



Varsity Scout Coach Start-Up

Congratulations on becoming a new Varsity Scout Coach! You have the opportunity to build character, teach citizenship, and assist young men as they develop physically and mentally. In your position as a Coach you will be challenged—not by the program as much as by the young men you will be working with. These young men are between childhood and adulthood. The decisions they make now will affect and guide them for the rest of their lives, and must be chosen carefully. **This brochure will not tell you *all* you need to know, but rather will serve as a guide for your first few meetings with the young men.**



1. What exactly is Varsity Scouting? A summary of the program and its terminology can be found on **page 2** of this brochure.



2. What makes Varsity Scout-age boys different from those 10 to 13 years of age? To gain a greater appreciation and understanding of these young men and their daily-life challenges, read about their characteristics on **page 3**. With a basic understanding of Varsity Scouting and the young men you will be leading, your next step is to determine the status of the team. **Page 3** explains what to do if you are accepting leadership of an existing or new team.



3. A description of the organizational structure of the team is on **page 4**. Many positions are filled by the young men on the team. Your chartered organization is responsible for assisting in filling the adult positions.



4. A checklist for successful team operation is on **page 5**.



5. It's only a few days before your first meeting. A plan for the team's next four meetings is on **pages 6–9**. You may photocopy these or fill in a copy of Ready Reference Addendum B yourself.



6. **Page 10** of this brochure highlights the many resources available to you.

As the Varsity team Coach, you are not alone in the responsibility that you are undertaking. The parents of team members are your greatest resource. These parents need to know that their involvement is necessary. Your chartered organization can help too! Ask for their assistance. Your district and council are

organized to provide you ongoing support. The commissioner assigned to your unit is another valuable resource. If you do not know who your commissioner is, call your local council, listed in the white pages under "Boy Scouts of America."



Synopsis of Varsity Scouting

The objectives of Varsity Scouting are to provide a Boy Scout-oriented program that meets the needs and interests of boys ages 14 to 18.

Objectives

- Desirable character traits
- Participating citizenship
- Physical and mental fitness
- Service to others
- Self-reliance
- Leadership abilities

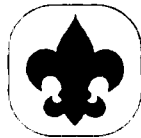
Program Fields of Emphasis

The heart of Varsity Scouting is the Five Program Fields of Emphasis. Within these five areas are activities for individual Varsity Scouts and for the

entire team. These provide an exciting variety of experiences, challenges, and adventures including:

- Advancement—leading to achievement of the Eagle Scout rank
- High-Adventure/Sports activities
- Personal Development—growth for each team member in spiritual development, leadership, citizenship, social and cultural understanding, and physical fitness
- Service—to community, religious organizations, individuals, and worthwhile causes
- Special Programs and Events—experiences beyond the team meetings and activities

Varsity Scouting follows the Scouting movement's partnership plan. The Boy Scouts of America provides the program-related materials. The chartered organization provides membership and the support services of leadership, administration, meeting place, and financial backing. Boys join Varsity Scouting in the same way they would join any other part of the Scouting program.



Terminology

Team	The unit of Varsity Scouts and adult leaders	Chartered Organization	A religious, civic, fraternal, educational, or other community-based organization that has applied for and received a charter to operate a BSA Scouting unit
Squad	Group of Varsity Scouts within the team	Council	An administrative body chartered to be responsible for Scouting in a designated geographic territory
Coach	The adult leader of the Varsity Scout team	District	A geographic administrative unit within a council
Captain	The youth leader of the Varsity Scout team	Commissioner	A volunteer Scouter who works with packs, troops, and teams to help the units succeed
Cocaptain	Assistant to the captain		
Program Manager	A Varsity Scout who supervises one of the Five Program Fields of Emphasis		
Huddle	A meeting where team Coaches learn about programs and share ideas; usually held on a district or council level		

Characteristics of Varsity Scout–Age Youth

Varsity Scout–age youth are at an exciting, free-wheeling time in their lives. It's a time of tons of homework and of part-time jobs. It's a time of discovery, opportunity, and maturing into manhood.

It's also a time when Varsity Scouts are encountering the serious problems of today's adolescents, such as the pressure to indulge in harmful behavior.

Varsity Scouting is designed to help them in this period of maturing and adjusting to life around them. The world is expanding for them in terms of relationships, experiences, and commitment. They're ready for the advanced, challenging program offered by Varsity Scouting.

As a Coach, you'll help them toward healthy development if you are aware of the changes taking place in their lives, are willing to accept them as they are, and can provide the support and opportunities they need. Varsity Scout–age youth are complex. Here are some characteristics of a Varsity Scout–age boy:

- He is concerned about body image and looks.
- He is concerned about sex and thinks about girls, sports, and cars much of the time.
- He can think and talk about abstract ideas.

- He thinks creatively and critically, and so might seem argumentative.
- He is moving from total dependence on parents to interdependent relationships with friends and others.
- New give-and-take relationships with parents, teachers, and employers can be positive and exciting. He wants to be able to contribute as well as receive.
- He would like to be treated as an adult, but often feels treated as a child. He wants and can take more responsibility.
- He is developing a personal philosophy of life.
- He is aware of differences between the standards of his group and those of his parents.
- He needs and wants a wide variety of experiences, adventures, and risks.
- He needs to try out new roles and to begin to think about vocations.
- He has maximum loyalty to his group.

Reading and understanding chapter 6, "Understanding Varsity Scout–Age Youth," of the *Varsity Scout Leader Guidebook* will help you have an enjoyable experience in your role as a Coach.



Team Status

Before your first meeting, you must determine your team's status. This is especially important if you're the new Coach for an existing team. Varsity Scouts, committee members, parents, and the chartered organization can assist you in gathering the information. Some items you will need to know are:

- Where the team meets and if the facility is adequate
- The type and condition of equipment, such as tents and other camping gear
- The number of boys in the team
- Adult involvement with the team
- Existing plans/calendar

- Activities held in the past
- Whether these activities were successful
- Whether promises were made and not kept

Using this information, evaluate the team status. You will know the activities that have been successful and enjoyed—and those that should never be repeated. Adult involvement is most important in Varsity Scouting. If there has been little or none in the past, find out why. (Many times parents were never asked to assist.)

Continue evaluation until you have a good feel for the status of the team. In doing so, you can develop a list of needs to support strong points you have identified.



Leadership and Team Organization

This section outlines the adult and youth leadership positions and responsibilities required to run Varsity Scouting at the unit level.

Coach—Adult leader, selected by chartered organization and has responsibilities as follows:

1. Trains Varsity Scout youth leaders to run their team, and guides them in their jobs
2. Attends and supervises all team meetings, activities, and team leadership meetings
3. Guides team in planning the program
4. Conducts Coach's conferences with Varsity Scouts for rank advancements

Team Committee—Adult members and interested adults from the chartered organization who support team program. Responsibilities can be divided as follows:

Chairman—Conducts committee meetings and coordinates team effort

Advancement—With the Advancement program manager, coordinates quality advancement within the team and keeps advancement records

High Adventure/Sports—Coordinates high-adventure and sports activities with the High-Adventure/Sports program manager

Personal Development—Coordinates personal development efforts with the Personal Development program manager

Service—Coordinates service projects with the Service program manager

Special Programs/Events—Coordinates special programs and events with the Special Programs and Events program manager

Finance—Oversees the financial records for the team

Supplies and equipment—Oversees the inventory of supplies and equipment

Youth Leaders—Youth members elected to leadership positions in the following areas:

Team captain—The top youth leader of the team

Cocaptain—Assists the captain

Advancement program manager—Coordinates activities to ensure that each team member has an opportunity for rank advancement

High-Adventure/Sports program manager—Plans, coordinates, and directs high-adventure and sports activities

Personal Development program manager—Plans, coordinates, and directs personal development activities

Service program manager—Plans, coordinates, and directs service projects for the team

Special Programs and Events program manager—Plans, coordinates, and directs special programs and events for the team

Squad leader—Leads members of the squad (The number of squads is determined by the number of young men on the team, usually six to eight youth per squad.)





Checklist for Successful Team Operation

I. Have Program Goals

Each quarter, a team should include activities from each of the Five Program Fields of Emphasis: advancement, personal development, special programs and events, high adventure/sports, and service.

These activities are carried out at weekly meetings, field trips, and all outings.

Keep this goal in mind: Every quarter, have some activity or event that captures the ingenuity of 14- to 18-year-olds. Ask these questions: Is it unique and special, and does it provide excitement? Will Varsity Scouts talk about it at school? Does it motivate our youth members and compete favorably with all the non-Scouting activities they participate in?

Here is an example of part of a program planned to include the Five Program Fields of Emphasis:



Quarter	Program Feature	Advancement	High Adventure/Sports	Personal Development	Service	Special Programs and Events
Fourth (June, July, August)	Fifty-mile canoe trip	All members: Swimming and Canoeing merit badges	Included in canoe trip	Team project at Fourth of July community event	Included in Fourth of July event	Team attends professional baseball game

The team's program should be scheduled over a three-month period. The Meeting Plan Work Sheet and the Activity Planning Work Sheet, Ready Reference—Addendum B and Addendum C, will serve as helpful guides.

II. Parent Involvement

Parents should be encouraged to become involved in Varsity Scouting activities whenever possible. Such participation can be accomplished in many ways. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Serve as a team committee member, committee chairman, or in another team leadership position.
2. Provide transportation or equipment to help support team activities.
3. Attend courts of honor and other award ceremonies.
4. Attend sports, cultural, service, and other team events.

III. Wise Use of Parents and Chartered Organization

1. Conduct a Varsity team resource survey with parents and members of organization. (See Ready Reference—Addendum E.)
2. Hold regular parent meetings to inform of calendar and their needed involvement and support.
3. Keep chartered organization representative informed and involved in planning process.

IV. Use Available Resources

Become familiar with and use the resources on page 10.

Varsity Scout Coach's Work Sheet



Varsity Scout Meeting Week #1 Meaningful Experiences

Date/Time:

Location: Unit meeting place/Outdoors

Conducting: Team Coach

Warm-up: See Ready Reference—Addendum H.

Opening: Welcome/Prayer/Announcements

Business: (Reports)

- A. Have team members fill out the Varsity Youth and Adult Team Resource Survey. (See page 127, *Varsity Scout Leader Guidebook* and/or Ready Reference—Addendum E.)
- B. Have team members take a copy of the Varsity Youth and Adult Team Resource Survey home for their parents to complete. Ask them to bring it to the next meeting.

Elective event: Have each team member relate special experiences:

- Who am I? Tell about an event in your life.
- Tell three things from the Varsity Team Resource Survey.
- What are my goals and ambitions?
- What would I like to accomplish in Varsity Scouting?

Closing: Coach's Corner (See Ready Reference—Addendum I.)

Song/Poem/Prayer

Wrap-up: Remind Scouts to have the Varsity Youth and Adult Team Resource Survey completed by their parents and returned next week.

Note to Varsity team Coach: In addition to the formal meetings scheduled in the next several weeks, it is recommended that you schedule some *informal*, fun, get-acquainted activities; e.g., day hike, swimming party at local pool, backyard barbeque, softball game, fishing trip, bowling, etc. This will provide the opportunity to get the boys involved in, and excited about the potential of the Varsity program.

Varsity Scout Coach's Work Sheet



Varsity Scout Meeting Week #2 Team Organization Session

Date/Time:

Location: Unit meeting place/Outdoors

Conducting: Team Coach

Warm-up: See Ready Reference—Addendum H.

Opening: Welcome/Prayer/Announcements

Business: Review Team Resource Survey

Elective event:

- A. After reviewing the Varsity Youth and Adult Team Resource Survey, elect a team captain, and with the captain, appoint the cocaptains and program managers.
- B. Help the team select one Venture activity and one Varsity activity. If the team is divided into squads, one squad may select a Venture topic, and the other a Varsity topic from the Venture/Varsity activity pamphlets.
- C. Using the selected Venture/Varsity activity pamphlets, determine two 45-minute activities (one Venture and one Varsity) to be carried out within two weeks at an overnight campout. (See Ready References—Addenda F and G for ideas.)
- D. The team captain appoints one or two program managers to plan the details and carry out the activities.

Closing: Coach's Corner (See Ready Reference—Addendum I.)
Song/Poem/Prayer

Wrap-up: Evaluate the meeting with the youth leaders and make assignments for next meeting.

Varsity Scout Coach's Work Sheet



Varsity Scout Meeting Week #3 Brainstorming Session *

Date/Time:

Location: Unit meeting place/Outdoors

Conducting: Team Captain

Warm-up: See Ready Reference—Addendum H.

Opening: Welcome/Prayer/Announcements
Pledge of Allegiance or Scout Oath

Business: Program manager(s) discuss details of campout and make appropriate assignments to team members.

Elective event: A. Divide a chalkboard into five spaces, each representing one of the Five Program Fields of Emphasis.
B. Using the Five Program Fields of Emphasis, have Varsity Scouts brainstorm their ideas for activities in each of the five categories.
C. Set priorities for the activities to be calendared in week #4.

Closing: Coach's Corner (See Ready Reference—Addendum I.)
Song/Poem/Prayer

Wrap-up: Evaluate the activities and the needed resources.

*Note to the Coach: You should spend some time before this meeting with your team captain to help plan the meeting agenda and to prepare him for conducting the meeting.

Varsity Scout Coach's Work Sheet



Varsity Scout Meeting Week #4 Planning and Calendar-building Session*

Date/Time:

Location: Unit meeting place/Outdoors

Conducting: Team Captain

Warm-up: See Ready Reference—Addendum H.

Opening: Welcome/Prayer/Announcements
Pledge of Allegiance or Scout Oath/Scout Law

Business: Program manager(s) reports on team activity.

Elective event:

- A. Create a general “yearly program plan” from the ideas presented during the brainstorming session. (See Annual Planning Chart, page 73, *Varsity Scout Leader Guidebook* and/or Ready Reference—Addenda A and D.)
- B. Assign each of the program managers to complete a detailed three-month plan for their specific assignment. (See Game Plan ideas, Ready References—Addendum A—Step 4 and Addenda F and G.)
- C. Make specific assignments for the next four weeks.

Closing: Coach's Corner (See Ready Reference—Addendum I.)
Song/Poem/Prayer

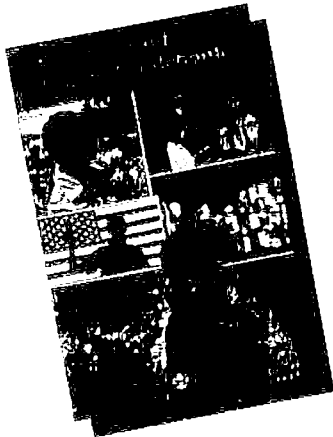
Wrap-up: Evaluate the meeting by listing good points and needed improvements.

*Note to the Coach: Use Ready Reference—Addendum A, “Planning the Varsity Scout Team Program,” to help prepare for this session. Be sure to meet with your team captain ahead of time to plan the agenda. Have him follow up with the program managers to assure that they are ready to report.



Resources

As a new Varsity team Coach, you have many resources to assist you in developing and carrying out an effective program. Here are the most commonly used materials.



Varsity Scout Leader Guidebook
This publication gives an in-depth understanding of the entire Varsity Scout program.



Varsity Leader Fast Start video and viewer guide, No. AV-02V004
This videotape and viewer guide give a good overview of the Varsity Scout program.

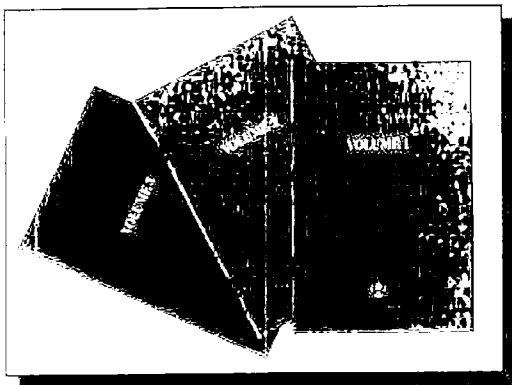
Boy Scout Handbook
Chapter 30 of the handbook provides a useful overview of Varsity Scouting.



Varsity and Venture Activity Pamphlets
Venture Activities

- Backpacking
- Canoe Camping
- Caving
- Cycling
- Discovering Adventure
- Fishing
- Freestyle Biking
- Frontiersman
- Mechanics
- Orienteering
- Rappelling
- Snow Camping

- Snow Skiing
- Survival
- Whitewater
- Varsity Activities**
- Basketball
- Bowling
- Roller Hockey
- Shooting Sports
- Soccer
- Softball
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Triathlon
- Waterskiing



Varsity Scout Game Plan
These three volumes are designed to assist you in developing an exciting program for your Varsity Scout team.

These pamphlets offer a wide variety of activities designed to provide adventures and challenges for Varsity Scouts.

These publications are available through your local council Scout shop or BSA distributor. Call 800-323-0732 to order these items directly.



Varsity Scout Coach Start-Up Ready References

Addenda

- A** Planning the Varsity Scout Team Program 12
- B** Varsity Scout Team Business Meeting Plan Work Sheet 14
- C** Varsity Scout Team Activity Planning Work Sheet 15
- D** Annual Varsity Scout Team Planning Chart 16
- E** Varsity Youth and Adult Team Resource Survey 17
- F** Varsity Scout Game Plan for Fishing 18
- G** Varsity Scout Game Plan for Backpacking 19
- H** Varsity Scout Team Warm-Up Ideas 20
- I** Varsity Scout Team Coach's Corner 21

Planning the Varsity Scout Team Program

An exciting team program doesn't just happen. It takes careful planning. Varsity Scouts and team leaders work together in developing a program that excites the team members, is fun, and accomplishes the purpose of Varsity Scouting. By using the following steps, a well-balanced program will be delivered.

Step 1—Preparation.

Prior to conducting the team's annual program planning session, determine the resources available to the team and the interests of team members.

- What physical facilities of your chartered organization and community can be used?
- What are the talents of Varsity Scout parents?
- Gather calendars for school, religious organizations, community holidays, and council and district Scouting activities. Personal dates should also be considered, especially Mother's Day.
- Be sure to review the *Varsity Scout Game Plan* books and the *Venture/Varsity* activity pamphlets.
- Set the date and location for the team's annual planning clinic.

Step 2—Conduct the team's annual planning clinic.

This clinic can be a fun way to complete your team's annual plan. At least half a day is needed for the planning phase. It's best to schedule this planning clinic over a weekend. Have all the materials required for step 1 available. Also have large sheets of paper or a chalkboard, and your team's annual planning chart. The team Coach and captain develop an agenda for the clinic.

- The Varsity Scout team captain conducts the clinic with the Coach's support.
- The captain, squad leaders, program managers, and Coach attend the clinic. If you have a small team, invite the entire team.
- During the planning phase of the clinic, program ideas are listed. It is essential that all Five Program Fields of Emphasis are included each quarter. (Program managers should be sure this happens.)
- Place special events—council- and district-sponsored activities, special school activities, chartered

organization events, and community events—on your annual calendar.

- The team then discusses and decides on the yearly calendar of activities. This becomes the yearly program plan. Details are added at quarterly planning meetings.
- List possible Good Turns, service projects, and money-earning projects in the month they will take place.
- If available, actual dates for activities should be listed. Schedule boards of review, courts of honor, family activities, and events that might be traditional with your team.

Step 3—Share the plan.

The team's annual program is presented to the team committee and chartered organization for approval and support.

- After receiving their approval, with any modifications necessary, the team's annual program is published and provided for Varsity Scouts, families, and the chartered organization.
- It is recommended that a parents' night be held to outline the team's annual program of events.

Step 4—Quarterly program detailing.

- On a quarterly basis, the team leaders meet to detail the upcoming quarter.
- The team Coach and team captain develop the agenda for this meeting.
- The team captain conducts this meeting with assistance from the team Coach.
- Specific assignments are given to each program manager.
- A description of activities for the next quarter's meeting is entered on the Business Meeting Plan Work Sheet or the Team Activity Planning Work Sheet. Program managers note specific assignments involving them. They request specific help from the team committee and team members.

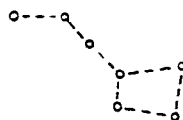
Step 5—Monthly program detailing.

- The team Coach, captain, program managers, and squad leaders meet on a monthly basis to finalize the coming month's meetings.
- The team Coach and team captain develop the agenda for this meeting.
- Meeting Plan and/or Activity Planning Work Sheets are completed.
- Program managers verify that everything is ready for this month's activities.
- At least one meeting of the team each month is a planned activity.

Step 6—Weekly checkup.

Two or three days before each team meeting or activity, the team captain and/or Coach should check with the program manager for any last-minute assistance.

By following these planning steps, the Varsity Scout program will be well received by the youth members.



Varsity Scout Team Business Meeting Plan Work Sheet

Feature: This work sheet is used to plan the details of the business meeting for the team.

Monthly location: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Activity	Description	Person Responsible	Time
Warm-Up (Preopening) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early arrival activity • Set up meeting room 			
Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceremony or song • Prayer or prayer thought • Welcome • Announcements 			
Team Business* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports • Assignments • Advancement • High Adventure/Sports • Service • Personal Development • Special Programs and Events • Squad events • Other reports 			
Skills Instruction* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squad meetings • Advancement work • Practice time • Guest specialist/consultant • Contest or game • Special activity 			
Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach's Corner • Quiet song • Closing ceremony 			
Wrap-Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate meeting • Cleanup 			

*Not all of these activities will occur at each meeting because of time constraints.

Varsity Scout Team Activity Planning Work Sheet

Activity: This work sheet is used to plan the details of the activities for the team.

Program manager: _____ Field of emphasis: _____

Team committee member/consultant: _____

Place: _____ Date: _____

Team captain's comments: _____

Follow-up: _____

Activity plans (agendas) for each Venture (high-adventure) subject are in the Venture pamphlets. Outlines for each Varsity sport are in the Varsity pamphlets.

To be filled in by team captain

Plan the activity. (Meet with your team committee member/consultant; make the plan.) What needs to be accomplished?

Identify needs and resources.

Equipment and facilities needed: _____

Determine payment plan for team members. _____

Number of people required: _____

To be filled in by program manager

Job to Be Done

Assigned to

Follow up. At additional meetings and through personal contacts, follow up on all assignments until you are sure that everything is ready. If the going gets rough, call on your Coach for help.

Carry out the plan. Just before the activity, double-check all arrangements. Conduct the activity to the best of your ability, using your team committee member/consultant as a resource.

Inform others. Give a copy of the plan to the team captain, program manager, team committee member, and Coach.

Annual Varsity Scout Team Planning Chart

Quarter	Program Feature	Advancement	High Adventure/ Sports	Personal Development	Service	Special Programs and Events
First (September, October, November)						
Second (December, January, February)						
Third (March, April, May)						
Fourth (June, July, August)						

Varsity Youth and Adult Team Resource Survey

Varsity Scouting is for adults as well as boys. We invite you to offer your skills and interests so that the best possible program can be developed for the Varsity Scouts in this team. In conducting this survey, the team committee wishes to find ways in which our adults and Varsity Scouts can share their talents with our team. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Welcome to the family of Team No. _____ in the _____ Council.

Please return this survey to _____

(Please print.)

Name _____ Home phone _____

Street address _____ Business phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

1. What are your favorite hobbies?

2. In which sports do you take an active part?

3. Please check any skills you have.

- Backpacking
- Black powder
- Camping
- Canoeing
- Citizenship
- Conservation
- Cycling
- First Aid
- Fishing
- Kayaking
- Knife and ax
- Motorboating

- Mountaineering
- Orienteering (map and compass)
- Outdoor cooking
- Rifle/shotgun
- Ropework
- Sailing
- Skiing
- Snow camping
- Sports
- Star study
- Survival
- Waterskiing
- Other (describe) _____

4. Would you be willing to assist the team leaders and team committee occasionally? _____

5. Please check the areas in which you would be willing to assist.

General Activities

- Campouts
- Hikes
- Outdoor activities
- Swimming supervision
- Bookkeeping
- Typing
- Drawing/art
- Transportation of Varsity Scouts
- Transportation of equipment
- Other _____

Special Program Assistance

- I have a station wagon.
- I have a truck.
- I have a workshop.
- I have family camping gear.
- I have access to a cabin.
- I have access to camping property.
- I can make contacts for special trips and activities.
- I can help with team equipment.
- I have coaching experience in _____ (sport).
- Other _____

Adults to complete

Varsity Scout Game Plan



Fishing

Have you ever caught that big one, or maybe just wanted to? Perhaps some of the team members have never been fishing. The fishing program feature offers an opportunity to try new techniques, make your own lures, tie flies, and go for the lunkers—or, just lie back and let the bait do all the work.

The Venture *Fishing* pamphlet will prepare you for an exciting fishing adventure. You will find sections on types of tackle—bait casting, fly casting, spin casting—and on freshwater fishing, ice fishing, and saltwater fishing.

Activity planning is outlined in detail, along with a list of resources.

Take your time preparing, master each skill level, and know how to deal with a challenging sport.

Good luck and good fishing!

Program Fields of Interest

The following ideas will help you plan a well-rounded program. Program managers carry out these ideas with help from a team committee member.

Advancement

- Review each Varsity Scout's advancement status.
- Conduct a merit badge clinic for the Fishing or Motorboating merit badge, or both.
- Monitor the Troop/Team Advancement Chart or display board regularly.

Addenda F and G are samples of program features contained in the three *Varsity Scout Game Plan* books. These publications are resource books used to carry out the team program.

High Adventure/Sports

- Program manager outlines or updates the team's annual special high-adventure event (Philmont, Florida Sea Base, etc.)
- Conduct a Venture fishing activity.

Personal Development

- Invite an aquatics instructor to certify team members in the Snorkeling, BSA, program. Use these skills on one of your fishing trips.
- Invite presidents of civic clubs in the community to make presentations on the need for strong leadership within the community.

Service

- Contact a conservation agency and volunteer to work on one of their projects.
- Offer assistance to a voters' league in getting out the vote or working the polls.

Special Programs and Events

- Contact the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society, P.O. Box 17900, Montgomery, AL 36141, to assist the team with the fishing feature.
- Plan team activities for National Hunting and Fishing Day.

Varsity Scout Game Plan



Backpacking

Backpacking began in America long before Columbus set foot on the North American continent. Native Americans backpacked with all of their possessions as they moved from place to place. Pioneers exploring this great country carried with them those items they needed to survive. Today's youth might have few true wilderness areas left to explore, but they can still enjoy the excitement of hiking and camping using the same skills as the early pioneers.

There are many locations throughout the United States that are available only to those individuals and groups having the skills to visit and leave an area undisturbed. Many of these locations are close to your community.

Using the *Backpacking* activity pamphlet as a resource, your Varsity Scout team can become proficient in the knowledge and skills needed to tackle almost any wilderness situation. The pamphlet includes sections on how to plan a backpacking adventure, conditioning, equipment and how to use it, trail procedures, preparing for a trek, and more.

By participating in this feature, Varsity Scouts not only learn the skills needed for successful backpacking treks, but perhaps more importantly, come away with a better appreciation for the world in which they live.

Program Fields of Emphasis

The following ideas will help you plan a well-rounded program. Program managers carry out these ideas with help from a team committee member.

Advancement

- Review each Varsity Scout's advancement status.
- Conduct a Backpacking merit badge clinic.
- Monitor the Troop/Team Advancement Chart regularly.

High Adventure/Sports

- The program manager outlines or updates the team's annual special high-adventure event (Philmont, Florida Sea Base, etc.).

Personal Development

- Arrange for worship services during the team's trek.
- Invite a representative to discuss careers in land management agencies.

Service

- Conduct an environmental awareness program for the members of the team's families.
- While on a team trek, carry out a conservation project coordinated with a land manager.

Special Programs and Events

- Visit a meeting of a local environmental club.
- Visit an agency responsible for a wilderness area.

Varsity Scout Team Warm-Up Ideas

The following preopening activities are designed to develop team building and the trust level of team members.

All Aboard

- Object:** To get a group of twelve to sixteen people on a 2-foot-square platform without anyone touching the ground.
- Procedure:** Explain the rules carefully and discuss safety considerations.
- Rules:**
1. Each person must have both feet off the ground.
 2. Everyone in the group must remain on the platform for at least 10 seconds.
 3. Participants cannot lie on top of each other, forming a pile, as a solution.
- Equipment:**
- A platform 2 feet square and between 8 and 12 inches off the ground; can also be a 2-foot square flat on the ground
 - Helmets

Blind Height Alignment

- Object:** To get the participants acquainted with one another and beginning to work together as a team.
- Procedure:** Blindfold each member of the group, and instruct all members to align themselves according to height.
- Rules:**
1. No talking is allowed.
 2. Blindfolds must remain in place.
- Equipment:** Blindfolds
- Variation:** Do alignment from the center out, with the tallest person in the center, the next tallest people on either side, and so on.

Blind Square

- Object:** A group of at least eight participants holding onto a rope must form a perfect square while blindfolded.
- Procedures:** Use a large, relatively flat, clear area for this activity. Participants form a circle while grasping the rope with both hands. Next, blindfold the participants. After the blindfolds are in place, ask the group to form a square. When they believe the square has been formed, the participants are to stand in place, drop the rope, and remove their blindfolds.
- Rules:**
1. All participants must have at least one hand on the rope at all times after they are blindfolded.
 2. Blindfolds must stay in place until the activity is completed.
- Equipment:**
- 40–75 feet of rope, tied or spliced
 - Enough blindfolds for all the participants
- Variations:**
- Form a triangle.
 - Form a pentagon.

Body English

- Object:** The people in the group try to spell out the words to a well-known proverb by using their bodies as letters.
- Procedure:** Split a group of at least twelve participants into two groups. One group spells out each word of the proverb using their bodies. The other group tries to decipher what the first group is trying to convey. The two groups switch roles after each proverb is communicated.
- Rules:** The participants are not allowed to use their fingers for forming letters.
- Examples:** “A penny saved is a penny earned.”
“That’s water under the bridge.”
“Haste makes waste.”
“Here today, gone tomorrow.”
“Out of the frying pan, into the fire.”

Varsity Scout Team Coach's Corner

Here are a few suggested topics for the Coach's Corner segment of your team meetings.

Word Avalanches

Avalanches occur frequently in the Rocky Mountains and in the Alps of Europe. They generally are the result of thaw and the loosening of supporting snow layers. A large mass of snow loosens and rushes down a mountainside, carrying with it trees, stones, and other things in its path. Villages and people are sometimes destroyed by the great impact. A clap of thunder or a loud shout can cause enough vibration to bring an avalanche rushing down a mountain. Swiss guides often prohibit mountain climbers from uttering a single word while crossing danger spots. Gossip is much like an avalanche. A few unwisely spoken words about a fellow Varsity Scout can cause an avalanche of character-destroying stories. How wise we would all be to avoid the great impact of careless words that could cause someone's destruction!

Learning by Experience

We learn best by our own experiences, but many times it is better to learn from the experiences of others. We needn't be hit by a moving car to learn to stay out of its path. We don't need to experience tobacco, alcohol, or drugs to learn that they can destroy us. Many of us have never seen Hawaii, but we know people who have seen it. We believe that it is there because we trust people and take their word as truth. The Boy Scouts of America advises us not to use tobacco, alcohol, or drugs. Some people had to learn by their own experience and have suffered lung cancer, chemical dependence, or other ailments. Some people still do not choose to believe the studies that show the increased risk of destroying yourself taken by those who use these substances. Some Varsity Scouts run perilously close to the car wheels or perhaps taste destruction before they learn the lesson. How much easier life would be for them if they could learn about the suffering and heartache without experiencing it! How much happier they would be if they learned to listen to the counsel and advice of those who have seen the damage and know the dangers!

Battle of Life

Theodore Roosevelt said, "In the battle of life, it is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out where the strong men stumbled or where the doer of the deed could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by blood and sweat, who strives valiantly and falls short again and again, because there is no effort without failure. And who, if he succeeds, knows the triumph of high achievement and who, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place will never be among those cold and timid souls who never knew either victory or defeat."

Faith

"A sailing ship . . . had become disabled in a storm. It drifted aimlessly for many days. The crew and passengers became famished and parched from lack of food and water. Finally another ship came into view. They signaled frantically for water. The other ship replied, 'Let down your buckets where you are.' This communication made no sense at all for they supposed they were far out to sea and surrounded by saltwater. Again the famished ones requested water. Again the signal came, 'Let down your buckets where you are.' They did not know they had drifted into the mouth of a great river and that the water beneath them was fresh and could save their lives. The water of life lay just beneath them, yet they were dying for lack of this knowledge."

(A. Theodore Tuttle, in *Conference Report*, April 1975, p. 133. Also in *Ensign*, May 1975, p. 90.)

Pride in Your Work

Years ago, a chair manufacturer employed a large group of young men to make chairs by hand. He paid his men according to how many chairs they made each week, but tested the chairs and paid for only those that were well made—those that passed certain tests. The owner of the factory kept his eye on two young men, Rufus and Henry. Each turned out a good number of chairs each week and rarely did either of them fail to have a chair approved. As time went on the factory owner needed a section superintendent. He could not decide between Rufus and Henry. How do you think he went about making his decision? He assembled all the men and announced that they would be paid for all the chairs they made, regardless of whether or not the chairs passed inspection. What do you suppose happened? Yes—many more chairs were made and the percentage of poor ones increased greatly. The factory owner checked the chairs that Henry and Rufus made. The chairs that Rufus made were good as before. Half of Henry's chairs failed to pass inspection, however. Can you guess who became the next supervisor?

Take Time

Take time to think—it is the source of power. Take time to play—it is the secret of perpetual youth. Take time to read—it is the fountain of wisdom. Take time to pray—it is the greatest power on earth. Take time to love and be loved—it is a God-given privilege. Take time to be friendly—it is the road to happiness. Take time to laugh—it is the music of the soul. Take time to give—it is too short a day to be selfish.

For more Coach's Corner ideas, refer to the *Varsity Scout Leader Guidebook* and the *Varsity Scout Game Plan* books.