



The most savage show on TV, **SAS Australia**, returns to Channel 7 and 7plus on Monday, 9 October with a new group of star recruits descending on one of the toughest environments faced by Special Forces operatives: the Middle East.

Former world boxing champion Anthony Mundine, 'Cocaine Cassie', Olympians Stephanie Rice, Peter Bol and Matthew Mitcham, Balinese princess Lindy Klim, Thai cave rescue hero Dr Craig Challen and Brownlow medallist Jason Akermanis are just some of the 14 Aussie celebrities who have volunteered for the toughest challenge of their lives: a series of physical and psychological tests from the real SAS selection process. All have a story to tell and a point to prove.

For the first time on **SAS Australia**, these men and women will travel offshore to a secret base in the Jordanian desert where they will eat, sleep and train together in punishingly hot conditions without allowances for their celebrity status or gender.

Chief Instructor Ant Middleton is once again joined by Ollie Ollerton and two new Directing Staff, Jamie "Jay" Morton and Anthony "Staz" Stazicker.

With a combined half-century of Special Forces experience between them, their mission is to break down each recruit and rebuild them to be the best versions of themselves, determining who, if any, have what it takes to be selected as a fellow SAS soldier.

Over 10 brutal days and nights, the recruits will live in grim camp conditions. Drop toilets, one bucket of cold water to shower with daily, unappealing rations and stretcher beds over a sand floor. Sleep-deprived and missing the comforts of home, they'll endure scorching desert heat across the day and the freezing cold of night.

Each day, they'll suffer through two tasks that will push them to their limits physically and mentally and beyond what they thought they were capable of. If the pain is too much to bear, they can voluntarily withdraw from the course. Some will sustain injuries and be medically withdrawn, and some will last 10 days.

Throughout the course, each recruit will tell their story behind the headlines and open up to their personal and emotional struggles, learning more about themselves and leaving behind the pain of the past.

The star recruits attempting to pass selection on the 2023 season of **SAS Australia** are:

ABBEY HOLMES, 32 – AFL Field Commentator
ANTHONY MUNDINE, 47 – World Champion Boxer
BOYD CORDNER, 30 – Retired NRL Star
CASSIE SAINSBURY, 28 – Convicted Drug Smuggler
DR CRAIG CHALLEN, 57 – Thai Cave Rescue Hero
CRAIG MCLACHLAN, 57 – Actor
JASON AKERMANIS, 46 – AFL Hall of Famer
LINDY KLIM, 45 – Balinese Princess
MAHALIA MURPHY, 29 – International Rugby Star
MATTHEW MITCHAM, 35 – Olympic Gold Diver
PETER BOL, 29 – Olympic Runner
STEPHANIE RICE, 34 – Olympic Champion
TIM ROBARDS, 40 – OG Bachelor
ZIMA ANDERSON, 25 – Actress

SAS Australia is produced by Screentime, a Banijay Group company, based on a Minnow Films format.

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- Watch uncensored episodes, uncut interrogations and phone calls home.

#SASAustralia





ANT MIDDLETON CHIEF INSTRUCTOR

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM THIS SEASON?

A brand new, dynamic DS team that brings lots of bang and crashes!

THE 2023 SEASON OF SAS AUSTRALIA TAKES PLACE IN A MIDDLE EASTERN DESERT. WHAT UNIQUE CHALLENGES DOES THE DESERT ENVIRONMENT POSE FOR THIS YEAR'S RECRUITS?

Intense heat, isolation and an environment that, no matter how hard they try, they can't escape.

THERE ARE TWO NEW DS THIS SEASON, JAMIE "JAY" MORTON AND ANTHONY "STAZ" STAZICKER. DID YOU KNOW EITHER OF THEM PRIOR TO FILMING?

I went through Royal Marine training and my Special Forces career with Staz. Staz is a knowledgeable hurricane of modernday warfare and he doesn't suffer fools. Jay is a well-respected Special Forces soldier who featured in an early season of **SAS: Who Dares Wins** with me. He has a wicked sense of humour and a stealth-like calmness.

THIS IS AUSTRALIA'S FOURTH CELEBRITY SEASON. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE RECRUITS THIS TIME AROUND?

It's a good mix of recruits this season. There are different strengths and of course, a few weaknesses that we immediately press on.

DID ANYONE OR ANYTHING SURPRISE YOU THIS TIME?

With a new environment and new personalities come new surprises, and this series is full of them.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS THE TOUGHEST PART OF THIS PARTICULAR COURSE?

It would have to be the vast emptiness and the isolation of a desert environment.

WE'RE A FEW SEASONS IN NOW AND RECRUITS THINK THEY KNOW WHAT THEY'RE IN FOR. HOW DO YOU KEEP UPPING THE ANTE?

That's exactly how we want them to think because that assumption is the mother of all failings. We are always upping our emotional and psychological game; this series is no different.

WHAT'S THE MOST SATISFYING/REWARDING PART OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU AS CHIEF INSTRUCTOR?

For me, it's watching recruits realise their full potential and experiencing what the human body is truly capable of.

@antmiddleton

OS IDIRECTING STAFFI OLLIE OLLERTON

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM THIS SEASON?

The brutal reality of fighting not only to stay on the course but to cope with the harshness of the dry and unforgiving desert.

THIS SEASON, THERE ARE TWO NEW DS: JAMIE "JAY" MORTON AND ANTHONY "STAZ" STAZICKER. DID YOU KNOW EITHER OF THEM BEFORE FILMING?

I knew both guys on a personal and professional level. Jay was a mole on **SAS: Who Dares Wins** and I'd met Staz through a mutual friend (Jason "Foxy" Fox). We all socialise outside the show, ride motorbikes, talk sh*t and have fun.

WHAT DOES JAY BRING TO THE SHOW/COURSE?

Jay is highly experienced in Special Forces operations in this environment. He has the cool and calm resolve of a firm but fair operator. His chilled-out demeanour can easily snare an over-friendly recruit or DS watcher.

WHAT DOES STAZ BRING TO THE SHOW/COURSE?

Staz has the highest level of experience and proven courage under fire. He is a solid member of the team and suffers no fools.

ASIDE FROM THE NEW DS, ARE THERE ANY OTHER FIRSTS WE SHOULD LOOK OUT FOR THIS SEASON?

The tasks are realistic and relate to modern warfare conducted in the Middle East in recent years. The live grenade throw sounds like a very simple task; however, there are many factors to appreciate when dealing with a live grenade. It can easily go wrong and render a self-inflicted injury.

THIS IS AUSTRALIA'S FOURTH CELEBRITY SEASON. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE RECRUITS THIS TIME AROUND?

They dropped at an alarming rate and quickly left a core group that proved their worth.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS THE TOUGHEST PART OF THIS PARTICULAR COURSE?

The immediate indoctrination by the DS, amplified by being buried alive and then thrashed back to camp. The start is always the worst and it was particularly evident this time.

WE'RE A FEW SEASONS IN NOW AND RECRUITS THINK THEY KNOW WHAT THEY'RE IN FOR. HOW DO YOU KEEP UPPING THE ANTE?

We, the DS, have hardly scratched the surface of our ability to introduce new and challenging tasks, and no two courses are the same. That and our ability to change character and roles within the DS make predictable outcomes impossible.

WHAT'S THE MOST SATISFYING/ REWARDING PART OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU AS A DS?

It's seeing a limited mindset expand to create a can-do attitude. The course is equivalent to years of therapy, creating a sense of belief for all that they can push through the limits of their current state.



DS IDIRECTING STAFFI JAMIE "JAY" MORTON

Jamie "Jay" Morton is a former SAS operator with 14 years of distinguished military service: 10 within the UK Special Forces and four within the Parachute Regiment. A trained military mountain guide and DSV ski teacher, Jamie is fully equipped to perform tactical and non-tactical expeditions navigating the extremes of mountainous environments worldwide. Jamie has traversed some of the world's highest mountains, proudly reaching the summit of Mount Everest twice.

CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OTHER DS PRIOR TO THIS?

I consider the other DS all brothers. We have all known each other for a while now. Staz and I knew each other from serving; we joined at a similar time so our squadrons would be on the same training exercises. I knew Ollie and Ant from being on SAS UK.

WHAT EXPECTATIONS DID YOU HAVE OF THE AUSSIE RECRUITS AND WERE THEY MET, SURPASSED OR DID WE FALL SHORT?

There is always a small handful that shows strength early on. You can usually tell who will be standing at the end, but it's not always true. A lot happens in the time we have them and sometimes the strongest will fall, whether through injury or lack of mental resilience.

WHAT DO RECRUITS HAVE TO DO TO STAY ON YOUR GOOD SIDE?

Show up with the right attitude. I'm not interested in a recruit telling me how good they are. I want them to show me. Keep your head down and work hard, it's relatively simple. Own your mistakes (if any) and move on. Just do what we tell you to do and look after the team around you.

HOW DO THEY GET UNDER YOUR SKIN?

They get under my skin by being lazy or not working as part of the team. Operating from the ego of who they believe they are on the outside world and not committing to the process of the course. I don't care what you've done or who you are. That means nothing to me.

AUTHENTICITY IS KEY TO THIS SELECTION PROCESS. BEING NEW TO THE PROGRAM, HOW REAL IS IT?

Ant and Ollie, two highly experienced Special Forces operators designed the **SAS Australia** selection process. It's designed to put the recruits under the stress experienced in real-life selection and it does just that.

WHAT PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE IN AUSTRALIA OR WITH AUSTRALIANS?

I've never been to Australia. I've always wanted to, but the opportunity has never presented itself. It's still on the list of places to visit. I have worked with Australian SAS previously and I've always found the lads very professional.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE CONSIDERING APPLYING FOR THE NEXT SEASON?

If you're serious about it, then commit and give 100%. If you're considering it but not 100% sure, then don't bother. This isn't TV. This is a selection process and we treat it as such. Don't fall into the trap of thinking this will be anything easy.

WHAT ARE SOME LEARNINGS FROM THE COURSE THAT THE EVERYDAY AUSSIE COULD APPLY TO THEIR OWN DAILY LIVES, ROUTINES, OR MINDSET?

Push yourself more. The recruits all get something from the course as individuals. It all comes from pushing themselves out of their comfort zones beyond what they have ever experienced. This mindset can be applied to anyone's day-to-day life.



DS IDIRECTING STAFFI ANTHONY "STAZ" STAZICKER

With an impressive 13 years of distinguished and decorated military service, Anthony "Staz" Stazicker was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross for combat actions in 2013. He left the UK Special Forces in 2018 and launched the technical clothing company, ThruDark, a top-selling UK high-performance outerwear brand.

WHAT DO YOU BRING TO THIS SEASON OF SAS AUSTRALIA?

I'm personable, aggressive yet calculated with my approach. I like to instil some "gallows" humour where applicable.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM THIS SEASON?

The cohesion and energy between the DS brings a strong and united force that will add a new dynamic to this season. Expect high energy and real-world special forces training that will push the recruits both physically and mentally further than ever before.

WHAT DO RECRUITS HAVE TO DO TO STAY ON YOUR GOOD SIDE?

I don't have a good side. If I believe they are there for the right personal reasons and are invested in the course, then I will invest my energy to do what I can to help them be successful on the course. 100% authentic effort will go a long way with me.

HOW DO THEY GET UNDER YOUR SKIN?

It won't go down well with me if they are playing games, trying to hide and not taking it seriously. If they are wasting our time and not being respectful, my attitude will switch towards them. I dislike people that moan and don't bring energy to a situation.

AUTHENTICITY IS KEY TO THIS SELECTION PROCESS. BEING NEW TO THE PROGRAM, HOW REAL IS IT?

Everything we do, front and back of house will always be with the view of applying authentic, real-world scenarios and training from our years of service. This course is the closest thing any "civilian" can experience to Special Forces selection.

WHAT PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE/S DO YOU HAVE IN AUSTRALIA OR WITH AUSTRALIANS.

I worked with the Australian SAS in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 2013 and visited their Perth headquarters for two months. I have always had a great working and personal relationship with Australians and find us to be very similar in approach and attitude.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO IS CONSIDERING APPLYING FOR THE NEXT SEASON?

Make sure you're doing it for the right reasons. Apply yourself physically and mentally to the challenges and invest your time wisely into preparing your body and mind. Do not underestimate the challenge.



GUUNSE FACTS

SAS AUSTRALIA

- SAS Australia teamed up with the Jordanian Armed Forces and the Jordanian Royal Air Force, who provided the production with military personnel, military-grade weapons, and military vehicles for various tasks.
- Jordanian Royal Air Force Blackhawks were flown for over 25 hours throughout the series facilitating the tasks.
- Over 4,000 rounds of AK-47 blank ammunition were fired during the series.
- The recruits fired over 2,500 paintball pellets.
- 76 smoke grenades were used during tasks both on and off the base.
- Over 25kg of C4 was detonated during the series, resulting in some of the show's massive explosions.
- 48 flash bangs (stun grenades) were used / to stun and disorient the recruits during tasks.
- 17 venomous Lionfish were spotted during tasks filmed in the Gulf of Agaba.



- SAS Australia worked closely alongside and was escorted by the local Bedouin people, who are the custodians of the Wadi Rum Desert.
- The recruits are filmed 24/7 with fixed-rig cameras in the barracks and handheld cameras outside. Sixty rigged cameras were utilised on the
- base to capture every move made by the recruits. Off-rig crew consisted of a team of up to seven "running" cameras.
- 2 drones and one racer drone were used to film the series. The racer drone was meticulously constructed and employed to follow recruits through tactical-based tasks.
- 18 tonnes of lighting equipment was shipped to Jordan and employed to illuminate the base, mess hall, dormitories, parade square and mirror room.
- 12 tonnes of technical equipment was transported to Jordan and used to set up the base.

- 10km of fibre cable was used to transmit footage from the base to the control room. This fibre cable enabled the control room crew to manage all aspects of the base, including cameras, audio and lighting.
- Over 200 hours of on-rig footage was recorded on set.
- The recruits had no access to hot water on the base.
- Recruits were only provided with a 'short drop' toilet, which they were responsible for cleaning and maintaining. There were no toilet stops when travelling to each task, the recruits had to "go bush."
- A recruit can quit by Voluntary Withdrawal, or VW. Four recruits left the course within the first two days.
- The temperature ranged from
 -2°C in windchill to 40°C.
- The commute to Wadi Rum, Jordan, took 36 hours from Sydney, Australia.

7/**7**4



BASE

The recruit and DS living quarters, which include the Recruit Dorm, DS Dorm, Mirror Room, Prayers Room, Mess and Parade Square.

DETAIL

When the DS brief the recruits on their task or what they're about to do, this is known as detail.

MIRROR ROOM

This is where the DS interrogate the recruits with tactical questioning (sometimes called TQs or Interrogations).

PRAYERS ROOM

The room where the DS discuss and assess the recruits and the day's events.

BEASTINGS

The imposition of arduous physical exercises for training or punishment aimed at breaking or making the recruits.

DS

The DS or Directing Staff are the ex-Special Forces team who direct the course (also referred to as Staff).

OPPO

A military term for buddy or mate.

PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING

Used to assess an individual's performance potential for the Special Forces.

BERGEN

A type of rucksack supported by a frame, used by the military (known as the "house on your back").

DUTY RECRUIT

The DS nominate a new Duty Recruit every few days who is responsible for being the spokesperson for all recruits to the DS.

PARADE SQUARE

The outdoor area on base where the DS brief and exercise the recruits

VW

Recruits can voluntarily withdraw (VW) from the course at any time by handing their numbered armband to one of the DS.



EP 1 - SURRENDER



EP 2 - PANIC



EP 3 - PRECISION



EP 4 - SURVIVAL



EP 5 - TRUST



EP 6 - AGGRESSION



EP 7 - PRESSURE



EP 8 - COURAGE



EP 9 - GRIT



EP 10 - BRAVERY









#4

AGE (ON COURSE): 32
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Melbourne
PROFESSION: AFL Field Commentator

(C) @abbeycholmes

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

I'm always looking to challenge myself and do something to get out of my comfort zone.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

It was a brutal but amazing experience. I don't think anything can prepare you for how real and how raw it is.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

I was already in training for New Zealand's Coast to Coast 30km mountain ride, which assisted my physical training. But the main one for me was the psychological and mental side; I really had to hone in on that. I'm a very emotional person so I had to prepare myself for what the DS was going to throw at us.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

The first minute of seeing the DS. They make it extremely real and that was a shock to the system. There was no easing in. It was on like Donkey Kong from that first minute!

WAS SAS MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

It was much harder than I expected. You enter that environment knowing it will be tough and certainly a grind, but it exceeds all expectations.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

The highlights are always finding out things you didn't know about yourself. The mind is a pretty amazing beast. If you can learn to channel your thoughts and emotions, you can achieve anything.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

The worst thing is being so far from home and out of your comfort zone. I'm so close with my family and my partner Keegan; I missed not having those comforts.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

Yes, in a heartbeat.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

100%. There is no task that's tougher in television. I've had a number of experiences in pretty raw and authentic TV landscapes and nothing compares to a 10-day SAS selection course.

THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON THE COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

In terms of environment and terrain, Wadi Rum was like nothing I had ever seen before. It was an incredible place to have that experience, but in saying that, it was brutal.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

It's the role of the DS to try and break you down, so focus your preparation on your emotional and psychological state. Get yourself to a strong headspace before you go into a situation like that.

ANTHONY MUNDINE





#5

AGE (ON COURSE): 47
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Sydney
PROFESSION: World Champion Boxer

(a) @anthonymundineofficial

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

I saw it as a challenge. I'm pretty good physically, but I also thought it would be a good mental test. It was good to get out of my comfort zone.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

Looking back, it was a great experience.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

I maintained my normal fitness routine, which includes a lot of boxing, and I bought a pair of steel cap boots to wear on road and dune runs.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

Probably on the first night when I jumped onto the stretcher bed to sleep.

WAS THE EXPERIENCE MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

The course was exactly what I expected.

DID ANYTHING ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE SURPRISE YOU?

The wake-up calls at any time throughout the night. It just made you feel constantly on edge.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

I learned the true depths of my mental strength.

DO YOU HAVE ANY REGRETS?

Yes.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

Yeah, definitely. The people were very cool and easy to get along with.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

Yes.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

Definitely have a crack. It's amazing. You will learn and grow so much and make life-long friends.

THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON THE COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

What other TV show would take you to the desert? The terrain was hectic, but it didn't impact my performance.







#8

AGE (ON COURSE): 30
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Sydney
PROFESSION: Retired NRL Star

(i) @boydcordner

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

I thought it would be a good challenge after I retired from the NRL. And it would test me both physically and mentally.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

It was great to be honest. It didn't disappoint at all. I loved the fact that it was in the Middle East.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

I maintained my normal gym fitness routine and added in hikes and dune running.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

When I was on my way to the airport, I started getting really nervous, and that's when it all became very real.

WAS THE EXPERIENCE MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

It was pretty much what I expected. I was preparing myself for the worst.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

The sleeping arrangements and knowing that you could be beasted at any time of the night. You always had to have everything ready to go.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

My mental strength is much tougher than I thought.

DO YOU HAVE ANY REGRETS?

Not at all.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

Yes, I would for sure.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE?

Yes. Definitely.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

Definitely do it. Make your preparation solid because what you get out of it will be worth it.

THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON THE COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

The desert location was the main reason I agreed to do the course. I loved it.



CASSIE SAINSBURY





#1

AGE (ON COURSE): 28
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Adelaide
PROFESSION: Convicted Drug Smuggler

(C) @cassiesainsbury

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

I wanted to give people a chance to see the real me.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

It was a very confronting experience, but worth it. It pushed me to confront emotions and feelings I had refused to acknowledge.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

I did several boot camps, long runs and hikes.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

The moment that you heard the DS yelling and running at you. For me, it was like the guards running at the inmates all over again.

WAS SAS MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

I hadn't expected my asthma to be an issue, but it flared up and made everything 10 times harder. It made an already hard experience quite dangerous.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

Trying to confront the trauma that was controlling me. It took all my willpower to try and pull myself together.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

For me, it was the PTSD that it forced me to face. I had to acknowledge that prison had left a permanent mark on me. And being in the desert really messed with my asthma. It made me struggle with the most simple things.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

I learned that I need to stop focusing on all the bad things people say about me and focus on just being me.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

Sure. I would love to have another opportunity. Now that I've faced the demons of my past, I know that I can work through them. I would love to go back into the course and show them the real Cassie, the Cassie that survived years in one of the worst prisons.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

Yes, absolutely. The course is designed to break and rebuild you. Everyone has their demons that make it easier or harder to get through it.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

Go for it.

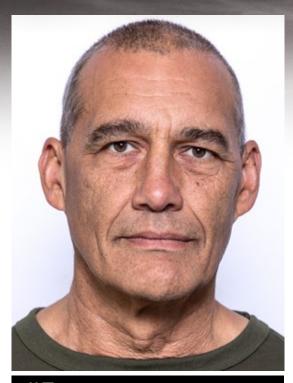
THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON THE COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

The heat and the sand made it 100 times harder. Insane.



Da Chalcalala





#7

AGE (ON COURSE): 57
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Perth
PROFESSION: Thai Cave Rescue Hero

© @drcraigchallen

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

I thought it would be an interesting experience and different to what I normally do. It's good to try something different.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

Very enjoyable. I was encouraged to find out that it was all pretty real, which I had my doubts about in advance.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

I didn't have time to do anything other than my normal routine of running and cycling.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

Pretty quickly, within the first day.

WAS SAS MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

About what I anticipated.

DID ANYTHING ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE SURPRISE YOU?

Not really. I try not to approach new things with expectations so as to avoid surprises.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU AND WHY?

Black Hawks. I love helicopters.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

Climbing up ropes. I was pretty hopeless.

ANY REGRETS?

Never have regret. It is the most destructive emotion.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

I don't know. Part of me says, "ticked that one off and move on to the next thing." But I also feel it would be good to have another go.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

It's the only test I've ever done on TV, so I have no basis for an opinion. But it was about as tough as a caving expedition, so not too bad.

THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON THE COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

It was warm but not really hot. The terrain was basically a lot of sand. All of this is familiar if you come from Western Australia. I've spent quite a bit of time out in the desert, so the conditions suited me. I'm probably more used to it than most on the course.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

Go for it.







#9

AGE (ON COURSE): 57
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Sydney
PROFESSION: Actor

© @craigmclachan_

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

I wanted the opportunity to exorcise pain with pain.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

Extraordinary.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

Believe it or not, hardly any, as I had to undergo abdominal surgery not long before we started. But I carefully did what I could and passed the barrier and cardio tests a couple of days before shipping out.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

At the precise moment Ant Middleton and his merry men jumped out of helicopters that had been hovering over us, sandblasting us out in the middle of the desert. They raced over to us screaming, shoved us down into the scorching sand, bagged our noggins (black hoods over our heads) and double-timed us through the dunes to waiting graves!

WAS SAS MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

It was all I imagined and more.

DID ANYTHING ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE SURPRISE YOU?

Just how thorough the "breaking down" process is.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU AND WHY?

It requires you to be absolutely real. There is no way you can BS your way through it. Who you are will be revealed.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

Honestly, without harping on about it, my physical limitations due to my surgery caused me some serious concerns many times throughout the selection course. But I tried not to let on and just soldiered on (no pun intended).

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

We are tougher than we think in every respect. We have innate reserves that we can call upon. We just have to believe. I sound like a 70s bumper sticker, but it's true.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

Yep. Time would be a factor, obviously. Don't invite me back when I'm too old. I was even older than George Foreman when he came back to the ring at 50!

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

No doubt. It's one thing to complete or at least attempt certain tough physical challenges on whatever TV show, but what's required psychologically to get up and get into that parade square every day is something else.

THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON THE COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

Everything about being in the Middle East just amplified the whole experience. The desert, with its scorching temperatures by day and its extra blanket temperatures at night, parched salt plains, towering pinnacles, dunes, and ravines – it's a magical place. Brutal but glorious.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR ADVICE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

If it's something you really want to do, understand in advance that you will have to respect the process: know that you're going to get screamed at, know that you're going to get called all sorts and you'll probably hate it, but the DS do it for a reason. You must give yourself to the process wholeheartedly. If you don't, you simply won't reap the rewards. And you'll have the shittiest time!





#3

AGE (ON COURSE): 46
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Brisbane
PROFESSION: AFL Hall of Famer

(© @jasonakermanisofficial

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA? For the challenge.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

Terrifying.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

Lots of push-ups, burpees, squats, weights and running.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

The first minute of the course.

WAS SAS MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

Way worse!

DID ANYTHING ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE SURPRISE YOU?

Yes. Getting buried alive in the coffins was more than I ever expected.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

Going home.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

Sleeping was hard and the on-going pain in my feet.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

How good my life is.

DO YOU HAVE ANY REGRETS?

No.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

No.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

Yes, that is correct. Nothing is harder on TV than this show.

THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

During the day it was hot and dry and everyone's lips were cracked. The nights were dry and cold.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

Do not go on it.







#12

AGE (ON COURSE): 45
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Bali
PROFESSION: Balinese Princess

(C) @lindyklim

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

I didn't at first. But I have this habit of saying "yes" to doing things that I don't want to do! I guess it pushes me to have different experiences that I wouldn't usually have.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

Intense and the hardest, most surreal thing I have ever done.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

I did a combination of functional training, hot Pilates and lots of hiking with a 12kg backpack on. I even started running for the first time. I had only seen roughly 10 minutes of the show before and wished I had trained more specifically for the show's needs.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

The minute I was shoved to the ground face down with such force, and then had the bag put over my face by one of the DS.

WAS SAS MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

It was definitely a lot harder and more real than I had anticipated.

DID ANYTHING ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE SURPRISE YOU?

Yes, everything. Part of me wishes I had watched more episodes of the show beforehand, but in saying that, I would have most likely pulled out and not pushed myself to the limit.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

I did enjoy getting fit again, especially after COVID. The training gave me a purpose and I loved meeting all the other amazing recruits.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

The intense physical tasks, mental stress, lack of privacy, exposure to challenging environments, and the pressure to perform in front of cameras for the whole of Australia to see.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

I can do things, but only if I'm yelled at!

DO YOU HAVE ANY REGRETS?

None. I'm happy I went on the course. I was completely out of my comfort zone. Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought I would do something like that. It's good to shake things up a little in life.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

Never.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

100%! It was so real and I was surprised by that.

THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON THE COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

I thought I was going to be OK because I live in Bali and I'm used to the heat, but I wasn't aware of how cold it got at night. I'm not good in the cold at all.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

I think it's an incredible experience. I guess it depends on what you want to get out of it. For me, it was more about the experience of the course than winning.



MALA PAUNTALY





#6

AGE (ON COURSE): 29
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Sydney
PROFESSION: International Rugby Star

© @mahaliamurphy

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

I wanted to experience a different challenge and a different environment.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

A lot of mental and physical challenges. But now that it's done, I can say I really enjoyed the experience overall.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

I didn't really do too much preparation as I was having my first proper football off-season for the first time in eight years. But I did some walking with a bag full of water bottles in boots and a tracksuit. I did go to the gym here and there to keep some strength up.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

As soon as the DS met us in person and bagged our heads then buried us alive.

WAS SAS MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

More challenging. I felt like everything was so full-on. Mentally, you had to be prepared to be on the go at any time. The whole environment was tough: the heat, sand dunes, challenges of the course and doing brutal tasks back to back.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU AND WHY?

The way everyone got around each other even though it was competitive.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

Reflecting on my childhood experiences because it wasn't easy to talk about and feel those emotions when sharing.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

Mental strength can get you anywhere.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

100%. I would love to.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

I agree. You are not prepared enough and you don't know what to expect. It pushes your mind and body to the limits.

THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON THE COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

It was absolutely hot! The sand dunes were tough. It made every part of the body switch on and burn whilst running. Felt like you were on a treadmill.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

Do it! Do lots of trail running whilst carrying some weight in a backpack, strength training and seek mindset coaching.







#13

AGE (ON COURSE): 35
CURRENT HOMETOWN: London
PROFESSION: Olympic Gold Diver

© @mathewmitcham88

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

I felt like I was getting soft and comfortable in life, and SAS would be a good challenge to give me purpose and momentum to tackle other goals.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

I loved it (for the most part!). I loved the challenge. I loved learning new skills, and I loved the novelty of experiencing something different every day that I would never have had the chance to do otherwise.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

A buttload of running with weight vests, F45, weight training, cold water swimming in the Amsterdam winter, and chopping onions while eating spoonfuls of chilli to simulate tear gas!

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

Literally the first day. We got beasted before we even got into the camp. We were still in our civilian clothes.

WAS SAS MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

More challenging. You watch it on TV and think, "yep, I could do that, and that, and why are they getting so freaked out? It's just a simulation!" The DS are so good at immersing you in the experience and even though you know you're not on the battlefield, the pressure is very real because the consequences for failure are extremely unpleasant.

DID ANYTHING ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE SURPRISE YOU?

I probably shouldn't say this, but I quite enjoyed the food. I did have extremely low expectations and there was never enough to meet our energy demands. I didn't find the toilet situation as challenging as I thought I would.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

Doing things I've never done before and doing things I believed I couldn't.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

I'm fine with cold. I'm fine with wet. But there is something particularly demoralising about being cold and wet for hours at a time, almost every day.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

That I'm a badass!

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN? 100%.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

I do. The DS are clever: they don't just flog you so hard that you quit. That would be too easy. They flog you to the edge of breaking physically, mentally and emotionally. They know when you're right at the edge and they hold you there day after day after day. I've never been so drained.

THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON THE COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

As soon as the sun was gone, it was cold. There was one afternoon task that was in a deep valley sheltered from the sun. I was one of the first to do the task, so I was waiting for a couple of hours, dripping wet in the cold, shivering violently like a small child.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

100%. Could not recommend more highly.







#10

AGE (ON COURSE): 29
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Melbourne
PROFESSION: Olympic Runner

(C) @pbol800

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

As an athlete, I challenge myself every day in striving for constant improvement. **SAS Australia** presented another opportunity for me to challenge myself in a completely different setting, something I am always up for.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

It was a great experience at the right time of my life. I enjoyed the simplicity of living with no phones (technology), no clock and the day-to-day noise.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

I did rock climbing, weight vest hiking at strange hours, cold showers, sand running and boxing.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

On day one.

WAS SAS MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

It was a lot more challenging than I expected. I am used to pushing my body to its absolute limits, but this took that to a whole other level.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

The experience allowed me to discover a lot about myself and I met some really amazing people along the way.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU AND WHY?

Not knowing who was going to come and wake you up and to do God knows what.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

That the mind is a capable tool and when aligned with the body, I'm capable of great things.

DO YOU HAVE ANY REGRETS?

Not at all. I am always up for a good challenge and this experience provided one of the best I could have gotten.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

Yes. Especially when I'm retired as an athlete.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

I agree. Some of the challenges were tougher than any training I have ever experienced as a professional athlete.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

Watch previous episodes, get off coffee and prepare physically and mentally.



STEPHANIE PICE





#11

AGE (ON COURSE): 34
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Brisbane
PROFESSION: Olympic Champion

(C) @itsstephrice

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

Having watched the past seasons, I was always excited and interested in taking part. It's a once-in-a-lifetime experience and I wanted to test myself mentally and physically again in a different situation to see if my inner athlete would shine through.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

I absolutely loved my experience. I enjoyed the toughness of the course. I feel like I thrive in intense and tough situations, and the course showed me that my instincts are more often right.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

I re-watched every past season, made a note of all the different challenges and trained for each one of them specifically. Physically, that involved boxing, repelling, running, water-based activities with long pants and boots, height exposure, claustrophobic situations and trainers yelling at me to get used to that antagonistic stress. I also did a lot of mental preparation.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

I felt alive for the first time in a long time. Very much a life-changing experience!

WHAT WAS THE HARDEST THING ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

The preparation. It's always the hardest part physically but mentally as well.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

I've always felt like that high-achieving, super resilient, competitive part of myself stopped when I stopped swimming. The course showed me that that girl is still within me. She just needed a vehicle and experience to come out again. I am forever grateful for my time on the course.

ANY REGRETS?

No regrets.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

Potentially.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

Yes, I agree. For most people, the entire course is completely outside their comfort zone, with nowhere to hide. Your true, authentic self will always shine through. This show, this course, brings out everyone's true character.

THIS IS THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN SEASON TO BE SHOT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLIMATE AND TERRAIN ON THE COURSE AND HOW THIS IMPACTED YOUR EXPERIENCE?

It was the most incredible location. Knowing it was overseas added an extra element of intensity, adventure and stress. When we arrived, I was completely blown away by how stunning and mystical the location was. The sand and heat were two big factors that I tried to train for and get more comfortable with.

WHAT WAS THE TOUGHEST THING ABOUT LIFE ON BASE CAMP?

Sleeping! Without a doubt, that was the toughest. Not knowing when or if you would get woken up for a beasting. Do you sleep with the full kit on, or take the shoes off for a better sleep, not knowing how long it would take to put them back on.



TIM POBARDS





#14

AGE (ON COURSE): 40
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Sydney
PROFESSION: OG Bachelor

(C) @mrtimrobards

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

My body is getting older. I've had many injuries and some degeneration over the last few years and I feel like I'm battling against it on a daily basis. People around me are telling me to slow down and essentially, it's time to give it up. That doesn't sit right with me. I need always to be moving forward in some way.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

Traumatic. It was a rude awakening. Even though I had mentally prepared so much, nothing prepares you for the constant state of gruelling stress, fear and anxiety the DS create. The challenges are one thing, but the daily anxiety is a whole other weight that takes its toll.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

I changed my training to be more specific to what I would endure. That meant a mixture of more walking/running with weight vests, more HIIT and more functional training. The biggest change was to make each session a challenge for the mind too.

WAS SAS MORE OR LESS CHALLENGING THAN YOU EXPECTED?

Much more. I knew it would be hard and I thought I was prepared. But the hardest part of the course is constantly being on edge, knowing that at any stage, you could be checked, challenged or tested and if you screw up or make a mistake or forget something, your whole team will suffer. It's the burden that you will be responsible for the suffering of others.

DID ANYTHING ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE SURPRISE YOU?

One of the biggest surprises was the power I found when using my daughter as a way to find strength. When I felt that strength, it brought tears to my eyes a few times as it reminded me just how much love I have for my daughter and how special she is.

WHAT WAS THE HARDEST THING ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU AND WHY?

The snoring at night was pretty bad. It made it nearly impossible to get any sleep. That and the constant threat that the DS may kick the door in at any stage and beast you. The lack of sleep was tough.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

I learned that I do have a lot of inner strength, integrity and grit. How powerful a dad's love for his daughter can be and that I can push my body a lot more than I thought.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN?

Looking back, I'm glad I did it, but would I do it again? I don't think so!

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

Yes. Chatting with some others who have done some pretty hard things on TV, we all concluded that this one tops the list. Yes, it's only 10 days, but the level of pressure is relentless. The physical and mental fatigue is intense, and you just have to keep on going.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

Do your research, know what you are stepping into and take it seriously. Train your arse off! And be ready to be yelled at and pulled apart.



ZIMAANDERSON





#2

AGE (ON COURSE): 25
CURRENT HOMETOWN: Melbourne
PROFESSION: Actress

(©) @justzima

WHY DID YOU WANT TO ENLIST IN SAS AUSTRALIA?

It felt like it sat really well with how I like to live my life. I love anything that aids growth in all aspects of life. I love challenging myself.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE?

I absolutely loved it! I'd do it again in a heartbeat. It was so rewarding being without a phone, away from civilisation and having a definitive purpose each day without distractions or judgment. Just pure focus. I really loved being around like-minded people with interesting stories and having my identity stripped down to just a number.

WHAT TRAINING DID YOU DO IN PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE?

Lots of training. I've always done a lot of exercise. My partner is a fitness coach, so he loved torturing me right up to the very day I started the course. My training consisted of boxing, mixed martial arts, pole dancing, weights, functional training, hiking, swimming, yoga and running.

WHEN DID IT HIT HOME THAT THIS COURSE WAS 100% REAL?

The moment the crew ran away from us and the DS landed their helicopters and started screaming at us. It really got real then!

DID ANYTHING ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE SURPRISE YOU?

I was surprised at how I was perceived. Being a five-foot blonde girl, I guess I walk out into the world expecting to be underestimated and regarded as weak. But my other recruits and the DS surprisingly expected a lot from me.

WHAT WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

Just being in a different country with completely different objectives for day-to-day life. No phone or anything to worry about.

WHAT WERE THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT THIS PROCESS FOR YOU?

When I made mistakes. It was especially hard when I felt I was letting down my teammates. That hurt. Knowing my mistakes made it harder for the rest of the team was a horrible feeling.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE?

I learned I am strong. Incredibly strong and I really need to stop doing things to prove my strength to others. My talent, skill and strength know no bounds. I now know this in my soul.

ANY REGRETS?

No regrets. But I I wish I believed in myself a little more towards the end and was easier on myself.

WOULD YOU EVER DO IT AGAIN? Yes x10000.

THEY CALL THIS THE TOUGHEST TEST. DO YOU AGREE?

Yeah, it's pretty real. There's no smoke and mirrors here and that's the only reason I did it. I love that it's the only reality show where you are supporting each other's attempts.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FUTURE SAS RECRUITS?

Do it. Prepare. Make sure you take care of your mind and are prepared both mentally and physically.

