

Your Name Here

Contributed by Drew Pogge

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My best friend, Nate, first used the phrase when we were still in middle school in Wisconsin. It followed an ill-advised, river-bluff tobogganing expedition that ended with a spectacular amount of airtime, a hole in the ice, and a hypothermic two-mile march home in frozen-stiff clothes. Our teeth were clattering like a vintage John Deere with iron wheels. From then on, anytime I wanted to do something fun, Nate'd ask skeptically, "Is it going to be a PA?"; and I'd assure him it wouldn't. And when we'd return home nine hours later, Nate would be missing his wallet, or the tip of one finger, or we'd both be covered in liquid manure, and he'd look at me and say, "F-ck you." But he was always game the next time....

When I started backcountry skiing in college, at Montana State, it was a bit of a renaissance period for PAs. Inexperience begets error, and error begets... suffering. Luckily, mistakes are the best teachers, and I learned a lot. Some of the lessons I quickly picked up were that three-season tents don't work well in snowstorms; forgetting the food but remembering the booze on overnights always ends badly; skis can break in half, even ten miles from the car; snowmobiles are unreliable; you can use pine boughs and duct tape in place of skins, if you should happen to lose yours somewhere between the top and bottom of a mountain; unprotected crampons will tear the bottom of your pack open and dump its contents on the trail; triggering an avalanche is the worst feeling in the world; people either buck up or break down under pressure; and perception is everything. This last one is critical.

To be honest, it's been a while since I've had a legitimately miserable, exhausting, glorious Pogge Adventure. It seems like all of my trips these days are pretty well planned, responsibly executed, and predictably enjoyable. But know what? I miss the excitement of being turned around in a nasty storm or physically crushed by a ridiculously long approach or out of my element starting down a sketchy rappel. I miss the shared suffering and the grumbling and the knowledge that no matter how bad it gets—as long as no one gets hurt—it's going to make a great story. So let this serve as an invitation: if you want to suffer a little in the name of (mis)adventure,

drop me a line, give me a call, or otherwise introduce yourself. Let's go have ourselves a little fun. We can call it whatever you want.

-Drew Pogge, Editor