

Boys who don't age

By IAIN BLAIR

WHEN to slow down and retire? For most people in their 60s the decision is a no-brainer — the sooner the better.

But in the rare air of movie stardom, where careers are fuelled by a mix of talent, ego, vanity and, sometimes, cosmetic surgery, it seems to be a far harder decision.

Hollywood's latest example is Harrison Ford, 65, the aging archeologist hero of *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, which is in cinemas now after its world premiere at the Cannes film festival.

But Ford is not alone in trying to maintain an image as a strapping young action hero. Movie icons from the 1960s and 1970s from Al Pacino to Sylvester Stallone still insist on winning the day and getting the girl — even if she's 40 years younger. Even Robert De Niro has taken questionable roles lately, playing a cross-dressing flying pirate in *Stardust*.

A few, notably Jack Nicholson, Warren Beatty and Clint Eastwood, seem to have

accepted the idea that their leading man status is now well behind them. Beatty is now a sort of elder statesman in Hollywood. Eastwood is an Oscar-winning director and Nicholson is, well, Nicholson.

Ford is luckier than most. After a long string of dismal thrillers and dramas the star is back in a role which, in three previous *Indiana Jones* movies that, ending with *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* 19 years ago, have generated about \$US1.1 billion (\$NZ 1.43 billion) at global box offices.

"Suddenly he's cool again and on every magazine cover in America," *Entertainment Tonight's* film critic/historian Leonard Malin notes.

"But without that role maybe he'd be in the same boat as the others."

Moreover, early word on *Crystal Skull* is that Ford and creators Steven Spielberg and George Lucas have insisted "Indy" roughly match Ford in age.

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Fashion over function

MATE
MARK WILSON

THE glorious season that is winter is now bearing down on us in the deep south with all its impending glory.

I love winter-clear frosty mornings, snow-capped mountains and the excitement of another season of Stag rugby just around the corner.

However, in recent times there is a part of winter that I've never been able to understand. Maybe it's age — but I'm only 27 — surely I'm not that out of touch with the youth of today. Maybe it's that I'm a practical thinker — built for function not fashion — whatever it is I still can't get my head around the culture of the "snow rat".

Snow rats, a winter time metamorphosis of the more commonly known term of street rat. You have all seen them scurrying about. They ferret around the streets, slopes and bars with their distinctive shuffle, bop to one side like a gangster walk so as not to look too healthy, agile or proud of their appearance. They are adorned in cutting edge street wear — ski pants round their knees instead of their hips, 16 sizes too big with boxers exposed, belt with the long hanging bit at the front dangling messily alongside — a seemingly redundant but aesthetically crucial chain. Head mostly concealed with a hat or oversize beanie that can't quite seem to sit straight — all capped off with an often offensively labelled hoodie or XXXL war-coloured jacket in case they need to stay camouflaged in the mosh pit at the big air competition.

I'm not claiming to be anywhere near the pinnacle of fashion and anyone who knows me would probably be saying "when in glasshouses don't throw stones".

I would, however, like to think I'm a practical dresser who adopts a horses-for-courses approach. When more than 14degC, shorts and a T-shirt; when under 14degC, jeans and a T-shirt; when frosty or snowing add a jacket or jersey. My clothes fit me and often help in improving my performance whether it be hunting, skiing or playing rugby. Can anyone realistically think that wearing pants around your knees while trying to avoid being tangled in your belt, chain and baggy sleeves improves your snowboarding or skiing?

Maybe perhaps we can attribute the reason for such ridiculous outfits to a strong desire to adhere to the "it's cool to look like a scruffy", which seems to have emerged in some segments of our diverse population? Is it the clothing's ability after a day on the snow that makes snow rat fashion stand out? It can be easily adjusted to become fashionable eveningwear by swapping the snow pants for a pair of equally saggy jeans, which now come with pre-assembled holes and even stains to save you messing them up yourself. The baggy tops and pants allow a cool draft while reminiscing at the bar about all the mad rails you have been jamming while listening to 50 Cent. I just don't fit in any more but somehow I'm glad!

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