

SQUADLEADER BROCHURE 2005



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CHAPTER ONE - THE SQUAD

Outline

- § 1 Definition
- § 2 History
- § 3 Function
- § 4 The Patrol

§ 1 **Definition**

The typical squad is a subunit of Troop 80 which is composed of two or three patrols¹, one Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL), and one or more Assistant Scoutmasters in charge of a Squad (ASMSQs). Each squad has a letter designation, with each patrol in the squad having an alpha numeric code made up of the squad letter and a "1," "2," or a "3." During the spring a squad may have more than two patrols. The squad is not a recognized BSA subdivision of a Troop. It is administrative in nature and is not meant to replace any of the regular functions or divisions of a troop, such as a patrol or a patrol leader. It is best understood as merely a grouping of two or three otherwise unrelated patrols for the convenience of the troop.

§ 2 **History**

The name "squad" and the letter designations were first used in 1971, just before the first Yellowstone trip. Initially the letter designations were for ease of job assignments and loading and unloading gear on that trip. The next year Assistant Scoutmasters (ASMs) began to be assigned to squads. The assignments became permanent and the troop formally adopted what is now known as the squad system. The theory of the system was to free up somewhat the time of the SM for other duties, and to place men nearer to the scouts. Over time, certain men became associated with certain squads due to long tenure to office. During the early 1980's, the squad system as originally developed began to break down with the squads being run as super patrols. This led to a breakdown in patrol identity and an undermining of Patrol Leader (PL) authority. Over much resistance, the squads were returned in 1982 to their original functions and the patrols permitted to function as set forth in official BSA literature. Since that date some refinements have been made as needed and manpower dictated. Specifically, more than one ASMSQ was assigned to a squad, creating a head ASMSQ and assistant ASMSQs. The squad will continue to adjust to the needs of the troop as those needs are perceived by the adult leaders of the troop.

§ 3 **Function**

Venture crews are also organized into squads, with ASMs who are designated "crew leaders" under current BSA terminology. Crews have "crew chiefs" instead of patrol leaders, whose function is very similar to patrol leaders. Venture crew squads also have ASPLs.

(a) The squad is to provide the adult to scout contact necessary for a good scouting experience for the boy. Each ASMSQ should know by name each scout in his squad and should know when that scout is present or absent. The ASMSQ is to monitor the following items for each scout:

1. Attendance
2. Skills
3. Advancement
4. Attitude

Some of these items are recorded elsewhere by other personnel. However, it is imperative that the ASMSQ be aware of where each of his scouts stands at all times with the above items.

(b) One of the most important functions that the ASMSQ does is the Scoutmaster's conference. Due to the size of the troop, the Scoutmaster (SM) does only the Eagle Scoutmaster's conferences. The Scoutmaster's conference is a crucial and valuable time to find out where the scout is going and to encourage him in his scouting experience. Special care should be given to this function to see that it is properly discharged. The Scoutmaster's Handbook has some suggestions on how to handle the SM conference. Also, the SM and other ASMs can be consulted for ideas on how to conduct a Scoutmaster's conference.

(c) With the addition of more than one ASMSQ to each squad, one ASM is designated as head ASMSQ, with the other ASMs being assistant ASMSQs. The head ASMSQ is responsible for setting policy of the squad within the rules of the troop and national policy. Assistant ASMSQs should be careful not to ask or require scouts to do things which are not approved by the head assistant ASMSQ. It is the duty of the head ASMSQ to allocate adult as well as scout resources within the squad. The assistant ASMSQs should be assigned definite jobs on a permanent basis or for a particular meeting, depending upon the situation. The division of jobs within a squad is left up to the head ASMSQ. The assistant ASMSQ job is also used to train men for being head ASMSQs.

(d) A squad will have two or three patrol leaders or troop guides² and an ASPL assigned to it, who are members of the troop "greenbar." The ASMSQ must make sure that the squad green bar has a clear understanding of their role within the squad. A more detailed explanation of the use of the green bar is given in Chapter 4 - the Meeting. Since a squad is the size of a small troop, the ASPL can be viewed in many ways as the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) of the squad. The ASPL is on permanent assignment to the squad and must report without fail to the ASMSQ, unless

²Troop guides must be a Star scout and serve as the officer for a new boy patrol, which is composed of eleven (11) year old scouts who have just joined. The patrol stays together after being formed, and does not transfer out scouts who achieve a certain rank. The purpose of a new boy patrol is to group together scouts of the same age to reduce harassment by older scouts. These patrols are an outgrowth of the changes in program instituted in 1989 by national BSA.

released for other duty, such as assisting the SPL. To the extent possible, the squad should be run through the green bar, provided that squad discipline does not collapse. More detail on squad management will be included in Chapter 3 -- Program.

§ 4 **The Patrol**

(a) Troop 80 uses the patrol system as set forth in the official scout literature. Reference should be made to that material for the actual functioning of the patrol. Only the rules which are peculiar to Troop 80 are included in this subsection. Troop 80 has a policy against inter-patrol transfer of scouts. Once a boy joins a patrol, he is expected to be loyal to and support that patrol until he moves into a venture crew or becomes a ASPL or SPL. Inter-patrol transfers should be made only on rare circumstances. Basically, the rule of thumb is that no transfer will be allowed unless the scout would otherwise quit the troop, or for disciplinary reasons. Inter-patrol transfers are also sometimes allowed if there is a great disparity in patrol size and the transfer would alleviate disparity. All transfers must be cleared through the SM and both ASMSQs before a scout may transfer.

(b) If a patrol needs a patrol leader or a squad needs a ASPL, an ASMSQ may go anywhere in the troop to ask a scout to become an officer, provided the scout is not otherwise an officer of similar rank somewhere else. That is, a patrol leader can be asked to become a ASPL. However, prior to talking any scout about transferring to another patrol or squad as an officer, the ASMSQ should talk first to the ASMSQ in charge of that particular scout. The ultimate decision will be left up to the scout whether or not to move into the new job.

CHAPTER TWO - THE SQUADLEADER

Outline

- § 1 Appointment and Tenure
- § 2 Function
- § 3 Duties
- § 4 Personal Example

§ 1 **Appointment and Tenure**

ASMSQs are appointed by the SM, subject to the Committee overruling him. The SM is to supervise the functions of the ASMSQs and to consult with them regarding their squads. The tenure of the ASMSQ is determined by the SM based on a best interests of the troop test. Any removal of an ASMSQ comes only after an opportunity for improvement of performance is given. Absent removal by the SM, the ASMSQ can serve as long as he can stand the job.

§ 2 **Function**

(a) There is no such creature as an ASMSQ in the national scout literature. He is a creation of Troop 80 to serve perceived needs of the troop. However, the ASMSQ is not given any duties which are not contemplated by the national literature. Basically, the ASMSQ has been assigned duties which are discharged by the SM in smaller troops. The best short hand description of a head ASMSQ is that he serves as SM for a two patrol troop. The ASMSQ represents the closest, and sometimes only, scout to adult contact in the troop. The ASMSQ is to lead the scouts in the squad and to coordinate the efforts of all the men and boys working in the squad.

(b) Below is short job description which consists of certain minimal requirements necessary to perform the duties listed in § 3:

- (1) Acquire and wear uniform.
- (2) Attend Tuesday night meetings.
- (3) Attend monthly campouts.
- (4) Attend training sessions (Troop, SMF, Woodbadge).
- (5) Attend Committee meetings.
- (6) Attend green bar meetings.
- (7) Tuesday night program
 - (A) Head ..supervise squad (greenbar and ASMSQs--Asst)
 - (B) Assistant -- Fill in for ASMSQ-Head if absent; perform other duties as assigned by ASMSQ-Head.

§ 3 **Duties**

(a) Below is a list of items which the head ASMSQ should be responsible for in the management of his squad. Variations for an assistant ASMSQ are listed separately. How these duties are performed is left to the ASMSQ and depends on the abilities and other characteristics of his squad.

(b) Personal pointers

- (1) Consistent attendance is critical.
- (2) Uniforms should be obtained within 3 months of becoming an ASMSQ. Each ASMSQ should wear a complete uniform, including belt, hat, and bolo

at each meeting.

- (3) The following skills should be mastered by each ASMSQ within 6 months oftaking the job:

- (A) six basic knots
- (B) four basic lashings
- (C) basic map and compass
- (D) tent and tarp pitching
- (E) knife and ax
- (F) basic backpacking and camping skills
- (G) basic first aid
- (H) flint & steel and fire by friction [optional]

(c) The scouts

- (1) Get to know each boy in the squad on a first name basis. Make sure each boy know who you are and that you work only with his patrol and the other patrol in the squad.
- (2) Know every Tuesday night where each scout is. *Tell scouts that have missed that they were missed and you are glad that they are back.*
- (3) Always, always, always encourage attendance at all scout functions.
- (4) If a scout misses two or more meetings in a row, give him a call to find out what is wrong. Find out if he has quit and why. If he has quit, try to get him to come back. Listen to his complaints to see if they are legitimate and need to be corrected.
- (5) Many of the scouts have personal problems which affect their attendance and/or attitude. It is important to know as much as possible about each scout's situation so that decisions can be made on how to help each scout have a good scouting experience. Although the troop is not a counseling service, recognition of non-scout factors is necessary to make the troop more effective. For example, some scouts quit coming for a while if their parents go through a divorce. The scout should be encouraged to remain active in the troop even though he is experiencing a traumatic experience. Being aware of a scout's particular problems should reduce problems for the ASMSQ and troop in the long run.

(d) The patrol

- (1) Stress the scout's loyalty to the *patrol* and the troop. Patrol pride will solve a lot of attitude problems.
 - (2) Stress pride in the patrol flag. Continually suggest ways to improve the patrol flag.
 - (3) Have the patrol develop a patrol yell and use it.
 - (4) Encourage patrol meetings. Go yourself if you have time, or have them meet at your house (so long as another adult is present).
 - (5) Encourage the patrols to **WIN** the various troop competitions. Patrol should be encouraged to win the National Honor Patrol A ward (formerly the Baden Powell A ward) for outstanding patrol. Constant encouragement will be necessary to keep up the patrol's interest in the outstanding patrol competition. However, the side benefits to the patrol are immense if the patrol scores a lot of points because points are awarded for doing what a patrol should be doing anyway.
 - (6) Each patrol has patrol equipment assigned to it. Help your PL's monitor the equipment so that it does not get lost. Check the equipment **BEFORE** it is time to load for camp .. Although the equipment is the responsibility of the PL, the system will not work unless you keep track of the PL and the equipment. You should stress patrol pride in the equipment. This will reduce the amount of damaged and lost equipment.
 - (7) Popcorn sales are important to the troop and the individual scouts in terms of teaching them economic responsibility. Encourage sales, especially for scouts who need money for trips and equipment.
- (e) Advancement
- (1) Be aware of where each scout is with respect to advancement. Sit down with slow advancers and select specific advancement goals which the scout can actually meet. If necessary, "compel" a scout to advance. The ASMSQ must see to it that the scout achieves the Scout rank and the Tenderfoot rank as soon as possible, and then advance to First Class within one year of joining.
 - (2) Each ASMSQ is responsible for seeing to it that his PLs and ASPL obtain mandatory advancement after obtaining office. The advancement requirement is not waiveable and the officer will be removed by the SM if advancement is not met. If you have an officer you do not want to lose, make his advance.

- (3) Be familiar with advancement procedure. Know how to turn in advancement. Merit badges are turned into Jim Altsman, Advancement Chairman, or his assistant. When a scout needs a Board of Review for a rank, tell Jim Altsman, and get the appropriate board of review form. If you have other questions, ask the SM or Jim Altsman. You may wish to keep a duplicate advancement record for each scout. The SM has the forms, or they can be obtained online.
 - (4) Have each scout maintain a merit badge application on the First Aid, Camping, and Pioneering merit badges. The weekly program is designed to pass these merit badges. A scout should get credit for the work that he does on these merit badges. Be sure that all advancement, whether merit badge or rank, is recorded on the night when the work is done by scout.
 - (5) Scouts are often intimidated by the advancement administrative process. You should be willing to persevere on their behalf when necessary so that they do not get discouraged.
 - (6) Keep SM conferences under 10 minutes. If more time is needed with a particular scout, handle the problem outside SM conference and get back to your squad.
- (f) Squad management
- (1) Stay in the squad area during the meeting. This lets the scouts know that you are concerned about them and also that you are paying attention to what is going on.
 - (2) Manage the squad as a whole, using the ASPL, the PLs and the ASMSQ-assts.
 - (3) The head ASMSQ in each squad should remain flexible during the meeting and keep the squad moving. The assistant ASMSQs should be available to help with a problem with a scout that takes more than a few minutes to solve.
 - (4) If the PL is unable or unwilling to teach effectively, the ASMSQ should have the ASPL teach a patrol (not squad), or if that option is unavailable, have an adult assume the teaching duties. Ultimately, the PL should do the teaching. However, it is more important that the scouts are taught effectively than they are taught by the PL. Consistent failure on the part of the PL to teach well may become grounds for termination.
 - (5) Be sure that the patrol correctly and completely fills out the attendance sheet

each Tuesday night during patrol corners. The attendance sheet should list every scout who is there, and also certain information on handbooks, uniforms, the flag, etc. Make sure the form is filled out accurately. If the PL does not know why a scout is absent, then he should call the scout during patrol corners time to find out where the scouts is. This is one way to enforce the duty of the PI to call his boys.

- (6) Evaluations should be done periodically on each scout officer under you. This is very important in the training of scout leaders. Also it helps the ASMSQ track the performance of the scout leaders. If you want to use a written form for the evaluation, check with the SM.
- (7) If you have questions, ask SM, another ASM, or another adult leader. Keep asking until you get a satisfactory answer.
- (8) The establishment of a strong squad takes 12 -18 months of consistent, hard work. Do not get discouraged.

(g) Assistant ASMSQs need to be familiar with all of the above items so that they can fill in for an absent ASMSQ-Head. In addition they need to work with the head ASMSQ and assistant him in whatever job he needs done. Each squad will have to work out its own particular job assignments, with the head ASMSQ having final authority to divide the work.

§ 4 **Personal Example**

The ASMSQ is a high profile adult leader that the scouts will look up to. It is imperative that the conduct of the ASMSQ always be upright and in the best traditions of scouting. The impressions of Troop 80 will be determined in large part by the actions taken by the ASMSQ and the SM. Accordingly, care should be taken to avoid swearing and off-color stories. Demeanor should be controlled and proper for the circumstances. It is alright to have fun in the job, but the scouts should realize that you have an important job to do in running the squad and that you have to make decisions which should be followed. Failure to control ones personal behavior can often lead to a breakdown in discipline in the squad and ultimately the dissolution of the integrity of the squad.

CHAPTER THREE - PROGRAM

Outline

- § 1 General Philosophy
- § 2 Agenda Books
- § 3 Preparation of ASMSQ
- § 4 Swimming and Aquatics

§ 1 **General Philosophy**

(a) The focus of the program is the boy. Safety, security and predictability are paramount. The Troop is not subservient to the scouts nor does it let scouts determine Troop policy. However, all program is structured to help scouts achieve the goals of scouting as determined by national and Troop policy. Success is part of the program, because success is necessary for self-esteem. Adversity and failure are also part of the program because in dealing with these issues a scout becomes a better man. How these factors are balanced is a delicate process in some instances. But the ultimate goal is to expose each scout to the right mixture of these and other challenges so that in the end he is a better man. Another factor which is essential to the Troop programs is the uncompromising and unrelenting pursuit of excellence by the Troop, its patrols, the scouts, and the adult leaders. This pursuit sets Troop 80 apart in this area from many other Troops and personnel. Adults who do not believe in achievement of excellence will have a difficult time in Troop 80. However, the duty is to boys, to teach the correct approach to problems of life, and to this end the Troop is dedicated.

(b) The Scoutmaster, in conjunction with the Assistant Scoutmasters and the Committee, is primarily responsible for the establishment of long range program goals consistent with national and local BSA policies and rules. Specific programs, training and events necessary to achieve those goals are determined by the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters. The Head Assistant Scoutmaster is responsible for planning the specific programs for the monthly camps.

§ 2 **Preparation of ASMSQ**

In order to supervise program, it is necessary that the ASMSQ be prepared (to borrow an old line). For a meeting this consists of knowing the program, reading the agenda book, calling your greenbar, and making sure that all physical arrangements are covered. For a camp, this consists of knowing what skill or event you will be teaching or running, or knowing what the general program on the camp will be. Personal skills necessary to teach or judge should be mastered. Necessary materials should be assembled. Coordination with other leaders should be made. Then execution of the program should be done, followed by evaluation of your and the scouts' performance. Preparation in advance is essential to the smooth functioning of the program.

§ 3 **Swimming and Aquatics**

(a) The swimming program in Troop 80 constitutes a little over 20% of the total Tuesday night program. It is the single most significant program item that we do in terms of time during the entire year. Of course, swimming is also used as entertainment and diversion and is a break from the other parts of the skills program. The swimming program consists of the swimming of laps of various strokes in order to give the kids practice in the free style, breast stroke, side stroke, and elementary backstroke. Each month a race is also held in which each patrol races one of its representatives. The rest of the program consists of individualized instruction, water polo games between the patrols, and sometimes a water polo game in which anybody can play. During the later part of the swimming session, free time is given to all scouts who are not in an instruction class.

(b) Each Assistant Scoutmaster should be prepared on a Tuesday night to observe the swimming of the laps to see which of their scouts cannot swim very well. After the initial race is held, the Assistant Scoutmaster should take his squad into an area of the shallow end and work with each boy on various strokes which each scout is expected to know. Instructions should be given on proper breathing techniques, and arm and leg strokes. Older scouts are utilized in assisting in the teaching of the various swimming skills. One of the goals of the Troop is to have each scout a strong swimmer. While style is important for ability to swim well, strength and endurance is more important for our program. It is the job of the Assistant Scoutmaster to see to it that each of his scouts passes the swimming requirements for Second Class Rank and First Class Rank.

(c) Two annual water sports competitions were instituted in 1987. A single elimination water polo tournament is held each year. Two or three games are played each swim night, with each patrol constituting a team. A patrol will play basically every other month. The schedule will be announced by the Head Assistant Scoutmaster or the Scoutmaster. The finals will be usually held on the May swim night. Each patrol that wins scores points in the outstanding patrol competition for each game. The overall champions also score additional points.

(d) Additionally, in November of each year on swim night, there is a Troop wide swim meet. No laps or instructions will be given this night. Before the swimming starts, a listing of all events will be handed out to the patrols. Assistant Scoutmasters will assist the patrols in assigning scouts to the various events. Individual winners will receive trophies. The overall winning patrol, and the relay winner will have their names placed on permanent trophies. Points for the outstanding patrol competition are also awarded, based on competition results.

(e) In addition to swimming, the Troop also offers the other aquatics skills and advancement as part of its program. Swimming requirements for Second and First Class ranks, Swimming Merit Badge, and Lifesaving Merit Badge are offered on each swim night. The Assistant Scoutmaster is primarily responsible for instructing the scout or seeing to it that each scout desiring such advancement meets with a counselor at the swim night meeting.

(f) The swimming and aquatics program of Troop 80 is designed to train young men to become proficient swimmers and to learn basic safety and rescue techniques to use on the water front. The program also allows a scout to acquire basic boating skills. Each scout should be able to protect himself, as well as others, while on, in, or near the water. Finally, the water sports program is designed to be fun for both the scouts and the adults.

CHAPTER FOUR - THE MEETING

Outline

- § 1 General Format
- § 2 ASMSQ Preparation

§ 1 General Format

The following is a format which may be used in helping your patrols during a regular Tuesday night meetings. This is a recommended format and may be altered by you as necessary and when experience of logic dictates in order to maximize the potential of your squad.

1. 7:00 p.m. Meeting begins with opening. ASPL and all patrol members should be present *before* 7:00 p.m. Check with SPL to have patrol members participate in opening who need flag ceremony advancement requirements (see rank requirements in Boy Scout Handbook).
2. 7:05 p.m. SM makes announcements. Tell him in advance of any announcements you want to make.
3. 7:10p.m. Patrol corners. Scribe will hand out attendance forms. Make sure the PL's have someone complete and return the forms to the scribe before patrol corners is over. Review briefly program for the night. Have PL's send patrol QM's to Troop QM for patrol equipment. Ask scouts to obtain completed M.B. forms and scout handbooks with completed rank advancements signed off. Make sure that PL's have read agenda book for the night's program. See who needs board of review. Turn in M.B. forms and arrange for boards of review.
4. 7:20 p.m. First session. have PL's begin teaching. Watch to see that instruction is proceeding properly, then leave ASPL in charge unless he is assigned elsewhere (e.g., setting up competition area for SPL). Take advancement to Advancement Committee. Tell it about need for board of review. Conduct Scoutmaster's Conferences.
Game. If patrol competition, see that Patrol QM's have necessary equipment.
5. 8:00 p.m. Encourage your patrols to try to win competition. If Troop game, use time to review first session with ASPL or conduct Scoutmaster's Conferences. Second session. Same as first. At conclusion, talk to PL's about next week-phone calls, equipment, reading agendas.
6. 8:10p.m. Closing ceremony. Tell SPL if you have rank advancements awards. A ward rank patches. Find out if your patrols have new inductees or scouts passing Tenderfoot board of review. If so, participate in ceremony. Tell SM about any announcements.
7. 8:45 p.m. If one of your patrols has cleanup make sure they know it and all stay to do it. Take two aspirin and hope for war before next Tuesday.
8. 9:00 p.m.

§ 2 ASMSQ Preparation

Call green bar on Sunday night. Spot check boys to see if called by PL. Read scout hand book on skills to be taught. Make sure green bar has physical arrangements for meeting covered. Have necessary advancement forms ready. Be prepared on personal skills to teach if necessary. If cannot be at meeting, call other ASMSQs assigned to squad to let them know.