

Having the Horn

Here is some advice on having the horn whilst on a hash - not a big (manly) erection but a musical instrument. These notes, incidentally written by me who's never successfully completed any musical training and also cannot even be considered to be musical or play an instrument. Those minor hassles aside, this will hopefully give budding horny people a head start into the wonders of hash fame, leadership, frightening people and livestock, and adding to the concept of running round the countryside acting like a complete tit.

If one is bestowed the honour of '**Having the Horn**', hopefully one has the luxury of being passed on the said instrument - possibly owned by the hash. Sometimes a hash will nominate a horn on each run; but this raises quality issues in the circle so is not a recommended system. What is best is to have a professional wind musician, who can preferably blow a horn or similar instrument, or better still owns his own!!! Sadly, the middle ground is normally the only option for most hashes i.e. someone somewhere has retrieved a bit of bent pipe out of a skip and this is, thereafter, designated as the Hash Horn. Hopefully said bit of bent pipe started life as a musical instrument.

Hash Horns come in many shapes and sizes from large 'French horn' type monsters (some with a rubber 'honk honk' bulbs on the end (which is cheating and a bit boring)) right down the size range to sappy little squeaky silly stupid party popper things. Anything in between is ideal e.g. hunting horn, bugle etc. Things like saxophones and trumpets etc. with finger thingy watsits are best avoided as, firstly the finger thingy watsits always end up blocked up with shiggy, mud, grit or flour and blood, and secondly trying to run round a hash playing a saxophone or something, makes you look even more like a pratt than just being on the hash in the first place.

So ideally a small musical blowy type instrument will get you started. If you have to buy one, don't be tempted to buy some Indian made, 'genuine' British Army Regimental Horn complete with metal badge and lanyard, as nine times out of ten they are crap, being made of brass plated tin and really only any good for sticking on the mantelpiece while your poking the fire. They will play but hash abuse will mean the item is maintenance heavy with rust forming and beer ingress causing acoustic attenuating corrosion within the finely tuned pipe work. The best option is to buy a crappy tenth hand 'genuine' British Army Regimental Horn complete with wary dents and scratches from years of abuse by battle hardened squaddies in the NAAFI. But test before you buy because dents will reduce the acoustic performance (funnily enough).

The critical item is actually the mouthpiece. Your genuine Indian made mantelpiece item will invariably have some badly turned brass mouthpiece which probably started life as a solid chunk of gas fitting in Bombay or an old cartridge case with the end drilled out (hopefully not still live). Chuck that and invest in a second (tenth) hand real mouthpiece available from your local musical instrument shop. Normally from the small cardboard box under the bottom left side of the counter and available for a few quid. (new ones are very expensive; probably the cost of 20-30 pints so forget that idea). Try before you buy!!! Stick it in and try and get a note out of the thing.

Chances are, unless you are already musical gifted or good at making farty sounds or good at giving blow jobs to camels, you won't get a squeak out of your new instrument, just a huff of air out the end, like a grannies fanny fart. Don't be put off; we all start that way!!! Give it to the bloke who's just sold it to you and see if he can make it work. Assuming he can get one or two notes out of it, that's all that required for hashing. Try and haggle him down on price for the job lot, pay him, get the hell out of the shop, preferably with said items in an opaque bag. Get cracking and start practising - but on your own.

The hardest thing is to get the first note out of it. The best way is to purse ones lips and try to make a farting raspberry sound like you are a virgin up the back way!!! Assuming there is no one watching or listening (hopefully you are not still at the bus stop by this stage or on the train) gradually move the musical instrument (mouthpiece first) to your lips while farting and hopefully the noise will eventually come out the blunt end of the horn, in a most horn like manner. Congratulations - your first note!! All you need to do now is keep on practising until your lips go raw.

You will probably start losing friends and family at home etc. and gaining cats, dogs and horses at the front door so it's best to practice either in an underground nuclear bunker with the doors shut or while driving along a motorway - at night.

Eventually with lots of practice, you may well end up with two or maybe even three notes. All that is left to do now is string them together randomly with some slight association with musical intonation in some kind of order, possibly similar to some music you may have heard of!! Easy.

Learning tunes is the hard part. If you don't want to turn out to be a hash without a repertoire, then you could be practising for years (like me). What is easiest is to copy someone else's simple music like a passing train hooter, police siren or door bell and stick with that. Most hashers couldn't really give a toss about the musical quality; in fact the worse the music, the funnier it can be. Well, that is the logic I have applied for years and it's got me by.

So, you finally take to your hash as the new (or muscling in on someone else's act) horn (best to wait until the real Hash Horn has suffered from some bad accident and are off hashing for a while). You will then be even more appreciated; a hero, the saviour of the hash.

So do you run at the front or what? The hash horn is supposed to lead the pack - go left, go right, withdraw, attack and lights out, or something like that. I'm sure a device like this would catch on with the military one day, given a chance. I tend to start off at the front but always end up quite quickly at the back. Blowing on the move takes a lot of practice and watch out for trees and fence posts (& Muffler!) or the mouthpiece will be in between your tonsils before you know it, and surrounded with what's left of your teeth. The up side is the high you get when you're blowing furiously uphill; better than drugs but can make you black out and faint (but always a good trick to play if you happen to be running alongside a large breasted Harriet).

The best thing about not really being able to play the thing is that you can generally bank on getting a laugh or three on the run, and virtually guarantee at least one down down at the end (unless the RA's a tight bastard). The only problem here is that if some git decides you should drink the Down Down from the horn. Some advantages here, for example an infantry bugle can take four pints before it tops out. The down side is that the instrument generally acts like a yard glass and you'll end up with great glugs of beer all over your face. Not a problem in itself, but tricky if the expectation is to down in one (as well as a tragic waste of beer). The other down side is also that the beer that comes out will also contain lumps of congealed spit and phlegm, plus old Brasso, twigs, chips etc. Highly recommended for a laugh but most people won't notice until you puke up and the chip sticks out your nose.

A military bugle does have advantages as it can be adapted to be 'the ultimate drinking machine.' Up to five cans of beer can be clipped in between the tubes setting up a cascading fountain of beer; ideal for those long summer circle sessions.

Once the drinking starts, do keep an eye on the horn as it WILL end up being passed around everyone for a suck or blow but it is also worth surreptitiously noting potential new hornists or girls who are good with their lips. But if you do take your eyes off it, do expect that the next time you come to play it, it will still be full of old drink and replacement chips. If you tend to lose the horn during a drinking session, they often turn up again but not normally in ideal circumstances. They are often either, tied to chimney pots, nailed to ceilings or have been planted out with some delightful indoor arrangement. And certainly expect another Down Down for losing the horn (Shame).

On On

Some thoughts on **Hash Horning by No Puff – The Birmingham Hash House Harriers (BH3)** official Hash Horn