

Ultra Performance: The Psychology of Endurance Sports

Paul Moore



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The world's leading endurance athletes are not only some of the fittest people on the planet, they are also among the toughest mentally. To train and race at the highest level of competition over hundreds – and sometimes thousands – of miles takes preparation, dedication and the ability to push the body and mind beyond conventional limits. Ultra Performance offers an insight into the psychology of these athletes.

Having interviewed fourteen ultra athletes, Paul Moore distils the dynamics of the mental toughness they required – the motivation, focus and ability to keep the mind positive deep in the heart of fatigue. What did it take, for instance, for Rachel Cadman to 'eat the elephant' of the Arch to Arc (running from London to Dover, swimming the Channel, then cycling to Paris)?

And to win? That takes steeliness beyond all mere effort, pushing through and improvising when necessary. The stories of these hard-fought wins feature strongly in the contributions from Brett Sutton, world-renowned triathlon coach, and Craig Alexander, one of the greatest athletes in the history of Ironman. Others, like Dee Cafari, the first woman to circumnavigate the world solo in both directions, required the resilience to overcome challenges they had set themselves.

With working examples of the implementation of their mental strategies, Ultra Performance not only gives an insight into the toughest moments these professional athletes have ever faced, but also offers advice to readers on how they can adapt and employ these techniques for themselves, often to the non-sporting pursuits of everyday life.

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