

Canadian and Swiss Teams Set Auto Rickshaw Altitude World Record

Harris + Harris LLP announces that Greg Harris, one of its partners, was a member of a team which set a new world record by driving a 6.6 hp auto rickshaw to the summit of Umling La Pass, at a height of 19,024 ft./5,798 meters, the highest motorable road in the world. An unusual and remarkable accomplishment.

TORONTO ([PRWEB](#)) October 25, 2022 -- A Canadian team (Greg Harris and Priya Singh) and a Swiss team (Michele Daryanani & Nevena Lazarevic) on September 16, 2022 at 11:04 a.m. (Indian Standard Time) set the world record for the highest altitude at which an auto rickshaw has ever been driven.

The two teams were participating in the Rickshaw Run (Himalayan Edition), an event promoted by The Adventurists, where teams drive auto rickshaws from the city of Jaisalmer in the Indian Rajasthan desert to Leh, a northern Indian city in the Himalayas. Rickshaw Run teams are given the start and finish lines, but are otherwise unsupported and left to their own navigational choices in completing the approximately 2,300 km journey.

The Canadian and Swiss teams were the only teams that decided to take a very unusual detour and attempt a world record altitude for auto rickshaws, requiring a drive to the summit of Umling La Pass.

The road at Umling La Pass was constructed by India's Border Roads Organization and completed in 2017. Guinness World Records certified the road as the highest motorable road in the world. The pass and road are in a sensitive area in northern India adjacent to the border with China and where China and India have territorial disputes. Consequently, special permission is required to stay and travel in this area – especially for foreigners.

On September 16, 2022, the two teams left the remote village of Hanle in two auto rickshaws in the pre-dawn hours and eventually arrived at the summit of Umling La Pass, recognized as 19,024 feet/ 5,798 meters.

The auto rickshaws used by the Canadian and Swiss teams were manufactured by Bajaj and had 198 cc engines. They produced 6.6 horsepower, slightly more than a gas push-powered lawn mower.

In speaking about the new world record, Greg Harris stated, “The road grade climbing to the summit of the pass was so steep that much of the drive could only be done in first gear; however, the Bajaj auto rickshaws were real workhorses and persistently made their way to the top, a drive usually only accomplished by higher powered motorcycles or cars”.

Umling La Pass, at a height of 19,024 feet/ 5,798 meters (approximately equivalent to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro), carries a real risk of serious altitude sickness. At such altitude, there is about 50% less oxygen per volume of breathable air than at sea level, creating breathing difficulties, headaches, dizziness, nausea, as well as more potentially serious or fatal altitude related illnesses such as cerebral edema (swelling of the brain) or pulmonary edema (lungs filled with fluid).

Priya Singh, on the high altitude, commented, “At the summit of the pass, we were breathing air with only half the oxygen found at sea level; so it was both the vehicles and the drivers that were oxygen deprived. Luckily, we had spent time prior to the attempt acclimatizing, so other than some minor discomfort, none of the team members suffered any serious issues.”

The road to Umling La Pass requires ascent from village of Hanle to the 18,149 foot/5,532 meter summit of Photi La Pass (the 6th highest motorable pass in the world), with a sharp descent of 5,000 feet/1500 meters to the valley between Photi La and Umling La and then the climb up to the summit of Umling La Pass – all on very steep and narrow roads with numerous tight switch-backs.

Michele Daryanani when asked about achieving the Umling La Pass summit replied, “We left all of our baggage and supplies (other than spare fuel) at base camp so that the auto rickshaws would be as light as possible in order to maximize our chances of making it to the top. The drive to Umling La Pass, given the steep road incline and treacherous multi-thousand foot vertical drops, if one strayed even slightly off-road, required constant concentration and focus on gear selection and braking, all the while trying to maintain forward and upward momentum. While the auto rickshaws were not the ideal vehicles for achieving this objective, it made the adventure all the more challenging and exciting.”

Nevena Lazarevic added, “While the world record was our ultimate goal, the entire Rickshaw Run of over 2,300 km from Jaisalmer to Leh, while quite difficult, was adventurous, thrilling and spectacular; involving numerous mountain passes, river crossings, half-constructed roads, off-road driving and navigation, as well as avoiding serious consequences on the notoriously dangerous Indian roads. That being said – the culinary experience was amazing. The dishes changed totally from the desert bean pickles of Rajasthan to spicy and aromatic curries around Shimla, until the momos in Leh.”

Source Harris + Harris LLP

For further information (biographical) about any of the record setters (or additional team and auto rickshaw photos and videos), please contact Nicole Cristiano at (416) 798-2722 x237 or by email at nicolecristiano@harrisandharris.com . A video of both auto rickshaws reaching the summit of Umling La Pass together is available on YouTube at <https://youtube.com/shorts/YwCW9mpmG7A?feature=share>.

Information on the Rickshaw Run or the other unusual adventures organized by The Adventurists can be found at <http://www.theadventurists.com>.



Contact Information

Nicole Cristiano

Harris + Harris LLP

<http://www.harrisandharris.com>

1 4167982722 Ext: 237

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