

Heading For The Finish Line 环法自行车赛

Every summer, crowds of people gather along the winding roads of the French countryside to witness something special. These fans will often wait for hours just to catch a glimpse of the world's greatest cyclists **zooming past** on their **quest** to win the **pinnacle** of all cycling events, the [Tour de France](#).

每年夏天，群众沿着蜿蜒的法国乡间道路上集结，为的是见证一项特别的事件。这些粉丝往往会等上好几个小时，只为一睹世界上最伟大的自行车手呼啸而过，去赢得所有自行车赛事中的最高荣耀——环法自行车赛。

Interestingly enough, this **prestigious** event, which originated in 1903, began as a **publicity stunt** to save a newspaper. The paper's cycling journalist **hatched** the idea of holding a six-day race around France, hoping to **boost** his newspaper's sales. The gamble worked, as the epic event captured the interest of sports enthusiasts and the Tour became a major annual race.

有趣的是，这项盛事源于 1903 年，一开始是作为抢救一家报纸的宣传噱头。该报的自行车版记者秘密筹划举办一次为期六天环绕法国的自行车赛，希望此举可以提高报纸的销量。这赌博性的计划奏效了且成为壮举，吸引了体育爱好者的兴趣并且变成每年主要的赛事。

Although the **terrain** changes from year to year, the course generally stretches over 3,600 kilometers and takes approximately three weeks to complete. The race is **broken down** into stages, each of which lasts for a day. The times taken to complete each stage are **aggregated** to determine who the leader is. Past winners include France's [Jacques Anquetil](#), Belgium's [Eddy Merckx](#), and America's [Lance Armstrong](#), who won the Tour a record seven times.

虽然每年赛道地形都会改变，但一般来说该路线绵延 3,600 多公里，大约需要三个星期才能骑完全程。赛事被分成好几阶段，每阶段赛程会持续一整天。最后，将完成所需的每段赛程的时间加总以决定谁是领先者。历届赢家包括了法国的贾克·安奎地，比利时的艾迪·墨克斯及来自美国，赢了七次环法冠军的兰斯·阿姆斯特朗。

This year, the 98th Tour began on July 2nd and will conclude on July 24th. Highlights include 6 mountain stages and 4 **summit finishes**. Plus, riders must climb the dangerous [Col du Galibier](#) mountain pass not once, but twice. And as usual, the race will conclude at the famous [Champs-Elysees](#) in Paris. So, be sure to tune in as the stars of cycling **put the pedal to the "medal"** in hopes of taking home the first place **trophy**.

今年，第 98 届环法自行车赛开始于 7 月 2 日，结束于 7 月 24 日。本届比赛焦点包括 6 站山地站和 4 个登顶终点。另外，车手必须骑上 Col du Galibier 险峻的山路坡段两次，而非一次。而本届赛事与往年一样，最后皆结束于巴黎著名的香榭丽舍大道。所以，一定要记得收看这些骑得飞快的自行车明星夺冠军奖杯的精采赛事。

— by Jamie Blackler

Vocabulary

prestigious [pres `trɪdʒiəs] adj. 有威望[声望, 威信]的

publicity [pʌb `lɪsəti] n. 宣传

stunt [stʌnt] n. 引人注目的花招, 噱头

terrain [`tɛren] n. 地形

aggregate [`ægri, get] v. 聚集; 总计

summit [`sʌmɪt] n. 峰顶

finish (比赛等的) n. 最后阶段

trophy [`trofi] n. 奖杯, 奖牌

More Information

quest [kwɛst] n. 探索; 追求; v. 寻求, 探求

pinnacle [`pɪnək!] n. (某事物最成功、最强大、最激动人心的) 部分; 顶点, 顶峰

hatch [hætʃ] v. 策划

boost [bu:st] v. 推动

Idiom

zoom past: 非常快速地经过 to run or move past someone or something very rapidly

break down into: 把...分解成 to divide something into smaller parts

put the pedal to the "medal": 加快速度, 骑非常快。 原为 put the pedal to the metal: to press a car's accelerator to the floor; to drive very fast