

Mantracker to hunt in Grande Cache: Filming begins soon for Canadian reality show that pits pro tracker against human prey

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A reality show in which two contestants try to elude capture for 36 hours in remote wilderness will make a stop in Grande Cache this month, but Death Race veterans are banned from competition.

Two episodes for the second season of Mantracker, an adventure series created by Toronto-based Bonterra Productions that airs on the Outdoor Life Network, will be filmed starting Aug. 15.

The Death Race is an annual 125-kilometre race ending in Grande Cache that crosses three mountain summits and the Smoky River.

Many contestants drop out, but in 2005 the winner finished in less than 16 hours.

"They're just too good," the show's producer, Ihor Macijiwsky, said. "We don't want someone that runs forever, day and night. It wouldn't stop."

The premise of Mantracker has contestants given a head start before an experienced tracker, Terry Grant, is sent after them on horseback.

He uses a broken twig or a bruised leaf, cowboy know-how and 13 years' experience volunteering with the Foothills Search and Rescue Team in southern Alberta to track them down.

With one season of experience tracking moving prey under Grant's belt, Macijiwsky said it will be tough for participants -- or prey, as he calls them.

"When you're going over the wild landscapes and you know someone is chasing you, it's tough."

He invited locals to apply to be on the show, but says typical contestants are men and women who work out three times a week or so and play sports in some type of recreational league.

"We're looking for Joe average," he explained. "What makes it somewhat fair for the Mantracker is that we don't have superhumans doing it."

Macijiwsky said he chose Grande Cache because of a series he used to produce and photograph called Great Canadian Parks, which profiled several provincial and territorial parks across Canada.

During the filming he had a great experience in the Willmore Wilderness Park area.

"It's good horse country, it's got good, high alpine meadows, it's scenic and it's wild enough, away from civilization but still accessible."

Participants will be pairs of people who have a pre-existing relationship, similar to the hit reality series The Amazing Race.

"The true drama of the program is the dynamic between the prey, working together, how they work together," Macijiwsky said. "They basically need each other, not only to beat this guy, but also to survive the terrain. ... We are looking for people with some piss and vinegar."

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PHOTO/IMAGE: Photo: The Canadian Press, OLN / Terry Grant stars in Mantracker

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