

Breaking Trail: A Look At Powderwhore Productions' New Film

Contributed by Tyler Cohen

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"I've never been one of the religious telemarkers who preaches that it is the way," says co-creator Noah Howell. "That kind of turns me off anyway." So he and his crew recruited several AT and splitboard campadres including Drew Stoecklien, Kim Havell, Forrest Shearer and splitboard inventor Brett Kobernik to ride in their new film.

Paul Kimbrough still skis bold lines with heels freed and his opening footage, narrated by his father, makes for the highest energy PW opener yet. Nick Devore and his go-for-broke speed and airs are notably missing from the film. But Jake Sakson drops knees where Devore left off--and may ski even faster. Sakson's charisma and attitude are as entertaining as his Mach-10 skiing style.

The Powderwhores continue to make mountaineering look cool, as Noah Howell ticks off the northeast couloir of the Pfeifferhorn, his final descent in Andrew McLean's "The Chuting Gallery." There's rappelling and a lot of sidestepping, but, as Howell narrates, "If you've got skis on, it's skiing." There's plenty of exploration, too, with segments from the bent mountains of Idaho's Lost River Range and Norway's boat-accessed seaside slopes.

Breaking Trail closes with a classic PW footage of black-and-white, slow motion, bottomless powder turns. It's rhythmic and mesmerizing. But the most captivating segment is the penultimate, where splitboarder Forrest Shearer surfs rocky Wasatch steeps and slashes turns into over-the-head curtains of snow. From a filming perspective, Noah says, a snowboard turn is just as aesthetic as a telemark turn, and Forrest's style clearly showcases this. Breaking Trail may feature a new crew of AT skiers and snowboarders, but the Powderwhore's soul is as strong as ever.

Powderwhore's "Breaking Trail" Trailer 2011 from powderwh on YouTube.

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