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SPEECH BY MR CHAN CHEE SENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY,
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, AT THE 1ST NATIONAL INTER-SCOUT
UNIT ORIENTEERING COMPETITION HELD ON SUNDAY,
6 NOVEMBER '77, AT 1.00 P.M. AT THE NATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE

Orienteering is a new sport in this part of the world and it is only practised by a few scout groups and a few organisations in Singapore. However, it is a popular weekend sport in Europe and Australia. The sport began some 60 years ago when Scandinavian cross-country skiers invented the sport to maintain physical fitness during snowless summers. This 1st National Inter-Scout Unit Orienteering Competition is the first of its kind to be held in Singapore and I am extremely pleased to see the 2101 Raffles Scout Unit organising on behalf of the Stamford District, this National Inter-Scout Unit Orienteering Competition today. It is an excellent way to introduce this sport, not only to the scout community, but to Singaporeans as well.

Basically, Orienteering is a combination of cross-country runs and map reading. It requires good map reading skills and stamina. Competitors are required to complete a set course and check in at pre-arranged points along the route. They are equipped with a map and a compass. The first team to complete the course with the best check-point scores wins the event. Time is added for each check-point missed or visited out of sequence. It takes a good navigator to search out every check-point without covering a few extra kilometres.

Scouting is one of the oldest youth movements in Singapore. It was established long before many of the present uniformed groups were even thought of. The scout movement helps in character development and the Scout Principle and Law constantly remind scouts to develop their character, be disciplined, have courage and help others at all times. Scouting also provides an exciting and healthy outlet for our young to satisfy their youthful spirit and

sense of adventure. It is indeed a wholesome activity where good and useful habits can be cultivated before bad habits creep in.

Scouts are expected to live up to their motto and be prepared for all circumstances. Since Orienteering as a sport helps participants develop physically, mentally and emotionally, it is a wholesome activity which develops alertness and self-reliance. For the young men who are going to do their National Service, this sport will certainly prove useful.

Singapore has a young population and youths have in them a spirit of adventure. They like to enjoy new pastimes and participate in new experience. This spirit will be put to good use in Orienteering because it adds a new dimension to the current interest in jogging and road-running. It is in fact as interesting and challenging as cross-country jogging and running. I sincerely hope that this 1st National Inter-Scout Unit Orienteering Competition will generate interest and be the fore-runner of other similar competitions to be organised by the scout community and other organisations in Singapore.

The participants today have run a course of approximately eight kilometres. I am sure they have had an enjoyable time figuring out the orientation of the check-points and they must have benefited from the spirit of working together with their team mates in trying to compete with the other teams. May I conclude by congratulating all the participating teams for having successfully completed the eight-kilometre run at this Competition and most of all, I congratulate the winners and the losers of this Competition. I am sure this Competition marks the start of many more Orienteering competitions to be held in the not too distant future.

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