

In a Nutshell....

by Ted Brown

The Klondike Derby / Deep Freeze is truly a High Adventure event in the form of a winter skill competition among Scout Patrols. The Klondike Derby is a race by sledge between certain Alaskan cities and hamlets. At each of five locations, the Patrol will be given a real problem to solve involving winter camping skills. Rewards in the form of gold nuggets will be awarded in proportion to the degree of skill demonstrated, the firmness of the patrol Leader's leadership, and the smoothness of the teamwork among the patrol members. A fast time around the course will get additional points.

The superior Patrols will be those with the most effective boy leadership and the best cooperation and skill in solving winter camping problems such as First Aid, Cooking, Map & Compass, Ice Rescue, Fire-building and Emergency Shelter.

The whole event furnishes a competition among Patrols operating on their own under their Patrol Leader's leadership. Therefore, any coaching or advice by adults or other outsiders is out of order. Coaching gives an unfair advantage to the Patrol receiving it and conclusively demonstrates the Patrol's lack of adequate preparation. The time for coaching is during the Troop program in December and January when a technical proficiency is learned by the Scouts. This fundamental knowledge will enable the Scouts to cope with the winter environment comfortably and safely, both at the Klondike Derby/Deep Freeze and in future years.

We realize that the winter environment may be quite harsh and that the urgency of competition may well prod the participants to press on regardless of cold and personal discomfort. Although each Patrol Leader is responsible for the health of his Patrol members, his judgment is backed up by roving observers called "Renegades" who will check on the physical status of the participating Scouts. A Scout who has cold feet or hands or is too wet and cold will be escorted (not sent) to the First Aid Warming Hut at Banker II where a hot stove and hot drinks will be available. All personnel manning the skill stations are also instructed to take a Scout who is unduly cold to the Warming Hut.

The Deep Freeze part of the event is a winter campout by Patrols involving cooking supper and breakfast and sleeping in tents through the night. Not all of the Scouts participating in the Klondike Derby will have enough camping experience to sleep out. It is expected, therefore, that the Patrols involved in the Deep Freeze campout are likely to have lost some of their younger members who enjoyed the Klondike Derby. The minimum size of an operating Patrol is four (4) Scouts.