

# Verbatim

*adjective* | ver·ba·tim | 축 어적으로 | literalmente | 逐字 | doslovně | 逐語的 | từng tiếng một  
: being in or following the exact words : WORD-FOR-WORD  
// a *verbatim* report of life at Cardigan

Monday  
April 8<sup>th</sup>  
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AUGERE VIRTUTEM-DIRIGERE MENTEM

62 Alumni Drive, Canaan, NH

## 42.9462° N, 114.7254° W

### Miles Sachdeva on Bluefire, the Desert, and How it Changed His Life

Tony He '19  
Editor-In-Chief

It was eleven or so, and Applebee's was the plan of attack. We were tired and hungry. I was presented with the choice of either going to boarding school or going to a two month long transformative program named Bluefire in the middle of August, 2016. I decided with Bluefire, and now, looking back on my seventy-two-day experience, it has definitely changed my life and my outlook.

#### How did you feel, or what did you immediately think of, after you decided to go?

"I was really nervous about the concept of backpacking every single day. As an unathletic kid, it was incredibly scary for me to imagine the concept of being outside every single day. It was also scary because I would be away from my family for so long, and it wasn't until the third week when I finally had the opportunity to contact them. I knew that my life would be handed into the hands of people that I had never met before. These were really frightening thoughts and they were all I could think of before going to Bluefire."

#### What were the first few days like?

"We got into the airport on a Wednesday, and it was August 24<sup>th</sup>. We landed at around 11 or so, and Applebee's was the only option because nowhere else was open and we were hungry. That night, I watched YouTube the whole night to calm my nerves, and I finally fell asleep at four. We woke up early the next morning, and we made the drive to Gooding, Idaho. As soon as I got there, I had to say goodbye to my dad, which was probably the hardest thing about this whole experience. They took me into another room and handed me the clothes that we had to wear and my pack. Right after that, we were off on a forty-five-minute walk to the campsite. Forty-five minutes later, I would be in the middle of a desert, and I would meet these kids that I had never met before. I was really scared,"

"I could barely think and it was just really hard to calm myself. I remember writing a letter to my dad that night, I never sent it but it was just me freaking out. I didn't know what to do. I was just so upset and lost. The next day started like any other day at Bluefire, wake up at six, eat oatmeal, go on a hike, and going backpacking. Every day was like this."

#### How did you manage to overcome your challenges?

"It was hard for me, because I wasn't used to hiking 15 miles in a day. It was really rough, and I kind of just dealt with it. I met some really great people there who were really helpful to me. They understood me and helped me calm myself. There was this one faculty who was a little less harsh than the other ones, and he would have fun. I made a hammock once, and I fell on the hammock at night until they came and found me. It wasn't easy at all. It would rain a lot because, although we were in the middle of a desert, when it rained, it rained a lot. I would wake up; my tent would be flooded and my clothes would all be wet."

#### A few years later, what do you think has been the most transformative experience?

"They let me go on a solo. They trusted me and I was the first kid they allowed on a solo. This was the hardest time for me, because I couldn't talk to anyone. I could see them in the distance, just hanging out. I didn't know what to do, and so I hiked back to the group and I just said: 'Guys, I can't do this.'"

#### Do you believe that this experience has changed you?

"It was a bittersweet experience for me. I hated it when I was there, but knowing how much I have grown as a person, both physically and mentally, I have found new confidence. It's like, if I have done this, then I can do anything. It was hard saying goodbye to people. My first mentee was a little crazy and I would have never imagined our relationship developing as much as it did at the start. Just watching him grow over time, and watching our relationship grow stronger. Seeing how much it helped me, and all my other friends. I've learned to never give up, if I can do this, what can't I do of what a normal day asks of me?"

Article written upon request of Miles.



Miles, standing outside of Dewar.

Photo | Verbatim

IN THIS ISSUE  
**Sebastien Madan**  
on his passion for  
skiing.

Athletics

No Student-Athletes of the Week due to tryouts

The Thrills and the Difficulties  
of the Race

Ari Sloan '19  
Managing Editor

What are the biggest thrills of ski racing  
for you?

One of the biggest thrills of ski racing is when I finish a race knowing I accomplished my goals and got a similar time to my competitors and teammates. Another highlight of ski racing is seeing the results and knowing I placed better than I expected.

What is the most difficult part of ski  
racing for you and how do you deal with  
it?

The most difficult part is having to face the fear of messing up or missing a gate. It gives me the feeling of disappointment knowing I could have done better. As I ride up the lift, I think about what I can improve on and concentrate on the feedback I receive from my coaches

Besides racing, is there anything in  
particular about skiing that you enjoy?



Sebastien Hitting the Gates

Photo | Smugmug

Besides racing, the best part about skiing is definitely the terrain park. The thrill of sending the jumps and rails really increases my passion for skiing. Although racing is fun, the thrill of gliding through the air off a jump is like no other.

Do you have any advice for people who currently ski race or want to?

My first tip is to have confidence in your skiing ability. You can believe in yourself when you're out on the course. People usually get scared when they see a new or hard course and they lack confidence. The lack of confidence eventually effects their ability to ski.

Culture

Cardigan Opinions:  
The Haircut Policy

STUDENTS

- "I want to look good when I return home. For example, when I attend my sister's graduation, I would like for my hair to look nice and stylish. My family and my sister both like it that way too."
- Rodrigo Pidal
- "I don't really care, but I think we should have lines in our heads."
- Brogan Lamb
- "Absolutely needs reform. You should be able to grow it as long as it is well kept. No bleaching though."
- Sam Sibold
- "Since America is free, we should have the freedom of expression through our hair."
- Ricky Garza
- "Students should follow Cardigan policy."
- Owen Fu

FACULTY

- "As long as it is well maintained, it doesn't matter what anyone does. Business in the front, party in the back."
- Ms. Haluska
- "I think you should look presentable. A clean and crisp haircut is a symbol of a gentlemen"
- Mr. Nevins
- "People should wear hair that makes them look good."
- Mr. Wennik
- "My opinion is that the shorter hair makes you look cleaner, like you've showered recently."
- Ms. Joslin
- "I love it. You look good, feel good, and you play good."
- Mr. Leroy