

To ensure we're selling only the best products, our gear is put to the test by some avid adventurers.

Travelling for 2 days through stormy and overcast conditions, **Sean Coleman** tests the **Mountain Designs Nimbus Jacket** and **Mammut Impact GTX Boots** while hiking in Northern Thailand - aka "Jungle, hill tribes and mosquitoes"



IDEAL FOR Backpacking, Walking and Travel

With a sense of probably over exaggerated adventure, I hopped on a long-tail boat and headed up river for 2 days of hiking in the Northern Thai jungle. Unlike Southern Thailand, the weather here is far more temperate in the winter, often not getting above 25°C during the day, with plenty of opportunity for rain and thunderstorms added in. Combined with the thick jungle on steep and muddy hills, it presented an excellent opportunity to try out my **Mammut Impact GTX boots** and **Mountain Designs Nimbus jacket** to the test. The first day was largely an uphill adventure along the local's narrow jungle paths. The Mammut boots' Vibram sole proved up to the task, commendably holding their ground when the dirt would slip and slide around. They also proved to be supple enough to allow me to negotiate the very narrow and low slung 'corridors' through bamboo forest, which were at times an Alice in Wonderland sized door, shrinking down to about 3 or 4 feet high.

By the end of the day my feet were quite sweaty in the boots, however some of this must be attributed to the fact that I was wearing merino wool socks, which don't dry the fastest and are really designed to keep your feet warm in cooler climates. With a new big toe nail reaching the point where it would threaten to go ingrown if banged around too much, the **Mammut Impact's** claim of comfort and support were pushed to the limit and passed with flying colours.

With heavy rain overnight many of the tracks and jungle floor had been turned into a quagmire of mud and debris. The **Mammut Impact** proved up to the challenge in terms of grip and ankle support. Again the boots were very warm and were damp, even with fresh socks, after just a couple hours of hiking. This was more than made up for though in providing amazing grip when negotiating slippery, rain soaked virgin jungle hillsides and wet river stones.

Coming into the open as we approached the first hill tribe village, we were exposed to more rain so I whipped out the **Nimbus** and unrolled it from inside its hood. This feature is certainly handy when packing and storing it dry, and I was curious to see whether when wet it would drip water from the exterior into the hood and interior of the jacket. But for the moment it's only mission was to try and keep me dry, both from the rain and my own sweat.

At mid-20's and well over 80% humidity this would be a challenge to any jacket, especially with my trusty Mountain Design's Escape pack on. The **Nimbus** has insulation panels around the shoulders and top of the arms, since it is a jacket designed more of snow and ice than for the tropics. Unfortunately it wasn't long before my back was damp with sweat, especially around these insulation panels and where my pack's harness held tight against my body. By the end of the day, my whole t-shirt



was quite damp with sweat, even with the pit-zip vents open. Having said that, this jacket was brought with my later hike in Nepal in mind (where conditions would be much colder).

On a more positive note the oversize helmet compatible hood provided excellent protection from low lying branches and bamboo with excellent visibility and adjustability to hold it in place. The fabric also stood up to the beating of broken bamboo, sticks, twigs, thorns, sliding over and under logs and everything else the tiny jungle tracks could throw at it. Also surprising was that the jacket dried well in the damp overnight even though it poured rain for most of the night. Overall for a jacket designed for alpine and much colder environs the **Nimbus** performed quite well.

