

Pretzels and Celery. The Things you See! With Truthful Phil Western 4wdriver Spring 2018

PRETZELS & CELERY

Tent pegs, yes the topic is tent pegs. Not a serious topic you reckon, tell that to a person who can't get pegs into the ground or who, when it's bucketing down, has a tent dis-erection. Before we go any further let's get past the, 'You're a wuss - use a swag', 'You're a ground hog' and so on. Its good old solid ground for me, no swaying about in the breeze or bouts of claustrophobia. I've tented for over 25 years and love em. Tents pegs, glorious tent pegs, I've seen many types ranging from tiny wire-like ones through to shortened star pickets. Sadly many tents and awnings nowadays come with the thin shiny wire type masquerading as a tent peg, these at the first blow from a hammer bend into pretzel shapes. They're as useful as a yard full of roosters. A celery stick would do a better job. So what's out there? We've talked about the pretzels, then there's the bent steel rod types, sand pegs, screw in pegs, post



spikes and star pickets. We also have rocks; yes rocks, more about that later. A photo hereabouts shows a range of pegs in my collection. The folded steel rod pegs are longer and thicker than pretzels and can take more

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WITH (TRUTHFUL)
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lusty blows, but in rocky ground they too are useless and are no more than large pretzels. Even with the use of a hammer drill to pre-drill the holes you wouldn't be successful. Sand pegs, the fluted variety, are great for use in beach sand, they bind well

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and stay in place. When in rocky ground however they can bounce back and be dangerous, especially to men without protection. The use of sand pegs or lack of reminded me of an incident many moons ago. I was lunching with the wife at Big Lagoon near Denham. A school group, using small dome tents, were camped on the beach sand. A sudden gust of wind plucked one tent from its pretzel moorings and rolled it like a giant ball, with shiny pretzels still attached some 50 metres. Even funnier was the frustrated tenant giving chase. He caught it, but suffered the indignity of having to walk, with the tent above his head, past many watchers who clapped enthusiastically. Screw in pegs, usually made of plastic, may work in sand and soft earth.

They'd be hopeless in rocky ground and if you forget the drill the bride will not be amused.

My experience with tent pegs is generally good, but! On one occasion I had the tent spread out ready to be pegged. I go to get the pegs, no pegs. Rather than own up to my mates and be ridiculed I used four large screw drivers instead. Lucky it wasn't hard ground. On another trip the pegs just wouldn't go in, sub-surface granite sheeting was the problem. I kept moving the tent around seeking better ground, no chance, the pegs were giving off sparks. Determined not to be beaten I gathered four large rocks and put them inside the tent in each corner, problem solved. At Steep Point I've used sandbags instead of rocks, the

incessant gale there showing no mercy. After years of frustrations with pretzels and celery I have designed and made

my own tent pegs, using 8 mm spring steel rod from Boynes Springs in Ozzie Park and 6mm chain links from the local Green Shed. I cut the chain links in half and welded them to the 250mm long spring steel pegs, making sure the top of the link is below the level of the peg. This ensures all of the energy from the hammer blow strikes the peg. You will need to grind a pointy end so the peg is more enthusiastic about the job at hand. My only complaint about my special pegs is the theft rate, my mates have a fondness for knocking them off. Do yourself a favour and get some real pegs and consign the pretzels and celery versions to the wheelie bin.

