



# The Final Countdown

*Please look through this now, and make sure that you and your parents read all of it thoroughly between now and the event.*

**Well done! - You have completed most of the training sessions and either made it into a team or have agreed to be on standby as a reserve.**

In recognition of this, those of you who have ordered them will soon be the proud owner of a troop 'Overland' bobble hat - something that is held in great respect, not only by all Ashdown District Scouts, Explorer Scouts and leaders, but by the organisers of the competition and all other teams that have competed against us in the past. Wear it with pride and look after it - it may be a collector's item one day! *Make certain that you bring it with you to the hike!*

**Now we come to the really serious bit, preparing for the hike itself.**

This booklet gives you details of:

- The remaining **training sessions**
- Extracts from the **Overland Rules, 2008**, including the official **kit list**
- How to **pack your rucksack**
- **What to eat** before and on the hike
- **How to avoid losing points** on Overland incidents and kit checks

## **Training**

There are no more hike training sessions left! Over the Easter holidays, however, you will need to arrange with your Troop Leader to visit the Start and Finish locations, so that your team is familiar with all possible route options out from the Start and into the Finish. This will help you not to panic at these critical moments during the event and is very important.

**The Overland Rules, 2008** (the rules are shown in purple text with extra notes and hints for Ashdown Scouts, based on past experience, added in black text) (Note that for explorer teams, the age limits weight limits and maximum hike times are different to those shown here)

The Scout Section of the Overland Competition is open to teams of **FOUR** Scouts, born between 1 April 1993 and 1 April 1996 (12 - 14 year olds), with a **minimum** combined age of 48 years. (Leaders must ensure that all Scouts are physically capable of undertaking this competition). (NOTE: in a last minute change from previous years, the organisers are no longer applying any discretion here to allow slightly under age hikers who are fit enough: in other words, you **MUST** be at least 12 years old to take part)

## Team Equipment

Each team will be responsible for providing their own equipment, which must be carried in **waterproof-lined** rucksacks, to a **maximum weight of 40kg per team** (this is the total weight limit, including personal and team equipment, and including at least one tent that all four members of the team can get into in an emergency situation. A second tent, if required, can be handed in at the Start and will be available to collect from the campsite. The second tent does not form part of the weight allowance).

The **minimum** TEAM requirements are:

- **Tents with groundsheets** (a flysheet only is not acceptable) (mixed teams must have separate tents). (All component parts of both tents must be fully labelled with your troop name and the outer bag must also show your team number)
- **Food for the weekend** (i.e. for a cooked evening meal and cooked breakfast)
- **Stoves** (we recommend two Trangia stoves with gas burner attachments and sufficient gas for cooking all meals) (liquid fuel, if used, should be carried in a metal container);
- **2 survival bags;**
- **2 x 0.25 Litre of water**
- **Ingredients for a hot drink** (which needs to include additional water if taking tea bags or dried soup etc. OR you could take the required amount of actual soup in a carton or pouch) **and 250g of boiled sweets or chocolate** for the whole team, to only be used in an emergency;
- **Cooking container and utensils** (i.e. some or all of the pans that come with the Trangia. You should also pack inside the stove a brillo pad for washing up and a small box of waterproof matches),
- **2 sets of appropriate 1:25,000 maps**
- **2 waterproof map cases,**
- **2 compasses,**
- **2 whistles,**
- **2 torches,** (lightweight head torches recommended. There is no requirement to provide spare batteries)
- **Paper and pen/pencil.**
- **2 mobile phones, fully charged, for emergency use only.** (Two members of each team will be asked to bring their phones for this purpose, and further instructions will be given about its use. **Absolutely no other phones must be taken by other team members since their use for either incoming or outgoing non-emergency calls WILL result in that team being disqualified.**)

(list continues on next page)

- **Two first aid kits**, to be contained in waterproof, airtight containers, each kit consisting of:
  - 2 large dressings,
  - 6 Assorted plasters,
  - 1 pack of blister plasters
  - 1 roll of micropore adhesive tape
  - 2 triangular bandages
  - 1 roller bandage (*not crepe or conforming (=stretch) bandage*)
  - 4 **antiseptic** wipes (*not just wipes*)
  - 1 pair surgical gloves
  - 10 x 10p coins
  - 2 polythene bags for soiled dressings
  - 1 vent aid

*(ALL of the above things, except for the torches and the two mobile phones, will be provided by the troop - do **NOT** bring your own additional items of anything else that is on this list!)*

**The Team also needs, between them:**

- **At least one** watch, preferably digital with a timer and alarm

## Personal Equipment

**EACH TEAM MEMBER must wear:**

- **Their Troop Scarf** (*tied with a Friendship Knot rather than using a woggle, which may become lost*)
- **long trousers,**
- **waterproofed hiking boots with ankle support** (*must be clean with freshly applied Nikwax or similar*),
- **gloves,**
- **suitable warm headwear** (*e.g. your Overland bobble hat if your team has ordered them*),
- **long sleeved top** (*ideally an old, long-sleeved football shirt*)
- **fleece** (*preferably a zipped fleece jacket. Need not be an expensive brand*)
- **high visibility reflective items** which must be clearly visible at all times (*provided by the troop*)
- **suncream** should be used to prevent sunburn

**You will also want to wear:**

- *two pairs of socks (wool or cotton, not synthetic) **or** one pair of special double layer socks designed specifically to prevent blisters (whatever you use, practice hiking in them before the event)*
- *additional layers of thin t-shirts beneath your long sleeved shirt (depending on weather forecast)*
- *a watch if you have one*

**NOT acceptable are: denim jeans, shorts, Scout uniform (except for scarf), sheath knives, CB Radios or GPS navigation aids (this list should also include wellies, shoes, trainers, mobile phones, other than the two 'official' one; i-pods etc. and computer games of any kind).**

**EACH TEAM MEMBER must carry in their rucksack** (which must have a reflective patch clearly visible at all times) (and must also have a **waterproof liner** e.g. black bin bag):

- a sleeping bag
- **substantial waterproof tops & bottoms** (i.e. cagoule & overtrousers) (shell suits will NOT do)
- spare fleece or sweater (warm, but as lightweight as possible)
- spare socks
- sun cream (THIS IS REQUIRED EVEN IF IT IS RAINING!!! - just bring a **VERY** small, lightweight tube, sachet or stick that is suitable for you)
- packed lunches for **both** days (but note the weight limit for these -1kg in total, including a drinks bottle)

You will also need to take:

- a drinks bottle (plastic, refillable with screw top, containing water or juice, but NOT fizzy drinks of any kind) (note that this may need to be half empty at the start to meet weight restrictions, but can (and should!) be refilled with water at any checkpoint along the route)
- a plastic mug and plate (as lightweight as possible. Additional items e.g. bowls are NOT needed)
- metal fork & spoon (you won't need a knife)
- a torch (if yours is one of the two needed as part of the team equipment - only 2 torches are needed by the team)

**EACH TEAM MEMBER must carry on their person:**

- An ID card (in a sealed plastic wallet) detailing any specific medical condition relative to themselves (Your Troop leader will be able help produce these - talk to them if you do not already have one)

Additional items that you might wish to take are:

- A simple, Swiss Army type penknife (no more than two are needed per team, and NO complex knives or multi-tools)
- Money for spending at the tuck shop, located at the half way point each day.
- A lightweight foam sleeping mat (though please note that this may have to be left out if your pack weighs too much)

**PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU DO NOT NEED TO TAKE:**

- Pyjamas, spare trousers, teddy bears, spare batteries, cartons of milk, extra sweets, or anything else that is not specifically on the list above .... **SO PLEASE DON'T PACK THEM!**

## The Hike

This year, the teams will hike approximately 16.5 miles (26.4km) on the first day and a further 10 miles (16km) on the second day, maximum hiking points being awarded to teams averaging 3 mph (5 kmh) between checkpoints. **Running is Not Permitted**

To qualify for the second day of the Hike, Scout teams must complete the first day's Hike within 10 hours from your team's starting time (so make sure you make a note of this at the Start!!), and the second day's Hike must be completed within 7 hours of your starting time on Sunday (so note this as well!)

Those teams that complete the first day's Hike but are out of time may, at the Organiser's discretion, be able to walk the second day, but are withdrawn from the competition (If this happens to you, it is worthwhile doing the second day for the experience, if you can).

The route is unknown to all competitors and will be negotiated by NGR (National Grid References) and compass bearings. **All teams are expected to know and use the Country and Highway Codes** (but note that proper footpaths must be followed, do not use other routes across 'Access Land')

## Preparation

Teams must prepare carefully for the hike, paying special attention to their choice of footwear and waterproof clothing and the 40kg team weight limit. **Remember, rucksacks are not waterproof and will need a liner.** (a black bin bag will suffice)

**IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT PRACTICE HIKES ARE UNDERTAKEN** (Done!)

In addition, all team members **MUST** read "SAFETY ON THE MOUNTAINS" Available from the Gilwell Resource Centre and be aware of the correct use of the Scout Emergency Card and the Hike Emergency Procedure (to be discussed at the incident training session)

## The Start

Teams will start between 07:45 and 12:00 hours on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2008 (see your Troop Leader for the more specific times for your team).

Each Team will hand to the starter a **Menu** for the weekend, with ingredients and costs, which will be judged for suitability for a weekend hike. Marks will **NOT** be awarded for the presentation (i.e. the prettiness!) of the menu. (NOTE: the menus are worth 20 points and need to be prepared by the teams in advance of the hike, with advice and help from the leaders).

## Incidents

These will be staged at check-points en-route and are designed to test practical Scouting Skills, teamwork, and initiative. Points will also be awarded for the manner in which the incidents are carried out. (This means being polite and demonstrating good teamwork, both on arrival/departure at each checkpoint and during the incidents, but saluting is no longer required)

## Refreshments

Hot drinks and a Tuck Shop selling confectionery will be available for all teams at the half-way point of each day's hike, and a light meal will be provided on completion of the second day's hike. Limited water will be available at each checkpoint (to refill your water bottles).

## Overnight

Over Saturday Night, all Teams will camp at a given site, where water and latrines will be provided. The evening meal on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday will be carried by the team. Points will be awarded for Campcraft, which includes the choice of menu and cooking. Hot meals and hot drinks will be expected.

Extra notes to Ashdown Scouts:

**The meal will have to be presented to the judges before it is eaten!!!** This means presenting at least one meal as smartly as possible on a plastic or paper plate which you will need to take with you.

Whilst at the campsite, each team will have to complete a **Project**, for which **30** additional points are available, .... So do not forget to complete this!!! **Everything you do at the camp site** will be observed by the organisers. To gain the maximum points you need to work together as a complete team, with everyone doing their fare share, no matter how tired they are. You also need to make sure that your tents are well pitched, that everything is washed up and cleared away after eating, that nothing is left outside overnight (except for rucksacks which can be stored outside within your bivvy bags, with the ends neatly tucked underneath and away from the prevailing wind to provide a weatherproof seal), and that your site is spotless when you leave it.

You **MUST** avoid gathering together with other teams at the campsite - especially whilst carrying out your project, and you should get to sleep as early as you possibly can. **REMEMBER THAT THE CLOCKS GO FORWARD BY ONE HOUR THAT NIGHT - SO YOU WILL LOSE AN HOUR IN BED!** **MAKE SURE TO ALTER YOUR WATCHES BEFORE GOING TO BED.**

Teams depart on the second day in the order that they arrive the night before. Make sure to set your watch alarm to give plenty of time for getting up, cooking breakfast, clearing up and striking camp before you have to leave. **You will need AT LEAST one and a half hours for this.** Your tents will need to be packed away in the plastic bags that they arrived in and **MUST** be clearly labelled. On the second day you will need to carry the same tent (or tents) as you did on the first day. If one of your tents was transported directly to the campsite, this can be done again on the second day, so hand it in to the Campsite

staff before you leave. Your equipment may well be inspected half way through the second day's hike, and (for example) this might include pitching your tent to prove all four of you can get into it, or it may include preparing your emergency hot drinks.

## Awards

First Place: the Overland Trophy, to be held for one year. Special Pennants will be awarded to the members of the first three teams. All Scouts who complete both days of the Hike will receive Hike Certificates and will be able to receive a Hike Neckerchief Slide.

The Awards will be presented at approximately 17:00 hours on Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> March 2008. Supporters will be welcome from 16:30 hours at the Finish, where refreshments will be available.

*(All Scouts completing the hike, and the training before it, will also be eligible to receive the Expedition Challenge Award. For those who already have this award from last year, the training can count towards other badges instead, e.g. the Fitness Challenge. Those who complete all the training, but not the event, may still qualify for the Expedition Challenge if they completed the training expedition or the Snowdonia Hillwalking and Geological Adventure scheduled for 11-13<sup>th</sup> April).*

The organisers are not prepared to allow ill equipped teams to take part in the Overland Hike and therefore failure to comply with the Rules as set out above will lead to automatic disqualification.

# THE ORGANISER'S DECISION IS FINAL



## Other Useful Hints and Advice to Ashdown District Scouts

### Packing your Rucksack

Well before the event you need to practice packing your rucksack in a way that is both practical and comfortable. The general rules are:

- Pack your sleeping bag, spare clothes and food inside a waterproof liner, inside your rucksack. Include a spare plastic bag to put wet things in on day 2;
- Pack things that you are likely to need on the hike (waterproofs, lunch, drinks, torch) near the top or (preferably) in pockets on the sides of your rucksack. Leave room in the pockets for your hat and gloves, which you should be wearing at the Start.
- Pack the heaviest items (e.g. cooker, fuel, etc) near the top of your rucksack, so that their weight is better distributed.
- Make sure nothing is sticking out into your back, and that nothing is hanging on to the outside
- Adjust the rucksack so that it fits your back, with the padded waist belt resting on your hips, to take some of the weight.

**YOU NEED TO GET THE WEIGHT OF YOUR RUCKSACK, INCLUDING SLEEPING BAG AND ALL PERSONAL EQUIPMENT, BUT WITHOUT TEAM EQUIPMENT OR PACKED LUNCHES, DOWN TO A MAXIMUM OF 5.5Kg. Experiment now with different contents until you can achieve this. If you can't achieve it, discuss with leaders immediately!**

The remaining **4.5Kg** will be made up of your share of the tents and other team equipment and food (to be issued by the leaders) and your packed lunches for two days. Individual Troop leaders will finalise the packing and weighing of all rucksacks, adding the team equipment in such a way that each Scout carries what they are capable of carrying. **Your leader will advise you of where and when to hand your rucksack over, which will usually be a few days before the hike.** This will be the last time you see it before the morning of the event, so please double check to make sure you leave nothing out except your packed lunches (for both days) and refillable drink container (one bottle), which you will need to add into your rucksacks on the morning of departure.

Please note that the total weight of these items (lunches and drinks bottle) must be no more than **1Kg**. This will mean wrapping sandwiches in cling film or foil rather than using heavy plastic containers, and putting 'nibbles' such as fresh fruit, dried fruit, sweets etc in the pockets of your fleece or anorak, to be worn at the Start. Note that bulging pockets are likely to cause the starting marshals to ask you to empty these and weigh them.

Please also note that, in the process of balancing the rucksacks, the leaders will remove any items of personal equipment that are not actually needed (e.g. CD players, extra food and drink, too many spare clothes etc.) - so don't pack them in the first place! Please note that you **DON'T** need pyjama's - the idea is to sleep in your clothes (minus muddy trousers, of course!), in order to minimise the weight you have to carry, and to make sure that all the essentials can be included within the strict weight limit of 40kg per team.

## What to eat before and on the Hike *(subject of course to any personal needs and restrictions!)*

On the night before the event (before coming to Scouts for those whose troop meets on Fridays), you should follow the example of marathon runners and eat a large portion of something rich in carbohydrates, such as pasta, as this will help to provide the fuel needed to keep you going all day Saturday. **BUT DON'T EAT ANYTHING THAT YOU ARE NOT USED TO, IN CASE IT DISAGREES WITH YOU!!**

You then need an early night and a good night's sleep.

The next day you need a good breakfast, preferably cooked, but again, **DON'T EAT TOO MUCH OR ANYTHING UNUSUAL IN CASE YOU BECOME SICK** - this happens to someone from Ashdown District almost every year!!! ... don't let it happen to you!

For your packed lunches, jam sandwiches (or similar) are ideal, as the sugar will give you instant energy and the bread will sustain you. Dried fruit and sweets are also good to keep nibbling as you walk, but don't overdo it - too much sugar can have a laxative effect, which is **NOT** what you need when hiking!!!

## How to avoid losing points

All your hard work can be wasted if you start to lose points through silly things like daft behaviour or getting lost. The three Golden Rules are to:

- **Stay together when hiking and work as a team at all times;**
- **Concentrate on your map reading - stay in contact with the map all the way;**
- **Keep your eye on the clock and make sure you are at the camp site on time.**

The following notes explain what you need to do to avoid losing points at each stage of the hike. This is invaluable information based on past experience .... Use It!!!!:

- **On arrival at the Start**, check the weight of your rucksacks on the official scales and be prepared to take something out if your team is over the combined limit of 40kg. The leaders will be on hand to assist with this, but we can't work miracles so make sure to get your kit as light as possible in the first place and don't add anything extra (such as surplus food!)
- Then go through the **kit lists** in the Overland Rules (see earlier in this booklet) and make sure you **know** where everything is packed.
- When your team is called in, the organisers will carry out a detailed **kit check**. Missing items can lose points and you won't be allowed to start unless you have all the essentials. If things are missing you may be asked to come out to find your leaders (who will have spares of most things just in case).
- You will be given **team number armbands**, which all team members must wear at all times during the hike. You'll also be given a **Tally Card**, which you must hand in to be signed at each checkpoint. **DO NOT LOSE IT!!** Without it you will certainly lose marks and may be disqualified;
- **BEFORE** you check out from the start (or any other checkpoint), first **obtain the grid reference of your next checkpoint**, plot this on your maps and work out which way you need to set off. Make sure both map readers are agreed on this, that your maps are correctly folded, and that your rucksacks are on your backs before you ask to check out. You can then go quickly, in the **right** direction (!), leaving a good impression (which could gain you extra marks).

- In between checkpoints, the map readers must concentrate on where they are going, whilst the others keep an eye on the time and the pace. If you **average 3mph (5kmh)** between checkpoints you will arrive in good time and receive full (20) marks for speed. If you go slower than this, or in the wrong direction, you'll lose marks for every minute or two that you are late. **DO NOT stop for a rest between checkpoints!** If you go faster than 3mph you'll get no extra marks but you'll use up more energy than you need to. Only do this if you are running out of time to reach the campsite.
- When you **approach** a checkpoint, arrive together, quietly and smartly. Many marks are lost by teams that arrive as a rabble. Go straight to the check-in point and report to a leader in uniform. To do so, the team should stand in line with the oldest scout on the right as you face the leader. That Scout should report to the leader, saying '*Team x Checking In*' and should then hand over the tally card. Only when you have properly checked in should you sit down and take off your rucksacks.
- **If you need a rest** (or if you are asked to wait) sit down quietly and have something to eat and drink. BUT KEEP AN EYE ON THE TIME: Your speed is only measured between checkpoints but don't forget, you need to complete the first day's hike within 10 hours from the time you first checked out. If you don't, you are withdrawn from the competition. So, **if time is running out you may need to tell the checkpoint staff that you want to skip their incident and carry on hiking.** This will lose you all 20 points for that incident but you will still be in the hike.
- Whilst waiting at a checkpoint you might get some idea as to what the incident is about, so be alert for clues BUT don't shout about them and DON'T just copy other teams - they might be getting it all wrong!
- When you are ready you will be given written instructions on what the incident is about, and you will usually have two minutes to read and understand these before they let you start the incident itself. **Let the team member who is the best at reading aloud** (not the one with the loudest voice!), **do all the reading.** All others pay attention and think;
- Use the two minutes to **plan** what you are going to do. Always check to see if anyone in the team happens to be an expert in the incident and if so, let them take charge;
- Be sure to work together as a TEAM. **Let the judges see you discuss** how to tackle the incident and **share out the work** so that you finish it in the available time (usually 8 minutes).
- After the incident, DON'T discuss it until after you have left (otherwise you may give clues to other teams)
- **When you are ready to go**, ask for and plot the next grid reference BEFORE you check out
- **Make sure your tally card is stamped, or signed, and returned to you** then check out smartly and walk off together in the right direction;
- **If you are instructed to go to a Via Point on the way to the next Checkpoint**, make sure you go there and get your tally card stamped again by the staff at that location, otherwise you will get no speed points for that section of the hike
- Throughout the hike (*from the moment you arrive at the start until the moment the results are announced*) you must: **Observe the Rules of the Overland Hike** - (the purple text in this booklet) and **display 'Scoutlike' behaviour** - (be polite, courteous and follow the Scout Law).

## Arrangements for the Day of the Hike

Leaders, detach this page and issue it once you have filled in the gaps

- **Meet at** ..... at ..... **a.m.**, prompt!
- **Bring with you:** two packed lunches & drink (subject to the weight limit discussed earlier: **DO NOT BRING TOO MUCH!!**), also money, paper, pencil, and wear the clothes you will be hiking in, including your boots and your new team bobble hat!
- **ALSO BRING YOUR FULL SCOUT UNIFORM** to leave at the HQ
- **Collect your rucksack & team equipment from HQ**
- **Depart from HQ, with your leaders** at ..... **a.m.** prompt!
- **Arrive at Start** (....., Grid Ref ..... ) at ..... **a.m.** latest
- **Weigh rucksacks on official scales and adjust contents as necessary!**
- **Call in time for official kit check for your team is:** ..... **a.m.**
- ..... **After that you're on your own!** .....
- **Remember**, you are representing Your Troop and Ashdown District in the premier scouting competition in the County. Take the hike seriously, and you will find that you enjoy it without even trying

... **Good Luck!**

## Arrangements for the Finish of the Hike

Parents should aim to arrive at the finish (at ....., Grid Ref ..... ) between 4:00pm and 4:30pm. The results should start being announced at about 5:00pm but that process will take up to an hour. Please be prepared to wait, if necessary, as the results can't be announced until all the teams are in and all the scores have been computed.

Leaders will arrive at the finish about 4:00pm with uniforms for the Scouts to change into before the results are announced.