



Gironimo!: Riding the Very Terrible 1914 Tour of Italy

Tim Moore

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The author of the bestselling *French Revolutions* does Italy -- cycling the course of the 1914 Giro d'Italia on a wooden bike. "Bill Bryson on two wheels." --*Independent*.

On the eve of the Giro d'Italia's 100th anniversary, Tim Moore sets out to cycle the route of the first race, all 3,162 km of it. On a 100-year-old bike. That he built himself.

The Giro is arguably the most brutal of the Grand Tours, and it began in style. At midnight on May 24, 1914 eighty-one starters were waved off by 10,000 spectators for this first circuit of Italy. Two weeks later, after enduring cataclysmic storms, roads strewn with nails, even the loss of an eye by one competitor, eight cyclists finished.

Tim hadn't done any significant cycling for twelve years, but taking on the 1914 Giro was a compelling challenge. To make it more authentic, he decided to do it on a 1914 bike, which, unburdened by relevant experience, he needed to assemble from a stack of rusty parts in a Breton farmer's barn.

Fuelled by Chianti, wearing period leather goggles and a woollen cycling shirt, and with the winner of the 1914 Giro's diary as his trusty companion, Tim sets off to tell the story of this historic race, as well as the travails of a middle-aged man cycling up a lot of mountains on a mainly wooden bicycle.

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