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'No Boundaries': **Eugene man ventures into 'reality' TV**

By BOB KEEFER
The Register-Guard

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MATT SPRINGER, a 25-year-old service coordinator for Looking Glass Youth and Family Services in Eugene, was one of 15 contestants who undertook a 30-day adventure last summer from Vancouver Island, B.C., to the Canadian Arctic for the new show "No Boundaries," which kicks off at 7 p.m. today on The WB.

In the arcane reality of "reality" television, each of the 15 contestants played group leader for 48 hours as the group made its way north by such means as kayak, seaplane and llama. And each was asked to throw another contestant off the show. (The last traveler left standing gets \$100,000 and a Ford Explorer.)

Matt Springer discusses his experience as a contestant on "No Boundaries," airing tonight on The WB.

Photo: **THOMAS BOYD** / The Register-Guard
Springer, an athlete who played football both at Colorado College and for a pro team in Switzerland, won't blow the show's ending - heck, he won't even blow the beginning - but he did sit down recently and reflect on his 30 days of fame.

QUESTION: How did you get involved with the show?

ANSWER: A friend of mine actually sent me the Web page on the Internet and said, "This is something you should apply for."

It was his bachelor party in Florida, and it came up as part of this conversation down there that there were all these reality shows going on and it would be interesting to be on one of them.

He suggested I try out for it. Which meant I would have to miss his wedding if I got it. And that turned out to be the case.

Q: What did you have to do to apply?

A: You had to make a short video and send it in. My video was pretty silly. It was like a Friday afternoon and it was due - I had basketball to go play at 5 and it was 2:30 and I had borrowed a camera from a friend, and there was nobody home at the time so I ended up shooting myself in the mirror a lot.

I did some Michael Jackson dancing. It's very embarrassing. I hope they don't end up airing any of that, but perhaps they will. Who knows?

Q: Like moonwalking?

A: Probably worse than that. Probably some crotch grabbing and whatnot. Mostly it was just me talking about myself.

I got in my van at one point and showed them around the van. Which has been there the last five months because it doesn't run very well.

That was late June.

A week after that, I got a call and they said they were interested in interviewing me in L.A. Being that I'm a social worker, I didn't really have the funds to get there. But they said they would be willing to reimburse some of the costs. My brother was going down to a business conference in Palm Desert, so I hitched a ride with him in the U-Haul.

Q: What was the interview like?

A: Whew. It was a little bit scary. In an old, brick building in Los Angeles and there's movie posters all over and it feels very

official - and you sit in the waiting room for two hours talking to security guards and occasionally seeing another person walk in and walk out but not really knowing how many people have been invited down. The two people on either side of me were older men in their 40s or 50s. You had no way of knowing what they were looking for.

Q: Did you watch the first "Survivor"?

A: I watched maybe an episode of it. And I watched maybe an episode of the last one. The one I've watched the most of is "The Amazing Race," which I thought was a pretty neat show.

By and large, I think the whole reality genre is a little depressing to watch. Everyone is so nitpicky. They concentrate on people's bad aspects.

Q: Did you worry about this in signing on with "No Boundaries"?

A: It was framed in a way that this group was going to work together. It seemed to be a format where people's good attributes were going to be highlighted much more than their bad aspects. That was very positive, I think.

That was the main goal of the show in general. To put people under duress and see what they're made of.

Q: When did you find out you were accepted?

A: We had the interviews in Los Angeles and then came back. And then maybe another two or three weeks after that, they flew us up to Vancouver (B.C.). At that point, there were maybe 32, 33 people left.

And it was very intimidating. A nice hotel. And not to be able to talk to anybody.

They were very conscientious about people not forming any relationships before the show started.

They didn't really have a means to keep us separated, but they had people around from the production crew and they were supposed to be watching. We could be in the same room together but we couldn't talk.

Q: But you could check each other out.

A: When you get 32 very sociable, amiable people together and they can't talk, they're having this great experience and very unusual experience. ... So, yeah. Like 32 very attractive young people in this really nice hotel in Vancouver for five days.

And they put us through a whole bunch of tests. Which was also kind of neat. It felt like the Olympics. We had heart monitors and blood tests. Two psychological examinations. One was an interview with a psychologist. Another was a written test.

Q: What did they ask on the psychological test?

A: Some of the questions are interesting. "Do you like to burn animals?"

Q: Do you think anyone said yes?

A: I don't know. I don't think so. It was all questions like that. "Do you like to work on cars? Do you like nudie magazines? Do you drink more than four or five drinks a week?" Probably everyone said yes. I'm just joking.

Q: How did you find out you were on the show?

A: I just got a message.

Q: What did you guys actually do?

A: We all went to Vancouver, met in Vancouver, had a couple days and got to meet each other and went over publicity stuff and our contracts.

This huge contract with The WB declining our rights to civil liberties in America in perpetuity throughout the universe. My father being a lawyer had a few things to say about that.

Q: Did they pay you?

A: They gave us a stipend. They said it was a nominal sum. It turned out to be about \$1,500. Which for someone who works for Looking Glass is about a 10th of my salary.

We were like contestants on "The Price Is Right" except they kept us a lot longer. You can walk away with the car or you can walk away with nothing.

Regardless of how people did on the show, they were going to be gone for six weeks. If you got booted off the show, you ended up at this wilderness lodge.

Q: So if you're the first one kicked off the show, you cool your heels for five weeks at this lodge?

A: And you have no idea what the lodge is going to be like. It could be a shack in the middle of nowhere. It could be this awesome place. No one really knew.

Some of the strategies going in were to find the cutest girl and to boot her off if you have the opportunity, because if you get booted off later and you're at this wilderness lodge, there's cute people there.

Q: Did you have to kick anyone off the show?

A: I can't tell you that.

Q: The whole thing goes up to the Arctic Circle somewhere. Would it blow the plot line to say where you got to?

A: It would blow *my* plot line.

Q: The easiest place I know to get to the Arctic Circle above Vancouver is north of Dawson City, Yukon.

A: You've got all the good information.

Q: Was it fun?

A: Anytime someone else is going to pay for an adventure, it's fun. Within the format, you know there's going to be three activities you do a day, and all of them are exciting.

Q: Would you do it again?

A: In a second.

Q: So you haven't seen the show yet?

A: No. I'll have the producers on speed dial. "Excuse me. You weren't going to show my butt. ..."

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