



# Tour de France/Tour de Force: A Visual History of the Worlds Greatest Bicycle Race

*James Startt*

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For three weeks each July, millions of fans from around the world descend upon the French countryside to cheer on the "forcats de la route," or slaves of the road—the riders competing in the Tour de France. The event has captivated people for nearly a century who gather to witness the strength of the human spirit in its struggle to endure and overcome incredible obstacles to rise to the ranks of heroism. Covering over 2000 miles in 21 days, the cyclists make a grand circuit of the country, crossing over both the Alps and the Pyrenees mountains before racing to the finish line along the Champs-Elysees in Paris. Now almost one hundred years old, the legendary bicycle race has a rich and colorful past. *Tour de France/Tour de Force* offers a one-of-a-kind look back at the Tours history and its heroes. Arranged chronologically and illustrated with hundreds of wonderfully evocative photographs dating back to the Tours beginning in 1903, it documents the great victories and the harrowing disasters, the glory and the agony of this amazing competition. From the astounding stories of early cyclists who looped around France on rudimentary two-wheelers to contemporary chapters emphasizing the tactics and winning moves employed in recent races, the drama of the Tour comes to life in these pages. Featuring race results from 1903 all the way through to 1999, plus an introduction by three-time Tour winner Greg Lemond, and special sections on the evolution of the Tour de France bike and the controversial issue of performance-enhancing drugs, *Tour de France/Tour de Force* is the consummate guide to this truly extraordinary event in the world of sport.

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