

Foreword

by Franco M. Impellizzeri, Senior Research Fellow at the Neuromuscular Research Laboratory at Schulthess Klinik (Zürich, Switzerland), scientific advisor to the Interuniversity Research Center in Bioengineering and Sport Science of Rovereto (Italy) and scientific advisor to the Italian Cycling Federation Medical Commission, the most experienced researcher in the field of mountainbike sports and is the author of many leading publications focussed on this specific theme.

It is a great pleasure for me to introduce this book written by a talented “new” researcher who I hope will continue to contribute to increasing the body of knowledge about this and other fields of sport science. Mountainbiking is a popular recreational and competitive sport, as well as being an Olympic discipline since the Summer Olympic Games of Atlanta 1996. Despite its popularity, relatively few studies have investigated mountainbiking. Conducting a literature search on PubMed, before 2000, only about 20 publications examined aspects related to mountainbiking and, excluding the studies on injury-related topics, only a few addressed issues such as nutrition and physiology. In recent years, fortunately, mountainbiking has attracted the interest of sport scientists, and a still small but growing number of physiological studies have been published. Performing the same search on PubMed from 2001 to present about 40 papers can be retrieved, which reflects this increase in interest. However, less than 10 have examined the physiological aspects of mountainbiking. Therefore, it is clear that more research is needed.

The present book summarizes the findings of previous studies on mountainbiking. However, in this book the results of very recent investigations are also presented. These studies are very important because they cover aspects which have not yet been addressed, such as the physiological load imposed by what is probably the most important international stage race (Transalp Challenge), and the nutritional strategy adopted by a vegan athlete. This book is not centred on elite athletes, as has been the case in most publications, but this makes the manuscript even more important from a practical point of view, given that mountainbiking is practised by a large number of amateur riders who are almost ignored by the scientific literature. For these reasons this book can be considered

state-of-the-art research on mountainbiking and represents a handbook essential for sport scientists, coaches and riders in planning and understanding mountainbike activity. Of course, this book is not intended to provide definite answers but ... “Science Will Never Explain Everything: That is Why it is So Useful!” (Robert Ehrlich, Sceptic, 2007).



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