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Where do you Hammer? Photo shoots and desert racing across the globe with Zandy Mangold

Interview & Intro by MYKE HERMSMEYER

When choosing an athlete for our “Where do you Hammer?” section, we look for an athlete who has sought out a challenge and pushed themselves to the limit in some interesting or exotic locale. When we first heard about Zandy Mangold and all of the adventures he’s been on while fueled by Hammer Nutrition products, we didn’t know where to start! Zandy is a professional photographer and ultra-runner from New York City. While his work in New York varies from covering everything from food to music and fashion, his true passion is covering ultra-running events—notably the weeklong stage races put on by Racing the Planet.

Zandy has shot races across the globe, from Antarctica to the Gobi Desert, and is constantly pushing himself physically through ever-changing conditions. Due to the distances he covers and the gear he carries, he often exerts himself just as much as the racers he’s photographing, all in order to get that perfect shot. For races and

photo shoots, Zandy relies on Hammer Nutrition products to power through the challenges he takes on, both behind and in front of the lens.



BACKGROUND PHOTO: Racing the Planet, Sahara Desert, Egypt. Photo: Zandy Mangold. FAR LEFT: Zandy competes in Racing the Planet-Atacama Crossing 2012. Photo: Scott Manthey. LEFT: Racing The Planet, Sahara Desert, Egypt. Photo: Zandy Mangold. TOP RIGHT: Racing The Planet, Atacama Desert, Chile. Photo: Zandy Mangold. BOTTOM RIGHT: Racing The Planet, Antarctica. Photo: Zandy Mangold



A lifelong runner, my introduction to the world of adventure racing and ultrarunning was a result of a photography assignment to document Racing The Planet's 4Desert Series. The annual series consists of four, seven-day self-supported stage races in The Sahara Desert in Egypt, The Atacama Desert in Chile, The Gobi Desert in China and finally, Antarctica. While the work was exhilarating, I was not tempted to compete in an ultramarathon having witnessed the runners' struggles . . . that is, until Racing The Planet staged a seven-day self-supported race in Australia in 2010.

I had always wanted to visit the outback and go "down under" so my interest was piqued. At that time, my cousin and dear friend, Ulla Lerse, was diagnosed with stage-four lung cancer. Thus, I decided to use the race as an opportunity to fundraise for cancer treatment in her name. During the seven-day race, I endured heat stroke and dehydration, while keeping an eye out for deadly snakes, spiders and man-eating crocodiles. Inspired by my cousin's battle with cancer, I eventually finished—in last place. In spite of my race struggles, I managed to cram in a lifetime of indispensable nutritional knowledge.

Specifically, I learned how and what to eat before, during, and after strenuous activity to not only keep myself out of the emergency room, but excelling in races. Hammer Nutrition had everything to do with my newfound success as a runner. After returning from Australia I started using Hammer Nutrition products as recommended in Endurance News and achieved a lifelong dream of qualifying for the Boston Marathon. Relying on Hammer Gel, Endurolytes, and Recoverite, I ended up setting a personal record in the marathon!

After my Boston success, I took another stab at stage racing and entered Racing The Planet's Atacama Crossing in 2012. In preparation, I stepped up my regimen, consuming Sustained Energy, Hammer Gel, and Endurolytes Fizz during workouts and recovering with Recoverite, while regularly taking Tissue Rejuvenator and Race Caps Supreme. I am not a scientist, but the results were in : I recovered faster from workouts and performance improved. After a last place finish in my first ultra, 150 mile stage race, I placed 4th overall (1st place American) in my follow-up and won my age group.

I have continued using Hammer Nutrition products, and not just when training or competing. I am a full-time photographer and due to the strenuous nature of my job, I rely on the supplements. If I am not vigilant with my nutritional requirements, I will experience health problems, as would any runner or other athlete.

I have spent weeks at a time chasing runners all over the deserts of Jordan, China, Chile, Egypt, Antarctica, and even the foothills of the Himalayas. (Photos from Zandy's travels can be seen at www.zandymangoldnyc.com.) I now apply the same nutritional principles as if I were racing. Hammer Bars and Hammer Gel are an excellent source of quick, clean fuel while I am shooting, and Endurolytes Fizz balances my electrolyte profile while trekking deep into the Sahara Desert on

120-degree days.

The combination of traveling the world and photographing inspiring athletes in idyllic scenery is my dream job. I am grateful for that every day, and I am grateful that I found Hammer Nutrition products that help me make the most of my opportunities. **HN**

