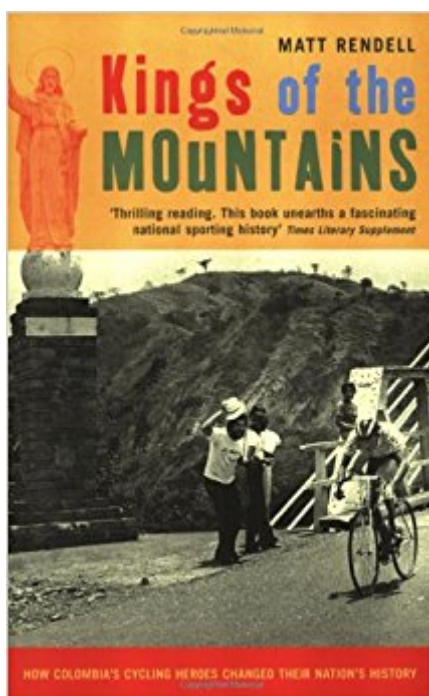


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# Kings Of The Mountains: How Colombia's Cycling Heroes Changed Their Nation's History



## Synopsis

"Kings of the Mountains" tells the amazing and little-known story of how an impoverished, politically turbulent Latin American country produced a breed of cyclist capable of taking on the world's best - in the 2002 Tour de France the top Colombian rider Santiago Botero beat even the great Lance Armstrong to win the time trial. Matt Rendell tells of how Colombia's first cycle races during the 50s were held on dusty, unpaved roads - with consequentially ghastly accidents; of how the first top Europeans to race in Colombia found themselves utterly vanquished by its endless mountain climbs; of how the biography of Colombia's first cycling superstar was written by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Then, in the 70s and 80s, its cyclists began to make their mark abroad, even in the Tour de France - especially as victors in its draining mountain stages, to become King of the Mountains - before Colombia's pathological political instability led to the rise of the cocaine cartels, and cycling became inextricably linked with the world of drug smuggling.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

'Wonderfully evocative' - Independent on Sunday; 'Thrilling reading... a fascinating national sporting history' - Times Literary Supplement; 'A fascinating and beguiling book... worthy of the magical realism of Gabriel Garcia Marquez' - William Fotheringham, Cycling Plus

Matt Rendell is a journalist for Pro Cycling magazine and a TV producer for ITV's Tour de France coverage, and made an acclaimed Channel 4 documentary also called Kings of the Mountains. He lives in Essex.

Great book if you are interested in the subject, the country, and the sport. If you aren't into Colombian cycling it is still a compelling read as interesting parallels are made between the nation's history and the sport's development, its source as a distraction, a source of national pride, and simply unique spectacle.

Kings of the Mountains by Matt Rendell is a Simply Amazing book that is without equal in the marketplace. The author's knowledge of professional cycling in general, and Colombian cycling in particular, is truly awesome. Possibly a niche-read (it is, after all, focused on Colombian cycling heroes little-known to English-speakers), but one that should appeal to fans of the more exotic aspects of professional cycling's colorful history. Fantástico!

Meticulous, elegant and sensitive, Kings of the Mountains works both as a panegyric to the sporting heroes of a troubled land and as a more general meditation on motifs key to sport and to nationalism: politics, religion, pride, pain and glory. The Times. Thrilling reading... cleanly written, meticulously researched... This book unearths a fascinating national sporting history. Times Literary Supplement. Wonderfully evocative. The Independent. In turns funny, reflective and passionate, Kings of the Mountains is part cycling history, part travelogue and part social analysis... Essential reading. Official Guide to the Tour de France. A fascinating work of admirable scope and depth. Cycle Sport. Some story, worthy of the magical realism of Gabriel García Márquez or Mario Vargas Llosa in its intricate layering of sport, social history and the vagaries of human nature. Cycling Plus. Matt Rendell was voted New Sports Writer 2003 by the National Sporting Club for "Kings of the Mountains."

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