



Photos: Karen Lundgren

PEAK POWER: Romero was 13 when he reached the summit of Mt. Everest, setting a world record

slayer of the seven summits

At 15, record-breaking climber **Jordan Romero** is on top of the world... literally

Jordan Romero's holidays were certainly memorable. While others might have spent time with their family at the beach, Romero was on top of Vinson Massif, the tallest point in Antarctica. Incredible as it may sound, it's a feat Romero's done before. At 15, Romero is now the youngest person to have scaled the highest peak on each continent, known as the Seven Summits. Romero grew up just east of Los Angeles in Big Bear Lake, California. By age ten he had scaled Kilimanjaro – the tallest mountain in

Africa – and by 13 became the youngest person to reach the top of Mt. Everest, the highest point on Earth at 8848 meters.

The other mountains on Romero's journey were Mt. Elbrus in Russia, Carstensz Pyramid in Indonesia, Aconcagua in Argentina, and Mt. McKinley in the United States. During the course of his journey, he set six world records. Jordan recently took time out of his busy schedule to chat with U.S.-based journalist Benjamin Mack.

Here's what he had to say.

What inspired you to climb all these mountains?

Well, I was inspired by art. A mural at my school really interested me. I walked by the mural everyday and it made me think and think about the Seven Summits.

How does it feel to own several world records? What do your friends and classmates think?

It's cool when I think about it... but



Top story

■ **On climbing a mountain** "There is a lot of hard work involved. It must be your passion. But anyone can do it, if they really, really want to and commit to their own success."

■ **On coming home after a climb:** "I love travelling and seeing the world, different places, different people, different cultures, but I LOVE coming home. The best part about travelling is coming home, right?"

■ **On using his fame:** "I want to use this platform I have built to inspire kids."

the seven summits

Kilimanjaro

Location: Tanzania
Height: 5892 m
Summited: July 2006

Mt. Elbrus

Location: Russia
Height: 5642 m
Summited: July 2007

Aconcagua

Location: Argentina
Height: 6962 m
Summited: December, 2007

Mt. McKinley

Location: United States
Height: 6194 m
Summited: June 2008

Carstensz Pyramid

Location: Indonesia
Height: 4884 m
Summited: September, 2009

Mt. Everest

Location: Nepal/China
Height: 8848 m
Summited: May 2010

Vinson Massif

Location: Antarctica
Height: 4892 m
Summited: December, 2011



TEAM JORDAN: Kilimanjaro was the first mountain Romero climbed on his quest. He reached the summit in July 2006.

it doesn't matter much, it doesn't change who I am. My friends think it's cool, but they don't treat me any different than any of the other kids. We're all just normal teenagers.

What's the toughest mountain you've ever climbed?

The mountains are all hard in their own way. But Everest was really hard. We were on the mountain for 52 days. That's a long time to be camping, sleeping in a sleeping bag on the ground and not taking a shower. There were some really technical parts of the climb and it seems they all come at really high elevations. The elevation is tough. It slows you down and makes everything harder.

You are the youngest person to ever climb Mt. Everest. How did it feel to be at the highest point on Earth?

Pretty cool feeling to stand up there and look at the mountains below. It's one of those times when you have to pinch yourself to make sure it's not a dream. I worked so hard and so

long to get there and it was pretty amazing to finally be standing on top of the world.

What did you hope to achieve by climbing the Seven Summits? How do you plan to use your fame in the future?

When I started I just wanted to climb. Now I want to use this platform I have built to inspire kids. I want to show kids that they can do anything they set their minds to. I want them to know the importance of family and teamwork. I want to teach kids to eat right and be healthy. This fame gives me the chance to share my message with more kids than I ever thought possible.

I imagine climbing is a huge time commitment. How do you manage school and homework?

Life is balance, right. I took homework with me to Mt. Everest. I was doing algebra at the Advanced Base Camp. I've done a few semesters of Independent Study to make sure

that I can miss the time at school. I like to call the world my classroom.

Your family has gone with you on your climbs. How much does their support mean to you?

I couldn't have done this without my dad (Paul Romero) and stepmom Karen (Lundgren). They have supported me all the way. They have taught me and pushed me and been there for me always. We are a team, 100 per cent.

What advice do you have for someone who wants to climb a mountain?

I tell them they can do it. There is a lot of hard work involved. It must be your passion. You have to know what you are getting into, know what's coming up, know what gear you need. You can't do it alone. Find someone with expertise to help you and support you. It takes planning, strength training and research. But anyone can do it, if they really, really want to and commit to their own success.

Share your feedback with us on  