

Reviews

Books

LITERATURE FOR LOCKDOWN SURVIVAL

Print queue

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Being Gary Fisher



THE FLAMBOYANT GARY Fisher is one of the founding fathers of mountain biking. As a lifelong off-road rider, lover of innovation, and owner of one of the bikes he developed, I snapped up the opportunity to review his autobiography.

Like Gary, the book is colourful and larger than life. It is also a vast, chronological account of a varied existence: that of a child raised in a culture of transformation, leading to an adolescence of adapting bikes into off-road 'clunkers', while emerging into the heyday of the hippy movement. This in turn formed the pioneering adult with a vision to bring mountain biking to all.

Despite this remarkable tale, the account is humble, honest, and unvarnished, the prose straightforward. It acknowledges his flaws, failures, and limitations, and reflects how they shaped him. The result is a compelling account of an inspirational figure. While it's heavily designed – almost a psychedelic picture book for cycle-loving adults – and an easy read, it's also a book with significant gravity.

I'd recommend Being Gary Fisher to anyone with an interest in cycling, alternative culture, and technology. It's a book with hidden depths and a few interesting surprises.

Brendan Dougan

Details

By: Gary Fisher with Guy Kesteven
Publisher: Blue Train Publishing
Price: \$39.99
ISBN: 9781912164141



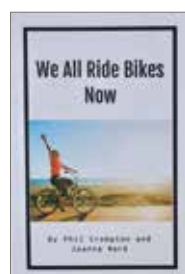
Details

By: Alan Alderson
Publisher: Laurence King Publishing
Price: £12.99
ISBN: 9781786279255

Back on Your Bike

KNOW SOMEONE WHO is on the fence about joining the cycling revolution? This short book is a useful guide for a new or returnee cyclist. Back on Your Bike covers everything from preparing for the road to riding confidently on it, as well as the benefits of cycling beyond individual health. It doesn't bombard the reader with jargon, instead using bright and colourful illustrations coupled with simple diagrams. For a newbie wanting a whistle-stop tour without too much technical depth, this could be the book.

Rebecca Mews



Details

By: Joanna Ward & Philip Crompton
Publisher: weallridebikesnow@gmail.com
Price: £10 inc P&P
ISBN: n/a

We All Ride Bikes Now

THIS FICTIONAL STORY is about two 18 year olds who "become absorbed" by cycling, then "find themselves centre stage in a year that transforms their country". It didn't entirely live up to expectations. The authors are a retired head teacher and a transport planner – and it shows. The plot and dialogue are contrived to make points about cycling, and the detail is sometimes obsessive. Yet I thoroughly enjoyed the conclusion, which is a cycling advocate's dream.

Roger Geffen



Details

By: Otto Ercroy
Publisher: Great Northern Books
Price: £9.99
ISBN: 9781912101351

Northbound and Down

OTTO'S FIRST TOUR is a 10,000km solo journey across North America from Alaska to Mexico. Not entirely new to adventuring, having somehow survived an ill-fated Atlantic sailing trip in a homemade vessel, Otto still manages to be endearingly naive at the beginning of his inaugural bike tour. (He packs three flower identification guides!) His narration, as he rides through bear-infested valleys, is hilariously candid, and he's a likeable narrator who makes friends with nearly everyone he encounters.

Andrew Campbell



Excerpts

To read excerpts from these books, and others reviewed in previous issues, visit cyclinguk.org/cycle-book-excerpts