

Local team competes in Asia Minor Rickshaw Run

KATMANDU, Nepal – If this is a reality TV show it's going to fail. No one will believe there actually is a rickshaw race from Katmandu, Nepal to Pondichery, India. That's right, rickshaw's. Back in the old days they were

for charity and his team – "Team Winner Winner Chicken Dinner" – needs your support.

In keeping with the rules – well, there are no rules – Starnes enlisted three teammates to help him in his don Quixote-like quest.

In addition to the Frank Water project, donations will go to Mercy Corps and Carolina for Kiberia.

Aside from the absence of rules, the teams all started in Katmandu, Nepal, on May 31. While there they purchased their rickshaws and stocked up on the necessary supplies – and survival tools – commensurate with a race of 2000 kilometers.

There are 70 teams in the event and Starnes says only about 30 percent normally complete the full course.

The correct name of the event is "The Mighty Rickshaw Run". Starnes was sure the teams would come up with more creative (and possibly unprintable) names for it before the end.

Live updates of the run are posted daily, when possible, at

<http://rickshawrun.theadventurists.com>.

According to the organizers, in addition to having no rules there is no designated route.

"The Rickshaw Run pits you and a trusty three wheeled mechanical marvel against thousands of miles of terrible roads, jungles, deserts and every thing the Subcontinent can throw in your face.

"Each time the route changes to make sure it never gets boring and you never really know if it's possible. If you were sure you could get to the end, why bother?"

"We're not in the business of holding your hands so the route is open to interpretation. You decide just how much adventure the seat of your pants can handle. If you want barren desert, you shall have barren desert, if you want impenetrable jungle it is yours for the taking, if you want to force 150cc of magic up a vast mountain or take a detour to Karachi, so be it. We just give you a few meeting points where you can hook up with your fellow Rickshaw Run chums. If we tell you exactly where to go or give you a fixed route, it stops being an adventure and becomes a tour, the sort of thing your grandmother likes to do round Brighton."

We wish the WWCD team a lot of luck, and don't envy them!



WWCD team members, left to right: O.E. Starnes IV (of Asheville), Jeff McMahan, Nathaniel Ushio, and Flynn Moffitt.

pulled by a man or, at best, a donkey. Today they sport three inflatable tires and are powered by a tiny 150cc engine. Somewhere along the line a few years ago, men being men, someone decided it would be great fun to race the tiny little contraptions across the face of Asia Minor, from Nepal to the port city of Pondichery, India.

According to contestant O.E. Starnes of Asheville, the race is

Jeff McMahan is from Norwalk, CT. Nathaniel Ushio, is from Honolulu, while Flynn Moffitt, is an "unemployed recent graduate of the University of Colorado". The four of them, with two rickshaws, have undertaken the arduous 1200 mile (2000 kilometer) journey to raise money for the Frank Water project.

Frank Water is an effort to provide sustainable, affordable clean water projects using the latest technology.

"Currently one billion people worldwide lack access to clean drinking water," Team Winner Winner Chicken Dinner (WWCD) says on its website. "Our charity, Frank Water, is working in partnership with Water Health International and Naandi, a local non-governmental organization, funding and implementing community clean water projects across India.

"Money raised through the race will go to the capital costs of building the clean water facility. Villagers also contribute to building costs so they will have commitment and ownership. It's a great charity and a great project."

Anyone wishing to support team WWCD is asked to do so by going to the team's website. The basic address is "www.willwemakeit.com/winnerwinnerchickendinner."

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