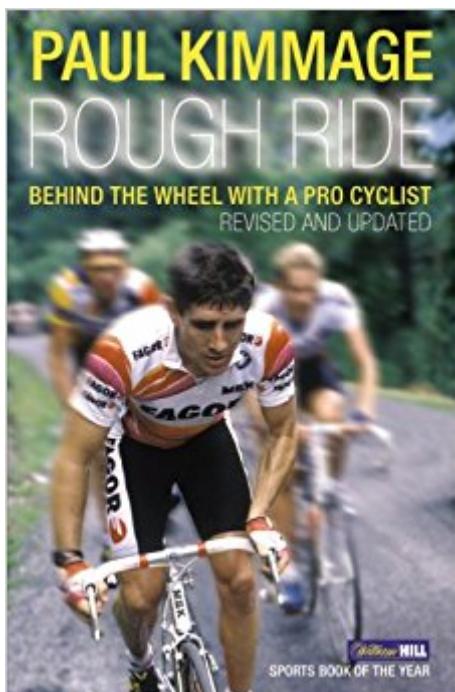


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# Rough Ride: Behind The Wheel With A Pro Cyclist (Yellow Jersey Cycling Classics)



## Synopsis

Paul Kimmage's boyhood dreams were of cycling glory; wearing the yellow jersey, cycling the Tour de France, and becoming a national hero. He knew it wouldn't come easy, but he was prepared to put in the work; he spent his teenage years cycling an average of 400 miles per week. The dedication began to pay off. As an amateur, he represented his country and finished sixth in the World Championships. In 1986 he turned professional, and reality hit. He soon discovered it was not about glory and courage, nor about training or dedication. It was about grueling defeats, complete and utter exhaustion, and drugs; not drugs that would ensure victory, but drugs that would allow you to finish the race. Paul Kimmage left the sport to write this powerful and frank account that breaks the code of silence surrounding the issue of drugs in sport. An eye-opening exposé and a heartbreaking lament, this is a book that anyone interested in any sport should read. This updated edition includes the story of Kimmage's 2006 return to the Tour as well as a moving section on the life and death of an old teammate.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Kimmage's tale provides an important context for our current problems with performance enhancing drugs, i.e., doping." [Boston.com](#)

Winner of the 1990 William Hill Sports Book of the Year. A former rider in the Tour de France tells what life is really like in the world of professional cycling. This new edition is fully updated with two

new chapters on the escalation of the use of drugs in sports.

There are others more informed in cycling who can give a more detailed review than I. I gave up on cycling after a few rides, it was not the sport for me, but I follow pro racing on television and in magazines. It seems so glamorous. But I wanted to know what it's really like. This book gives you so much insight, if you follow pro cycling you may never see it quite the same way again. The glamour is reserved for a very few. For guys like Paul, second rate riders (if you can call a pro rider second rate!), the cycling life has just a quickly passing hint glamour and brief moments of joy but mostly it's a very, very tough slog, not only on the courses themselves but dealing with the other riders. Paul shows how tightly knit the community of riders is and what he had to put up with as someone who spoke up against doping. I think that culture may have changed now, as riders in 2013 have turned viciously against dopers in an effort to clean up the sport and their own reputations - but Paul was a pioneer in that regard. He writes about the bitter rejection he received and the abusive letters that came his way from members of the cycling establishment and then the media establishment, once he became a journalist and wrote about cycling. Even though my knowledge of pro cycling is not what I would call great, I enjoyed this book immensely for its candour and for the revelations about a life lived on two wheels. For sure it's easier today for riders (Paul had to wash his own kit - unthinkable today), but the grim aspects of life as a domestique survive to this day I'm sure. The book is well written and compelling, and I found it hard to put down.

I really enjoyed this account of life a domestique professional rider in the mid eighties. I had read numerous articles and seen the nasty YouTube confrontation between Paul Kimmage and Lance Armstrong and was interested to learn more about Kimmage's journey in cycling. This provided exactly what I wanted, a story of his upbringing in Dublin, his father's passion for racing which was passed down to his sons, and how Mr Kimmage reached the promised land of professional cycling only to realize after arriving that to compete at that elite level meant doping was needed to survive let alone prosper. When the book came out Mr Kimmage was vilified by fellow riders, even some who he had considered friends, however I don't consider it to be a damning expose of use of PED's during his era. From what I've read there appears to be 2 distinct timelines to doping, the Kimmage era of amphetamines and steroids and the Armstrong era of EPO and other advanced PED's. By comparison with the organized science driven methods of the latter era the Kimmage era almost seems innocent. The book provides a detailed account of his family life, the ups and downs of working his way up the ladder to make it as a cyclist at the elite level, the rivalries that ensued and

his disappointment and in some cases bitterness at the reality he found during his time in the peloton until he finally made the decision quit the sport. I'm left with the impression that behind the glamour, cycling is a terribly hard way to make a living. There is a poignant line in the book where his father questions whether or not he wants to become a pro cyclist, because in cycling there is more heartbreak than glory. It appears to have been the case for Mr Kimmage.

Writer has excellent recall of events. Hard to find books that really talk about behind the scenes and all the off the bike events that go along with being a pro racer. Paul came off a little little golly gee once In a while, but that didn't really bother me that much, but it is there. Still, a good man and a pretty good writer. Definitely recommend this book, plan on reading a few more cycling biographies. This one is the best I've read so far. Also recommend tyler hamilton's book.

Growing up in Ireland in the 80s you would have to be deaf and blind not to know of Sean Kelly, Stephen Roche. Martin Earley and Paul Kimmage. Kelly and Roche were the heroes of a nation - winning against all the odds and delivering on the dreams of a nation. At a time when Irish pride was blooming....Everyone knew about Kelly and Roche but Earley and Kimmage's stories weren't one of raging successes, front page news and win after win. My first recollection of Paul Kimmage was that infamous 'Late Late Show' interview. This book fills in so many gaps and answered so many questions I never realised I stored in the back of my mind. I'm so pleased to have read the book and I now realise that Paul Kimmage has proved to be a real winner as a cyclist. I would also like to think that nobody begrudges him a few smug moments when you realise what's been revealed about US Postal, Lance Armstrong and the many others.....To say that Paul's book hit the nail on the head is a understatement....Read it, you won't regret it. As for Paul Kimmage - he makes me proud to be Irish and I hope his work gets the acknowledgement it deserves after all these years.

Just finished it. It really draws a straight line connexion between the doping practices of the 1980's and the later 'version on steroids' doping of the late 90's and 2000's. They start the new pros off with vitamin injections... completely legal, but it gets them used to injecting themselves with 'stuff' that helps them recover and race faster... then come the amphetamines, steroids, etc. and later HGH, EPO, etc. There really is a whole 'grooming' procedure that these guys are put through to get them to the point where they will accept 'enhancements.' It may sound sad to say, but this is the book that made me realize I never loved the sport of professional cycling... I loved the \*idea\* of the sport of professional cycling. It's all smoke and mirrors for money's sake and the way this sport

chews up new pro athletes and spits out old pro athletes is really quite deplorable. I'm very glad I read Kimmage's account and only wished people had paid attention to the warning signs back then.

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