

Survivorman Challenge – NEW!

BY LES STROUD AND IAN MITCHELL

SURVIVORMAN

Scouts Canada has long been known for preparing youth for leadership roles and for helping them gain knowledge, skills, and outdoor expertise through experiential, hands-on learning. We are excited to announce a partnership with Les Stroud, Canadian filmmaker and sur-



vival expert, to take the Venturer Outdoorsman Award program to new heights, while introducing a new challenge for Rovers.

Scouts Canada feels Les is a strong role model for youth, and have now created the Scouts Canada **Survivorman Challenge** for Venturers and Rovers.

The Survivorman Challenge

“Survival is not about smelling the pines and feeling the breeze on your weathered and tanned face. Survival is not fun. It’s not pretty. It’s never comfortable. It may involve eating gross things, enduring pain and deprivation, and battling fatigue and loneliness. It may involve danger. It’s about life and death.

No matter how prepared you may be, you should never lose sight of the fact that a survival situation is an emergency. It may seem fun on a survival-skills weekend when you’re fully fed, guided by an instructor, and surrounded by a group of like-minded students, all smiles and dirty faces. But in a real-life ordeal, “fun” is not part of the equation.” (From *“Survive; Essential Skills and Tactics To Get You Out of Anywhere – Alive”* by Les Stroud [SURVIVORMAN])

Stroud says, “This ‘Survivorman Challenge’ is designed for Venturers and Rovers, ages 14 to 26, who want to stretch their outdoor skills and knowledge while providing an experience that could prove essential in a survival situation. Do not take it lightly, for those who complete it are well on their way to being their own ‘survivorman.’”

Guidelines for Advisors/Adult Leaders

The following activities are to be conducted within the scope of the directed programs. They are to be completed in a natural setting where the participants are stationary; the participants do not hike or move from their designated site. Venturers should only participate in Level 2 after successfully completing Level 1.

Advisors must provide appropriate supervision throughout the event ensuring that participants are aware of all boundaries. Participants must be clear on whether or not advisors will visually observe them during the event and how the advisor will approach them if necessary.

Prior to the activity, participants are to be briefed on the following guidelines:

- ☞ they must NOT take part in potentially dangerous activities during the event such as swimming, climbing, building large fires, hiking, etc.
- ☞ they must know what to do if approached by any unfamiliar person
- ☞ behavior expectations
- ☞ safety rules.

If, at any time, a participant is physically, mentally or emotionally unable to complete the activity, he or she will not be required to do so.

Overview:

Successful completion of Level 1 and/or Level 2 of the Survivorman Challenge demonstrates survivor skills and leads to the Outdoorsman and Exploration Awards.

Level 1 Requirements

1. In a group of 3 to 5, camp for two consecutive nights at a prescribed camping site, arranged with your advisor. Only the following equipment may be taken:
 - pocket knife
 - small day pack
 - one large orange garbage bag
 - sleeping bag, if participating in fall, winter or spring
 - flint and stone (with charred cloth) or fire bow
 - four litres of water per person per day, if not camped beside a lake or stream
 - one small pot if camped beside water
 - two energy bars per person
 - a small writing pad and pencil
 - one change of clothing
 - necker
 - single purpose camera or disposable camera (NO cell phones allowed)
 - First Aid kit
 - a small flashlight — if without an adult supervisor.
2. As part of your planning, complete a Risk Management Assessment for your event as per page 30 of the *Venturer Advisor’s Handbook*.
3. Research and practice all of the following skills before demonstrating each during your camping experience:
 - Emergency shelter building – build and sleep in an emergency shelter built with only natural materials found at the site (one plastic garbage bag may also be used).
 - Lay and light a fire without the use of matches/lighter/accelerant.

- Map the outline of your campsite, including cardinal points, without the use of a compass.
 - Measure the tallest tree in view from your shelter without the use of any man-made measuring devices.
 - Demonstrate, by taking a picture, one first aid use of your necker.
 - Find, and consume, at least one food source from nature. Only four litres of water per person per day and two energy bars per person can accompany each camper.
 - Keep a personal log of your camping experience from start to finish (personal reflection and things learned).
4. Upon completion of the Challenge, review/debrief your experience with your company/crew and advisor.

Completion of Level 1 of the Survivorman Challenge satisfies requirements for:

- Outdoorsman Award – Section 2
- Outdoorsman Award – Section 3, b #vi)
- Exploration Award – Section 2, #2

Note: Submit your log and photos to your council youth commissioner for possible submission to *Scouting Life Magazine!*

Level 2 Requirements

NOTE: Venturers should only participate in Level 2 after successfully completing Level 1.

1. **Alone**, between May and October, camp for one night at a prescribed camping site, arranged with your advisor. Only the following equipment may be taken:
 - pocket knife
 - small day pack
 - flint and stone (with charred cloth) or fire bow
 - two litres water
 - small writing pad and pencil
 - one change of clothing
 - necker
 - single purpose camera (NO cell phones allowed)
 - First Aid kit.
2. As part of your planning, complete a Risk Management Assessment for your event as per page 30 of the *Venturer Advisor's Handbook*.

3. Research and practice all the following skills before demonstrating each during your camping experience:
 - Emergency shelter building – build and sleep in an emergency shelter built with only natural materials found at the site.
 - Lay and light a fire without the use of matches/lighter/accelerant.
 - Map the outline of your campsite, including cardinal points, without the use of a compass.
 - Measure the tallest tree in view from your shelter without the use of any man-made measuring devices.
 - Demonstrate, by taking a picture, one first aid use of your necker (must be different from that used in Level 1).
 - Find, and consume, at least one food source from nature. Only two litres of water can accompany each camper (no food).
 - Keep a personal log of your camping experience from start to finish (personal reflection and things learned).
4. Upon completion of the Challenge, review/debrief your experience with your company/crew and advisor.

Completion of Level 2 of the Survivorman Challenge satisfies requirements for:

Rover Development and Practicum Stages – Outdoors

Note: Submit your log and photos to your council youth commissioner for possible submission to *Scouting Life Magazine!* X

— *As the creator of the international hit television series, Survivorman, Les Stroud has used his vast skills to demonstrate survival while alone in remote wilderness situations. Stroud created a new TV genre, "survival tv", and as a result, a world wide resurgence in the desire for wilderness knowledge began. A second hit series for kids entitled Survive This was also created by Stroud.*

— *Neal Rice, CYC Voyageur Council and Ian Mitchell, Scouts Canada's national program director for Scouts, Venturers and Rovers worked extensively with Les to develop these new Challenge initiatives.*



Photo: Laura Bombier