistants up. Prepare breakfast. (Cooks should be working on First and Second Class requirements.)	Cooks, assistants
7:00 A.M.	Everyone else up. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, hang out sleeping bags.	
7:30 A.M.	Breakfast	
8:00 A.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
	Patrols put up gear for morning activities, clean up patrol site.	
8:30–11:30 A.M.	Run five or six of the decathlon events.	SPL
11:30 A.M.	Cooks prepare lunch.	Cooks
Noon	Lunch	
12:30 P.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
1:00 P.M.	Run remaining decathlon events.	SPL
4:30 P.M.	Start dinner preparation.	Cooks
5:30 P.M.	Dinner	SPL
6:00 P.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
	Free time	
8:00 P.M.	Troop campfire	SPL
9:00 P.M.	Cracker barrel	
10:00 P.M.	Lights out	
Sunday 6:30 A.M.	Cooks and assistants up. Prepare breakfast. (Cooks should be working on First and Second Class requirements.)	Cooks, assistants
7:00 A.M.	Everyone else up. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, hang out sleeping bags.	
7:30 A.M.	Breakfast	

TIME	ACTIVITY	RUN BY
8:00 A.M.	Clean up.	
	Patrols put up the gear for morning activities, clean up patrol site.	
8:30 A.M.	Worship service	
9:00 A.M.	Patrol games—Use four games from the Games section of *Troop Program Resources.* *	
11:00 A.M.	Break camp.	
Special equipment needed	Topographic maps, compass, clipboards	

**Troop Program Resources for Scout Troops and Varsity Teams,* Supply No. 33588