

## Recap of the High and Dry Bluegrass Festival

Written by Bob Woodward  
Monday, 22 August 2011 10:44

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When it comes to outdoor music festivals, the annual [High and Dry Bluegrass Festival](#) at John and Nancy Hancock's Runway Ranch east of Bend is a throwback. A throwback to simpler times when acoustic bluegrass and folk music was a festival norm and the gatherings to listen to it were often at people's homes or rural properties, settings that had a relaxed, informal feel to them.

High and Dry succeeds not only because of its relaxed informal atmosphere but also because it provides a place for top line bluegrass and folk ensembles to strut their stuff and a chance for new acts eager for a chance to perform and get noticed.

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This year's format had main stage acts playing 45-minute sets with new groups and up-and-coming groups playing fifteen-minute sets in between on a smaller side stage.

Sitting on the ranch lawn sheltered by canopies provided by Pickathon, festival goers brought in their lawn chairs, snacks and drinks. Food truck vendors were on hand to provide full meals.



As usual, High and Dry regulars Great Northern Planes charmed the audience on both Friday and Saturday night with their extensive musical chops, superb “high lonesome” harmonizing and incredible wit. This is a must-see act for anyone who likes groups that play to a high standard and have unmatched stage presence.

Apart from the names like Great Northern Planes, there were the usual surprises. Surprises like the group Powder Monkey, whose Friday night set weaved nicely along an invisible line between true bluegrass and more modern “new grass.”

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Photo credit: Bob Woodward