



Merckx: Half Man, Half Bike

William Fotheringham

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The first ever English-language biography of Eddy Merckx, the greatest cyclist of all time, by William Fotheringham, Britain's top cycling writer.

Eddy Merckx is to cycling what Muhammad Ali is to boxing or Pelé to football; quite simply, the best there has ever been. Throughout his professional career Merckx amassed an astonishing 445 victories. Lance Armstrong, by comparison, has managed fewer than 100.

For Britain's leading cycling writer, William Fotheringham, the burning question remains, why? What made Eddy Merckx so invincible?

Merckx was a machine. It wasn't just the number of victories; it was his remorseless domination that created the legend. Once, already comfortably leading the 1969 Tour de France, Merckx hammered a further eight and a half minutes out of his nearest rivals during an 85-mile solo break in the Pyrenees. But his triumphs only tell half a story that includes drug-busts, horrific injury and death. He was nicknamed 'The Cannibal' for his insatiable appetite for victory, but the moniker did scant justice to this handsome, sensitive, and surprisingly anxious man.

In *Half Man, Half Bike*, Fotheringham goes back to speak to those who were there at the time. The result is the extraordinary and definitive story of a man whose fear of failure would drive him to reach the highest pinnacles before ultimately destroying him.

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