



The Year: Reawakening the legend of cycling's hardest endurance record

Dave Barter

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In 1939 British cyclist Tommy Godwin cycled 75,065 miles in a single year. Think about that for a second: that's an average of over 200 miles each day. And it's a mark that still stands after almost eighty years. In *The Year*, Dave Barter resurrects the legend of the year record - a challenge nearly as old as bicycles themselves - and the cyclists who pushed themselves to establish and break it. Barter uncovers the stories behind these riders who would routinely cycle over a hundred miles a day in the race to set new records: Americans such as John H. George who recorded over 200 'centuries', nineteen double 'centuries' and three triple 'centuries' in the late 1800s. The British advertising executive Harry Long, whose annual tallies of over 20,000 miles in the early twentieth century led to the founding of the formal cycling year record, and *Cycling* magazine's Century Competition. The Englishman of French descent, Marcel Planes, whose 1911 record of 34,366 miles stood for over twenty years. Not forgetting the legends of the job-seeking Arthur Humbles, the one-armed vegetarian communist Walter Greaves, the 'keep-fit girl' Billie Dovey and the staggering mark set by Godwin who left a youthful Bernard Bennett trailing in his wake. Meticulous research through the annuals, archives and news stories of the bicycling world is backed up with insights from the families of these legendary cyclists, as well as Dave's own analysis of the riders' years in numbers. There is no more difficult challenge in cycling. *The Year* is the definitive story of these phenomenal cyclists.

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