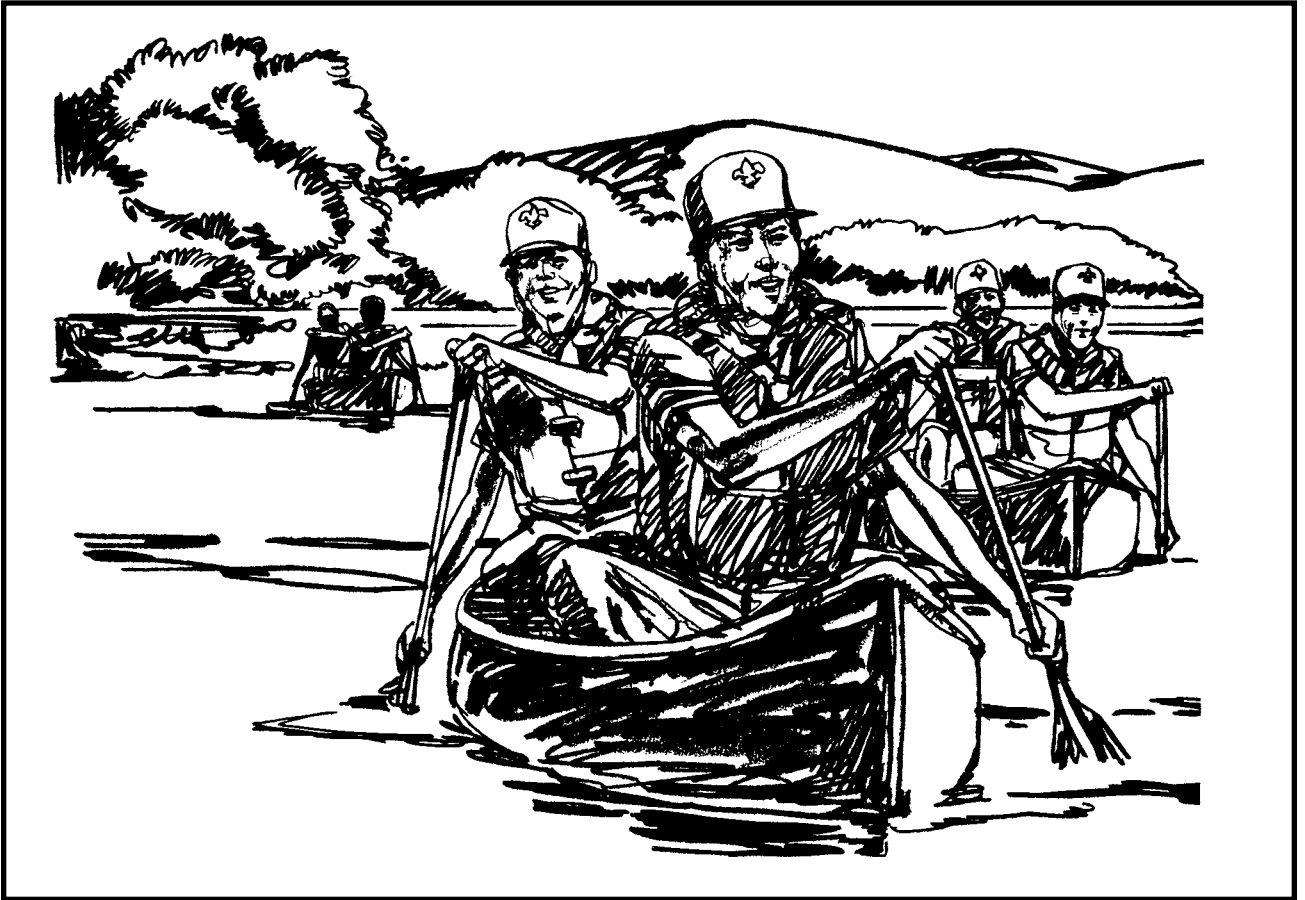


AQUATICS



In any camp where a waterfront is within a half-mile, Scouts will gravitate there like bees to honey. Most Scouts like nothing better than a swimming session or a couple of hours in canoes or boats.

In this program feature we will capitalize on that interest by providing a month of fun and, at the same time, encouraging the boys to become stronger swimmers and better boaters and canoeists.

If possible, hold all troop activities this month at a waterfront or swimming pool. The troop meeting plan for this month suggests both water activities and alternatives to use if you must meet at your regular meeting place.

If the troop does not have access to a waterfront or pool, ask for help from your unit commissioner or district activities committee. They might suggest municipal pools, facilities at a YMCA or YMHA (Young Men's Hebrew Association), or even school or motel pools that could be used. For these facilities, you will probably have to hold troop activities in off-hours.

At a minimum, the troop's goal should be to have all Scouts advance from the nonswimmer class by month's end. If most of your Scouts are already good swimmers, urge them to work toward the merit badges

in swimming, lifesaving, and aquatic sports, and the Snorkeling, Mile Swim, BSA, and BSA Lifeguard awards.

The big event will be a water show for the troop's families or a water expedition with canoes or rafts. The patrol leaders' council's choice of events for the show will depend on how many Scouts have earned the swimmer designation.

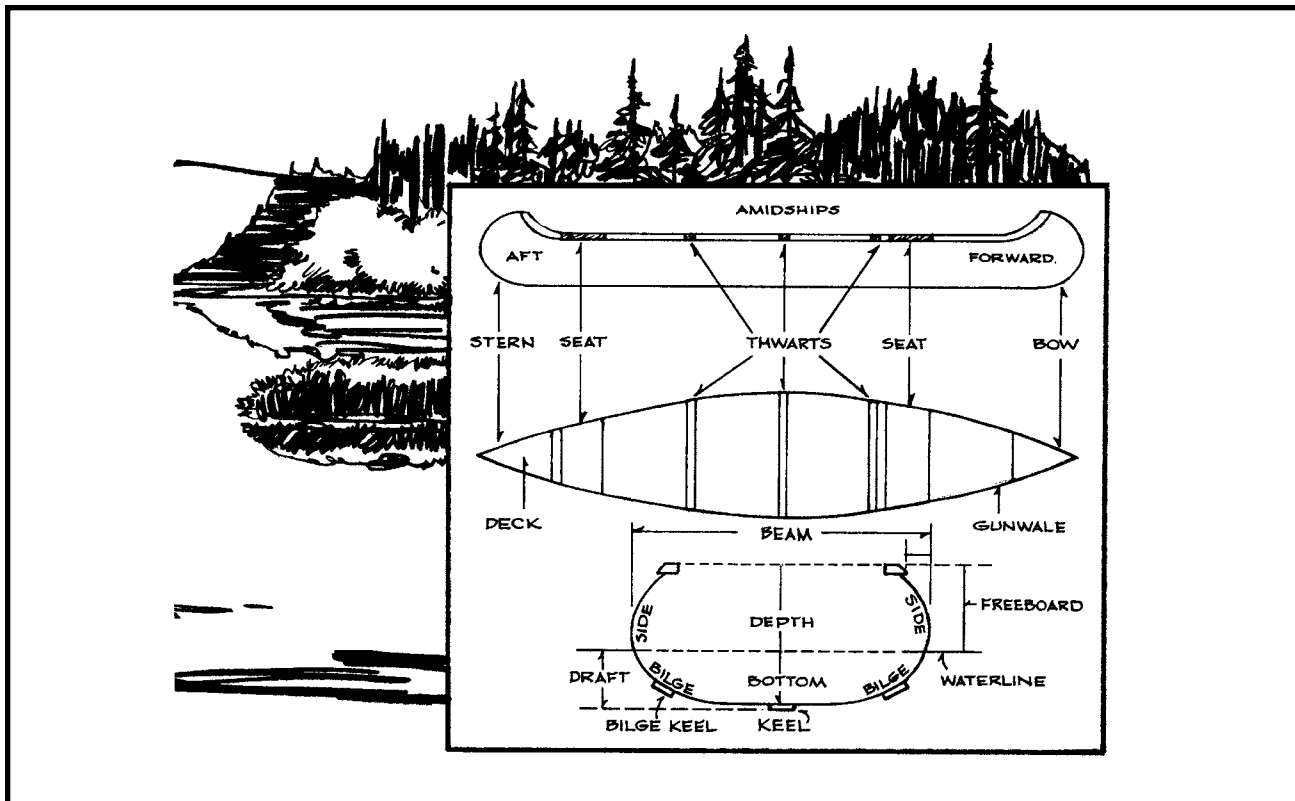
SCOUTING OUTCOMES

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

- A better understanding of physical fitness
- Greater swimming skills, and perhaps greater skill in handling canoes, boats, or other watercraft
- Enhanced self-confidence

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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



Tenderfoot

- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law
- Physical fitness—health, conditioning, swimming

Second Class

- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law
- Physical fitness—health, conditioning, swimming

First Class

- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law
- Physical fitness—health, conditioning, swimming

Merit Badges. Older Scouts can concentrate on the Swimming 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 Lifesaving, and if the facilities permit, other aquatic-related merit badges such as Canoeing, Rowing, and Small-Boat Sailing.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

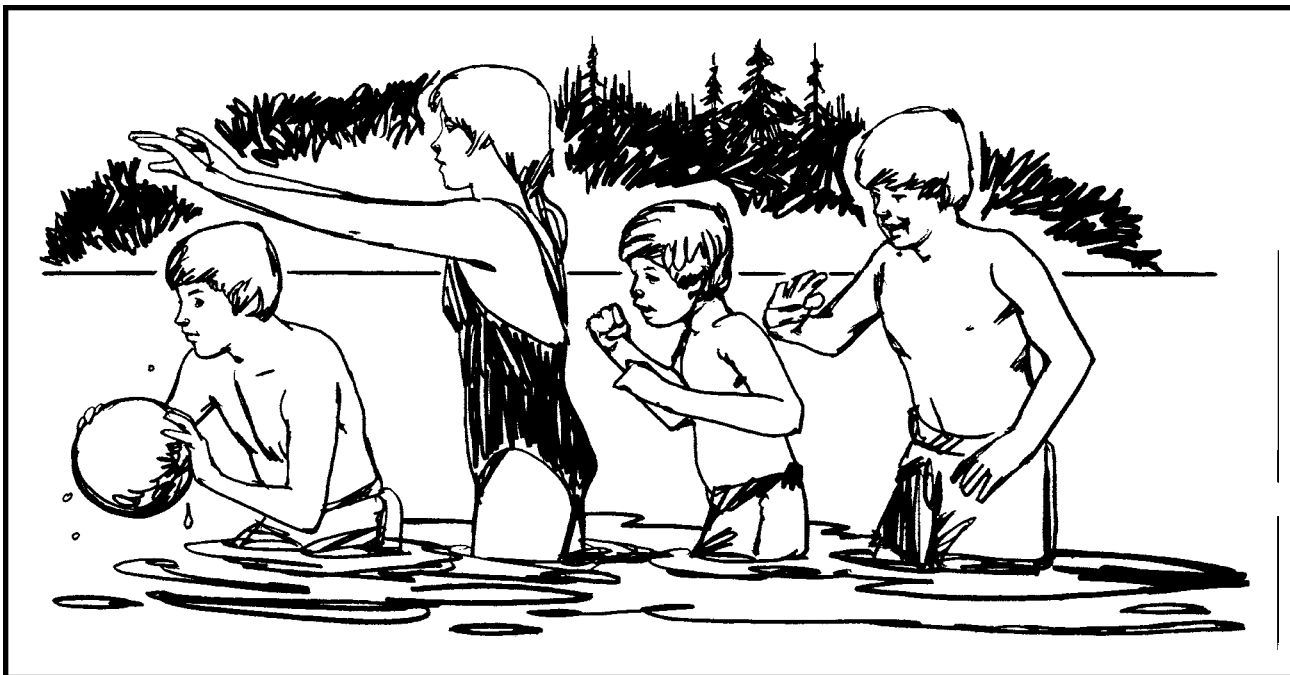
The patrol leaders' council can involve parents in the program feature this month by

- Asking qualified parents to assist with swimming instruction
- Inviting parents to come along on the water expedition
- Inviting the whole family to your water show

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.

- Older boys may want to plan a canoe trip at one of the BSA's high-adventure bases.
- Decide whether to make the big event a water expedition or water show. Remember that for a canoe or raft trip, only Scouts who have been classified as "swimmers" are eligible to go, since the BSA Safety Afloat plan bars nonswimmers from all watercraft except rowboats and motorboats. So, if many of your Scouts cannot be expected to earn the swimmer designation before the big event, better plan for a water show. See the ideas on these pages.



- Choose a site or watercourse for the big event. Assign someone to secure the necessary permissions; ask the troop committee for help, if necessary.
- If the big event will be an expedition, arrange to borrow or rent equipment. (Some BSA local councils will rent canoes.)
- If possible, arrange to secure a waterfront or pool for all troop activities. (Remember that it may be necessary to change regular meeting dates or hours to use these facilities.)
- Plan the details of troop meetings for the month. Consider inviting Swimming merit badge counselors to help with swimming instruction. You might also ask counselors for other aquatics merit badges to help, depending on available facilities and equipment.

FEATURE EVENT

Water Show or Expedition

The patrol leaders' council should plan the big event based on the swimming ability and desires of the Scouts. The patrol leaders' council will probably prefer a water expedition, such as a canoe or raft trip, but only those classified as swimmers will be eligible to go.

If the troop has a lot of nonswimmers or beginners, it is best to have a water show—or have both events, with only swimmers taking part in the expedition.

Water Show

This is a day of water fun and water safety demonstrations for the whole family. It could be held at a

swimming pool or at a waterfront. If it is held at a waterfront and canoes and boats are available, the program can be more varied. The day might end with a troop family picnic and campfire.

The following are some suggested activities.

SAFE SWIM DEFENSE. Remember to use this for all swimming activities. Demonstrate the Safe Swim Defense and explain its value for safety. Prior planning is needed for any swimming or boating activity. It is required that at least one adult must be certified in Safe Swim Defense and/or Safety Afloat, which also requires CPR from any community agency. See the *Scoutmaster Handbook*.

RESCUE BREATHING. Have a patrol demonstrate rescue breathing and invite family members to try it.

CANDY HUNT (for Scouts and their brothers and sisters). Drop a number of foil-wrapped hard candies into the water at chest level. On signal, children jump in and retrieve as many pieces as they can.

WATER RESCUES. Have a patrol demonstrate the Reach, Throw, and Go With Support methods of water rescue (*Boy Scout Handbook*).

NAIL-DRIVING UNDERWATER (for parents). Have a hammer, five nails, and a piece of 2-by-4 for each parent. The object is to go underwater with the block, nails, and hammer, and pound as many nails as possible within a specified period—say, three minutes. Obviously, your parent can come up for air between strokes.

LIFESAVING WITH CANOE. Have a patrol demonstrate how to right a capsized canoe and how to save a struggling swimmer using a canoe. See the *Canoeing* merit badge pamphlet.

MOTHER-DAUGHTER/SON BALLOON TOSS. Each mother-daughter/son team is given a balloon filled half-way with water. Partners face each other about 10 feet apart in the water and begin tossing the balloon back and forth. After each catch, the thrower takes one step backward. When a player misses, the team is eliminated. The team with the most successful tosses wins.

Patrol Relays

Run swimming relay races in chest-deep water so that nonswimmers can take part by walking their lap.

UP AND UNDER (for Scouts and brothers and sisters). Have a volleyball or beach ball for each team. All teams line up relay fashion in waist-deep water. The first player in each line is given the ball. On signal, he passes the ball back over his head to the next player in line, who passes it between his legs to the next player, and so on to the end of the line. The last player runs to the head of the line and passes it as before. The first team back in its original order wins.

GREASED WATERMELON (for Scouts and older brothers and sisters). Divide players into two teams. Have each team form two lines about 15 feet from the center of the pool or playing area. In the center, float a medium-sized watermelon greased with shortening. On signal, each team tries to bring the watermelon to its starting line. The successful team gets first crack at the melon when it's time to eat.

BIG BLOW (for Scouts and brothers and sisters). Play this game in chest-deep water. Each team lines up, relay fashion, and is given a table tennis ball or toy boat. On signal, the first player on each team swims or walks to a turning line and back while blowing the ball or boat ahead of him. The following players repeat the action. The first team to finish wins.

For more swimming contests, see the Games section of *Troop Program Resources for Scout Troops and Varsity Teams*, No. 33588.

Water Expedition

A day or weekend trip in canoes or rafts is a great adventure for Scouts, but it is not for everyone. Do not permit any nonswimmer or beginner to make the trip.

Also insist that a U.S. Coast Guard-approved PFD (personal flotation device) be worn by every participant. Enforce the Safety Afloat guidelines as explained in the *Scoutmaster Handbook*.

Unless all participants—both Scouts and leaders—are experienced canoeists or rafters, hold at least one practice session before the big trip. This is especially important if it is an overnighter and troop members will be carrying packs and other equipment in their craft.

Consider the capabilities of all participants in choosing a river or other watercourse. If all are inexperienced, avoid difficult courses with white water. Save those for Scouts who have earned the Canoeing merit badge.

If you plan an overnight camp en route, you might arrange to have Scouts who are not eligible to go on the trip join you at the campsite so that they can take part in the fun.

Start your planning for a water expedition by reading “Swimming Skill and Safety” in the *Canoeing* merit badge pamphlet. That section tells how to prepare for a safe, enjoyable expedition.

Special Aquatics Awards

Scouts who are already good swimmers may begin to work toward any of four special awards this month. Although these are not advancement awards, they will encourage Scouts to improve their skills and have some additional fun. The awards are:

Mile Swim, BSA. The requirements call for the Scout to swim a mile over a measured course after four hours of training and to know safety rules for swimming in open water.

Snorkeling, BSA. The requirements call for the Scout to demonstrate the use of a mask, fins, and a snorkel in deep water, to know diver's signs and signals, and to understand hyperventilation and hypothermia. The full requirements are outlined in the Application for Snorkeling, BSA, No. 19-176.

BSA Lifeguard. The requirements call for the Scout to know the requirements for the Swimming, Lifesaving, Rowing, Canoeing, and First Aid merit badges, the Safe Swim Defense, and Safety Afloat, and be able to demonstrate specific skills. The full requirements are outlined in the Application for BSA Lifeguard, No. 34435.

50-Miler Award. Scouts are eligible for this award if they take part in a canoe or boat trip (or wilderness trek) of at least 50 consecutive miles in at least five days and do conservation work en route. The full requirements are outlined in the 50-Miler Award Application, No. 34408.

Boardsailing, BSA. Scouts are introduced to basic boardsailing skills, equipment, and safety precautions and will build a knowledge foundation for participation in more advanced and demanding activities on the water. The full requirements are outlined in the Boardsailing, BSA Award Application, No. 19-935A.