

SOME TIPS ON HOW TO SURVIVE IN THE WILD

# COMMANDO

Jane as she is put through her paces in Adventure Centre



**TOUGH:** Patsy shows Geraldine the ropes as she gets ready to fly through the woods

Opera, which is being held on the estate this weekend (June bank holiday weekend 5th and 6th).

**Pocket**

My tent was an altogether more Spartan job called a 'bothy'. It weights half a kilo, can fit in your pocket folded up, and has no poles.

After that, I expected the food to be equally basic - slugs, beetles and rabbits killed with our bare hands. So imagine my

surprise when Patsy showed me his typical meal in the wild; Pot Noodles, Hot Cup, Mars bars, tea and coffee.

"This is what I eat all the time," I pointed out. Patsy said this means I am a real commando. His cooking tips would give a dietician a heart-attack - but they sounded like my perfect picnic.

"Crisps and chocolate mashed together in a plastic bag are tasty - and they'll keep you going for hours," he revealed.

"Tinned fruit is great cooked. A tin of

tuna and corn mixed with curry powder will give you heat and energy."

The 48-year-old grand-dad totally blew apart the image I had of hard men when he admitted to being a vegetarian.

"I haven't eaten meat for 25 years and it hasn't done me any harm. I've never been sick a day in my life and, up to the time I retired from the Army at 42, I was beating 20-year-olds in fitness tests," he said.

**Naked**

His other tips sounded like fun, too. His cure for hypothermia is the real Bare Grylls - take off all your clothes and get into a survival bag with another naked person. He says the most important tip for survival is to find shelter.

"Most people start cooking straight away. They end up freezing," he added.

He is as tough as Clint Eastwood in Heartbreak Ridge, but Patsy really Made My Day when he said I was fit.

"You're fit without even trying. You probably walk miles around car parks. You can't run fast, but you don't need to be a runner to be fit."

But he admitted: "If I had a bunch of macho Army guys out here I'd make it difficult for them. Survival is not about hardship - but if they want to be cold and mis-

erable, who am I to argue?"

"I recently trained a group of soldiers. They asked me to 'test' them to the limit. I gave each of them a plastic bag with a tent in it - with no poles. Then I marched them into the open countryside and just left them there for the night.

"It was a freezing cold night. I set up my tent nearby so I could watch them. They didn't know what to do. They were completely lost, in the dark - but, instead of building a shelter for themselves they were standing around complaining.

"One guy started crying. They were convinced I was going to do something terrible to them. I was just relaxing in my tent. I fell asleep laughing."

He also runs team-building courses for companies, and adapts the course for kids aged eight and over. However, most of his clients, surprisingly, are hen parties. The hens rent out the big house on the grounds for a weekend, but spend their time camping out.

"I recently had a great group of girls. The wedding had been called off but they went ahead with the hen party. They were tougher than the guys - and they had more fun."

**DAUNTING:** Geraldine hanging loose on zip wire



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