

The Adventure Blog

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Full Article: <http://theadventureblog.blogspot.no/2017/04/gear-closet-mountain-hardwear-scrambler.html>

Gear Closet: Mountain Hardwear Scrambler RT 20 Review

Through my various travels and outdoor adventures I've come to understand that no single backpack is perfect for every activity. Sure, some are more versatile than others, but I've found that there are times when you need a purpose-built pack that meets some very specific requirements. I was reminded of this recently while traveling in the Falkland Islands and on South Georgia in the Southern Ocean. On that trip, I needed a good daypack to carry all of my gear and supplies for a variety of outings. But, that pack also needed to be able to protect my equipment from moisture too. Lots and lots of moisture.



The weather in the Southern Ocean is unpredictable to say the least, and it was not uncommon to experience rain, snow, sleet, and winds. We also made our landings on inflatable zodiac boats too, and the vast majority of our landings were "wet," meaning we were often hopping out into knee deep water. For that type of environment a waterproof pack was a necessity, and it was the perfect place to test the new *Scrambler RT 20* from Mountain Hardwear.

In terms of fancy features, the *Scrambler* is somewhat lacking. The pack doesn't have numerous organizational pockets, a hydration sleeve, a backpanel or suspension. In fact, other than one main compartment and a couple of side pockets for water bottles and other small items, there aren't many other places to hold your gear. The pack does come equipped with trekking pole loops, but that's about it. Even the waist belt and shoulder straps would be described as "minimalist" at best.

All of that said, the *Scrambler RT* performs exactly where it counts. The pack is made from Mountain Hardwear's proprietary *OutDry* fabrics, which are exceptionally waterproof, and features a roll-top enclosure that helps to prevent a drop of moisture from reaching the interior of the bag. In fact, MH says that it tested the pack in a rainroom for 24 hours straight, and the *Scrambler* passed with flying colors, repelling all the water that was thrown at it. If it can survive that kind of test, chances are it'll be able to keep your gear safe from foul weather too.

As mentioned above, the *Scrambler* doesn't have thickly padded shoulder straps or waist belt, but it is still surprisingly comfortable to wear. While testing it on my recent trip, I loaded it up with camera equipment, a water bottle, an extra layer of clothing, and a variety of other items, and it carried the load particularly well. On that trip, I often spent hours hiking rugged trails, complete with mud, snow, rocks, and plenty of loose scree. Yet I managed to walk comfortable through all of that wearing this pack, which met the demands and requirements that I placed on it without any issues at all. It even came back looking practically brand new, with no signs of wear and tear despite three weeks of daily use in a harsh environment.

One of my favorite features of this pack is one that you won't see Mountain Hardwear touting on its stats sheet. The *Scrambler RT* is extremely packable, making it easy to take with you on your far-flung adventures, even if it isn't your primary bag. Because it has no frame, it is simple to roll it up and stash it in a duffel while traveling. And since it weighs just 13.7 ounces (389 grams), it doesn't add much in the way of bulk to your kit either.

In case you couldn't tell, I came away extremely impressed and pleased with the performance of the *Scrambler RT 20*. Essentially, this is a drybag you can wear on your back, which is exactly what you need for wet-weather hikes, paddling trips, river excursions, or camping outings in damp environments. And since it is priced at just \$110, it is an affordable addition to just about anyone's gear closet. I think you'll find it is a nice option to have at your disposal when you need it too.