



Cycling Fun Facts Did You Know?

General Cycling:

- 🚲 The term "bicycle" was not introduced until the 1860s, when it was coined in France to describe a new kind of two-wheeler with a mechanical drive
- 🚲 Before 1869, bicycle "tires" were largely made of iron
- 🚲 Fred A. Birchmore circled the globe by bicycle in 1935 at age 25. The entire trip, through Europe, Asia and the United States, covered forty thousand miles. He pedaled about 25,000 miles. The rest was traveled by boat. He wore out seven sets of tires.
- 🚲 About 100 million bicycles are manufactured worldwide each year
- 🚲 The highest speed ever achieved on a bicycle was 167.043 miles per hour
- 🚲 Americans use their bicycles for less than one percent of all urban trips. Europeans bike in cities a lot more often— 5 percent of all trips in Italy are on bicycle, 30 percent in the Netherlands, and seven out of eight Dutch people over age 15 have a bike.
- 🚲 Cyclists were the highest paid athletes in the U.S. until Babe Ruth joined the Yankees
- 🚲 Cycling was one of the original sports in the Olympic program since the first modern Olympic Games in 1896

Racing:

- 🚲 History holds the first recorded bicycle race to have taken place May 31, 1868, at the Parc de Saint-Cloud in Paris. The 1.2-kilometer jaunt was won by Englishman James Moore on a wooden bike with iron tires inlaid with ball-bearings that helped speed him past the competition.
- 🚲 The first Tour de France was conducted in 1903 as a promotional event for L'Auto, a French newspaper. The yellow jersey worn by the lead rider in the Tour de France is a tie to the yellow paper that the newspaper was printed on.
- 🚲 Greg LeMond was the first American to win the Tour de France in 1986. LeMond ended up with a total of three Tour de France Victories (1986, 1989 and 1990).
- 🚲 Lance Armstrong holds the record for the most Tour de France wins at seven. They were in consecutive years from 1999 through 2005.
- 🚲 The youngest Tour de France winner was Henri Cornet (France), age 19 in 1904. The oldest winner was Firmin Lambot (Belgium), age 36 in 1922.
- 🚲 Dave Zabriskie is the only American to have won a stage in each of cycling's three Grand Tours

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🚴 Seven riders have won the Tour de France *and* the Giro d'Italia in the same year:

- Eddy Merckx (Belgium) three times, in 1970, 1972, 1974
- Fausto Coppi (Italy) two times, in 1949, 1952
- Bernard Hinault (France) two times, in 1982, 1985
- Miguel Indurain (Spain) two times, in 1992, 1993
- Jacques Anquetil (France) one time, in 1964
- Stephen Roche (Ireland) one time, in 1987
- Marco Pantani (Italy) one time, in 1998

Sources:

Bicycle: The History by David Herlihy

The World Almanac Book of Records: Firsts, Feats, Facts & Phenomena by Mark Young

The Cycling Trivia Book: 1001 Questions from the Velocipede to Lance by Mark Reidy
David Fiedler, About.com

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