For eight years, the Tour de France, arguably the world’s most demanding athletic competition, was ruled by two men: Lance Armstrong and Floyd Landis. On the surface, they were feature players in one of the great sporting stories of the age–American riders overcoming tremendous odds to dominate a sport that held little previous interest for their countrymen. But is this a true story, or is there a darker version of the truth, one that sadly reflects the realities of sports in the twenty-first century? Landis’s title is now in jeopardy because drug tests revealing that his testosterone levels were eleven times those of a normal athlete strongly suggest that he used banned substances, and for years similar allegations have swirled around Armstrong.
Now internationally acclaimed award-winning journalist David Walsh gives an explosive account of the shadow side of professional sports. In this electrifying, controversial, and scrupulously documented exposé, Walsh explores the many facets of the cyclist doping scandals in the United States and abroad. He examines how performance-enhancing drugs can infiltrate a premier sports event—and why athletes succumb to the pressure to use them. In researching this book, Walsh conducted hundreds of hours of interviews with key figures in international cycling, doctors, and other insiders, including Emma O’Reilly, Armstrong’s longtime massage therapist; former U.S. Postal Service cycling team doctor Prentice Steffen; cycling legend Greg LeMond; and former teammates of both Landis and Armstrong.

Central to the story is Lance Armstrong’s relentless, all-consuming drive to be the best. Also essential to this narrative is Floyd Landis, the unassuming, sympathetic hero who was the first winner of the Tour de France after Lance—and the first ever to face the threat of having his title revoked. More than anything else, this book will ignite anew the debate about whether there is room in the current sports culture for athletes who compete honestly, whether sports can be saved from a scandal as widespread as this, and what changes will have to be made.

With a compelling narrative and revelations that will stun, enlighten, and haunt readers, David Walsh addresses numerous questions that arise in that crucial space where sports meet the larger American culture.

Features:
* ISBN13: 9780345499622
* Condition: USED - VERY GOOD
* Notes:

**Personal Review: From Lance to Landis: Inside the American Doping Controversy at the Tour de France by David Walsh**
I've read the book two times and not as a member of the "Nail Armstrong" brigade but because it does give insight to professional road cycling and I do call it that because we need to remember that cycling is wide and varied, up to the kid riding his tricycle down the street. He's more respectable than many of those riding described in this book who basically have no kind rules placed on them. Okay, the UCI and others say it is changing, but professional cycling has always had this kind of substance abuse and most likely always will. The thing is, is with the EPO or r-EPO making it's way into the sport by the late '80s/90s, a cyclist's performance could now start to grow up to 30% better for a cyclist than a performance...
without. So, in other words, Walsh is telling us a story we need to know. A story where often it is not new information but he somewhat coordinates the information for a better understanding by the reader. This is information we deserve to know, how with the r-EPO, cyclists that would be nowhere near leading in the mountains, now were up in the pack and cyclists not using but that should be leading in the mountains were nowhere near the front. Really quite ridiculous. Whereas speeds riding on flat roads and speeds on the mountains now became similar, whereas one team using r-EPO before it was a known commodity did the extraordinary finishing 1-2-3 in one famed race. This is a book about cyclists getting those extra wings while other 'clean' cyclists fall behind the pack.

I remember the recent tour where Vinokourov broke away from the pack, doing a fantastic job and reknown cycling commentator Phil Ligget exclaiming "I don't believe it! This is impossible" and yes, I felt the exact same way but in a suspicious cynical way and voila, the rider was promptly caught in drug tests concerning this episode. German TV soon thereafter decided not to broadcast what they termed as "chemical exhibitions." That episode was a lot like the way Floyd Landis stormed back in that one race and I believe both happened within a year of each other, 2006 and then with Vino in 2007. Still, I have no personal resentment against these two individuals.

The science angle is about as understandable as possible per Walsh's narrative and this is no easy feat. High-Performance Cycling is an example of a book with a lot of science talk on cycling that might leave the layman unsure of what he just read.

To those who often say that the likes of Walsh and others are just taking pot shots, why should one turn a blind eye towards Armstrong, the backdated prescription he was issued in 1999 that cleared his use for a substance found in his system, his relationship with the notorious Dr. Ferrari, giving the 'shush' sign to Simeone during a Tour De France stage (similar incidents purportedly with Robin and Bassons, anti-dopers) and in fact, the witnessing of Armstrong saying he did use performance enhancers and the Armstrong camp clearly going after many detractors via legal avenues and why doesn't Armstrong speak against the use of these substances? It's good that this book could not be stopped because it's not about the book.

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