

KNOT GAMES

Blackout Knots

All players have a piece of rope. Assign a specific knot. Shut out lights for a specified time and see how adept group is in the darkness. Vary knots called and time lights are out.

Blindman's Knot

The patrol is blindfolded. The leader passes down the line, holding a piece of cord knotted in one of the familiar knots. Each boy may finger it for ten seconds to discover which knot it is. The patrol is then provided with a cord. At the word "Go" each blindfolded player makes the knot he considers the right one. The quickest (if correct) wins.

Bowline/Sheet-bend Draw

Have the troop divide into pairs. Each pair lines up across from each other. Each Scout is given a piece of rope long enough to tie around his/her waist and leave a couple of extra feet. These ropes should be on the ground by the scout's feet.

At the GO signal, each scout picks up his/her rope and ties a bowline around their waist. Then they join the rope with their partners rope using a sheet-bend. They then back up until the ropes become taught, lean back and hold their hands in the air.

As a Patrol competition, the first patrol to have all of their pairs done, wins. As an individual competition, each team competes independently. Check the knots, if they are wrong, have them start over, with time running.

Chariot Race

When you get on to teaching the square lashing a good game, the chariot race. The Troop is divided into teams (of a fairly small number) and each team is given a chair and two staves. They then have a fixed period (say fifteen minutes) to build a chariot which simply involves square lashing each of the staves to either side of a chair so that they extend equally in front and behind of the chair. Warn Scouts that it is vital that the lashings are very tight.

Then set up a race track, if space is limited then you will probably have to have each team running one at a time and time each, however if you can hold the race in a larger space it is possible for all teams to race together. One member of each team sits on the chair and the other team members must carry the chair by the staves only and run around the course. In running with the chair, any bad lashings will be disclosed since they will work undone. A suitable penalty should be imposed for any team that drops their passenger. This game always proves to be most entertaining, both for the members and for the leaders!

Fisherman's Knots

Good practice for the real thing. Make your game realistic by using fishing line or leader. Teach the boys the basic fisherman's knots as well as the blood knot, clinch knot, perfection loop and line-to-leader knot, and use relays to develop skill and speed.

Knotting Baseball

Same teams as baseball, but no bat or ball. Pitcher and batter each have a piece of rope. Pitcher calls name of knot and throws his rope to anyone in the field. If batter reaches first with knot tied correctly, he is safe. If knot tied (correctly) by fielder, reaches first before batter, he is out. If batter cannot tie knot called, he is out. If fielder cannot tie knot called, batting side scores one run whatever else happens. Fielders can then return ropes to second, third or home to "force" base runners. Make sure pitcher throws rope to all fielders and not too frequently to first base.

Knotting Circle

Players in circle, one ties a knot in a bit of rope and drops it at the feet of one of another group, who must name the knot correctly and say if it is tied right before the tier has run around the circle. Whichever wins ties the next knot, and so on.

Knotting Relays

Give all boys a chance to compete and practice. Use basic knots tied in a useful way: bowline around the waist, tie a sheet bend using two different thickness of rope, tie a clove hitch around a spar or pole.

Knot Relay (timed variation)

Have the patrols line up behind a starting line. A leader stands opposite each patrol and has one or two ropes, and a pole (if desired). At the GO signal, each patrol send one scout forward. The leader gives them a randomly selected knot. The scout then must successfully tie that knot before returning to their patrol. When each scout returns to the patrol, the next scout is sent forward.

Count the number of knots tied. Keep moving until the game period has nearly expired. The patrol with the most successfully tied knots wins. By running this relay for a fixed time, there is no need to adjust for different sized groups. Each scout should get the opportunity to tie 2 or 3 different knots (at least).

Knotty

1) Each scout is provided with a thin rope that is a foot and a half long.

2) Two players sit face to face with about 8 feet between them. One player holds his rope in front of him and the other scout is the guesser. When the scout who is the guesser says "Ready!" the other scout puts his cord behind him and makes any number of simple, single knots on it, from one to four. The knots are made as fast as possible and when done, the player brings his empty hand out in front of him. His opponent guesses how many knots there are on the cord. The guesser only has one chance.

3) Immediately upon the guess the rope is held out in front of the player who made the knots, in order to prove the guess right or wrong. The scout making the knots tries to fool his opponent by only making one knot, none, or several knots in the time it should take to make one, in order to fool his opponent. His face can give the expression that his hands are idle when they are actually busy or vice versa.

4) When playing this game as a Patrol competition, each player on each team has a turn at knotting and guessing before the winning side can count coup. A team can have a brief conference before guessing the number of knots made by the opposing Patrol. In patrol competition it is best to have a referee to keep track of the score made by each team.

Knot Relay

The game simply involves each member of the team running across the hall, where they are told a knot to tie, and they must tie that before returning to their team and the next person running up to do their knot. Each player will be given a knot in a predetermined sequence and the sequence will be the same for all teams. Therefore the Scouts know that if they do not pay attention during the learning phase of the evening they will let their team down during the game phase. This is often sufficient incentive for them to make every effort to learn. You will need to decide in advance how to handle a competitor who, after making several attempts, still fails to tie the required knot, one possibility is for the next person in the team to come up (after the previous has been there for a set period of time), then the next person must tie the knot that the previous person failed at and one more person must come up at the end of the race so that the required number of knots get tied.

Rope Throw

One member of group is seated on a piece of cardboard (2' x 2') 30' - 35' away from the group. Balance of group each have one piece of rope about 6' long. On "Go" each group must join all pieces of rope using a specified knot (square, reef, clove hitch) and throw completed rope close enough to player on cardboard so that he can reach it. Player on cardboard cannot move and rope must fall within his arms reach. When he catches rope, he must tie bowline around waist and be hauled across line where rest of group throws rope from. Works well on most indoor floors. If you haven't enough rope for all your groups, game can be run by groups in turn using best time to declare the winners.

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