



Pinebranch

First Pinelands

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LETTER FROM PINEBRANCH COMMITTEE

Hello readers,

Another term has very quickly flown by!

These past few months have been packed with Scouting activities. With our troop currently having three Springbok Scouts, there has been plenty of Springbok activity happening, meaning our weekends have been filled with camps, projects and lots of Springbok adventures. While this term was short, it definitely packed a punch!

I'm also really glad to see our attendance picking up. We've been seeing more and more Scouts in the hall each week, and it's starting to get a little squished during parade, a problem we are very happy to have! It's great to see the troop growing and becoming more active again, and I'm excited to see what the rest of the year has in store for us.

Yours in Scouting, Tiya (Malathi Mistry)

The Scouts of 1st Pinelands fully create this termly magazine. The Pinebranch committee consists of 7 Scouts, Anna-Grace "Sylver" Skead, Divya "Modzi" Jonnalagadda, Iyaad "Maverick" Pandie, Malathi "Tiya" Mistry, Malachi Burt, Josh "Endir" Botha, Yameen "Deezil" Jheebay, and Ana-Sofia Badroodien. We thank everyone who has contributed to this magazine **If you are interested in joining or have any questions/requests for the Pinebranch Committee, please message Tiya (+27 72 415 2441)**



GORDONS SHIELD 2026

Gordons shield is the annual Scout Camping competition held in the Western Cape at Hawequas Scout Adventure Centre. Teams compete by building campsites overnight as well as completing bases and STA's.

TEAM 40

Gordons this year for team 40 went very well and was extremely fun. There was a great team dynamic with different people doing different jobs so the workload was spread evenly and no one was putting substantially more effort than anyone else.

First there was Luke, the PL and our Shrek, running the patrol through the competition with great leadership skills and directing. He carried us through the competition and truly we could not have done it all without him and his leadership.

Next is our P2 Anna. She was our Fiona and cook as well as, when she had time, helping with general tasks. Thanks to Anna's amazing cooking we came first place in the competition's new cooking award bracket which is amazing. Her food was truly delicious and well done and everyone in the patrol loved it.

Next is Lexi, our P3 and Donkey. Lexi was in charge of our STA's for the competition and she did an amazing job of it through putting in a lot of time and hard work, even at times stretching periods of multiple hours sitting in a tent working on STA's without going outside at all. In the end all her hard work was worth it as we got 3rd place in the competition's new STA bracket, a substantial accomplishment adding to our list of wins for this year.

Next is Matthew, our P4 and Fairy Godmother. He did mostly odd jobs throughout the competition helping with a little bit of everything, from STA's to cooking to construction and bases, acting as a jack-of-all-trades when something needed getting done.

Then next are our builders being our P5 Oliver (or Lord Farquaad), our P6 James (or Pinocchio), and our P8 Jasper (or Puss in Boots). Together they did a large amount of the campsites construction, building most of our structures like our notice board and dresser and doing a very good job at it, with our structure inspectors from the morning telling us that they were very well constructed and stood nicely.

Last but definitely not least we have our P7 Clara, or the Gingerbread man. Mostly being a general assistant around the campsite, helping others with their jobs like cooking or STA's.

All in all this team worked extremely well together, and it was because of this cohesion that 1st Pinelands has brought home the Gordons Shield camping competition for the second year in a row, tying for 1st place with 2nd Bergvliet in what was an amazing competition, with many laughs, shenanigans and a great deal of general all-round fun. Now all that's left is to see if we can keep up the good work and claim the shield for a 3rd year in a row come the 2027 Gordons Shield camping competition.

Parsons

GORDONS SHIELD 2026

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TEAM 15

Wow, what an amazing competition!

My team: Iyaad, Josh, Ana-Sofia, Jaime, Iris, Samuel, Laasya and I (Team 15) were camping on the terraces, much to everyone's relief.

We arrived at Hawequas and quickly unpacked our equipment from the trailer, lugging a billion different ropes up to our campsite. We finally got all our equipment there and then went for our uniform inspection (we were in tip-top shape, of course!).

We then went back to our campsite for a lot more waiting.

Eventually, opening parade happened, and as we lined up with hundreds of other Scouts, you could feel the excitement brimming in the air.

As soon as parade came to a close, we quickly ran back to our campsite, and the competition began. Our team started constructing immediately. A table and two tents were slowly emerging from our equipment.

Some of our team members rushed off to bases, quickly completing the Scouty tasks which we had trained for.

We began preparing a literal feast for supper: pesto rice, veg stew, fried chicken, and gingerbread men. The smell of food was soon wafting through our campsite, and I could hear way too many stomachs rumbling.

We quickly got into character and donned our costumes. (I was Gingy, of course.)

Dinner was so delicious we barely had to wash the Dutchie because it got scraped clean!

Our Scouter enjoyed the food, and we enjoyed the long conversation.

After that, we had night bases and SO much construction. I don't think I can look at a rope the same way ever again.

Now, at a Gordons competition, sleep is not always needed... (Parents, this is a warning for the next sentence.)

We got 1 and a half hours of sleep total... yay.

The next morning, we woke up and had inspection, which we completed in true 1st Pinelands style. Puma would be proud of our patrol box (I hope).

After that, we had completed all our construction, so we literally only had STAs left to complete. Which we did with style.

My favourite is by far the Pinocchio puppet. It was way too funny.

Overall, I had such an amazing experience. Gordons is definitely my favourite competition. I had so much fun with my patrol and with the other troops, and I can't wait for next year!

Tiya

GORDONS SHIELD 2026

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YUROS SPRINBOK CAMP

Oliver's Springbok Sailing Camp took place from 16–18 July, and it was an unforgettable experience filled with challenges, learning opportunities, and plenty of fun.

On the first day, we arrived bright and early, excited to get started. Before heading onto the water, a few of us worked together to build a flagpole, which was later used for the opening parade. After the parade, we were briefed on what to expect over the weekend before changing into our sailing gear.

It was finally time to get the boats into the water and set off. We spent the morning sailing and learning how to pull. At first, pulling wasn't easy, and it took a bit of practice to get into the rhythm, but once we figured it out, it became one of my favourite parts of the camp. It was an amazing feeling working together as a team while enjoying being out on the water with one another.

After returning to shore, we prepared lunch before spending the afternoon taking part in different bases. We learnt useful skills such as self-defence, survival tips, knot tying, and many others. We also had time to relax, play volleyball, and get to know each other better.

On the second day, we received the disappointing news that the vlei had been closed. We had all been looking forward to spending more time on the water, so it was definitely not what we had hoped for. However, thanks to Oliver and the staff's quick thinking and planning, the day was still packed with exciting activities which included an obstacle course where great team work was required. We completed more bases, learnt new skills, played games, and signed off many requirements for various badges.

That evening was one of the biggest highlights of the camp. We gathered around the campfire, where each patrol performed skits, everyone joined in singing songs, and we enjoyed the warmth of the fire together. Scouts from Hermanus also joined us, which brought even more fun and laughter, making the campfire an unforgettable experience.

On the final day, we completed a few more bases, finished signing off badge requirements, packed up camp, and headed back home.

Looking back, my favourite part of the camp was getting the chance to pull on the water, even though it was cut short because of the vlei closure. I also loved the campfire, as it lifted everyone's spirits and created a great atmosphere. Another highlight of camp for me was making new friends. We shared stories, learnt more about one another, and encouraged each other throughout the camp and on our Scouting journeys. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the camp. Although things didn't go exactly as planned, everyone made the best of the situation, and it turned into an experience full of learning, teamwork, laughter, and tons of memories.

Sofia Badroodien

YUROS SPRINBOK CAMP



DAIAHS SPRINGBOK CAMP

This July, a group of our Scouts packed their bags and headed to Hawequas Scout Camp in Wellington for Daiah's (Zoe DeRoo) Springbok Camp. Running from the 5th to the 7th of July, the camp was organised by Daiah alongside Scouters Tiya, Sylver and Parsons. With two patrols, the Zebras and the Eagles, we took part in a makeshift Troop Camp filled with competition, teamwork and plenty of memorable moments.

Sunday

After meeting at the Scout Hall, we travelled to Hawequas and got straight to work unloading equipment and setting up camp. Headquarters was established near the parade ground before both patrols began moving gear into their campsites and starting campsite construction.

The afternoon was packed with Spare Time Activities (STAs), bases and plenty of opportunities to put our Scouting skills to the test. After dinner, we headed off for another round of bases before ending the evening around a warm cup of hot chocolate.

It didn't take long for us to discover that we weren't the only ones camping at Hawequas. A rather determined family of baboons seemed to take a special interest in our campsites and HQ! Before long, the Scouters had developed the famous "Baboon Signal." Whenever it was called, the Scout boys would sprint into action, waving equipment and shouting to encourage the baboons to move along, all under the leadership of Parsons and his trusty slingshot. Thankfully, both our food and our camps survived the weekend!

Monday

Monday began with the much-anticipated morning inspection before everyone headed off to more bases and continued improving their campsites. Lunch was prepared by the First Class members from each patrol and was a well-earned break after a busy morning.

Of course, the baboons couldn't resist making another appearance, but by now everyone knew exactly what to do whenever the Baboon Signal sounded.

The afternoon continued with Advancement activities before we enjoyed dinner and welcomed Paarl Scout Group for what would be Daiah's final campfire as a Scout. The evening was filled with new songs, entertaining skits and a few hilarious impersonations that had everyone laughing. To finish off the night, we toasted marshmallows over the fire, enjoyed another cup of hot chocolate and headed off to bed after an unforgettable evening.

DAIAHS SPRINGBOK CAMP

Tuesday

Before we knew it, the final day had arrived. After the last morning inspection, both patrols packed away their campsites, organised equipment and worked together to leave the campsite looking spotless. We then enjoyed a big group lunch, giving everyone a chance to relax before parents arrived to collect us.

Back at the Scout Hall, Final Parade brought the weekend to a close with the announcement that the Eagles Patrol had won the camp. It was a fitting end to an incredible weekend and an especially meaningful moment as this camp completed one of Daiah's final requirements for her Springbok Award.

Overall, the camp was a huge success and an experience I thoroughly enjoyed alongside my patrol. It was filled with learning, laughter and teamwork, and it was clear how much effort Daiah and the Scouters had put into making the weekend such a memorable one. I wish Daiah all the very best as she completes her Springbok journey and look forward to seeing what she accomplishes next.(*´□`*)

Tussan (Michaela Muthuray)



DEENOS SPRINGBOK CAMP

This term I attended a camp led by my Patrol Leader, Luke, as part of his Springbok advancement. It was a really enjoyable camp and gave us the chance to spend time together as a team while taking part in a whole load of different Scout activities.

Throughout the camp we took part in activities designed to develop our teamwork, leadership and general Scouting skills. These included pioneering, physical training, astronomy and even dance.

One of the things I enjoyed most was being able to work together with the rest of the team. A lot of the activities required us to communicate properly and help each other out. It was a good reminder that you can't always do everything yourself, and sometimes the best way to get something done is to work as a team.

It was great, we learnt loads and had a great time, however there were a few challenges.

One of the biggest challenges we faced was the baboons. They came into our camps to steal food and pretty much anything else they felt like taking. This meant we had to be especially careful about where we left things and make sure our food was properly secured.

Although the baboons were a serious nuisance at the time, they also became one of the funniest parts of the camp. There was always someone keeping an eye out for them, and whenever they appeared, everyone suddenly became much more interested in what was happening around the campsite.

Apart from the baboons, there was another rather undesirable challenge. One that was much less enjoyable than chasing baboons.

Rain.

Rain gets everywhere. And when you're sleeping in tents, walking around outside and cooking food in the open, it is nothing short of miserable.

Despite all of that, we managed to get through it. In a way, the difficult parts made the camp more memorable.

It also gave us a chance to build stronger relationships with the other members of our team. Spending several days together, working through challenges and doing activities together is a very different experience from simply seeing each other at normal Scout meetings. We got to know each other better, had plenty of laughs and made memories that I'm sure we will remember for a long time.

A big congratulations to Luke for making the camp happen as part of his Springbok advancement. It was a great experience for everyone who attended, and I think we can all agree that we learnt a lot, had a lot of fun and came away with some brilliant memories.

By Malachi Burt

DEENOS SPRINGBOK CAMP



UPTON SHIELD

On the 19th of July 2026 the junior hiking competition, Upton Shield was held. Photos of you who do not know, Upton is an annual competition in which the whole of the Western Cape region may take part. Each troop may enter as many teams as they want. A team consists of four junior scouts (under 14 1/2 years old). Each team hikes around, from base to base. At each base there are required to perform a scouting skill, they are then marked on how well they can do that skill. The team at the end who has the most points wins.

The skills are things like mapping, first aid, knots and teen building activities.

This year it was held at the Alphen greenbelt in constantia. In past years there has been a set loop which everyone hikes around. There are bases stationed on the loop. However, this year it was more of an orienteering event. Each team received a map with different bases all over it. The bases opened and closed at different times. From there the teams could try to complete as many bases within the time limit.

First pinelands entered one team, who came 8th overall in the competition. Here is some feedback from the team that went.

Clara Lugt (PL)

I really enjoyed it and I'm really happy that we came 8th overall. It was quite a challenge to get to as many of the bases as possible before they closed. One thing I think we could improve in is that if we hike slightly faster and so get to more bases.

Jasper Nye (P2)

Optimus year was really well organized and different from last year, I was saying it was more like a wide game and could have had more hiking aspects. The weather was cold and moist but otherwise pleasant.

Bella Welby - Solomon (P3)

Upton was really fun, especially with the rain, although it was more of a walk than a hike. But it was so much fun and made so many new memories.

Timo Gieser (P4)

Upton was really fun with plenty of practice for our skills and lots of bases. We also came 8th which was really fun.

On the whole I think our team did really well and worked together nicely. One of our favorite bases was where you had to get a can full of water out of a circle with only ropes and staves. A challenging base for us was ground to air signals, with flags. But I think we were really world prepared and did amazingly well.

By Clara Lugt



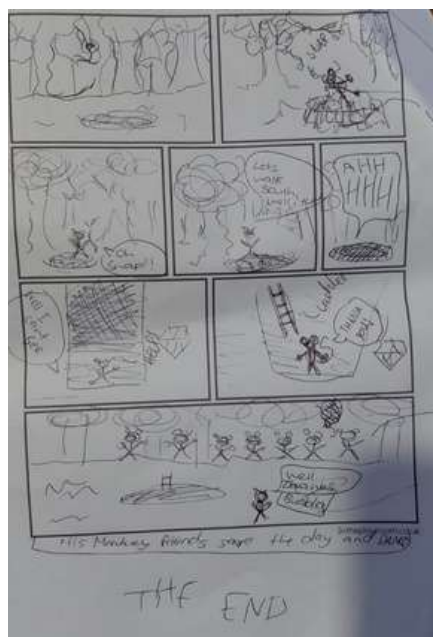
PL NIGHT

On the 28th September we had PLs night. This term we had to complete in various different bases. We had stalk the lantern with a twist. Iyaad added special rules to make it more complicated than it needed to be. Then we had a base in which we learned about disabilities through different exercises where we couldn't use a specific part of our bodies to do a task. We had a base where we needed to use a beef gun to shoot at spoons. Then we had to make a comic strip about Tarzan. I personally was very proud on my patrol, Lexi (who is my petrols P2 currently) managed to handle everything in stride and confidence. I know she will be a great PL one day. PLs evening was definitely an evening to remember.

Divya 'Modzi' Jonalagada



TARZAN COMICS



ISLAS CUB JOURNEY

My Cubs Journey

This year was my first and last year of Cubs. I've enjoyed it very much. At cubs I've been part of something bigger than my usual school friend group. At first it was hard for me to get used to new people and new traditions. My favourite cub memory was the Cecilia Forest hike before I was invested. I was very disappointed when I couldn't team up with a girl, but I quickly realised that it didn't matter. The views were astonishing! When we came to the waterfall it felt like we were standing in front of a computer's lock screen! It was beautiful!

Written by Isla Jooste

