



Inside Team Sky: The Inside Story of Team Sky and Their Challenge for the 2013 Tour de France

David Walsh

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After the victory of Bradley Wiggins and Team Sky in the 2012 Tour de France, the pressure was on the team to repeat their success in 2013. When Wiggins had to pull out of the defence of his yellow jersey, attention moved to Chris Froome, who had finished as runner-up the year before. Could he bring about back-to-back victories for the UK and for Team Sky? With team principal Sir Dave Brailsford at the helm, the levels of expectation were high. Nothing less than a win would do.

Embedded within the team was top sportswriter David Walsh, who had been covering the sport for four decades. As the man who had done more than any other journalist to reveal the lies of Lance Armstrong, he has the reputation for exposing the dark secrets that cycling would want to keep hidden. His inside story, from how Team Sky prepared for the Tour de France through to Froome's emphatic victory, is supported by insights from all the key members of the team, and provides a definitive account of a dramatic race that gripped cycling fans around the world.

Inside Team Sky: The Inside Story of Team Sky and Their Challenge for the 2013 Tour de France Details

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From Reader Review Inside Team Sky: The Inside Story of Team Sky and Their Challenge for the 2013 Tour de France for online ebook

Gumble's Yard says

The book is really about Walsh's conviction from his time inside the team that Sky aren't doping.

This is based on the complete lack of any circumstantial evidence (despite his digging, the anti-doping attitude of the team and their willingness (even if they do get stressed sometimes) to try and discuss the issue – all in complete contrast to US Postal. He goes further in regarding the suspicion of clean riders as a kind of second defeat for the sport by the dopers.

He does address some of the obvious issues (eg Leinders or the l'Equipe scientist that endorsed Froome's performances as possible but did the same for Armstrong).

Where he is perhaps weaker is in claiming that others are making up for the fact that they were foiled by Armstrong, as he doesn't really acknowledge those like Kimmage who have been cynical about the sport even pre-Armstrong and who unlike Walsh himself are more worried about the longer history of the sport and not fully focused on Armstrong.

POST REVIEW

I wrote this review in 2014 - subsequent events have proven that perhaps Walsh should have been a little more cynical at the time and at least investigated some anomalies.

Ireney Berezniak says

"Inside Team Sky" by David Walsh turned out to be somewhat of a disappointing read, focusing less on the inner workings of the team, and more on team's struggle for credibility in this "post-Lance era", when any major result is met with a healthy dose of scepticism.

After their impressive results in 2012, having dominated the tour with first and second place finishes (among other feats), cycling fans and pundits alike began to doubt team's credibility and its claims of zero tolerance policy towards doping. The team embarked on a campaign to address such doubts and prove that its achievements are legitimate. What better way to accomplish this than to involve David Walsh, the journalist famous for uncovering the doping program propagated by Lance Armstrong and US Postal Service Cycling Team, by inviting him to travel with the team through 2013 leading up to and including the Tour de France?

David Walsh obliged, and this book is the result. Chapter after chapter filled with praises defending team's policies, and painstakingly outlining anti-doping sentiments of various team members, whether management, doctors, or soigneurs. One begins to suspect that Walsh has been explicitly commissioned to emphasize team's anti-doping stance alone.

The book is not without a few gems. The heart warming story of Mario Pafundi, team's head soigneur, is particularly memorable. Walsh charmingly highlights Mario's team spirit, his dedication to the team, his professionalism and integrity, which Mario attributes to the lessons he had learned from his father.

Invariably, however, the story turns to another doping discussion; Mario used as just another tool to promote Team Sky's anti-doping stance.

If you are tired of reading or hearing about doping, then this book is not for you, otherwise it contains just enough substance to satisfy anyone curious to learn about Team Sky and some of its key players.

Barry Bridges says

Not a revelation, just an affirmation of the Team Sky party line. Do we all need to get T-Shirts printed saying "I Believe" before the sport can shed its tainted image and return to just being about the racing....

Inga Gunnarsdóttir says

Could not finish, something about the writing style that made this too much effort to read. English is not my language but I have read a lot of books in English that were hard to put down. This was an easy-to-put-down book :)

Gill says

Walsh is the Sunday Times journalist who pointed the finger at Lance Armstrong, so for Team Sky to invite him to spend a year on the road with them in 2013 speaks volumes.

Lots of fascinating behind-the-scenes stuff about the team setup and the famous marginal-gains philosophy etc, but the writing isn't as good as I expected, the clichés betraying the newspaper man.

Eleanor King says

The author's background into exposing Armstrong is a major contextual influence on Inside Team Sky, and with good reason. Walsh, a guy who admits in the book that he desperately wants to fall back in love with the sport of cycling and the excitement of World Tours, but is still cautiously guarded in his admiration by the foul taint Armstrong left in the world of cycling, gives an insider's account of Team Sky. He points out that it is so important, when investigating whether Sky are doping or otherwise cheating that the team who are behind the guys in black and blue, are as important as ever. I was surprised how much this book changed my opinion of Froome. I feel guilty for thinking that his antics on stage 11 of 2012 were purely down to his own selfish gain, when now I realise that he needed to push himself and it was not his fault that Wiggins failed to keep up. The strained relationship between Froome and Wiggins is evident to even the novice fan of Team Sky but Walsh explores in his book how and why this relationship needs to be fixed and harmonious for future Tours.

Dan Cohen says

A good read from an excellent journalist. It gives some good insights into the workings of the team and some of the key personalities. I do not concur with the criticism that the author has received for supposedly giving Team Sky an easy ride (ho ho...). Quite the opposite: I think he has gone to great lengths to try to answer the question of whether Sky or any of their riders or personnel are involved in doping and I accept his reasoning, although it still wouldn't surprise me if there were a rotten apple remaining to be discovered.

Well worth reading for cycling fans and also for those with an interest in the subject of doping, in the journalistic issues surrounding same, and in sports science.

Nick says

Detailed but uninspiring account.

Steve says

An excellent journalist, Dave Walsh has produced several worthy books now, including some ghost-written. This one gives some good insights into the workings of Team Sky and some of its key staff. He tries hard to try to answer the question of whether Sky or any of their riders or personnel are involved in doping. A very good read for cycling fans and also for those with an interest in the subject of doping, whatever your sport.

Paul says

It's good to see the author David Walsh spend a year with Team Sky and getting an insider perspective of a cycling team. However, I think the book tries to cover too much or tries to cover many different topics, from doping to the team mechanics, to Chris Froome. Somewhat confusing at times as to where the book is heading or what the focus is. Nevertheless, a good insight to the world of cycling.

Robert says

Knew very little of workings of race team. This opened my eyes.

Timojhen says

Decent. While I do believe Sky are largely genuine in their intent, recent developments clouded this book for me. Style and writing were good and the depth of detail was also solid.

Dunno, harder and harder to maintain any faith at this point.
