



RISK ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW for the RAIDER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Lawhorn Scouting Base - Molena, Georgia



1) PURPOSE

- a) To identify potential safety hazards/risks to cadets, instructors and spectators that are possible during the upcoming Raider Nationals Competition Weekend.
- b) To pose mitigation/elimination methods to give everyone the best chance of staying safe throughout the weekend.

2) POSSIBLE RISKS ITEMS

- a) Heat/Cold Related Issues: Individuals can experience excessive heat injuries due to improper clothing, lack of proper hydration, poor conditioning/physical preparation and/or inadequate diet, both leading up to and on the morning/afternoon of the competition. Parents/instructors should exert influence and ensure when possible cadets eat, dress and hydrate properly. HYDRATION STARTS 36-48 hours prior to a competition, not the morning of! Instructors should closely monitor heat related issues (heat exhaustion/heat stroke). Cold weather is also possible, especially late at night and very early in the morning. Cadets could experience cold weather injury due to improper clothing, becoming wet, failure to bring adequate warm bedding materials, extremely windy conditions. Plan in advance to look at the Raider Nationals website where the local weather forecast is located. Ensure cold weather sleeping items are a part of your travel gear if the weather is calling for low temps. Likely weather pattern is to have a night temp touching 35 degrees with daytime temps in the high 60's in the shade and sunny. All types of weather are possible. Do not trust the cadets to ensure their preparation and safety - this is the responsibility of the instructor as this can be a life or death situation.
- b) Campfires: The care and safe use of the fire pits used at the Raider Nationals is essential for your safety, and the safety of others. For those schools deciding to use the campground firepit, there are essentially three things dependent on safe care for any outdoor fire; 1)a safe place, 2)a safe size and 3)proper extinguishing of the fire after use. Additionally, once the fire is built, it is against the law in Georgia to leave it unattended for any reason and for any amount of time! All units who are camping must CAREFULLY review and discuss in detail with cadets the complete fire safety regulation posted on the Raider Nationals camping website homepage: http://www.thenationals.net/raider-fire_safety.htm.
- c) Vegetation: Cadets could have severe reactions to poison ivy, poison oak and other similar items. Show cadets both plants before or immediately after arriving at the site. Caution cadets not to touch either plant if necessary and possible.
- d) Lightning: Cadets could be struck or injured by lightning. Lightning is EXTREMELY rare in Georgia this time of year but should it occur, SNI will signal by radio the suspension of the event. All teams at that point should head for cover away from all trees, bathrooms near standing water and other places where a lightning strike would be likely and/or deadly. School bus/van, covered concrete areas in most all shelters, as well as the large dining hall would be best. Brief cadets where you will plan to meet in the event of lightning storms. If caught outside and exposed, Cadets will assume a position on their knees, bent forward with hands on their knees and with their knees close together. Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact it the ground. DO NOT lie flat on the ground. Cadets should seek depressed areas avoiding hilltops and high places, and seek dense woods avoiding isolated trees.

- e) Wild Animals/Insect Bites: Cadets should ensure they do not intentionally handle any wildlife. It is possible to see snakes, small rodents, squirrels, and other animals common to the woods in the southeastern United States. Additionally, spiders (likely), bees, ticks and mosquitos (unlikely) are possible. Ensure cadets and others know to get basic treatment for any insect bite immediately. Wash the wound and apply the proper dressing depending on the injury. Looking or swelling and redness and apply ice as needed.
- f) Vehicle Safety: Cadets could be injured by vehicles that are driven both in the camping area, in the parking area, as well as on the road by the camp. Pedestrians have ALL RIGHTS OF WAY AT ALL TIMES but that won't keep you alive if you are not aware of your surrounding and looking for traffic! Vehicles will travel no faster than 20 MPH in any area when cadets are present and slower when safety dictates. Seat belt use is mandatory and individuals ARE NOT PERMITTED to ride in the back of open pick-up trucks at any time.
- g) Lyme Disease: Cadets could catch lyme disease from infected ticks. Brief cadets to conduct tick checks using the buddy system each day during personal hygiene.
- h) Repelling Tower/Playground Equipment/Climbing.: This equipment is COMPLETELY OFF-LIMITS to all competing cadets at the Raider Nationals. Cadets should not climb trees, building or other structures. Small children traveling with your group are welcomed to utilize the playground equipment with parental supervision.
- i) Falls/Cuts/Nosebleeds/Related: Cadets may be injured by a fall during any event. Most importantly after a fall at the first convenient time, the school's instructor should speak with the cadet and physically look at the injury and treat as required. With any fall that maintains a possible head injury, please contact the on-site medic to ensure no concussion or other more serious injury has occurred. Any form of puncture wound should also see the event medic. Best way to reduce the chance of a fall and deep cuts is to be in good condition for the event, wear the proper footwear, and to ensure you have the opportunity to review the course and look for areas that may cause falls BEFORE your competition begins (hopefully the day before!).
- j) Bruises/Sprains/Strains/Related: Cadet could suffer a sprain, sprain or bruise through the normal course of competition. Bruises should be looked at and re-contact in the affected areas should be avoided. Sprains & Strains are tricky and range from: 1)Grade I (mild) sprain/strain involves some stretching or minor tearing of a ligament or muscle; 2)Grade II (moderate) sprain/strain is a ligament or muscle that is partially torn but still intact and 3)Grade III (severe) sprain/strain means that the ligament or muscle is completely torn, resulting in joint instability. Most commonly affected areas are ankles, wrists, fingers and even necks. Grade I injuries usually heal quickly with rest, ice, compression, and elevation (RICE). Therapeutic exercise can also help restore strength and flexibility. Grade II & III injuries are treated similarly but may require immobilization of the injured area to permit healing, with grade III sprains/strains require possible surgery to restore function.

3) SPECIAL POINTS OF EMPHASIS FOR SAFETY

- a) TRAVEL TO/FROM THE EVENT: Instructors who are driving, ensure you have sufficient rest the night prior to attending. Use rest breaks to stay fresh. Keep bus/van decorum at a dull roar.
- b) ROPE BRIDGE: Rocks/creek bed can be slippery and water levels can vary greatly depending on rainfall in the weeks prior to the event. All cadets should CAREFULLY review the event SOP to fully prepare a safe and solid rope bridge crossing. Use care running across the river.
- c) THE WALL: Raider Challenge teams do not execute anything involving the wall(s) in any event. However, if they wish to become proficient in it, these teams CAN practice using the wall in a safe manor and adult supervision. Explain strategies with cadets, use hands on spotting if needed. IF YOUR TEAMS DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT UPPER BODY STRENGTH TO NAVIGATE THE WALL, GET OFF OF IT. Again, practice and preparation are the keys to a safe trip over the wall. Litters do NOT go over the wall ever to mitigate unnecessary risk. Cadets should NOT fling themselves over the wall but should scale, hang and drop unless they have practiced a more advanced dismount. Once clear of the wall, cadets should practice removing themselves from the landing area.

- d) RAIDER GAUNTLET: The Raider Gauntlet course utilizes galvanized steel tunnels that all cadets must navigate through to complete the event. While the leading edge will be padded and the entire tube spray sanitized, general actions getting through these obstacles could pose risks of cuts and scrapes. THESE INJURIES SHOULD BE TREATED IMMEDIATELY AFTER COMPLETION! Vaults, tires and other items are more standard and careful execution should be sufficient to avoid injury. A judge with a radio will be placed in the woods by these tunnels to ensure any cadet with an injury can have medical help summoned.
- e) TEAM RUN: The team run has been moved AWAY from the vehicular traffic area. However, the course is now run largely on crushed shell traffic-free roadway that is not always perfectly flat or perfectly dry. Teams are given the option to run in sneakers or boots as the roadway is clear of debris. Should weather look rainy or if there has been recent rains making the course too wet, boots will be directed by the competition director for all schools before the event begins.
- f) FIREPITS: Without question, the largest single point of emphasis are the fire pits. AN INSTRUCTOR MUST BE ON-HAND AT ALL TIMES A FIRE IS ACTIVE WITHIN A FIREPIT - NO EXCEPTIONS! Failure to follow basic fire safety can result in your dismissal from the campgrounds without refund or recourse.
- g) BATHROOMS/SHOWERS: Along with cleanliness, bathrooms are places where slip/falls can be common, No horseplay in these areas, wear shower shoes to prevent mold/fungus and please be use common sense in all aspects of using the showers.
- h) ELECTRIC AT CAMPSITES: Standard campsites have electric power nearby. General safety around electricity should be understood by instructors and explained to youngsters who may not understand. Largest serious risks are electricity near water and fire hazards. Do not use any electricity near a water source for fear of electrocution. Do not overload extension cords or run cords under floor mats or blankets near combustible materials.

4) COURSE RISK MITIGATION / FINAL RISK ASSESSMENT

- a) The courses in use for the Raider Nationals events will be screened months in advance and event modifications will be put in place as soon as they are known to ensure teams have maximum planning time. Low limbs, loose tree trunks, ground holes and other dangerous materials and related items will be moved from courses or the courses themselves will be designed around these items. Specifically tricky items that remain will be identified with high contrast paint, flagged with tape and discussed in the Commander's Call to be held the morning immediately prior to the event.
- b) Final course risk mitigation will be performed several weeks in advance of the competition and then the days prior during final course set-up under the supervision of Raider National Subject Matter Expert and Competition Supervisor SFC (ret.) Ed Fincher, U.S. Army, formerly of Cedar Shoals HS and co-founder of the Raider National event. SFC Fincher maintains nearly two decades of Raider experience involving course design, team preparation, rule/manual interpretation and most important, all safety aspects involving Raider. Additionally Justin Gates, Competition Director - Sports Network International has a degree in physical education and has spent a lifetime as a sports official and youth sports coach. His expertise will be used largely to ensure course fairness in initial design is carried out, as well as making all final rulings for team penalty and disqualifications for the most serious rule violations.
- c) The best mitigation of risk can occur by walking the course the afternoon prior, mentally mapping out strategies to safely and effectively navigate the courses involved.
- d) Please remember all event judges have radios that can summon instructors, as well as the camp medics/ambulance personnel. Should a cadet, parent or instructors need to contact SNI for any reason, we will be located in the event HQ room (see map on website). We can also be contacted by any of these radios scattered throughout the facility.