

What if On Target day is cloudy? Having alternate plans

On Target is held on the third Saturday of July (and September in GCC) every year. This particular date gives us the best chance of clear skies and favorable weather conditions. During the many years that I have been involved with On Target, only once has cloudy weather made signaling with the mirrors impossible. All is not lost if inclement weather occurs on On Target day, however. Following are some thoughts concerning alternative plans if clouds prevent signaling:

The Mountain Top Ceremony (MTC) can still be held, making use of the letters from parents and church leaders. The symbolic nature of scaling a mountain as it relates to succeeding in life can be discussed. Objects can still be placed in a Time Capsule. Feelings and/or testimonies can still be shared. The young men could write letters to their parents, in response to those they received from their parents.

The ham radio operators can still communicate with each other. An in-depth exposure to amateur radio could be meaningful. The ham could discuss propagation, types of radios, how to obtain a license, Morse code, and other aspects of hamming.

Work could be done on merit badges such as Backpacking, Nature, Wilderness Survival, Camping, Hiking, Camping, Orienteering, etc. Varsity Letter activities could be carried out.

The scouts could perform service in the area of your encampment. Trail improvement, trash pickup and removal, the building of a mountaintop cairn, or erosion control are some possibilities.

Mountain games or activities could be held, such as Steal The Flag, Stick It To Me, orienteering, or map and compass work.

A mountain-top Court of Honor could still be held, with the awarding of merit badges or other accomplishments.

In short, a cloudy day does not doom this activity. At the very least, you will have enjoyed a wonderful camping experience in the mountains, having had an opportunity to share feelings and experiences in a beautiful setting. Be prepared with a "PLAN B" in case inclement weather occurs. We all need to exercise our faith and prayers that we might be blessed with clear skies and smog-free valleys on ON TARGET morning!

(Our thanks to Michael Taylor and his OT web site for the Utah Parks Council at <http://members.home.net/mdtaylormd/ontarget.htm>).