

8th National Senior Scout Adventure Cederberg 1988

The 1988 Adventure was again filled to capacity with 496 boys from all nine Scout Areas in South and South West Africa drawn from 144 Troops, including three [Venturers](#) from Western Australia and one from a Boy Scouts of America Troop in Eagle River, Alaska. These were served by some 130 staff members from both within and without the Movement.



What is it that attracted these large numbers of senior Scouts to the Western Cape for the Adventure?

- it is an unforgettable backpacking adventure, exploring the trails, sleeping under the stars in the wilderness of the mountains, bivouacking near the summit and watching the sunrise from lofty Sneeuberg; marvelling at the weirdly-weathered sandstone formations - for with its rich natural beauty there is a magic to the Cedarberg.
- the exciting programme of 23 challenging activities offered by experts in their fields. Each activity is chosen to provide new experiences, fun, knowledge and a challenge for the older boy.
- the comradeship that develops from sharing tough experiences - backpacking in the heat of summer, cooking on the trail, swimming in the pools, the teamwork and co-operation necessary to be successful in many of the activities - not only with one's Patrol mates but with others of different backgrounds from all over our country and overseas

What then do the Scouts do during the 12 days of the Adventure? Early in the morning of 11 December six 60-seat coaches left Cape Town for Camping HQ on the farm "Driehoek" in the heart of the range, filled with excited boys looking forward to the days ahead. Nor were they disappointed, for after arrival each day was action-packed. Camped under the oaks, the 52 Patrols drew their trail rations for 12 days and sorted them into boxes for delivery by road to nominated food pick-up points. Briefings of Expedition Leaders by the Adventure Chief, swimming, visits to the Trading Post for cold cokes, made a busy day

That night, or early next morning Patrols set out, or were transported to Activity Centres, so that the action could start in the morning of Day 2. Each Patrol followed a pre-planned, 10-day backpacking itinerary that took it to the 18 Activity Centres located at various places in the mountains.



The activities that filled the next 10 days included a 10km Canadian canoeing expedition; bass fishing presented by the organiser of the SA Bass Fishing Championships; sailing; boardsailing; water skiing; kayaking; ecology of the Cedarberg with professional instructors from the Cape Department of Environmental and Nature Conservation; handcrafts; tough Commando assault course; gold prospecting involving pack donkeys, gold planning and metal detecting; fox hunting (radio orienteering) and assembly of electronic kits that worked; diving with air lines for sunken treasure; clay pigeon, pistol and rifle shooting on Quick-response ranges; archery; mountaineering on the Sneeuberg; Dutch oven cooking; pioneering (bridge building); astronomy; rock climbing on the Cedarberg Tafelberg with instructors from the Mountain Club of SA and the Scout Mountain Club; handicapped awareness trail to create an appreciation of what it is like to be disabled; forestry, including the use of power saws for tree felling and tree-climbing using lumberjack climbing irons; and the Ultimate Challenge Game.

A new activity included in this Adventure was the Ultimate Challenge Game which is based on the traditional Scout wide games such as flag raiding, storming the stockade, and ambush. It provided plenty of practice in stalking and camouflage - and tension, excitement and fun. It proved a popular innovation. Like the taste of grasshoppers? There is a photograph of the Chief Scout eating a grasshopper with apparent relish; or so he would have us believe! This was all part of the Air Survival base where the Patrols became survivors from an air crash in the mountains with the necessity of living off the wilderness until rescued. The added dimension of realism was added by a helicopter of No 22 Squadron, SAAF, which conducted an air search for the survivors and demonstrated ground-to-air casualty evacuation.

This was also demonstrated at the Adventure Opening Ceremony when the assembled Scouts were enthralled by an exhibition of skilful helicopter flying. A real casualty evacuation took place on the Sneeuberg when a Scout with a dislocated knee was airlifted to Camping HQ the casualty being more concerned with obtaining a photo of his rescue by helicopter than with his injury!

We were delighted to welcome two distinguished visitors from Europe. Pat McLaughlin, Regional Executive of the World Bureau European Region office, and Tony Markmiller, chairman of the European Scout Region and chairman of the German Scout Federation, spent a few days at the Adventure as part of their tour of South Africa to see South African Scouting in action. Impressed with what they saw, Tony offered to bring out a team of German Scouters to run an Activity Centre on the next Adventure!

Unlike the heat wave experienced at the 1986 Adventure, the weather was warm but not excessive, with a cold front with rain adding variety. Each Adventure is remembered for its own particular highlights or incidents, for example, the cloudburst and floods of the 1976/77 Great Winterhoek Adventure. This recent Adventure will be remembered for the stranding of Buzz Macey on the summit of the Cedarberg Tafelberg in high winds, with temperatures below 5°C, for the night whilst engaged in an abortive attempt to set up a radio repeater station. Search parties could not locate him until morning for he was huddled in 'an animal hole', the extraordinarily high spirits throughout shown by the fine young men who participated; the hard work and friendliness shown by all the staff; and the "snake bite " incident when a Scout's PL ran 3km down the mountain for help for the victim who, as a local inhabitant put it "was bitten by a big scare" after being pricked by a bush.



Buzz Macey

We are all indebted to Colin Inglis for his outstanding organisation; to the staff without whose hard work, dedication and professionalism the Adventure would not have been the success it was; and to those many non-Scouting folk, organisations and sponsors who made a significant contribution to the Adventure.



Colin Inglis - Convener Extraordinaire