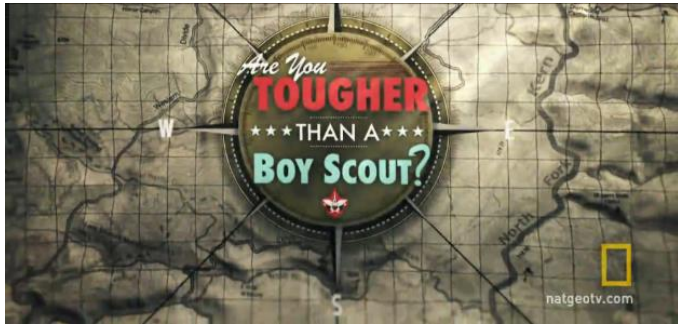


Tough Scout Challenge - Tougher Than a Boy Scout?



BSA Reference Materials

- Belay On, No. 430-500
- Troop Meeting Plan, www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34425.pdf
- Guide to Safe Scouting, <http://dev2.scouting.org/pdf/34416.pdf>

Community Resources and Materials

- “Are You Tougher Than a Boy Scout?” (National Geographic Channel series), <http://toughscout.com>, <http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/are-you-tougher-than-a-boy-scout/> (National Geographic website that supports Boy Scout recruiting)

Presentation Content

- The Tough Scout Challenge concept is intended to capitalize on the National Geographic Channel series “Are You Tougher Than a Boy Scout?”
 - The TV show can serve as inspiration for local unit and district events that challenge youth to demonstrate mental and physical fitness, character strength, leadership skills, teamwork, and planning.
 - The *Tough Scout Challenge* is based on the concept of situational leadership—a scenario in which there are several potential solutions but none that are clearly “right” or “wrong.” Situational leadership challenges have been used in other leadership development arenas with great success due to the flexibility of the process.
 - The overall intent of the *Tough Scout Challenge* is to build stronger teams and develop more effective Scouting leaders.
 - The *Tough Scout Challenge* can be incorporated into district and council events, and used to develop patrol and troop teamwork and unity.
- The BSA “low COPE” program can serve as a starting point for developing a *Tough Scout Challenge*. Appropriate obstacle courses may also allow Scouts to test their knowledge and capabilities while working as a team. Every attempt should be made to incorporate Scouting skills.
 - In a troop meeting setting, the *Tough Scout Challenge* should fit the planned completion time of 15 minutes for an inter-patrol activity. This makes the “game time” of the troop meeting a useful leadership development and team-building experience.
 - Longer format challenges could be used for a campout event or a district camporee.
 - Keep the equipment required for each challenge to a minimum so all patrols can attempt the challenge at the same time. If this is not possible, the patrol attempting the challenge should do so in a location where other patrols cannot observe them; this way, each patrol can develop a unique strategy for addressing the task.
 - Each patrol must complete the challenge according to standards you provide. There should be no specific “right” or “wrong” way to complete the task, and in some cases, the task will not be completed successfully. The challenge should be a controlled opportunity for patrol leaders and other youth leaders to exercise leadership methods and skills, and to develop problem-solving and team-leading strategies.
 - Once the *Tough Scout Challenge* is completed—or the time limit has been reached—the patrols should be reassembled and a post-activity review should be conducted. In this review, you should:
 - Reveal the intent of the challenge.
 - Allow each patrol leader to explain how his patrol addressed the challenge.
 - Share information and feedback to help develop leadership.

Challenges used during the *Are You Tougher Than A Boy Scout?* Program

Here's how the show works: Each week, a new trio of adults squares off against the same rotating cast of superstar Scouts. The order is this:

- Three-on-three challenge.
- Scouts vote to eliminate one adult.
- Two-on-two challenge.
- Scouts vote to eliminate one adult.
- The last remaining adult competes against one or more Scouts to try and prove his toughness.

Episode 1, Challenge 1: The first challenge had three parts that both teams completed in a different order: a lifesaving task where one member tossed a ring onto the lake to collect floating boxes; a slingshot activity, which required a teammate to knock three cans off their stumps; and a simple rope climb up a boulder.

Episode 1, Challenge 2: They started with a quarter-mile race, continued with a tug of war, and finished with a canoe jousting event that surely raised the blood pressure of a few health and safety guys out there.

Episode 1, Challenge 3: Asked participants to show off their skills in the wild without most of their gear. Sure, wilderness survival in real life isn't exactly a race, but it was fun to see these guys out on their own and imagine what was going through their minds as they built a lean-to, started a fire, and covered themselves with mud.

Oh, and this wouldn't be a reality show without someone eating bugs. So Keegan and Mark ate wilderness survival rations: a worm, grub, and grasshopper. The graphic helpfully told us that insects have more protein than beef. Good to know, but I'll stick with a cheeseburger, thanks.

Then the guys made spears out of a long piece of wood, Mark hacking at his and Keegan calmly whittling. But when it came time for the final task: tossing their spears into a target.

Episode 2, Challenge 1: When the episode opened with the group gathering on a bridge over a river, you knew something was about to go down. Or, in this case, someone was about to go down, each had to rappel off the Bridge into a whitewater raft waiting below.

Once everyone was safely in the raft, teams had to identify a taut-line hitch, release a knife, cut their raft free, navigate the Kern River's Class III rapids, carry the

raft on a brief portage, get back on the river, and try to reach the finish line first. Whew! The challenge tested skills used in the Climbing and Whitewater merit badges.

Episode 2, Extra Challenge: It was 5:30 a.m., and that meant it was time to get up. Diallo was there for more than a wake-up call. His visit was for a surprise pack check. He wanted to see whether these wannabe Scouts had packed the Ten Essentials: pocketknife, first-aid kit, clothing, rain gear, water bottle, flashlight, food, fire starter, sun protection, and a map and compass.

Episode 2, Challenge 2: Other than when it's about to storm, there aren't many times when setting up a Scout campsite is a race. So "the 100-yard dash of setting up a Scout campsite" might not have been based in reality, but it was entertaining nonetheless. Teams of two had to start a campfire, pitch a tent "to perfection," and properly hang a bear bag.

Episode 2, Challenge 3: The three-part event tested skills necessary for Rifle Shooting, Pioneering, and First Aid merit badges. For rifle shooting, contestants needed to hit three targets with a .22-caliber rifle. For pioneering, they had to complete the fourth wall of a pioneering tower and shoot a slingshot from the top to break some glass jars and retrieve a map. And for first aid, they were to follow that map to Lake Ida and handle a life-threatening situation.

Episode 3, Challenge 1: With the sun glaring at them, three Scouts and three adults took on The Gauntlet, a three-part race down the beach that tested skills used in the Kayaking and Archery merit badges:

Part 1, Kayak Haul: Carry an inflatable kayak a quarter-mile down the beach and hand off to the next teammate.

Part 2, Kayak Race: Paddle the kayak a quarter-mile down the lake to the third teammate.

Part 3, Crawling Archery: Crawl under a net and then be the first to hit the target, a small fleur-de-lis inside a lifesaving buoy. (Ah, "Buoy Scouts," I get it.)

Episode 3, Challenge 2: See how you'd do in this trivia test. The three possible answer choices are in parentheses after each question:

1. The bowline knot is best used for what purpose?
(Rescue, Boating, Lashing)
2. What color are poison sumac berries? (White, Purple, Yellow)

3. On what side of a tree or rock does moss usually grow? (South, West, North)
4. In navigating, what does UTM stand for? (Universal Transverse Mercator, Unilateral Traverse Method, Universal Trans-Meridian)
5. What type of California toxic plant is edible? (Poison Oak, Grape Ivy, Stinging Nettle)
6. What clouds are known as streak clouds? (Stratus, Cirrus, Cumulus)

After reading each question, teams of two — searched a field of logs for the answer. One possible answer was on the bottom of each log, meaning a lot of flipping logs upside down and carrying them to Charles for approval. If they were wrong, they had to carry the log back to the field and waste precious time.

Jason correctly compared it to the game Memory. “You not only had to guess the right log to find the answer you need,” he said, “but you also need to remember what you just turned over.” Logs with the correct answers were stacked to form a pyramid, and teams had 25 shots with a giant slingshot to topple the stack.

Episode 3, Challenge 3: The task combined Geocaching merit badge skills with a ride on a personal watercraft, also known as a Jet Ski. Here’s the setup: Each pair had to find a GPS device and shovel in their rowboat. Then use geocaching skills to track down binoculars and the key to their personal watercrafts, both buried in the sand. Using the binoculars they needed to locate the flag on the other side of Lake Isabella, before racing one mile to opposite shore on their PWCs. First to grab the flag wins.

Episode 4, Challenge 1: The three-on-three challenge tests skills for Pioneering and Rifle Shooting merit badges. First, teams use pioneering poles and lashings to build a bridge to cross a stream. Next, they build an A-frame derrick for crossing a river. Finally, they find a rifle range and load and fire a musket-ball rifle. The first team to hit all three targets wins.

Episode 4, Challenge 2: Inspired by the Reptile and Amphibian Study merit badge, teams get one minute to memorize the appearance of several different kinds of snakes, including the California rosy boa, Arizona mountain king snake, the gopher snake, and other nonvenomous varieties. Then, teams race to a tree where several snakes are hanging in bags. Yes, the actual, live snakes are in the

bags. Teams pull each snake out of the bag to identify it. Some of the snakes look alike, so this isn’t easy. The first team to correctly identify six snakes wins.

Episode 4, Challenge 3: The next morning, it’s a one-on-one challenge of “survival skills, speed, smarts, and first aid” that uses skills learned in the Orienteering and First Aid merit badges. Competitors begin blindfolded, and they’re dropped “in the middle of nowhere.” In front of them are several survival items, and they must choose four and find Lake Ida without a compass. But there’s a twist: At some point, they will come across an emergency first-aid scenario and must tend to the victim and safely transport her to the dock of the lake in order to win.

Episode 5, Challenge 1: We start things off with a shooting-sports relay involving archery, shotgun-shooting, and a .22-caliber rifle. One competitor for each range, but the twist is competitors needed to use geocaching skills to find the ammo hidden somewhere in the woods.

Episode 5, Challenge 2: The second challenge is out of left field, a quiz show with a presentation style and graphics straight from *The Price is Right*. The quiz questions were paired with Scout-related tasks. The first person to correctly answer scored points for his team. The tasks ranged from serious — split a log in half before answering — to silly — spin around in circles to make yourself dizzy before answering. The questions: What is another name for the North Star? Name the planets in our solar system. How many stripes are on the American flag, and what do they represent?

Episode 5, Challenge 3: The final challenge is a three-leg race that includes cycling, climbing, and gunnel jumping? The final task is one I hadn’t seen because it’s rarely practiced anymore. It’s a from-the-Scouting-archives event where someone propels the canoe by jumping on the stern and bouncing it forward. Who knew this was even possible?

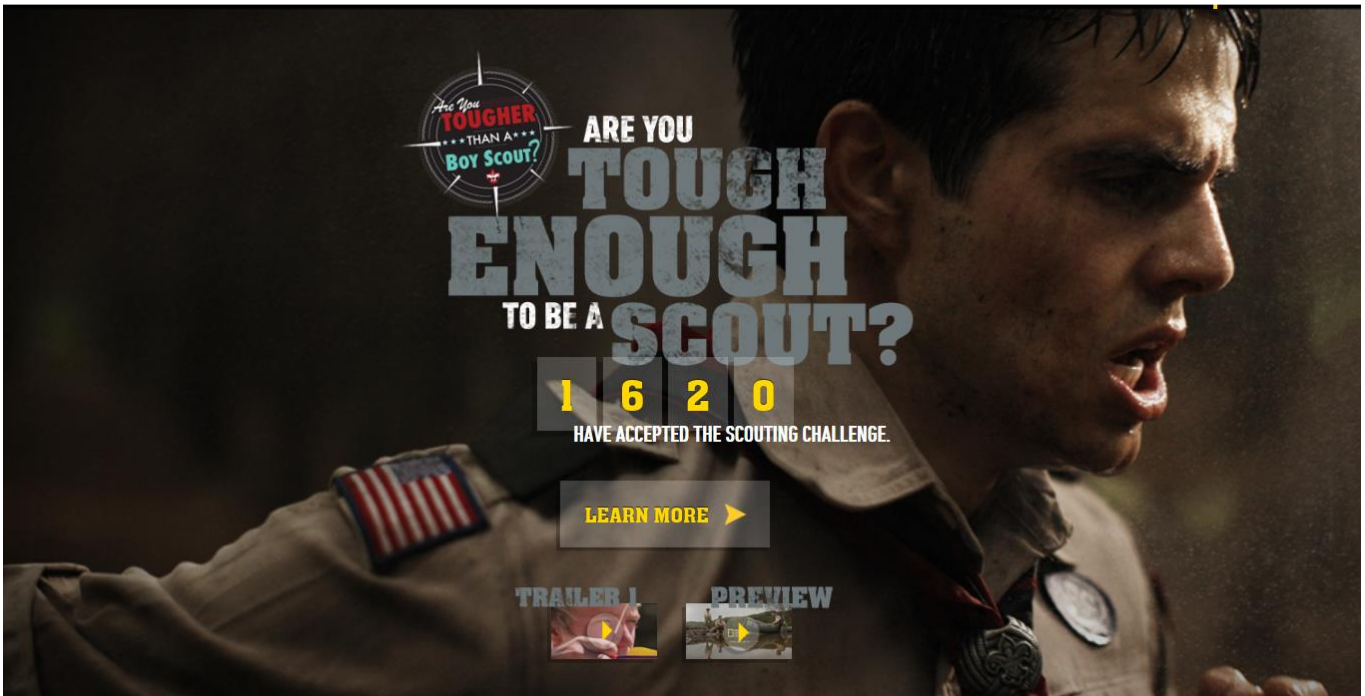
Episode 6, Challenge 1: For the first event, contestants tie a string to an arrow and shoot it across the gorge. Then they cross the gorge on a commando line (hang from a rope and pull yourself across) and then bring the backpack over using the string they shot to the other side.

Episode 6, Challenge 2: Another head to head challenge, Lost and Found, tests skills used in Orienteering and First Aid merit badges. Like the first challenge, this is adult vs. adult with the Scouts only watching. Competitors begin

blindfolded, and they're dropped "in the middle of nowhere." In front of them are several survival items (knife, rope, cash, trail mix, sling, mirror, water bottle, etc.), and they must choose four and find Lake Ida without a compass. But there's a twist: At some point, they will come across an emergency first-aid scenario and must

tend to the victim and safely transport him or her to the dock of the lake in order to win.

Episode 6, Challenge 3: The contestants navigate using a GPS device to find the appropriate weapons cache for each event: tomahawk throwing, archery shooting, skeet shooting, and musket firing.



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ARE YOU TOUGH ENOUGH TO BE A SCOUT?

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