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Founded in 1878



FROM THE EDITOR

CASUAL CYCLISTS avoid hills; keen cyclists seek them out. It's not masochism. Or not just masochism. The difficulty of any hill can be divided by the amount of common sense applied to your gearing.

You can embrace the iconography of suffering and conquer that climb on a 42/23, burning with lactic acid and mentally shouted at by your flag-draped inner fan. Or you can spin up while sitting down on 22/36, staring not at the tarmac or the speedo but at the visible height gain all around.

Whichever way you do it, maximal or minimal effort, it's satisfying to reach the top of a climb, especially long or steep ones. It's an achievement ticked off. There's a sense of relief. There's the view. And there's all that gravitational potential energy, ready to be spent on a thrilling descent.

The idea of uplift – going to the top in a van or a gondola, like downhill mountain bikers – feels alien. I want to ride to the top. I don't want to be gifted a free descent. I want to pay for it with honest toil. Maybe it's a generational thing. Maybe it's the rationalisation of a cyclist skinny enough to go up hills well but too chicken to go down them quickly. Or maybe there is a bit of masochism in it.

Whatever: the hill is there. We're going up it. I'll see you at the top.

Dan Joyce
EDITOR



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Clockwise from far left: Steve Fleming, Chris Juden, Alamy

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On the cover
The last few hairpins of the Galibier, climbing from the Lautaret side. Photo © Steve Thomas

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