

High-octane achievements

Filmmaker and director, Rohan Tully, used JVC's GY-HM100 handheld and GY-HM700 shoulder-mount camcorders to follow the adventures of British Strakka Racing team driver, Nick Leventis, as he raced in the recent Le Mans 24-hour event. Adding to his driving challenge, Nick also set out to perform the highest altitude tandem skydive over the Himalayas, with the aim of raising money for charity. HIGHWAY caught up with Rohan to find out how both the camcorders and the fearless racing driver performed.



Rohan's journey began on the Thai-Burmese border, as Nick needed a short video that he could use to raise awareness and funds for the children's charity, [Global Angels](#).

"The charity helps thousands of the area's most vulnerable children, who have fled the brutal government and civil war in Burma and are currently being housed and schooled in Thailand," Rohan explains. "For our film, we visited a project that the charity supports, which meant we were often filming in very difficult locations. You can't take cameras into Burma but, as the GY-HM100 was so compact, we were able to get some great shots of the troubled kids without being noticed. Nick wanted the film to show how money raised from his skydive would be used, especially on schools and welfare projects."

Once the fund-raising short film was complete, Rohan followed Nick competing as part of the Strakka Racing team in the 78th Le Mans 24-hour race.



“What started out as a follow-on short film to cover Nick’s money-raising efforts turned into a 52-minute feature,” Rohan continues. The Strakka team was dominant, leading from start to finish to win the LMP2 class, setting a new lap record and finishing fifth in the overall race – the highest ever position for an LMP2 car.

“I was able to film continuously for 39 hours, thanks to the hot-swappable SDHC cards on the GY-HM700 camcorder, which meant we covered everything from the early morning start, through the day’s gruelling race, and on until well after the team’s victory. I was shattered but the camcorder kept performing well, especially with the changing lighting conditions at the race; both low light and floodlit images really worked. We also used the GY-HM100 camcorder in the Strakka Racing garage, where space was at a premium.



“I used just four 16GB SDHC cards, logging and backing up footage onto two hard drives, then erasing the cards when needed,” Rohan adds. “We edited the footage in record time, using Final Cut Studio, as the workflow with the .MOV camera footage was so simple. The final film, [The Battle of La Sarthe](#), available from was narrated by Sir Stirling Moss OBE and shown at MIPCOM.”

After using the [GY-HM100](#) and [GY-HM700](#) camcorders to capture such diverse footage – troubled war-torn Burma and then the excitement of Le Mans – Rohan embarked on a trip to Nepal to cover the final leg of Nick’s record-breaking achievements.

Along with a small support team, Rohan took his JVC cameras to film Nick as he attempted to set a new altitude record for a free-fall jump over Mount Everest in the Himalayas. After many problems with bad visibility, he successfully completed the jump, leaping from a height of 30,000 feet, setting a new record for the highest tandem skydive in the Himalayas, and successfully raising just under £100,000 for the children’s charity in the process.



“I was really impressed how both camcorders dealt with the extremes of temperatures across the whole experience,” Rohan concludes. “The images they produced were excellent, whether the temperature was hot and humid as in Thailand or freezing cold as in the Himalayas. We couldn’t have completed the three projects in the relatively short timescale without the simple workflow the camcorders offered either; Nick’s achievements were tough enough, so I was pleased that the camcorders also lived up to the challenge.”