



Better Cub Scout Roundups

White Horse District Cub Scout Roundtable
Southern New Jersey Council, BSA



August 2008

The Basics

Roundup is the first, and possibly last, contact you'll have with prospective scouts and their parents.

You get one chance to make a first impression!!!!

Plan and execute your roundup like any other pack event. Parents will judge the quality of your program by how good your roundup is. If your roundup is a chaotic mess, they have to assume your regular meetings and events are the same.

Have as many of your current leaders present at your roundup as possible, in **proper** uniform (No Iggles hats!). This "show of force" reinforces the impression that new parents are joining an existing team. But: Make sure everyone has something to do. Leaders talking football (or whatever) in the back of the room while you're running your roundup makes a bad impression.

Remember that you're not just recruiting Cub Scouts – You're also recruiting leaders. Emphasize that scouting is almost exclusively a volunteer organization and that it doesn't happen without the parents.

Planning & Publicity

Strong Pack Program: Have a good program and "*Word-of-Mouth*" recruiting will help get more parents and prospective cubs to your roundups. Boy-to-boy recruiting works! Cub Scouts should be encouraged to recruit their friends and neighbors.

Posters: Put up posters in your school, church, etc. well in advance of roundup night. On the poster include other contact information, so that prospects that can't get to roundup can still get in touch with you. Consider creating a temporary e-mail account at Gmail or Yahoo. Don't forget to cover *all* the schools in your area – Not just the public ones!

Fliers. Distribute fliers and have teachers pass them out to prospective Cub Scouts about 1 week before roundup night. Do some advance work with teachers to ensure they will be passed-out on time. Examples: find out when the teachers pass out each week's school bulletins; some schools send-out a weekly packet of bulletins; include your notice with the week's packet; get your notice (and annual Pack Calendar) in the school newsletter.

Daytime At-School Event: You can build enthusiasm for Cub Scout activities and hand out fliers at a lunchtime or after-school rally at school, a day or two before your roundup night.

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Combined Roundup/Pack Meeting: Some packs avoid combining roundup with a pack meeting (it's too busy and difficult to get parents' attention). Other packs say they have done it successfully by having the prospective cubs watch the pack meeting while their parents are split-out into a quieter room so that the program can be explained to them, and paperwork can be finished. If you do a combined roundup, plan carefully.

Follow-up Pack Meeting: Have a pack meeting about 1 to 2 weeks after roundup so that those that could not come to roundup can still learn about the pack, and those that join at roundup will not "cool-off" waiting a month for pack meeting. Plan a pack outing for October to have an event for new scouts to attend right away. For example: Cub Fun Day

At the Roundup

Sign-in Table: Have a sign-in table at the entrance to get names, phone numbers, and age/grade levels of all who came so that you can follow-up later. This can be especially important in case someone must leave early. Give out *name tags* - it is easier to recruit parents for pack jobs if you know who they are - otherwise you may be asking afterwards, "Who was that lady in the yellow dress that wanted to be a Den Leader?"

Handouts: At your sign-in table hand out an information packet containing

- Roundup agenda
- Youth & adult application form
- Pack contact list
- Pack policies
- Pack calendar and newsletter
- Uniform inspection sheets (Cub Scout and Leaders).

Testimonials & Exhibits: Have some Cub Scouts in uniform at roundup to show-off their *Pinewood Derby cars* and other typical cub-craft. Have Cubs talk about *fun experiences* at day camp, adventure camp, etc. Set-up your Pinewood track and run some sample races, or run a demonstration space derby. Have a *photo display* of pack activities.

Organization: Arrange tables by school grade (cub rank), so that the parents of each age group can meet and feel comfortable. This will also allow you to get a rough count of how many boys are in each rank and how many new leaders you need.

Activities and Program: Start with a formal opening and flag ceremony conducted by a well-uniformed den. At some point in the meeting have several leaders and Den Chiefs take the prospective cubs into a different room for games or other activities, so that you can talk quietly with the prospective parents. Keep the program short and to the point. Parents may have brought younger siblings that need to get to bed early. **Don't waste people's time!**

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Parent Involvement: Discuss parent involvement. There is a lot that new parents don't know. Be prepared to explain scouting jargon – There's a lot of it and it confuses people. Where appropriate, recruit new den leaders and assistants. Avoid over-stressing immediate parent duties - being a den leader may seem too great a task for a new parent until learning more about it and getting Fast Start training. Have your Pack Trainer available to discuss den leader training and duties for any new leaders.

Finances: Include your pack's financial arrangements in the pack policy write-up. This helps prevent sticker shock. You may want to include a uniform price list as well. Clearly spell out what the unit pays for and what the scout's family buys.

Ending the Meeting: Have a formal closing and move everyone to a checkout table, staffed by your treasurer and other committee people to collect forms and fees. Have leaders available for questions. Follow-up with those who didn't bring their checkbooks to roundup - don't submit their applications until they have paid, but don't ignore them either.

Secondary Recruitment After Roundup

Follow-up: Make phone calls to any families who did not join at roundup within one week after roundup night.

Other Contacts: Make sure you handle people that couldn't attend roundup (Busy that night, got the flier late, etc.). Hand deliver or mail an information packet and follow up within a week. Don't let them say, "I called, but no-one got back to me!"

Information Tables: Have an information table inside the school entrance on "Back-to-School" or "Open House" or sports sign-up nights. These frequently occur in October or November, but can be a recruiting opportunity regardless of time of year.

School and Municipal Events: Have a Cub Scout fun booth at school or town carnivals (regardless of time of year). Include some cub-craft displays and have pack information available.

Spring Roundup: Have a Spring Roundup, particularly for graduating kindergarten boys who will be your new Tigers. You **MUST** follow up with a strong summer program of activities – including summer camp.

Steve Leth
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