



THE HIGH ROAD

NONSTOP ACROSS THE HIMALAYAS



Press-Kit for the short documentary

„The High Road“

Graz (Austria), 20.10.2015

Logline



Extreme cyclist **Jacob Zurl** wants to bike across the Himalayas on one of the world's highest roads - in only 40 hours.

Short-Synopsis

The **Manal-Leh Highway** spans the Himalayas and is one of the most dangerous and highest motorable roads in the world. In 2014, Jacob Zurl sets out to travel it in one continuous trip on his bike. A regular journey takes two weeks, Jacob's plan is to do it in 40 hours. To keep him safe, his friends and family follow him on this record attempt that puts extreme mental and physical strains on everyone involved.

Synopsis

The Styrian extreme cyclist Jakob Zurl rides nonstop on across the Himalayas one of the world's most dangerous roads. From Manali to Leh in Ladakh, in India then to the Khardung La Pass at 5359m. This means biking day and night, without sleep, without rests, on a wild track over 8 passes, **540 km including 13.500 altitude metres, at an average altitude of more than 4000m**, in

less than 40 hours. The film accompanies this project closely, it shows the extreme physical and mental strains. Jacob's family and his friends are ambivalent. One the one side, they question this dangerous project because they worry about his health, on the other side, they support him in psychologically and medically, because they want to help him to reach his goal.

About the production

Not unlike Jacob Zurl's record attempt, the making of the documentary was a hard journey. The filming in India was done by **Raoul Kopacka** who functioned as a one-man crew. While Jacob was on his bike, Raoul traveled by car and motorcycle to stay ahead or close behind the subject of the documentary. At home in Graz the task for editing and directing duo **Nils Kaltschmidt** and **Vincent Seidl** was not the high altitude but rather

the sheer amount of footage Raoul had produced in his two weeks in India. Through months of editing, the shooting of interviews as well as the production of animations and studio footage they were able to craft a compelling story about a man with extreme goals and how his surroundings are affected by them. With exception of the music the whole postproduction was completed in Graz at the production company **HENX**.

Hard Facts

Title	The High Road
Subtitle	Nonstop across the Himalayas
Completion	August 2015
Premiere	10. Nov. 2015 - Mountainfilm Festival Graz
Duration	27:08 min
Directed / edited / written	Nils Kaltschmidt, Vincent Seidl
Camerawork India	Raoul Kopacka
Animation	Markus Seereiter
Music	Matthias Müller



The Cameraman

Raoul Kopacka is a freelance documentary filmmaker. He finished his master studies in Global Studies and Cultural and Social Anthropology and works as a video-journalist for derstandard.at. Along with adventurer and mountain guide Rudi Stangl he finished the documentary “Prosper - The Cook on the Kilimanjaro” which premiered 2013 at the Mountain Film Festival in Graz. He arrived ahead of the other team members in India to document Jacob’s phase of acclimatization (both in respect of height and the surroundings) and shot all footage of the record attempt as well.

The Directing/Editing-Duo

Nils Kaltschmidt and **Vincent Seidl** are members of the Austrian film collective HENX since its founding in 2009. Nils completed his BA in Information Design in 2015 at the FH Joanneum Graz. His work at HENX includes the creative direction, editing and animation. Together with Vincent Seidl he directed and edited “The High Road”. Vincent is the cameraman on the group’s projects and does freelancing work as an AC or camera operator on documentary or feature productions for TV and cinema.



The production company

HENX is a Graz-based collective of five young filmmakers with several years of experience in quality filmmaking is producing and distributing “The High Road”. Founded in 2009 they have produced several documentaries, music videos and narrative shorts as well as a wide range of commercial work for different clients. The different skillsets allow the team members to complement each other and to tackle large projects.

Cast



Rudi Stangl

Jacob Zurl

Prof. Hans Holdaus

Paul Zurl

Brigitte Zurl

Greta Hametner

Harald Reinbacher

Judith Zielstra

Thinles Dorjay

Tenzin Phuntsog

Contact



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