

# THE RANT AND RAVE GAZETTE

A Music Newsletter

Issue 15

Welcome to the fifteenth issue of the Rant - a bushwhacking issue. NOTE: the most recent issue comes up first with past issues following. Cheers!

## THE HOKEY POKEY

"YOU PUT YOUR LEFT FOOT IN ....."



*"Again with the left foot."*

What I carry in the bush depends on the land and location. Carrying a gallon of water in the west coast rainforest is a monumental waste of weight and packspace. I might need a little water bottle for those periods when I'm hiking the ridges and no streams are immediately available, but generally the place is awash with water in one form or another.

Hiking in the Mazatzal wilderness in Arizona, however, is an entirely different kettle of fish. There are springs, but you can never be sure they are producing. If I am out for three days in this country, a gallon of water is the minimum I need to carry. Many times the summer temperature can be 100 degrees, even in the high country, and you run through water like shit through a goose, particularly when you are climbing. I also remember to fill up before I leave.

Obviously, clothing is as different as chalk and cheese in these opposite environments. Head covering is important in both locations, but in the high desert you need protection from the sun and in the rainforest you need to protect yourself from the deadly combination of cold and damp that can easily result in hypothermia.

Speaking of hypothermia, before I had any experience with it, I assumed it occurred mostly in the extreme cold of the far North or in the frigid waters of, say, the North Atlantic. Fact is, I found the North to be pretty benign when it came to hypothermia. The humidity is usually low, it's easy to dry out and, unless you are hiking the barren lands, there is usually a ready supply of dry wood. No, it's the west coast rainforest that seems to be the most dangerous because it's here where hypothermia can easily catch you off guard.

The rainforest can be cold enough to cause hypothermia under the best of circumstances, particularly at higher elevations, but the added ingredient of 'wet' can make it a sneaky foe. Wet clothing against the skin, particularly if you are unable to dry it out with your body temperature, is dangerous, and cheap rain gear doesn't breathe, making your own sweat your worst enemy.

On one occasion, a pal and I were hiking the high country. We were steadily climbing and gaining elevation by the minute. It was the fall and we were in T shirts, but as it gradually got colder, we reached for our outerwear. I slapped on my hoody, and he stuck on this nasty little rubber rain jacket. It was the wrong move.

Understandably, we were sweating as we climbed and after a while I noticed he was becoming erratic. Stumbling about and running into things, he finally just stopped and sat down. Sweat was pouring down his face but he was shivering and somewhat incoherent. I realized I had to get him out of that jacket, stripped down and into a sleeping bag as fast as possible. The big H had struck! The zipped up jacket without any insulation against the skin just kept that moisture inside and down went his body temperature.

In the end, it all turned out fine but, by gum, it left a lasting impression on both of us.

Something from the Muse:

A time comes  
when the fluid swaying branch  
that moulded so readily  
to the changing winds  
fails to bend  
in a timely fashion  
and begins to split

Not visibly at first  
Just a few fractures  
in the internal fibres  
Enough to initiate  
an occasional clumsiness  
A distortion of shape  
A lack of grace

Grace that must surface  
in more important ways

## LITTLE GEMS

ADVICE THAT WAS WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD



"It's better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it."

THATS ALL FOR NOW FOLKS! SEE YOU NEXT TIME