

Bishops Epic 2023

Hiking and 24 hr Solo boxes – General Info

The departure date for the Epic is fast approaching and we need to start organizing the ‘food’ side of the Epic. Every boy is asked to prepare the following: two ‘three-day hiking packs’ and a ‘24 hr solo pack’. A slightly different plan is made for those boarders who are on bursaries – check with your house director. The first three-day hike is done with a staff member who will show the boys the ropes as far as cooking and organizing themselves is concerned: for the second hike the boys are on their own. We will supply all the base food for the other days – they will cook it and sometimes the staff do the cooking. The document: “Recommended Food List for Hiking and 24 hr Solo Boxes 2023”, outlines the recommended contents of the boxes. All these goods should be available at most of the larger retail outlets. Cost per day for the food listed comes in at around the same cost as last year ie R320 per day (based on purchases made at Pinelands Pick ‘n Pay). I also popped in to the local Woolworths and found a greater variety of tuna sachets which were cheaper than those at PnP! So shop around.

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Zip-loc bags and 2 litre ice cream tubs are an important part of food that is packed properly. It is recommended that crackers and Oreo’s, which break easily, go into the ice cream tub along with the cheese wedges (they squash easily) and hot drink goods. Then pack each day’s food into its own separate zip-loc bag and label the bags ‘Day 1’, ‘Day 2’ and so on. In addition to this, get rid of unnecessary packaging. The larger bag then acts as the rubbish bag when it has been used.

Please note the following:

- Each cardboard box must be carefully labelled on **ALL** six sides and firmly sealed with packing tape on each opening side.
- The boy’s surname and first name should be clearly visible on all the sides and top of the box as well as his group’s name and colour (Red or Blue) e.g. “Peter Jones: Sneeuwberg Blue”.
- There should not be any perishable items in the boxes for obvious reasons! Biltong and droewors must also be vacuum packed.
- No electronic goods should be packed – iPods and the like.
- For most groups, the hiking boxes need to include three breakfasts, three lunches and three suppers. The only exceptions for the **staff hike** are the 4 night out exceptions of Krakadouw Red and Sneeuwberg Red. For the **solo hike**, the 4 night exception is Apex Red and the 2 night out only exceptions are: Sneeuwberg Blue, Sneeuwberg Red, Tafelberg Blue and Tafelberg Red.
- There are two reasons for the exceptions. Firstly, some groups hike the same route and so the one starts in the late afternoon the day before the other. Secondly, the hiking groups hiking in the last rotation, spend one night less out in the mountains.
- The 24 hr solo box needs one breakfast, lunch and supper.
- Items like spare batteries and spare sun screen (in a zip lock bag please – they do leak!) can be packed into whichever of the solo or hiking box your son will access first (Sneeuwberg, Krakadouw and Tafelberg do their 24 hr solo prior to their second hike).
- These details are summarised on the next page.

| | | Nights out for all groups | NIGHTS OUT – Exceptions | | | | | |
|------------|--------|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| | | | Kdouw Red | Apex Red | Sberg Blue | Sberg Red | Tberg Blue | Tberg Red |
| STAFF HIKE | Bkfst | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| | Lunch | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| | Supper | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| SOLO HIKE | Bkfst | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Lunch | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| | Supper | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 24 hr SOLO | Bkfst | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Lunch | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Supper | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Each boy will need his own knife/fork/spoon, mug and plate (bring along a bowl-type-plate from which you can eat cereal as well as regular meal) and a billy-can (pot with lid) to boil water and cook food – we suggest you buy a Hart Aluminium pot. Bear in mind that there will be one gas cooker between two boys for the hikes – we will give these out when equipment, jackets etc are handed out in the preparation week. During the solo time each boy will have a gas cooker to himself.

Breakfasts

It is highly likely that breakfast will happen after two to three hours of walking, this to take advantage of the cool part of the day. We therefore recommend that boys pack an energy bar as a fill up snack as ‘first breakfast’. We recommend a packet of premixed muesli (Pronutro, muesli, milk powder and sugar) for breakfast. On the other hand, you can find some retailers who sell sachets of muesli or Future Life, but then you still need to make a plan with milk and sugar. Boxed milk is a heavy option – not recommended. If you premix, you can literally eat out of the plastic bags (zip lock are best) then all you have to do is clean a spoon! The advantage of a premix (recommended) is you can try out a helping before Epic and see if it is sufficient. Don’t guess and fill up a zip lock bag unnecessarily – weigh out a normal helping and use that as a guide. Some find the Oat-so-easy is best as all you have to do is add water – nothing else. There is usually time to make tea/coffee/hot chocolate at breakfast and so maybe a rusk or biscuit to go with the hot drink will help make for a filling breakfast.

Lunches

Pack food which doesn’t need much preparing. A couple of ideas:

- Provita/ Cream crackers/ Salticrax (placed in an ice cream container) with cheese wedges, marmite (small plastic bottle only), mussels, tuna (John West or Cape Point sachets are great) or even salami (not pre-cut, but on the roll, otherwise the meat dries out in the heat).
- Dried fruit, Snacker/ Jungle Oats or other health bar, high in energy and fibre. There are some ridiculously expensive brands of energy bar – a complete over kill if these are bought. The one we recommend (Jungle) goes for R12.50.
- Peanuts and raisins / Biltong / droë wors (vacuum packed – a must as the food goes off if it is not vacuum packed). There is also trail mix and, once again, a vast array of prices and products. We recommend a 50 g packet of Snackmix for R17. If you are industrious, you can make up your own selection – Yellow Submarine has an excellent online site but you need to buy in bulk – typically 1 kg bags.
- For those hiking right from the start (Apex and Wolfberg) bring nice home-made rolls full of all your favourite ingredients for lunch on day one.

Suppers. Here are some suggestions:

- In the past we have recommended Pasta-and-Sauce or Cup-a-Snack mixed with a variety of options. Feedback from Grade 11's is that is easier, quicker and tastier to use 2-minute noodles instead as the others take ages to cook. In order to get the necessary protein, we recommend the addition of tuna or salami or biltong to the noodles.
- Don't pack tinned food – tins are too heavy and contain water. Rather use goods to which water must be added. The only exception might be light-weight sardine tins.
- You could also spoil yourself with some of the wonderful de-hydrated camp food that is available at stores like Outdoor Warehouse or City Rock – expensive though!! Foreverfresh is an online store selling locally produced dehydrated food – also pricey though. Find out from those who have been before if they liked the food or which food was best. R239 per meal (Outdoor Warehouse), compared to R30 per sachet for tuna and the R8 per sachet of 2-minute noodle option ie R76 for 2 x tuna and 2 x 2-minute noodles.
- Again, for those of you that start hiking on the first day – save a good-sized portion of a favourite home cooked meal and freeze the meal in a plastic bag (double bagged). Bring the sealed packet along on the first day and it will defrost slowly in your bag and be ready to be heated up for your first meal. From then on you will be on your own and you will long for home cooking! Be warned that the heating up often results in a very sticky pot which can catch easily – can be difficult to clean.
- Do **NOT** bring along uncooked steak or wors for the first night – the cleaning of the pot used for frying is going to make you regret your decision. Obviously, no fires are allowed!

To drink

- Game powder in sachets (R24 per sachet). If you choose this option, take no more than one sachet per day. The packet says that you will get a litre of game from one sachet, but it can easily be stretched to 1,5 litres and still taste great. Try it out at home to find out how strong you prefer it. Experience has shown that boys usually bring way too many sachets of powder. Super-C's, Sparkles, jelly babies etc are excellent for provision of glucose and some feel that the combination of these and drinking sufficient water works just as well as drinking Game. It also provides greater variety. Game also flavours your water bottle.
- Remember coffee / tea or hot chocolate for mornings and evenings. Some prefer coffee or cappuccino sachets, they make a much nicer cuppa than instant coffee, especially when mixed with a dash of condensed milk! If you like condensed milk, make sure you have it in a strong plastic bottle with a tight screw top in a zip lock bag – a rare find would be that of a 'dirkie' – they used to be presented in those triangular single servings which are more commonly found filled with milk at accommodation establishments – they are now sold in a tube. A condensed milk can is heavy and most is wasted by those who choose this option. The cappuccino option also means no hassle with milk powder.

Snacks

Chocolate is normally not a good idea (too hot), but if you have to have a chocolate fix, take it in the form of Smarties – they don't make too much of a mess.

Other snacks: Nougat, jelly babies, biltong, energy bars, droë wors sticks, Sparkles (or equivalent), Mentos, an apple or orange a day, nuts and raisins, super C's.

Most boys go over-board on snacks and end up carrying a lot of extra weight in snacks, which they never eat. Plan carefully and be realistic. You might want to pack a zip-loc bag per day that contains your quota of snacks for the day – walking with this in your pocket can allow you quick access to a sweet and also provides a bin for those sweet wrappers that fly away so easily!

Solo Packs

Food for the solo time should be packed into the box given with the necessary labelling and sealing on the outside. Remember that these boxes can be heavier, so pack a luxury or two such as a litre of fruit juice or a tin/sachet of really nice food or even one of those over-priced dehydrated meals.