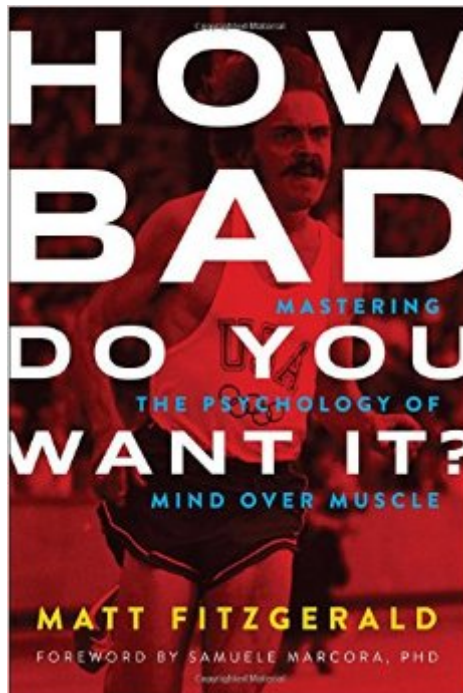# How Bad Do You Want It?: Mastering The Psychology Of Mind Over Muscle

Synopsis

The greatest athletic performances spring from the mind, not the body. Elite athletes have known this for decades and now science is learning why itâ ™s true. In his fascinating new book How Bad Do You Want It?, coach Matt Fitzgerald examines more than a dozen pivotal races to discover the surprising ways elite athletes strengthen their mental toughness. Fitzgerald puts you into the pulse-pounding action of more than a dozen epic races from running, cycling, triathlon, XTERRA, and rowing with thrilling race reports and revealing post-race interviews with the elites. Their own words reinforce what the research has found: strong mental fitness lets us approach our true physical limits, giving us an edge over physically stronger competitors. Each chapter explores the how and why of an elite athleteâ ™s transformative moment, revealing powerful new psychobiological principles you can practice to flex your own mental fitness. The new psychobiological model of endurance performance shows that the most important question in endurance sports is: how bad do you want it? Fitzgeraldâ ™s fascinating book will forever change how you answer this question and show you how to master the psychology of mind over muscle. These lessons will help you push back your limits and uncover your full potential. How Bad Do You Want It? reveals new psychobiological findings including: Mental toughness determines how close you can get to your physical limit. Bracing yourself for a tough race or workout can boost performance by 15% or more. Champions have learned how to give more of what they have. The only way to improve performance is by altering how you perceive effort. Choking under pressure is a form of self-consciousness. Your attitude in daily life is the same one you bring to sports. There's no such thing as going as fast as you canâ •only going faster than before. The fastest racecourse is the one with the loudest spectators. Faith in your training is as important as the training itself.Athletes featured in How Bad Do You Want It?: Sammy Wanjiru, Jenny Simpson, Greg LeMond, Siri Lindley, Willie Stewart, Cadel Evans, Nathan Cohen and Joe Sullivan, Paula Newby-Fraser, Ryan Vail, Thomas Voeckler, Ned Overend, Steve Prefontaine, and last of all John â œThe Penguinâ • Bingham

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Customer Reviews

This book explains the latest theory of how the brain regulates endurance performance, the psycho biological model. The thesis is that decisions about pacing or quitting are taken by the conscious brain and that these decisions are primarily based on the conscious decisions of how hard, heavy and strenuous exercise is, a feeling called perception of effort, or body's resistance to the mind's will. Endurance performance is a self-regulated behavior on which thoughts and feelings can have profound influences. Perceptions of effort limit endurance performance. The book describes how conscious self-regulation of thoughts, emotions, and behavior can have a dramatic influence on endurance performance. In other words, mind and body are interconnected with the body distinctly subordinate, or as the great Finnish runner Paavo Nurmi opined, "Mind is everything. Muscles-pieces of rubber." Fitzgerald states the thesis of the book, "One cannot improve as an endurance athlete except by changing one's relationship with perception of effort." The author proceeds to devote the remainder of the book to examples of how athletes changed their relationship to perception of effort. As he states, "the best source of knowledge concerning the most effective methods of coping...is the example set by elite endurance athletes". Subsequent chapters describe how these elite athletes learned to cope.

Matt Fitzgerald has written a very interesting and enjoyable book on the role of mental training for endurance athletes. I recommend this book to all endurance athletes and those who enjoy interesting narratives about individuals who have overcome challenges to become successful. The book can truly be enjoyed on 2 different levels:â ¢ Stories of Elite Athletes who have achieved their best through development of better mental training skills and mindsets â " these are truly inspirational stories of courage, resilience and are very enjoyable to readâ ¢ A deeper understanding of the psychobiological model â " how the mind and body interact for endurance athletes â " that can be used to help each person better coach themselves in a true journey of self-discovery to see what they are truly capable of, regardless of their level of athletic ability (these

skills are helpful in other area of life as well).I learned a lot in each chapter of the book but would like to share a bit from 2 chapters that I found interesting and compelling:â ¢ In the chapter â œThe Art of Letting Goâ •, Matt chronicles the story of Siri Lindley (triathlete) and her struggles and triumphs. The chapter has some very interesting information on choking during big performances. Perceived effort is heightened by self-consciousness - which then leads to decreased performance. The solution is to reach a state of flow â " complete immersion in a purposeful activity â " that allows one to be in the moment. A key passage from the chapter: â œParadoxically, it may seem, Siri had to let go of that dream and find contentment in the moment-to-moment process of chasing it in order to complete the personal transformation that was her deeper ambition.

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