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Faster: The Obsession, Science And Luck Behind The World's Fastest Cyclists

'Fantastic. An intelligent and personal insight in to the world of elite cycling'
SIR DAVE BRAILSFORD

FASTER

The Obsession, Science and Luck
Behind the World's Fastest Cyclists



MICHAEL HUTCHINSON

Read By SIMON VANCE



Synopsis

For professional cyclists, going faster and winning are, of course, closely related. Yet surprisingly, for many, a desire to go faster is much more important than a desire to win. Someone who wants to go faster will work at the details and take small steps rather than focusing on winning. Winning just happens when you do everything right - it's the doing everything right that's hard. And that's what fascinates and obsesses Michael Hutchinson. With his usual deadpan delivery and an awareness that it's all mildly preposterous, Hutchinson looks at the things that make you faster - training, nutrition, the right psychology - and explains how they work and how what we know about them changes all the time. He looks at the things that make you slower and why they do so and how attempts to avoid them can result in serious athletes gradually painting themselves into the most peculiar lifestyle corners. Faster is a book about why cyclists do what they do; about what the riders, their coaches, and the boffins get up to behind the scenes; and about why the whole idea of going faster is such an appealing, universal instinct for all of us.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I originally thought that this book was just another cycling training guide that would lead the reader through various workouts and drills to get faster. But it's not, and for that I am grateful. Instead, Faster is a fantastic exploration of the many techniques used throughout the years to help top-level cyclists gain critical seconds and an explanation of the scientific reasoning behind them, as well as an explanation of what works and what doesn't. Unlike a normal training book, Faster repeatedly

points out that the methods described probably won't be of much use to amateur cyclists, since many of the methods are effective for elite level athletes only and even then yield very small gains. That still didn't stop me from being engrossed in the descriptions Michael offers of beet juice, ice baths, altitude tents and dietary supplements, among other things. These are all discussed in very informal language with only glimpses of the complex science underlying them. And each chapter is interspersed with descriptions of Michael's own impressive pro cycling career and what he attempted and where he failed, but filled with self-deprecating humor and modest descriptions of Michael's phenomenal speed. One might think that a book discussing VO2 max ratios and the different muscle fiber types, as well as wind yaw as it relates to wind tunnel testing would be unbelievably dry, but Hutchinson writes with a very easy-going style and manages to include quite a few humorous quotes and examples of the famous British dry wit. Some of my favorite quotes include: "It's a waste of time drinking organic cherry juice if you're using it to wash down a Big Mac" "I wrote my first book because of the sitting about."

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