



C. C. Pyle's Amazing Foot Race

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Among the runners of C. C. Pyle's First Annual International Transcontinental Foot Race were an assortment of underdogs, including twenty-year-old Oklahoman and part Cherokee Andy Payne, who wanted to win over the girl of his dreams and pay off the mortgage on his family's farm; Paul "Hardrock" Simpson, who was in over his head but couldn't let down his North Carolina hometown; Mike Kelly, a luckless boxer from Indiana; Seattle's Ed Gardner, one of four black runners who encountered bigotry; Charles Hart, a sixty-three-year-old Englishman hoping his best days weren't behind him; and Frank Johnson, a middle-aged husband, father, and steelworker from St. Louis who broke away from his humdrum life and dared to do something different. Newspaper and magazine journalist Geoff Williams details this historic event and the colorful cast of characters involved, based on firsthand accounts of those who were there and interviews from many living descendants. C. C. Pyle's Amazing Foot Race is a classic American story so astonishing and surreal that you have to hear it to believe it.

C. C. Pyle's Amazing Foot Race Details

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Author : Geoff Williams

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From Reader Review C. C. Pyle's Amazing Foot Race for online ebook

Lotte says

Davy and I just finished this fascinating look at an unbelievable test of endurance and will - a 1928 foot race of nearly 3500 miles from California to NYC. I wasn't sure about this as a read-aloud but Davy loved the book and was especially captivated by the various motivations of the men to start and then continue (or not) the race. We both marveled at the ability of so many to complete the race under extremely difficult circumstances and without the benefit of better surfaces and footwear and knowledge of the importance of hydration and diet, etc.

Donald says

In an era in which everyone wanted to do the next great extreme thing (before today's extreme sports), some 50 men set out to run across the country (in leather dress shoes, mostly, way before Nikes). No PowerBars, no Gatorade, sometimes without food or proper sleep. Adding to the challenge: C.C. Pyle was a crook.

Scott Willis says

I couldn't get enough of this book so I ordered the DVD "The Great American Foot Race" and another book about the same event called, "Bunion Derby: The 1928 Footrace Across America." The movie is just o.k, the second book seems promising.

Williams really does an amazing job detailing the characters and history of the event. I'm an avid fan of endurance races. I watch the Tour de France religiously every year. Nothing, though, in my knowledge, comes close to what these runners (not only the 55 who finished) endured. But, beyond the incredible stories of the main characters, Williams details pre-depression America as well as anyone.

Jan says

Fantastic historical information on a real event ...set back in 1928, 199 men set out for a \$25,000 prize. They were to run 3422 miles from Los Angeles to New York in 84 days. They ran 7 days a week, running the equivalent of 2-3 marathons each day!

Laura Murdoch says

Fascinating book about a little known piece of American history. I couldn't decide between 3 or 4 stars, but settled on 4 because I was impressed with all of the research and anecdotal stories that the author put into the book. The book was about a foot race between L.A. and N.Y.C. in 1928. The men ran across the country the

equivalent of 2-3 marathons a day 7 days a week in all kinds of weather...and in bad shoes! As a runner, I know what bad shoes can do. This was the ultimate AMAZING RACE!

J says

What a fun piece of American history -- it beggars belief on almost every page. In 1928 C. C. Pyle decided to organize a cross-country foot race, and a couple hundred men take on the challenge. Who needs running shoes or a shower, a decent bed, or decent food after running 25-50 miles a day, every day?

Billie Pastor says

It could have been so much better! I suffered through this book. I was hoping for a look at the runners and the suffering they endured and the course they followed. Instead it was a jumping around story line which didn't let u connect with any character. In addition, most of the focus was on the slime bag organizer. They missed the mark in this book.

Al Berry says

An interesting book on a 1928 trans continental foot race, organized by Showman CC Pyle. There are a lot of colorful characters and the hardships that the runners go through is quite intense, Football Star Red Grange is Pyle's lieutenant and is charge a lot of he race while Pyle goes into hiding from Creditors. The route (mostly) follows historic 66 which had just opened and the race was partially set to showcase that road. A Suspense to the end not only who wins but will the runners get paid or will Pyle turn insolvent?

Vix says

My brother lent me this book around the time I began training for a half marathon. It revealed the beginnings of competitive distance running in the 20th Century and was a pretty entertaining read. A billion characters/runners to keep up with so it felt a little scattered but overall a decent read.

Meggen says

This book made me very tired at times just reading about the endurance of these athletes, all the injuries they dealt with along the way, and the sheer insanity of this race! Still, it was interesting enough to keep me plodding through it. The beginning and the end were a little slow for me, though. And, there are lots of characters to try and remember.

Bennjamin says

Third time reading this book. I am always amazed and surprised by the runners of CC Pyle's Transcontinental Foot Race. When we think of how easy it is to complain about our lot and station in life, 199 runners in 1928 set out on the eve of the Depression to forge ahead and pave the way for distance running today. What I find most inspiring about this is that it reads as a story about real people FOR real people. A must read.

Diane says

In 1928, C.C. Pyle organized a race across America – from Los Angeles to New York City. Contestants ran approximately 30-50 miles every day with no support as we find in marathons today. They had to provide their own food, water, and equipment. Sleeping arrangements were barely adequate. The first place contestant was to win \$25,000. What is amazing is that about 50 out of 198 contestants finished! Williams tells the story of the race, nearly day by day, and of many of the contestants. The story is also about C.C. Pyle, a shyster and self-promoter in a league with P.T. Barnum.

I was amazed that anyone could undergo the torment of this race and survive day after day. The individual stories are fascinating. I could have done with less about C.C. Pyle and his shenanigans.

Keith says

Interesting book about a footrace across the country that most people don't remember. I found the author's style a bit awkward at first but either I adjusted or he got better because it didn't bother me as much at the end.

I recommend this book to runners and fans of contests and amazing human feats.

Vince says

Great read about an amazing footrace. Heroic, amazing, historical. Seabiscuit but with people.

Brad Melius says

Amazing story well told, though it does drag a bit in the middle (not unlike the country the runners were crossing, if I'm honest). C.c. Pyle makes Barnum look like a philanthropist. Those were tough times, and the book brings that home. These men ran thousands of miles because they believed it was their best opportunity, and I don't think they were wrong.

