

WIDE GAMES

From the *NJLIC Staff Guide*, 1992, and the *Scoutmaster's Handbook*, Fifth Edition, 1959

A "wide game" is the term used for various types of games played in open countryside or woods involving two or more patrols. These games usually involve capturing opponents with a good deal of close-range or long-range combat. There may be some other formal objectives such as to occupy a specific area of ground or seize something deep in enemy territory and get back safely with it. Continuous action and simple rules are vital for a wide game.

Wide games are best played in open countryside or woods, but smaller areas can be used successfully. About one square mile of territory is ideal. Many wide games fail because the area of play is too small.

Twelve Elements of a successful wide game:

- Decide on the theme or story for the game. In order to create the most fun and get the best result, a wide game should be developed on a story or real life situation.
- No matter how great the game, much of the spirit is lost unless some imagination is used in the name of the game. It need not be impressive and something like "Operation will usually work.
- Study a map of your favorite territory and decide the positions for teams to start and move. Although the map may be sufficient, the actual area itself should be visited beforehand.
- Be sure that the strengths of the teams are about equal.
- Develop the rules of the game. No game is much fun without rules — in fact it ceases to be a game. But keep the rules of the game as simple and natural as possible. KISMIF.
- Decide on a method of capture — that is, how to put the opponents out of commission.
- Have equipment available or placed before the game starts.
- Decide upon the time for the start of the game, the finish of the game, and when the Scouts are to gather at a specified spot after the game to hear the results.
- Give instructions well before the game is to start. These can be given to the patrol leaders at a patrol leader council meeting or other gathering. Get the word out
- Be sure everyone is wearing suitable clothing for the terrain and the activity.
- Umpires or referees should be used. No matter how simple the game, some help here will be required.
- Count the players at the beginning and at the end of the game. Wide games have been known to generate a lost Scout.

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Where Wide Games are Played:

Open countryside or woods. At least one square mile of territory is needed. Most wide games fall because the area of play is too small.

Rules for Wide Games:

- Keep it simple and make it fun (KISMIF)
- Decide on boundaries (centerline should be unmistakable; road, stream, ridge, etc.)
- Agree on a rule for putting an opponent out of action, and on the rule for returning to action (this is important and must be included.)
- Length of game — time (1 to 2 hours)

Examples of Captures:

- Neckerchief hanging at least half out of hip pocket; when pulled out player is captured.
- Tie toilet paper or gauze around each player's upper arm; when pulled off player is captured.
- Tagging three times on the back.
- Small paper bags with flour; kill or capture is when bag is burst on opponent

Return to the Game:

- Players must be able to get back into game
- When a jail is used, it should be within 20 feet of the centerline.
- Prisoners can be released by touching of hands of teammate.
- Captured player must go to jail for specified length of time (5 minutes or so).
- Have a non-participant be official timekeeper.
- Player is out of commission for as long as it takes him to perform some agreed on task at the spot of capture (such as 50 sit-ups, tie specified knots, make specified bandages on himself, etc.)

Team Identification:

Both teams must be clearly identified

- Shirts and no shirts
- Caps and no caps
- Special arm bands
- T-shirts and scout shirts

Develop your Own:

Select themes and rules. Consider the possibility of having Generals, Majors, Captains, etc. with different point values. Add adventure and activity. Make it fun. Involve everyone.

For some ideas, see the NJLIC handout: "Types of Wide Games" on pp. 67-72.

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TYPES OF WIDE GAMES

Adapted from the *Scoutmaster's Handbook*, Fifth Edition, 1959, pp. 459-464. The original story lines date from the 1920's and 1930's. Though they may seem antique, use your imagination. The various types of wide game are readily adapted to the modern day, the past, the future, or to fantasy.

Most wide games may be divided into the following types (although many other classifications are possible):

Treasure Type — Each of two or more teams attempts to obtain a treasure and bring it to safety against the opposition of the other teams.

Seizure Type — Each of two teams attempts to bring a treasure from one spot to the other, at the same time trying to seize the treasure of the other team which is moving in the opposite direction.

Conquest Type — Each of two teams attempts to conquer a specified spot of ground defended by the opponents, at the same time keeping the opponents from conquering its own piece of ground.

Sample of Treasure Type Wide Game:

THE MAYAN TREASURE: A sealed envelope is given to each patrol leader. On the outside is written "To be opened at (time) o'clock at (start position) and read before your patrol." At the appointed time the patrol leader tears open the envelope, which contains a marked map sketch and the following message:

Story: I am the well known explorer Professor Phineas Dooley. It has come to my attention that an aviator flying over the Yucatan has spied a large ruin never before discovered. I have the suspicion that this ruin is that of the Mayan Palace of Oaxacaxco, and that it contains the famous lost treasure of the Mayas. I have therefore called you together so that we may set out and find the treasure. I have already secured provisions and weapons for this most dangerous expedition. But I have learned that our deadly enemies led by Doctor Marcus Enright are planning a similar expedition. They shall not succeed!

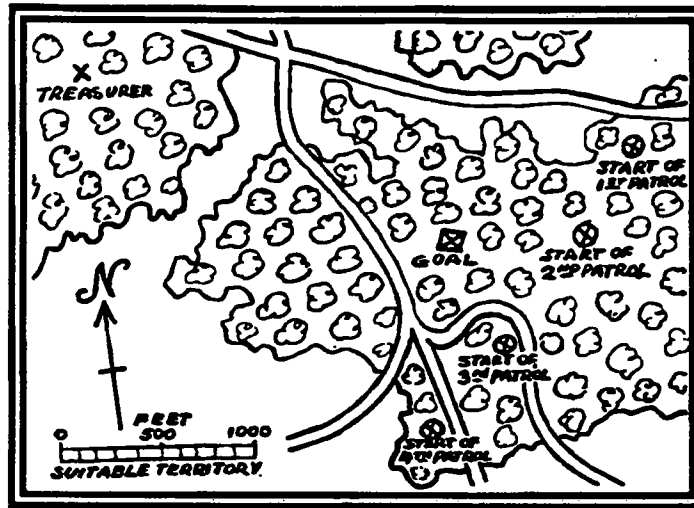
Object: We will proceed to the Mayan Palace (marked on the treasure map) where the treasure (packsack of stones) is buried, dig this up and transport it to our goal, Numa, where we shall be able to convert it into real money. We will do everything in our power to prevent our opponents from getting the treasure and bringing it to Numa.

Score:

Treasure found	10
Treasure possessed at end of game	20
Each opponent captured	2

Special Rules:

(Method of capture). Game starts at (time), stops at (time). Troop gathers at (place) at (time).



Wide Games — Treasure Type

Examples of Variations of the Treasure Type Wide Game

THE INHERITANCE: Each patrol leader is the son of a man who died ten years ago. On the tenth anniversary of his death each son receives from a lawyer a letter describing where the father buried his treasure, hoping that after ten years the old animosity between the sons would have disappeared. But it is worse than ever. Each son sets out with his own gang to find the treasure and prevents his brothers from getting it. The treasure must be brought to a bank for safety.

THE POLAR EXPEDITION: Each patrol is a group of polar explorers racing to the North Pole in competition with the other patrols. On the North Pole they will find the Rag which Admiral Byrd threw down from his airplane when crossing the top of the world. This flag (signal flag) must be brought back to the office of the geographical society before the explorers' claim can be acknowledged.

THE IDOL OF BULALONGA: Each patrol is a primitive tribe in the wilds of the lost continent. Through their medicine men they are informed that the tribe which finds the image of the heathen god Bulalonga and brings it back to the spot from which it was stolen by the pygmies, will forever after be in Bulalonga's favor. The image may be a staff decorated with a couple of neckerchiefs.

The treasure type of wide game may be combined with the features of a regular treasure hunt.

Sample of Seizure Type Wide Game

THE GEMS OF MUSTAPHA: A sealed envelope is given to each of the two team leaders to be opened at a specified spot at a specified time. Each envelope contains a marked map sketch, and one only of the following two messages:

Message for TEAM 1 (to be opened at position 1 on the Map).

Story: We are the Luxor Desert Police. The rich Arabian, merchant Mustapha, has come to us has asked for an escort to take him through the desert. He carries with him a treasure of gems (packsack filled with leaves) and has learned that the notorious bandit Ali Baba is on the rampage. Our spies have discovered that Ali Baba's right-hand man (with turban) still carries the loot from the bandits' last robbery (also a packsack filled with leaves).

Object: We shall escort Mustapha, with his treasure, safely from Aswan (position 1 on the map) to Kharga (position 2 on the map). And while we are out in the desert, we shall use the opportunity to destroy the robbers and recover the loot.

Score:

Mustapha brought to Kharga	10
Mustapha's treasure brought to Kharga	20
Ali Baba's right-hand man caught	10
Ali Baba's loot brought to Kharga	20
Each opponent captured	2

Special Rules: (Method of capture). Mustapha wears a neckerchief turban. He must carry his treasure throughout. If treasure is captured it may be recaptured. Game starts at (time). Stops at (time). Troop gathers at (place) at (time).

Message for TEAM 2 (to be opened at position 2 on Map)

Story: I am Ali Baba, and you are my gang of desert bandits. We have learned that Mustapha, the rich merchant who always wears a turban, is going to travel through the desert . He carries with him a treasure of gems (a packsack filled with leaves) and has therefore asked the Luxor Desert Police for an escort. But this does not scare us. We have another important job before us. The loot from our last robbery (also a packsack of leaves) which is carried by Abdul, my right-hand man, must be brought to safety.

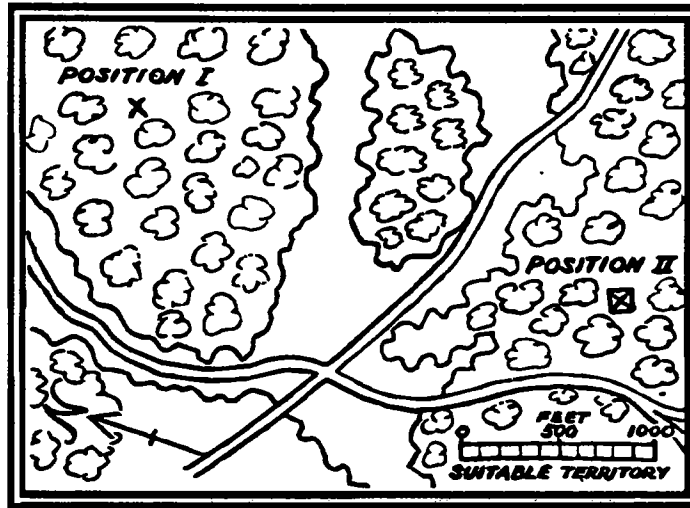
Object: We shall steal Mustapha's treasure and destroy his police escort. And also, we shall bring Abdul and our loot from here (position 2 on the map) to our secret hide-out right in the town of Aswan (position 1 on the map).

Score:

Abdul brought to Aswan	10
Abdul's loot brought to Aswan	20
Mustapha captured	10
Mustapha's treasure brought to Aswan	20
Each policeman captured	2

Special Rules: (Method of capture). Abdul wears a neckerchief turban. He must carry the loot throughout. If it is captured it may be recaptured. Game starts at (time). Stops at (time). Troop gathers at (place) at (time).

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Wide Games – Seizure Type

Examples of Variations of the Seizure Type Wide Games

THE THREE MUSKETEERS: One team is The Three Musketeers and their helpers, the other Cardinal Richelieu and his men. The Musketeers are on their way to Buckingham in England with a code message from the Queen in Paris when they learn that the Cardinal's men have stolen the secret code from Buckingham and are proceeding toward Paris with it. The Cardinal's men in turn have discovered that the Musketeers have a message which decoded would help Richelieu gain his aims. The Musketeers attempt to get the code and the code message both to Buckingham, while the other team tries to get them to Paris. Count extra if the team brings in the decoded message. Code and message are written on large pieces of heavy paper and enclosed in cardboard mailing tubes, to be carried in full view.

THE SACRIFICE TO BALA: The teams are two primitive and barbaric tribes. Each has an idol to whom must be sacrificed a human offering of a child of the enemy tribe. The warriors of each tribe have successfully stolen a child their village. Each team of warriors, of course, wants to rescue the stolen child of its own tribe and also bring home for its idol the enemy child. The "child" is a dummy (a stuffed sack) which must be carried on a stretcher.

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Sample of Conquest Type

THE TRIP TO MARS: A sealed envelope is given to each of the two-team leaders to be opened at a specified spot at a specified time. Each envelope contains a marked map sketch, and one only of the following two messages:

Message for TEAM 1 (to be opened at location 1 on the Map).

Story: I am the famous aviator, Colonel Bud Stoop. With you, my brave fellow airmen, I have just completed a flight to Mars where we have landed our stratoplane (indicate by placing four signal flags on 5-foot poles at the corners of a 5-foot square). Unfortunately, in landing we smashed our water tank, and since there are no rivers on Mars, we are in a dangerous situation. We have seen from the air NE from here one of the portable tanks in which the Mars people store their artificial water, but it will be dangerous to reach it since Mars men are violent enemies of Earth people.

Object: We must capture the water tank (marked by four 5-foot poles to which are tied signal flags which must be pulled out) and bring it to our stratoplane. At the same time we must defend our plane. If the Mars people take it, we shall forever be prevented from returning to Earth again.

Score:

Water tank captured (all 4 poles).....	20 points
Stratoplane held intact.....	20 points
Each Mars man captured	2 points

Special Rules: (Method of capture). If the stratoplane is captured it may be recaptured. Game starts at (time). Stops at (time). Troop gathers at (place) at (time).

Message for TEAM 2 (to be opened at position 2 on the map)

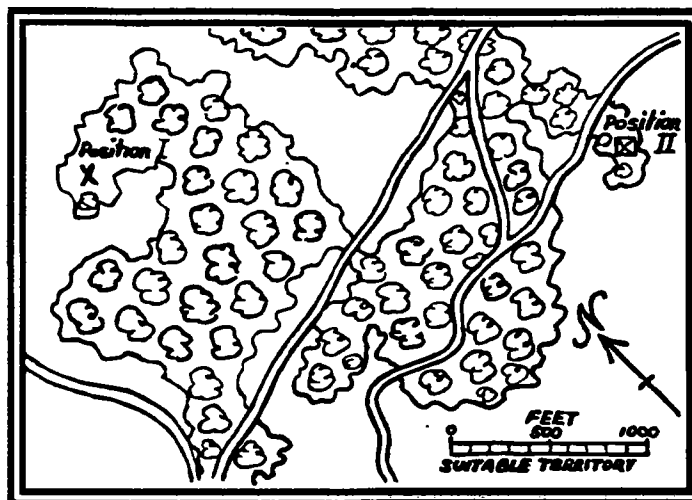
Story: I am the king of Mars. Some of the vicious Earthmen have just landed on our globe SW from here. They came in one of their great metal birds that rumbles like a volcano. My spies have just told me that they are looking for water and that they may try to get one of the tanks in which we store our artificial water (indicate by placing four 5-foot poles to which signal flags are tied with the poles placed at the corners of a 5-foot square).

Object: We must prevent them from capturing our water tank. With its water they will live and kill us all. But they will not succeed. We shall take their metal bird (marked by four signal flags which must be pulled up and brought into the water tank square) and we shall destroy every one of the ghastly Earthmen.

Score:

Metal bird captured (all 4 poles).....	20 points
Water tank held intact	20 points
Each Earthman captured	2 points

Special Rules: (Method of capture). If the water tank is captured it may be recaptured. Game starts at (time). Stops at (time). Troop gathers at (place) at (time).



Wide Games — Conquest Type

Variations of Conquest Type Wide Games

COMMANDOS: Two tiny countries are trying to get into the good graces of one of the big countries. To do this, each of them establishes a radio tower (three 20-foot poles, lashed together in tripod style, with a streamer at the top), and begins a barrage of propoganda, praising itself and defaming the other country. Each government decides to stop the propoganda of the rival county by sending into it a team of men on a commando raid, for the purpose of destroying its radio tower (team to bring home evidence of its destruction in the form of the streamer from its top).

THE FIGHT AT THE STOCKADE: One team is Indians, the other settlers. The Indians attack the stockade and defend the Indian village, the settlers the opposite. To make it more exciting, two settlers may have been left in the stockade. The Indians are then to prevent them from getting out and joining their friends, while the settlers are to bring them aid. Stockade and Indian village are indicated with four poles.

A Final Note

Scouts take to wide games readily and will soon start clamoring for more. And, fortunately, more are always available. All that is needed to create them is imagination with which to clothe the simple skeletons suggested above — and to design others.