



# Unarmed to the South Pole

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*Cato Zahl Pedersen and Odd Harald Hauge inside The Jerven Bag on their way to the South Pole in 1991.*

*Photo: Lars Ebbesen.*

You have to be both physically and mentally strong and have a lot of willpower and sense of adventure than most, if you`re going to pull 120 kg sled to the South Pole. Such a journey is not without dangers. Frostbite, the risk of falling into glacier cracks...anything can happen. There`s on thing, though, that is strictly forbidden, and that`s poor equipment. Norway has a rich tradition of polar exploration and a wealth of expert knowlegde on which to draw when it comes to surviving under the artic conditions. All equipment is throughly tried and tested before use.

The Jerven bag "Thermo King Size" Survival Poncho has been tested in advance on Svalbard. But how would it perform through two months of daily use...? Cato Zahl Pedersen, Norways Paralympic gold medalist who lost both arms in a childhood accident, sweats when he exerts himself. Not just a little, or even a lot, but one heck of a lot. The perspiration literally streams off him. The combination of soaking wet clothes, a biting wind, and minus 30 C. (-22 F), is bad news when you have to break for lunch. Mr. Pedersen most deifinitely needs to take shelter - innside a Jerven Bag.

Jerven maintains that condensation innside these thermo-bags is not a problem. True enough, even when a veritable Niagara Falls like Cato Zahl Pedersen on the innside, the Jerven Bag stayed just as dry and ice-free every step of the way. And- so warm that a little air had to be let in occasionally. Home again safe and sound from the South Pole, expedition leader Odd Harald Hauge faxed the following message to Audun Melkeråen of Jerven/Norway (The inventor):

## **The South Pole and the Jerven Bag:**

*Hi!*

*Here follows an interim report on the Jerven Bag. You`ll receiving a more detailed account later, and I hope we`ll have the opportunity to meet in the near future. In general, I must say we`re incredibly glad that we came over the mountains to Odda to talk to you and buy three of your Jerven Bags. The two other lads have been a bit sceptical at first but that didnt last long. Now to the point: We zipped two ponchos together to make a bag, just as you showed us. There was plenty of room for three innside. We stashed the bag in the back of our sleds, and took it out every lunchtime. We opened it up in the middle, stepped innside and sat down om the sled - in no time at all we had this down to a quick and efficient routine.*

*There were no problems with the Bag in bad weather, regardless of wind force, which should interest you greatly with a view to its potensial as an emergency bivouac. It became warm innside almost immediately, enabling us to remoe our hats and mittens loosen our jackets etc. After a few minutes, all the ice inside had melted. It is difficult to estimatet he inside temperature, but it was probably around plus 5-10 C (41-50F) dependent of course on the outside conditions In the sun, it became almost uncomfortably warm. I should add that we experienced an average temperature of minus 24 C (-11,2F) over the entire trip, or minus 32 C (-25,6 F) if we take into account the "windchill" factor. Lunch is always a problem on polar expeditions, because you start freeze after 15-20 minutes. With The Jerven Bag, we were able to take long breaks at 45-55 minutes and were well rested before preceeding. So our Jerven Bags were in use every single day throughout the trip, no matter what the weather was like.*

*Apart from a minor problem with one of the zip fasteners towards the end, the Jerven Bags functioned perfectly as regards quality. No rips and tears of any kind, and they still looked like new after 70 days under extreme conditions. We were prepared for ice to form the inside them from our body humidity, but incredibly enough there was never any trace of ice. Finally : The Jerven Bags attracted lot of attentionin the Artartic base camps and there can be no doubt that a trully innovative product such as this must be a responding success.*

*Talk to you soon!*

**Odd Harald**

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