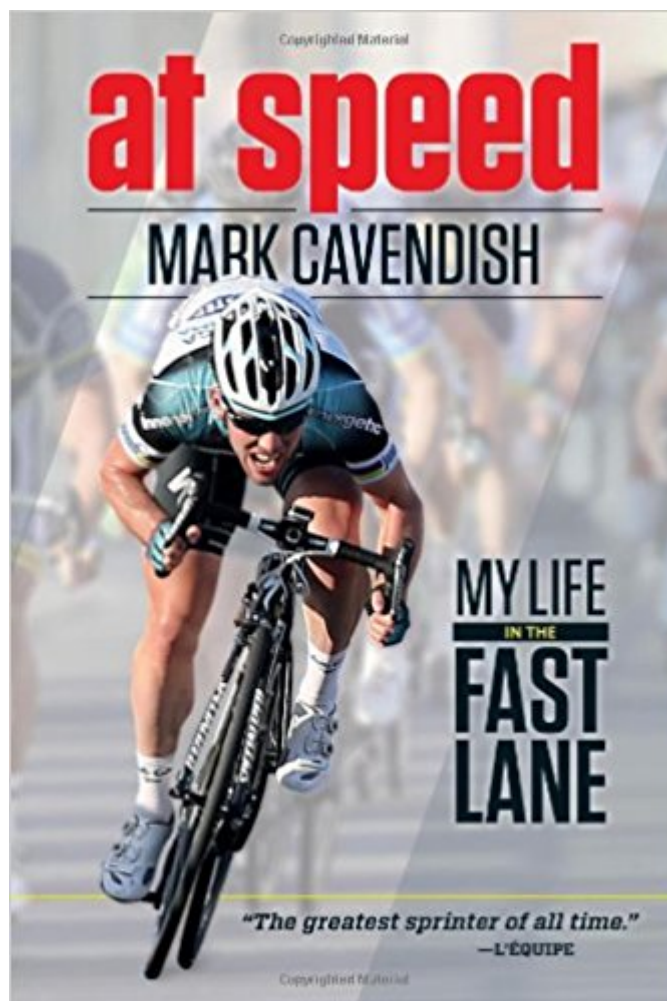


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# At Speed: My Life In The Fast Lane



## Synopsis

Written off as "fat" and "useless" in his youth, Mark Cavendish has sprinted to the front of the Tour de France peloton to become cycling's brightest star--and its most outspoken. Following his debut book *Boy Racer*, Cavendish has truly come of age as one of the best cycling sprinters of all time. In *At Speed*, the Manx Missile details what it took to become the winningest Tour sprinter ever, examines the plan that led to his world championship victory, reveals the personal toll of his sacrifice that helped teammate Bradley Wiggins become the UK's first-ever Tour de France winner, and confesses his bitter disappointment at the London Olympic Games. Screaming fights with teammates, rancorous contract negotiations, crushing disappointments--for Mark Cavendish, winning is always the cure. His book *At Speed* is the page-turning story of a living legend in the sport of cycling.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"There is, though, a lot in *At Speed* to make it a good book, a book about struggling with success, the difficulty of staying on top once you get there" [At Speed](#) is the more introspective, probably tells us more about Cavendish the professional, shows more of what really drives him to be as intense as he is. *Boy Racer* might be a more enjoyable read, but *At Speed* is more rewarding." -- [Podium Café](#) <sup>TM</sup> <sup>©</sup> " *At Speed* reveals every facet of the man known simply as "Cav" [At Speed](#) Throughout the book you rarely feel that any of Cavendish's views have been airbrushed or, conversely, built up to either avoid or deliberately provoke controversy. He offers honest insights which are simultaneously simplistic and yet original" [At Speed](#) Ultimately the joy of

At Speed is the sense that, warts and all, this is the story of a rare sportsman." -- Velo Voices "At Speed is a valuable book for anyone who is interested in an inside, detailed account of a top professional cyclist as he describes his take on his career and cycling." -- U.S. Cycling Report

Meet Mark Cavendish, cycling's biggest star. And loudest mouth. Everyone knows Cav is fast. With 25 Tour de France stage wins in his pocket, no one disputes the Manx Missile's speed. But he also owns one of the brashest--and most honest--voices in pro cycling. In his usual take-no-prisoners style, *At Speed* lays out the highs and lows of life in the pro cycling bubble. Along the way, Cav takes on all comers--the doubters who claimed he was a one-hit wonder, the rivals he fought for his sprinter's crown, and the team managers who yanked their support, only to see Cav win in the end. *At Speed* unflinchingly recounts Cav's celebrated move to Team Sky and his crushing disappointment in the team's misuse of his skills. He lays out the winning strategy for his world championship--and the losing one for the Olympics. He breaks out the story on doping, and the riders who doped. *At Speed* accelerates you into the fast lane and across the finish line with the vivid candor that has made Mark Cavendish cycling's brightest and most likable star.

Mark Cavendish, with journalist Daniel Friebe (who really should be credited on the cover), has written a very interesting and entertaining book about what it's like being one of the fastest sprinters in cycling. Mr. Cavendish has a reputation as being one of the 'bad boys' of cycling to complement his well-deserved reputation as a superlative sprinter. Reading this book has softened my opinion of him somewhat as hearing his side of the story paints a fuller picture of the man. That said, it's obvious that he does not see certain things the way most of us do. The most glaring example of this is his account of his famous crash with Heinrich Haussler at the Tour de Suisse in 2010. From his (Mark's) description of the crash it seems perfectly obvious that Cavendish is at fault. Looking at videos of the crash seems to confirm this. Haussler, head down, is driving for the finish and holding a straight line while Cavendish crosses from the right side to crash right into him. Yet somehow Cavendish concludes that it was Haussler who was at fault for not seeing him and giving him room. Oh well, what can I say. On the other hand, throughout the book Cavendish is very frank and open about himself and his good/bad points, and comes across in total as a much more likable chap than I expected. I found myself liking him more and more in spite of his blind spots. He's lavish in praising his teammates, which is nice to see. He also dispenses criticism freely, but it seems to be deserved. He gives the impression of speaking freely and not holding anything back which leads to a feeling of authenticity. In sum, this is a very enjoyable book. Cavendish devotes a good amount of time to

describing in detail how he and his team approached races and stages of races, and what went wrong or right in executing their strategies. This is the kind of information I like to read, and there is plenty of it in this book.

It's very refreshing to finally read a cycling book that does not devote 90% of its pages to kicking Lance Armstrong in the teeth. In fact, what Cavendish says about Lance in his book makes me respect Mark even more. I thoroughly enjoyed this book as Cav is probably my favorite personality in pro cycling today. It's evident that he gets a bad rap from the media because he refuses to be their lap dog. Unfortunately it is becoming all too common in sports that if the athlete does not bow to the media's wishes then they simply trash them using the power of print and video.

We seem to live in a time when everything an athlete says comes out of a can and leaves the fans wondering after an interview, "Did you really just race in an epic battle for 4 1/2 hours and come out with no thoughts other than, 'I had a good car on a good day with a good crew and everything went good.'?". This book is not like that. Cavendish offers praise for those who have been a positive influence and does not hold back his thoughts on those who have fallen short. Not every page or every thought is gripping, but that is ok because the book reads like a conversation with someone who most of us will never have the chance to speak with one-on-one and I appreciate that. This book is not one where you will find any incredible insights or which is particularly revealing about the world of road bike racing. Instead, it is one man's honest perspective and that is something which I really enjoyed.

I have always enjoyed watching Cavendish race with no fear and now after two books to his credit his writing style might come close to matching his fearlessness on the bike. He's candid and transparent as he allows the reader to get a glimpse of his life in the fast lane of professional cycling. A definite read for all who enjoy the sport of pro cycling or those who want an honest what you see is what you get perspective from the world's fastest man in the peloton.

Anyone interested in cycling can read this. Very honest and a bit of inside detail which the public does not get to see or know about. I read *Boy Racer* also, so this was a nice and good follow up and you can clearly see how he has grown as a person. It was nicely written and never got boring. An interesting read indeed. Good luck Cav!

At Speed, Cavendish's second book about his life, includes some great descriptions of sprinting at the highest level. It provides a lot of insight into his perspective, both on sprinting and other aspects of life. In particular, his complete confidence that if the course is suitable and he and his team does everything right, he WILL win the race. There are very few cyclists in history who have been able to pull this off, but at least until the 2013 Tour (described here), he has.

If you read 'Boy Racer', Mark's first book and liked it, you will like this just well. I only hope he will continue to write his new books on his brilliant career.

Love to read Cav's view of things and very interesting insights into the teams he has ridden for. VERY surprised to read about the not-so-perfect High Road / HTC / Columbia days. He's a driven athlete and man and I really enjoy watching him ride and now to read his thoughts about cycling is a real delight. There are more chapters to be written on this story and I'm looking forward to reading them also....

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