

# The First Tour de France: A Journey into the Heart of Cycling's Greatest Race

The Tour de France is one of the most iconic sporting events in the world. Each year, millions of people around the globe tune in to watch the world's best cyclists compete in a grueling three-week race across the French countryside. But how did this legendary race come to be?

The story of the Tour de France begins in 1903, when a young French journalist named Henri Desgrange decided to create a cycling race that would be the ultimate test of endurance and athleticism. Desgrange was the editor of the newspaper *L'Auto*, and he believed that a great cycling race would help to boost the popularity of his publication.



## The First Tour de France: Sixty Cyclists and Nineteen Days of Daring on the Road to Paris by Peter Cossins

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 32895 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 379 pages



Desgrange's idea was met with skepticism by many in the cycling world. At the time, the longest cycling race was the Bordeaux-Paris, which covered a distance of 584 kilometers. Desgrange's proposed race would be more

than twice as long, and it would take place over a much more challenging course.

Undeterred, Desgrange set about organizing the race. He recruited a team of cyclists to participate, and he mapped out a course that would take the riders through some of the most beautiful and challenging terrain in France. The race was scheduled to start on July 1, 1903, and it would cover a total distance of 2,428 kilometers.

On the morning of July 1, 1903, 60 cyclists lined up at the starting line in Montgeron, just outside of Paris. The race began at 3:16 p.m., and the riders set off on their epic journey.

The first Tour de France was a grueling event. The riders faced terrible weather conditions, including rain, snow, and hail. They also had to contend with difficult terrain, including mountains, cobblestones, and dirt roads. Many of the riders dropped out of the race, but 21 managed to complete the course.

The winner of the first Tour de France was a French cyclist named Maurice Garin. Garin completed the race in a time of 94 hours and 33 minutes. He was awarded a prize of 20,000 francs and a gold medal.

The first Tour de France was a huge success, and it quickly became one of the most popular sporting events in the world. The race has been held every year since 1903, with the exception of the years during World War I and World War II. Over the years, the race has grown in length and difficulty, and it has become one of the most challenging sporting events in the world.

The Tour de France is more than just a sporting event. It is a cultural phenomenon that has captured the imagination of people around the world. The race is a celebration of human endurance and athleticism, and it is a reminder of the power of the bicycle to bring people together.

## **The Legacy of the Tour de France**

The Tour de France has had a profound impact on the world of cycling. The race has helped to popularize the sport, and it has inspired countless people to take up cycling. The race has also helped to develop new technologies and training methods, and it has played a major role in the development of professional cycling.

The Tour de France is a truly global event. The race is held in a different country each year, and it attracts riders from all over the world. The race is a showcase for the best cyclists in the world, and it is a major source of national pride for the countries that host it.

The Tour de France is a race that is steeped in history and tradition. The race has been won by some of the greatest cyclists of all time, and it has witnessed some of the most dramatic moments in the history of sport. The race is a living legend, and it continues to inspire and amaze people around the world.

## **The First Tour de France: A Book by John McGann**

*The First Tour de France* is a new book by John McGann that tells the story of the inaugural Tour de France. The book is based on extensive research, and it provides a fascinating account of the race's origins, its challenges, and its ultimate success.

McGann's book is a must-read for any fan of the Tour de France or cycling history. The book is beautifully written and meticulously researched, and it provides a unique insight into the world's greatest cycling race.

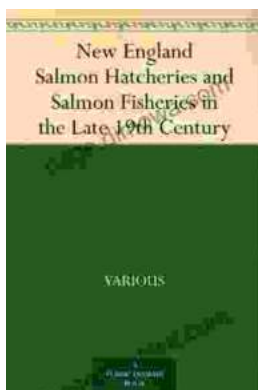
To learn more about *The First Tour de France*, please visit the book's website at [www.thefirsttourdefrance.com](http://www.thefirsttourdefrance.com).



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