



Hoisting the flags for a win!

- Ropecraft
- Teamwork
- Competition
- Fun

Flags in the Minefield

An outdoor game for scouts

Flags in the Minefield is a game that requires teamwork to succeed. Teams of six scouts come to a prepared field and on starter's orders race to build sheer legs either end of a roped off 'minefield' and rig a line between such that a travelling pulley with hook can be steered by ropes to any part of the field. 3 flags are placed in the minefield attached to drums which must be rescued by hooking the drum and transporting it to the side. Scouts are 'blown up' if they enter the minefield. Ultimately, the 3 flags must be hoisted up a distant flagpole but one that requires all 6 scouts to be present. The winner is the team that hoists its 3 flags. All details of the game as played at the 2009 Highland Gathering in Harpenden are shown on the following pages.

This game (as played) is preparation intensive. The components must be pre made and laid out such that teams have everything to hand at the instant of need. Ropes must not tangle or else the competition spoils as one team suffers unfair time penalties for the organiser's mistakes.

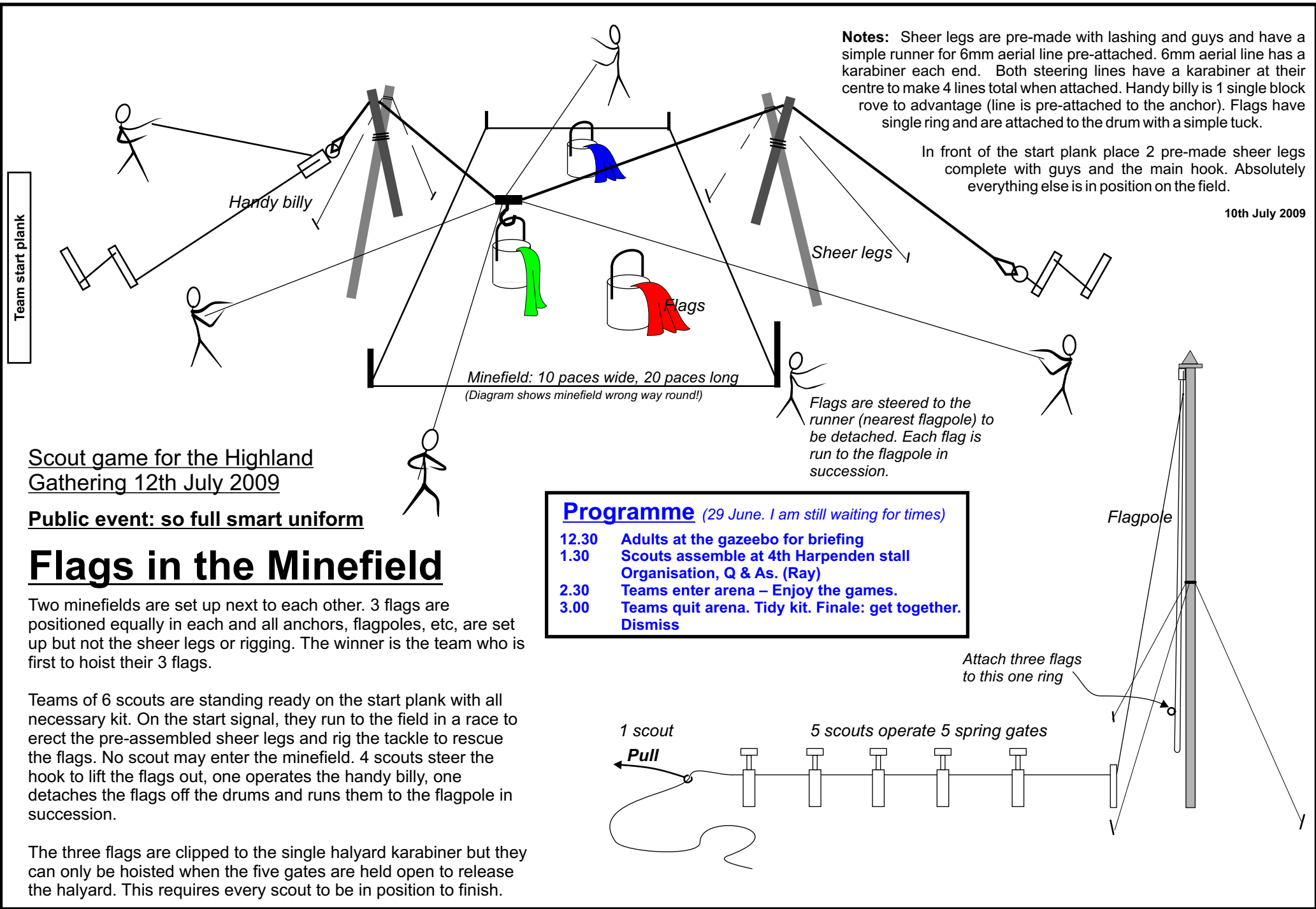
The construction of the flagpoles and the 5 gates are the most challenging pieces to make, the sheer legs being straightforward. Leaders wanting to make Flags in the Minefield should be creative and adapt what they have to the task. The 5 gates are designed to allow the halyard to move only when 5 scouts are in position to open them allowing the 6th to hoist the flags. But any device will serve so long as every scout in the team must be at the flag pole to hoist the flag. For instance, a leader could be stationed to hold the halyard to be released only when every scout is in position. Be creative, think of ways to make things work.

The best time from the start signal to the hoisting of the flags was 3 minutes, 4 seconds, achieved in practice by the 4th Harpenden.

As described, it takes one leader about an hour to layout one minefield. At the Highland Gathering, a Fellowship crew of 8 men took just 5 minutes to layout 2 minefields for the race.

Ray Vassie
Summer 2009





Notes: Sheer legs are pre-made with lashing and guys and have a simple runner for 6mm aerial line pre-attached. 6mm aerial line has a karabiner each end. Both steering lines have a karabiner at their centre to make 4 lines total when attached. Handy billy is 1 single block rove to advantage (line is pre-attached to the anchor). Flags have single ring and are attached to the drum with a simple tuck.

In front of the start plank place 2 pre-made sheer legs complete with guys and the main hook. Absolutely everything else is in position on the field.

10th July 2009

Team start plank

Handy billy

Sheer legs

Flags

Minefield: 10 paces wide, 20 paces long
(Diagram shows minefield wrong way round!)

Flags are steered to the runner (nearest flagpole) to be detached. Each flag is run to the flagpole in succession.

Scout game for the Highland Gathering 12th July 2009

Public event: so full smart uniform

Flags in the Minefield

Two minefields are set up next to each other. 3 flags are positioned equally in each and all anchors, flagpoles, etc, are set up but not the sheer legs or rigging. The winner is the team who is first to hoist their 3 flags.

Teams of 6 scouts are standing ready on the start plank with all necessary kit. On the start signal, they run to the field in a race to erect the pre-assembled sheer legs and rig the tackle to rescue the flags. No scout may enter the minefield. 4 scouts steer the hook to lift the flags out, one operates the handy billy, one detaches the flags off the drums and runs them to the flagpole in succession.

The three flags are clipped to the single halyard karabiner but they can only be hoisted when the five gates are held open to release the halyard. This requires every scout to be in position to finish.

Programme (29 June. I am still waiting for times)

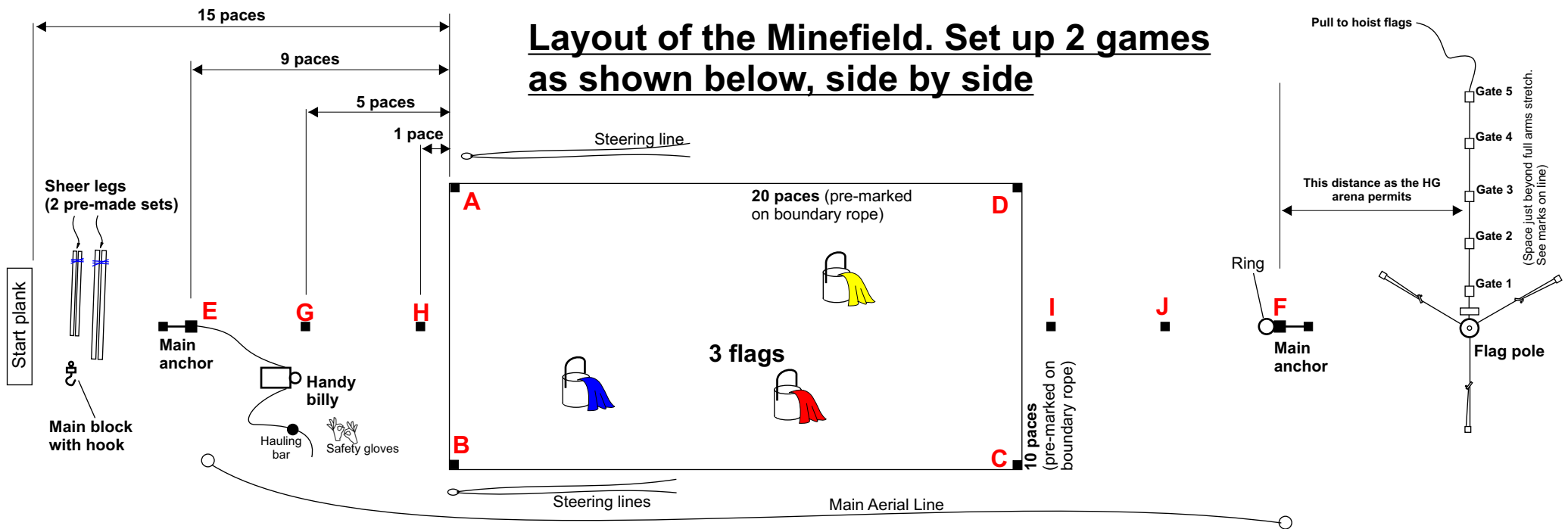
- 12.30 Adults at the gazebo for briefing
- 1.30 Scouts assemble at 4th Harpenden stall Organisation, Q & As. (Ray)
- 2.30 Teams enter arena – Enjoy the games.
- 3.00 Teams quit arena. Tidy kit. Finale: get together. Dismiss

Flagpole

Attach three flags to this one ring

1 scout Pull

5 scouts operate 5 spring gates



Adults prepare the field before the game

The time to set up is limited and we're on public show so the 2 minefields, the pegs for the sheer guys and the main anchors must be placed right first time and quickly. 4 adults per game layout will be required to bring it off and they must be briefed. (8 adults for the event). The kit is streamlined as far as possible. Breakdown and quitting the arena should take a minute.

All adults should have mallets to hand and all parts of the kit must be organised. On entry to the arena, the 2 flag poles should be ready assembled, carried by adults and erected under the leaders' directions.

Adult 1 and 2 (Flag): *Mallet required*

Direct the flag pole to the far end of the arena (opposite end to start planks). See other team's flag; site so that there is an equal run from both minefields. Erect (note guy positions) and place 5 gates in line, correctly spaced. Attach halyard and ensure all gear is running correctly. Set the flag ring low ready for attachment. See diagram to ensure accuracy.

Adult 3 (Minefield boundary): *Mallet required*

Locate 'Boundary Line' on bobbin and 4 pegs. From the near end of the arena, pace 15 walking paces towards the flag and hammer in peg A. Loop the start end of the boundary line over it and walk towards the flag. At roughly 10 paces see the 1st marker on line. Hammer in peg B. Turn right and walk roughly 20 paces to find 2nd marker on the line. Hammer in peg C. Unreel the entire boundary line to find the end loop and place it over the start at peg A. Pull the line taught to position peg D at 3rd marker on the line. The Minefield should be a rectangle 10 x 20 paces. If it isn't square at the corners – tough: there is no time for corrections!

Adult 4 (Pickets):

Mallet required
Position the main aerial line anchors E and F at 9 paces beyond each end of the minefield on the centre line. Attach the handy billy to E and a ring to F.

On the centre line, position pegs G-H and I-J for the sheer legs beyond each end of the minefield at 1 and 5 paces.

Adults when free (Position of equipment)

Find the 'Main Aerial Line' on bobbin and run it out quite straight along one side of the minefield. Find the 2 'Steering Lines' on bobbins and place them in a tight Vs with karabiners at pegs A and B, one each side of the minefield.

Position the start plank 4 paces beyond the anchor E. Place a long and short sheer-leg set in front of the start plank together with the main block with hook and gloves for the handy billy. Set 3 drums with flags attached in each minefield, same positions in each.

The game is ready for the teams of 6 to assemble on the start planks.

When scouts are ready – count down 5-4-3-3-1-GO!
Adults should quit the game site during the game and return to reset the kit between races. Timekeeper to keep times. (Clock stops when team hoists 3 flags). Leader per team required close by to ensure safety of kit and play.
rv. 5 July 09



Brief the scouts to ensure success

Flags in the Minefield

Useful pics



Simple sheer legs. Note the guide for the aerial line



Adjusting the aerial line tension



Layout. Flagpole not shown in picture



Three scouts begin to erect one sheer leg



Ropes and main block



The halyard gates. 5 in a row next to the flagpole



Pre-made sheer legs



The minefield boundary and flags on drums



The flagpole, halyard and gates