

Segment 05 – “Harder than Hell”

Script Draft #2

Eat your hearts out, Fernie and Canmore.

When *Explore* magazine ran a recent story on “Canada’s Best Outdoor Towns,” YOU didn’t make the cut.

But *Whitewhorse* did.

No doubt, a few super-proud Whitewhorse-ians might even be miffed that we didn’t get the centerfold.

But on the other hand, *Mark and I* kind of wondered if the folks at *Explore* magazine really did their research.

Whitewhorse’s reputation as a bountiful garden of outdoor activities might have some merit, but maybe not in the way we think.

In truth, there’s not actually a lot of low hanging fruit when it comes to many outdoor pursuits around here.

Talk to the experts about almost any outdoor activity - from whitewater paddling to road cycling - and you’ll hear how tough Whitewhorse can be. Sure, we might be “larger than life.” but when it comes to the outdoors, that life can sometimes be *harder than hell*..

Don’t just take our word for it.

“Moving to Whitewhorse basically killed my climbing career.” [CLIP: Track 24 00:29-00:35 = 6 seconds]

Ouch! When you hear remarks like that, it makes you wonder what Explore magazine was thinking when they picked our town.

Or maybe we're being too tough. So what if Whitehorse isn't a paradise for climbers? Local outdoorsy types like Steve Brewis compensate by learning to be flexible.

"Whitehorse is a fantastic town, except for the fact that if you're a one sport kind of person, you're not going to last long here..." [CLIP: Track 24 00:12-00:23 = 11 seconds] [Could lengthen with 10-second "garage full of gear" clip 01:55-02:05]

This experience has taught similar lessons to fanatical kite skier and boarder Bruce Todd. He's logged a ton of – sometimes frustrating – miles driving around, searching for good wind.

So over the years, he's made life easier – and assembled his own trapline of weather watchers from Carcross to Kluane Lake.

"So one of the frustrating things, you're sitting here, 'Damn, I know there's wind somewhere. I know there is....' Sometimes, the information I get is wrong, nature changes.... So I always have Plan A, B and C. And D. (Laughs) So, I take my mountain bike and skis in winter..." [CLIP Track 01 05:55-06:07 + 10:46-11:08 = 34 seconds]

Did he say "*mountain bike*"? Now that's preparation. But bringing a mountain bike along might be a pretty solid backup.

Rumour is, Whitehorse is a biking mecca. In reality, its lack of purpose-built singletrack has prompted *some* crazy people to toil away building their own trails.

Other riders haul their bikes to a whole other town – *Carcross* – to ride a downhill trail that Derek Crowe knows pretty well.

“The Sam McGee Trail is one of the best singletrack in the Yukon...” [CLIP: Track 23 00:11-00:19 = 8 seconds]

However: before you blast *down* this scenic joyride, you have to grind, like, *forever* up a tortuous washboard road to get to the start.

“And then, you carry your bike...” [CLIP: Track 23 01:34-01:55 = 21 seconds]

Finally, you’re ready for some serious fun – assuming you don’t get lost.

“If you’re going up there with a ‘Oh, I’ll figure it out sort of thing... Slot canyon... hideous country...” [CLIP: Track 23 02:33-02:54 = 21 seconds]

Under those circumstances, you might start to envy other outdoor cities where you don’t have to drive to the next town and feel like you’re crossing the Himalayas – to enjoy half an hour of sweet downhill.

And speaking of downhill, Backcountry skiers don’t have it much easier.

And yet, it’s *from* a backcountry skier where we discovered a quality that does earn credibility for Whitehorse as a great outdoor town.

Rob Legare is the guy who remains eternally optimistic, no matter how many times he’s risen at dawn, driven to the Summit – and spent the day skiing boilerplate in a total white out..

When the going gets tough, he's not just a *good* sport – he's an *extreme* sport.

"I think people know me enough that they don't bother asking me if it's good out there because I'm going to say it is."
[CLIP 6 seconds]

We live in a town that – contrary to the hype – is maybe just *okay* for a lot of outdoor activities.

But in truth, it's the spirit and optimism of those who persevere in our tough conditions that make Whitehorse a really great outdoor town to live in.

Because really, if you don't do any hard work and adventure for your fun, you're not going to smell at all like Yukon.

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Script Draft #1

Word length: 435

Clip length: 1 min 47 seconds

Eat your hearts out, Fernie and Canmore.

When *Explore* magazine ran a story on “Canada’s Best Outdoor Towns,” you didn’t make the cut.

Whitehorse did.

No doubt, some super-proud Whitehorse-ians were miffed that we didn’t get the centerfold. On the other hand, *Mark and I* wondered if Whitehorse’s reputation as a happy hunting ground for outdoor activities wasn’t screaming for a reality check....

The truth is, the ratio of happy to hunting can leave a lot to be desired. Talk to an expert about almost any outdoor activity, from whitewater paddling to road cycling, and you’ll hear how tough Whitehorse can be. Sure, we’re “larger than life.” But sometimes, that makes life harder than hell....

“Moving to Whitehorse basically killed my climbing career.” [CLIP: Track 24 00:29-00:35 = 6 seconds]

Ouch—that stings.

But, so what if Whitehorse isn’t a paradise for serious climbers? Local outdoorsy types like Steve Brewis compensate with flexibility.

“Whitehorse is a fantastic town, except for the fact that if you’re a one sport kind of person, you’re not going to last long here....” [CLIP: Track 24 00:12-00:23 = 11 seconds] [Could lengthen with 10-second “garage full of gear” clip 01:55-02:05]

Experience has taught fanatical kite skier and boarder Bruce Todd similar lessons. He’s logged a ton of miles searching for ideal winds—and, to make life easier, he’s built his own trapline of weather watchers from Carcross to Kluane Lake.

“So one of the frustrating things, you’re sitting here, ‘Damn, I know there’s wind somewhere. I know there is....’ Sometimes, the information I get is wrong, nature changes.... So I always have Plan A, B and C. And D. (Laughs) So, I take my mountain bike and skis in winter....” [CLIP Track 01 05:55-06:07 + 10:46-11:08 = 34 seconds]

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their bikes to *another* outdoor town—it's called *Carcross*—to ride a downhill trail that Derek Crowe knows pretty well.

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“If you're going up there with a ‘Oh, I'll figure it out sort of thing.... Slot canyon... hideous country...” [CLIP: Track 23 02:33-02:54 = 21 seconds]

Under those circumstances, you might start to envy other outdoor towns where chair lifts ferry bikers to exhilarating—and well-marked—trails all summer long.

Even sadder, Whitehorse's marginal snow conditions, cold snaps and short days make our local ski lift a hit and miss affair even in *winter*.... Backcountry purists don't have it much easier.

And yet, it's in a backcountry skier that we find an all-important quality that might earn Whitehorse its status as a great outdoor town.

He's the guy who remains eternally optimistic, no matter how many times he's risen at five, driven to the Summit—and spent the day skiing boilerplate in a total white out....

When the going gets tough, he's not just a *good* sport—he's an *extreme* sport.

Maybe he's real, maybe he's just a myth. But listen carefully to the spirit he represents:

“I think people know me enough that they don't bother asking me if it's good out there because I'm going to say it is.” [CLIP 6 seconds]

Yes, in a town that's okay for a lot of outdoor activities, but truly great for very few, you can sense the sweaty smell of Yukon in those words to live by.

Happy hunting!