

First Rally

Introduction

This factsheet is meant as a short guide for anyone who hasn't attended a SSAGO rally before. As each rally is different, this factsheet will only cover the basics of what to expect during a rally.

What to expect

As there are three rallies a year autumn, spring and summer, the weather tends to be quite different, with the autumn and spring rallies tending to be very cold especially in the evenings, therefore remember to bring plenty of warm clothes. There is a kit list at the end of this document which lists recommended equipment that you should bring with you. There could be over 200 students at rally so be prepared for a rowdy yet fun weekend.

Prior to rally

You need to book on to the rally in advance using the website (rally.ssago.org). Booking opening will be announced through an email to all clubs and on the SSAGO Facebook group. Some activities will book out quickly so if there is something you really want to do then it is advised you book on as soon as possible.

When booking on you are required to give emergency contact information as well as your date of birth and any medical conditions. This is to ensure the rally team has all the necessary information in case of emergency. You will not be able to book onto rally if you leave any box unfilled on the booking page. You are also able to select your Saturday afternoon activity when you book as well as notifying the rally team of any dietary requirements so you can be catered for at the event.

Getting to rally

There are many ways of getting to a rally, the main ways that are catered for are by minibus, car and train with the rally staff offering pick up from the local station. Keep an eye on the rally website for more information about which station to use. It may also be an idea to contact other local clubs to you as they might be using their own transport and may have spare spaces for you. Contact details can be found in the 'Club Directory' on the SSAGO website.

Reps' Meeting

If you are from a new club then one member of your committee should attend the Reps' Meeting which is likely to be held on either Saturday or Sunday morning. A representative of each club present must attend this meeting. This is where policy changes are made and

members updated on any changes or progress of SSAGO. You should be sent an agenda for this before the rally and will be asked to submit a club report as well.

Rally Programme- Friday Night

Sign in and registration

Arrive on site and follow directions to sign in/registration. Here you will check in. Be sure to tell the rally staff if any of the emergency or medical information has changed since you booked onto the event. It is usual that you will be given a small programme of events for the weekend at registration as well as picking your team for the Saturday morning activity.

Supper

At some point in the evening supper will be served. If you are early to arrive you may have to wait for this and if you are very late the catering team may have headed to bed. This is usually something warm but not a large meal (perhaps soup, a hotdog or a jacket potato) so it is wise to have something a little more substantial before arriving.

It will be necessary that you provide your own cutlery and crockery (as stated in the kit list) and wise to leave this near the top of your bag in case you eat before pitching your tent.

Setting up camp

If it isn't obvious ask the staff at registration where you are to pitch your tent. It is best to get this up sooner rather than later in the evening!

Once your tent is pitched take a few minutes to set your bed up as it's easier now than after you've been to the campfire.

Campfire

Friday night's activity is a campfire so bring your own drinks and follow the noise to the campfire. Around the campfire you can expect lots of singing, shouting and talking, it's quite a relaxed atmosphere so you can come and go as you please.

Rally Programme-Saturday

Wake up and breakfast

You will be woken up at around 8 by some of the rally staff. This means that breakfast is ready so grab your cutlery and crockery and head off to breakfast. Once you've eaten there will be a washing up bowl placed nearby for you to wash your crockery.

Opening Ceremony

After breakfast you need to follow the directions to the opening ceremony. The opening ceremony will pretty much welcome you to the rally and give out any announcements that the rally team or national exec have.

Sometimes you will be taken offsite immediately after the opening ceremony and not return until after the barn dance. If this is the case you will need all of your eating equipment and barn dance costume sorted to be taken to the evening venue. The rally staff should inform you of this but it is worth checking with a member staff before the end of the opening ceremony if you are unsure.

Ensure you have your team name badge that you collected at registration with you are the opening ceremony as it is usual that at the end of this you split into your teams for the morning activity.

Saturday morning activities

The Saturday morning activity takes the form of a wide game/incident hike either on site or off site, you will need to ask the rally staff if it's going to be muddy so that you can decide which footwear to wear etc. During the morning activity there will be a number of bases/activities for your team to compete in; these are not always judged fairly and bribing of the officials is common place so feel free to bring some sweets.

Saturday afternoon activities

These are the activities that you will have chosen online whilst booking onto the rally. Depending on the activity you might need different equipment or clothing. I.e. an activity taking place indoors might require clean footwear, a hike will require decent boots or an activity taking place in a pub will require you to take off your neckerchiefs. Details of what you require should be given to you prior to rally, if you are concerned be sure to contact the rally staff beforehand.

Barn Dance

The barn dance is the chance for SSAGO members to show off their dancing skills and fancy dress costumes. You will be informed in advance of the location and any issues with regards footwear, alcohol etc. The barn dance takes place undercover; this may be in a building or in a large marquee type tent. There should be plenty of space to stand at the side to relax or to sit out a few of the dances to get your breath back! Don't worry about making a fool of yourself when dancing, everyone will be. Halfway through the dancing there will be a break for everyone to get dressed into their costumes, it will be announced that it is costume time! Those dressed up are asked to parade around and it is usual that the barn dance band will judge the best group and best individual costume.

Campfire

Same as the night before, it often starts before the end of the barn dance if the barn dance is on site so you can go and start singing if you have had enough dancing.

Rally Programme-Sunday

Wake up is the same as Saturday! After breakfast there is the Scouts and Guides own if you wish. This is your chance to take part in the faith aspect of Scouting or Guiding – the rally team will inform you of the location and time of it. If the rally you are attending is the spring rally then after breakfast there will be the SSAGO AGM where you get the chance to elect the next SSAGO Executive and the location of future rallies and balls. If it is the autumn or summer rally then it is likely to be silly games time, this means that you need to get into some old clothes as it could get messy. You will be informed of what to do during the games. You normally complete these in the same teams as the Saturday morning activities

Closing Ceremony

This is where the winners of the games and competitions are announced. Forfeits will happen to return club mascots. Any other announcements will be made, either by the rally staff or SSAGO executive.

After this is it is time to pack up and leave site. If you are catching a train be sure to see the rally staff on the Sunday morning to find out what time bus you will need to be on to get to the train station on time. You may need to take some time out of morning activities to pack your tent etc if you need to leave before or soon after the closing ceremony.

Kit List

As a rule you should take all the equipment listed below but check the weather before you set off to the rally and always be prepared for the worst as you're likely to be outside for most of the weekend. Below is not an exhaustive list but the bare minimum.

Tent
Roll Mat
Sleeping bag
Plate, Bowl, Mug
Knife, Fork, Spoon
Warm Clothes (layers work better than one thick single layer of clothing)
Hat, Gloves
Old trainers, walking boots
Barn Dance costume (sometimes clean shoes for venue)
Torch
Drinks Bottle
Drinks for around the campfire (check rules about taking glass bottles)
Change of clothes
Wash kit and towel
Waterproofs

More information

If you still need some information as to what to expect on a rally, feel free to contact the rally organisers, the SSAGO executive or someone who has been to a rally before.