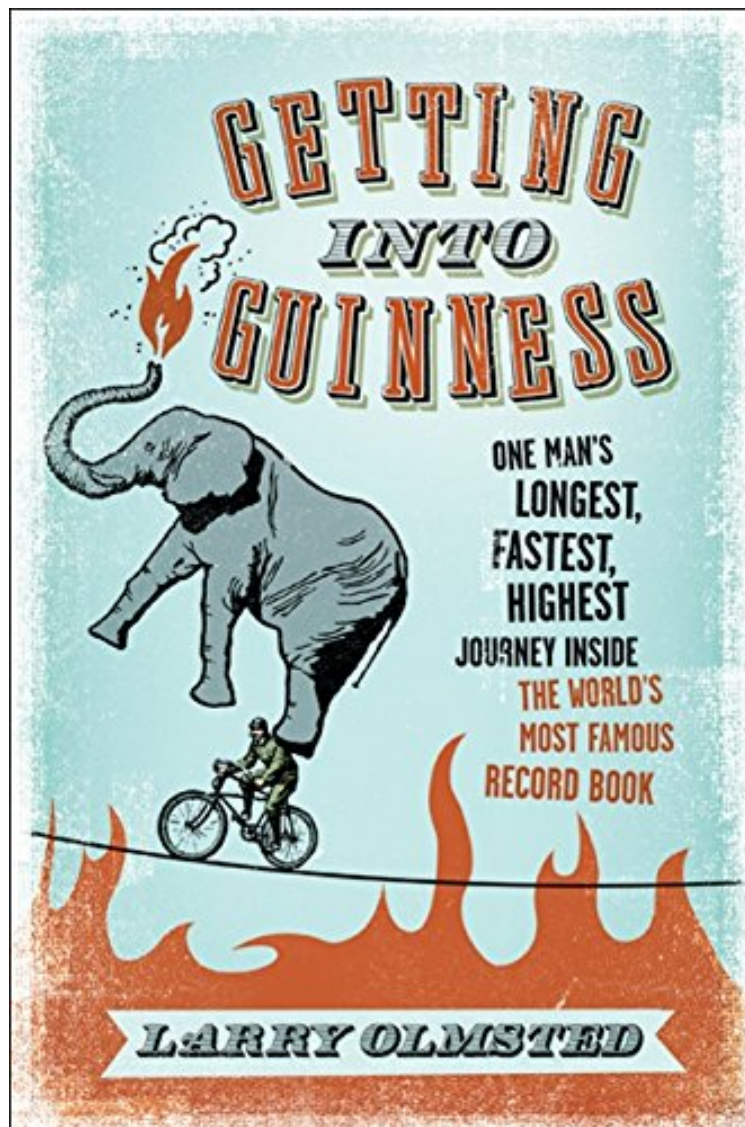


[Mobile ebook] Getting into Guinness: One Man's Longest, Fastest, Highest Journey Inside the Worlds Most Famous Record Book

Getting into Guinness: One Man's Longest, Fastest, Highest Journey Inside the Worlds Most Famous Record Book

Larry Olmsted

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Larry Olmsted : Getting into Guinness: One Man's Longest, Fastest, Highest Journey Inside the Worlds Most Famous Record Book before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Getting into Guinness: One Man's Longest, Fastest, Highest Journey Inside the Worlds Most Famous Record Book:

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Wonderfully readable, interesting history ...By L. MountfordLarry

Olmstead's look at the rarified world of record breaking is an entertaining read. For history buffs, it tells the story of the bestselling "Guinness World Records," a book I first read over 40 years ago. I remember being absolutely fascinated by the longest mustache, the longest fingernails, the tallest woman, etc. The fact that it was originally meant to be used to settle bar bets or disputes was an interesting tidbit -- the name "Guinness" refers to the Guinness Brewing Company. Guinness, the book, has come a long way since then, and Olmstead gives us a detailed look at how Guinness does what it does. It's clear he has both respect and affection for his subject -- and he uses his own experiences in breaking two records to illustrate the process. His description of his journey to break the "longest casino poker session" record is especially enjoyable. I found the book hard to put down -- Olmstead's style pulls the reader along through a fascinating story. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Very Fun Read, Fills In Some History Behind the Records By Jacob and Kiki Hantla Like many, I spent much of my childhood with my Guinness Book of World Records in hand, trying to figure out how I could get in there. I never did figure it out, but I still have many of the random facts of the book memorized. I suppose that I'm not the only one in those shoes as the Guinness Book of World Records has sold more copies than any other copyrighted text. But have you ever wondered who exactly are these people who Somersault Paul Revere's ride, pogo-stick up mountains, eat a 747, make humongous foodstuffs, and all those other random records that you read about? I had. That's what this book is about. Getting into Guinness tells some of the history of the book itself, but most entertaining is the background it offers on the people who set the records. There isn't much focus on the people who didn't have the book in their sites when they set their record: Tallest man, shortest woman, oldest, smallest, biggest, etc. The focus of this book is on the people who invent records to break or discipline their body to do ridiculous but amazingly difficult things, for no other reason than to get their name printed in small font in a book full of other people whose only claim to fame is their Guinness Record. It is overall a very fun read. There are sections that get slow. Olmsted is a much better storyteller than philosopher, and these philosophy-of-record-breaking sections seem to be the part where things bog down. But it's still hard to put the book down once you get going. I recommend Getting Into Guinness as a pleasurable read for any who have taken the time to flip the world-famous record book and ever wondered, why? how?.

16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. A Fascinating Look at Superlatives By John Williamson Larry Olmsted is quite a productive writer, one who has written many articles that have appeared in such publications such as USA Today, Inc., Investor's Business Daily, Outside, New York Magazine, Food Wine, Men's Health, Playboy and many others. Many know him as one of this country's leading golf and travel writers, and he has appeared on both network television and nationally syndicated radio shows. I was personally familiar with his writing from some of the publications above, and from a book that he authored about a decade ago Snowshoeing: A Trailside Guide, one read when I was contemplating trying that winter sport. Had also seen some small news articles a couple of years ago talking about Larry Olmsted having set some new Guinness records, so my interest level rose when I saw the announcement of this new book from a versatile writer of whom I was familiar. And this book didn't disappoint, either. Between the covers, you'll meet Ashrita Furman, who at 187 holds the current record for the most Guinness world records held at the same time by a single individual, and presently holds 82 records. This native of Brooklyn, NY, set his first official record by doing 27,000 jumping jacks in 1979, and he hasn't stopped. Then there's Jackie Bibby, also known as 'The Texas Snakeman', who has set records for holding rattlesnakes by their tails in his mouth, along with sharing bathtubs with these poisonous snakes. Olmsted also introduces us to Sridhar Chillal, the man who let the fingernails on one of his hands grow for over 50 years, and whose thumbnail measures 57 inches. Then there's Lucky Diamond Rich, who is the most tattooed person alive, having spent more than 1,000 hours under the needle. There are many more, from celebrities to average people... if one can call an obsession to get ones name into print in the Guinness Book an "average" endeavor. Olmsted would be the first to admit that he also fell under the spell of obtaining such acknowledgment and done what so many have fantasized. He earned his way into the Guinness Book, and he did it twice. The first time was in February 2004, when he earned recognition from Guinness for "The Greatest Distance Between Two Rounds of Golf Played on the Same Day." This feat required that he start by playing a round at the New South Wales Golf Club in Sydney, Australia. He then boarded a Qantas flight to Los Angeles, drove to Newport Beach and played his second round of the day at Pelican Hill. He traveled almost 7,500 miles between his two rounds that day, breaking Nobby Orens' 1999 record of 5,954 miles. By his own admission, Olmsted noted that this accomplishment had seemed easy with his golf and travel background, but it ended up that things don't go as easily as planned. Still, he accomplished what he had set out to do, and his record held for three years before someone else bested him, as often happens. The next time was quite a bit more difficult, as he outlined in both the introduction to the book and in a chapter entitled, "Seventy-two Hours in Hell: Getting Back into Guinness," which took place in June 11-13, 2004 at the Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut. Without revealing what he went through, it's best to say that this was one of the more fascinating chapters in the book, as it describes sleep deprivation at a first-person detail level that makes one wonder if the endeavor was worth it at all. The author also introduces us to the history of what we often refer to as the World's Most Famous Record Book and its fairly simple origins in the 1950s, when it was first published on August 27, 1955. Its first title was the Guinness Book of Records, and it was published by the newly-formed Guinness Superlatives, Ltd. Some of the details can border on slogging to get through, while others can leave you fascinated at the spirit with

which the participants tried to reach their goals of being recognized as worth of mention in this book, if only for one edition, or failing that, just to receive a rare recognition letter distinguishing their accomplishments. Also worthy of mention is the epilogue and the numerous appendices in the back of the book. Larry Olmsted has provided some fascinating notes here, including some tips for those who want to try to be a record breaker on their own. If you don't wish to make your own attempt at a world record, do at least read the excellent epilogue, for it sums up this fascinating book on superlatives quite well, and does it from Olmsted's insightful and personal perspective.

A fascinating mix of participatory journalism and history, *Getting Into Guinness* is the never-before-told story of the bestselling copyrighted book of all time. Veteran reporter Larry Olmsted began a personal quest to break an existing world record, then to set another one, and soon he was fully immersed in the crazy and highly competitive world of record breaking. This is his behind-the-scenes report of the characters who created the famous record book and continue to make it wackier and wackier with every passing year. The enthralling 50-year history of the Guinness World Records is a story of phenomenal success, equally compelling failures, and extreme oddities. People all over the world strive to get into the book, often in the most unbelievable ways. Olmsted chronicles some of the funniest and most interesting Guinness record holders from a uniquely insider perspective: he himself is one of them. It all began with a gentleman's wager over which was the fastest game bird in Europe, the golden plover or the grouse. The attempt to answer this question has sold more than 100 million books in dozens of languages and every corner of the globe. Today, there is heated competition for the record to hold the most records (currently held by Ashrita Furman, 114 records and counting), as well as classic curiosities that have lasted for decades (the tallest man in history is still Robert Wadlow, at 8' 11"). Interwoven into all of this is Olmsted's account of his own two successful record-setting attempts, the first involving traveling halfway around the world with his golf shoes "Greatest Distance Between Two Rounds of Golf on the Same Day" and the second causing him to nearly lose his mind while playing the world's longest poker session. Why do people devote so much energy to get into the record book, often at great risk? Why do the most extreme fans devote their entire lives to this pursuit? Why is society so obsessed with records and record breaking? Why do Americans alone buy a million and a half copies of the famous book every year, propelling it to the top of the bestseller lists decade after decade? Why do readers of all generations remember the same record-holding icons, the fattest twins, the longest fingernails, and the tallest man? After his own journey inside the world of record breaking, these are the questions Olmsted attempts to answer. In the tradition of the bestselling *Word Freak* a mix of travelogue, memoir, investigative journalism, and history *Getting Into Guinness* is a must-read for anyone who has ever read Guinness World Records and wondered why someone would grow their fingernails for an entire lifetime.

From Booklist
Olmsted, a Guinness world-record holder himself (he played golf on two continents in one day), examines the history and the allure of the well-known record book (which was first published in 1955 by a subsidiary of the Arthur Guinness Sons brewing company). The author introduces us to some truly remarkable record holders, including the amazing Ashrita Furman, who has set or broken 177 records, more than 36 of them in a single year, 2006. In case you're wondering how such a thing is possible, Olmsted explains (and remember, he is speaking as a world-record holder) that becoming the best in the world at a specific thing—whether it's teacup balancing, pogo sticking, somersaulting, or playing in the world's longest poker game—takes a rare combination of endurance, dedication, and imagination, not to mention a certain amount of just plain wackiness. The book is endlessly fascinating, an exploration of what makes ordinary people try to do extraordinary things for no other reason than because no one else has ever done them. --David Pitt
About the Author
Larry Olmsted, a prolific freelance writer who has published thousands of articles in national publications, including *Outside*, *Playboy*, *USA Today*, and *Inc.*, is a contributing editor to numerous publications, and was a longtime columnist for *Investor's Business Daily*. He lives in Vermont.