

“CHILTERN 20” REPORT – 16th October 2004

Another highly successful annual County event was made even better by the fact that this was the best ever supported Chiltern 20 in its 23 year run. Nine more teams than last year turned up at Northchurch Community Centre ready for action and at two minute intervals a total of 150 Scouts were let loose into the hills. Most teams were accompanied by an adult, and these adults had a strict remit just to be responsible for the safety of the young people, and not to “lead” their teams.

We are delighted to report that every Scout who completed The Challenge was presented with not only their own achievement certificate, but also the Fitness Challenge Badge (one of four Challenge Badges which along with a personal challenge goes toward The Chief Scout’s Gold Award).

We are forever grateful to the large contingent of adult helpers who offered their services and expertise to make this both an enjoyable and a safe event for all participants. Special thanks go to our loyal and dedicated band of checkpoint marshalls and to our catering team who worked wonders to produce over 250 hot meals. It was also a pleasure to have had the skills of the County Mountaineering Team who braved the conditions on top of Ivinghoe Beacon giving practical sessions on aspects of navigation.

So what about the 150 young people who were the real stars of the show? Congratulations to the 16th Wood Green for winning The Challenge for the third year in succession, but with different personnel in each of the three years. This year they were involved in a sprint finish to the line with the 3rd Southgate “A” team breathing down their necks. In the final shake-up there was just 3 minutes separating the two teams. Even more remarkable was the fact that the runners-up finished the event in an excellent time and were unaccompanied by an adult, and were presented with not only the runner-up trophy but also a new achievement award as decided by the organising committee. 44 minutes later in bronze medal position came the 18th Edmonton “Col’s Cruisers”. This team showed huge improvement on last year’s efforts when they failed to finish as a team. The first nine teams home completed the event in under six hours which was consistent with last year’s times. At the other end of the spectrum, everybody got home before dark, again something of a record. The Challenge was all about Scouts plotting their way through 8 checkpoints and demonstrating the combined skills of teamwork, leadership, endurance, navigation and orienteering. Map reading skills improved as the day progressed.

Certificates and Fitness Challenge Badges were presented at the end by Steve Taylor who had flown in from Gilwell for the occasion.

All this bodes well for the rosy future of “The Chiltern 20 Challenge”. And definitely a good curtain raiser for “The Southern 50 Challenge” on 12th February 2005. Full details can be found on www.scouts-gln-southern50.org.uk.

Chris Foster
Chiltern 20 Committee