

Father and daughter set new Guinness World Record on the Mississippi River



A team of paddlers has set a new Guinness World Record for the fastest time to canoe the length of the Mississippi River, completing the quest in 17 days, 19 hours and 46 minutes.



MMZero, made up of father and daughter duo Kirk and Casey Millhone, and recognized paddlers Bobby Johnson and Rod Price, set the record after paddling 24 hours a day, for over two weeks.

The successful attempt means Kirk, aged 62, is now the oldest person to have completed the estimated 2,350-mile journey and hold the record, while daughter Casey, aged 20, is the youngest female to do so.

Casey said: "I was nervous about being a weak link in the team, with Kirk, Rod and Bobby all having accomplished such amazing things. But the further we got

along the river, I realized that I was prepared, I was learning, and I was getting stronger each day.

"It was an amazing feeling to be an equal amongst the greatness of these three established paddlers."

Kirk added: "Casey held us together throughout this journey, which has made me as proud as I can be.

“A highlight of this trip is that she now sees herself as I’ve seen her for a long time – as an extraordinary young person who has abilities beyond imagination. The world is a better place having had her in it.”

To ensure the team could obtain the record, they paddled day and night in nine-hour shifts, taking it in turns to sleep on the canoe for just three hours at a time.

During the attempt, which began in Lake Itasca on April 22nd, they battled exhaustion, sleep deprivation, hallucinations and extreme weather conditions.

Rod Price said: “We measured our success based on how many hours ahead of world record pace, so losing time to tornados and high winds was a huge blow.

“One night we nearly capsized in a whirlpool; five inches of water soaked into my sleeping bag while I was resting, and I ended up hypothermic.

“When the weather conditions cause you to lose time you realize there’s no wiggle room at all, but one good night can completely turn circumstances around.”

Kirk added: “Mother Nature was our biggest challenge; she is completely indifferent to plans, and we dealt with everything from blizzards to 90-degree heat.”

“Alongside that, we also had to deal with the grueling physical challenges. You can only eat so many calories and work hard for so long before your body starts to feed on itself and you can’t maintain your strength any longer.”

Rod said: “Riding the Mississippi River is like Mount Everest for paddlers.

“More than 4,000 people have climbed Everest, but I can guarantee that far fewer than 4,000 people have paddled the Mississippi, and even less have tried to paddle it for a speed record. It’s a phenomenal task and you do need to factor in the danger involved.”

Team MMZero was followed by a support crew on an RV and pontoon boat, who provided food, took care of laundry and charged equipment during the journey.

Kirk said: “This is not a world record of four paddlers, but a world record of a whole team, including the support crew and everyone who helped us along our way. There’s no way we could have accomplished this without all of the people who were involved.

“Every single person on our support team at one time or another was that thread that held things together to allow us to keep going.”

Bobby Johnson added: “I want to say thank you to everyone. Every single person involved in this trip was the reason that we finished it and I wouldn’t have had this amazing experience without them.

“It really was the adventure of a lifetime.”

To find out more about Team MMZero, visit mmzero.org/

