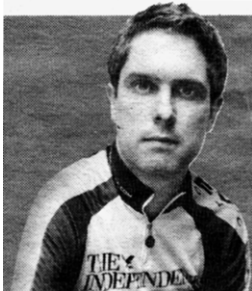


‘So, is cycling really bad for men?’



James Daley

- 1 I couldn't help feeling rather angry last week, when I stumbled across yet another newspaper article claiming that cycling can be bad for men's sexual health. I must have seen at least half a dozen of these kind of scare stories over the past few years, but this was all the worse for the fact it emerged from what claims to be an esteemed academic journal. "Male cyclists risk impotence," the headlines proclaimed. For anyone looking for another reason to avoid trading in their car for a bike this summer, there it was.
- 2 But a closer look at the original journal article revealed that, surprise surprise, the conclusions of the study were not nearly as definitive as the headlines had suggested. While the author, Mr Vinod Nargund, a urologist surgeon at Barts hospital in London, had indeed discovered that the chance of men suffering from impotence or testicular damage is higher if they cycle regularly, the most common problems among male cyclists are simply "numbness", "soreness" and "skin problems" in the crotch – hardly life-threatening ailments. Furthermore, the most serious of health problems only tend

to be experienced by those who cycle for several hours every day – and, even then, the damage is often not permanent.

- 3 I don't mean any disrespect to Mr Nargund – I'm sure his work will prove a valuable contribution to the field of urology. But was it necessary to press-release the juiciest parts of his research, while it was well-known that the press would take a sensationalist approach to reporting it? I've heard people who swim are at a higher risk of drowning than those who don't, but I'm not sure it's worth alerting the national media.



- 4 In his press release, Mr Nargund explains mountain bikers are most at risk of sexual health problems. What he didn't say, however, was that previous studies have suggested you'd have to spend more than two hours a day, six days a week on your mountain bike to find yourself in any real danger. So that puts the other 99.9 per cent of us in the clear.

5 In my experience, people will call on every excuse they can when it comes to trying to avoid taking up cycling – and, if we start spreading the myth that it's bad for your sexual health, fewer and fewer people will ever make the shift. A lot of people I speak to already wrongly believe cycling affects male fertility – another myth which can be easily dispelled

by looking at the large families professional cyclists such as Miguel Indurain and Chris Boardman have fathered. Any health professional will tell you the benefits of cycling far outweigh the risks – a message that may not excite newspaper editors, but which needs to be spread.

The Independent, 2008

Tekst 9 ‘So, is cycling really bad for men?’

- 1p 34 “rather angry last week” (paragraph 1)
Which of the following have caused the writer’s anger according to paragraph 1?
The fact that
- 1 he thinks articles about the negative side-effects of cycling will keep people from riding bikes instead of driving cars.
 - 2 even a serious magazine has published an article about the negative side-effects of cycling.
 - 3 there have been many articles in the press about the negative side-effects of cycling.
- A** Only 1 and 2.
B Only 1 and 3.
C Only 2 and 3.
D 1, 2 and 3.
- 1p 35 What becomes clear from paragraphs 2, 3 and 4?
The writer of the article
- A** agrees with Mr Nargund on the necessity of warning people about the possible health risks of cycling.
B condemns the press for misrepresenting the facts of Mr Nargund’s excellent research.
C criticises Mr Nargund for presenting journalists with the most spectacular details of his study.
D reproaches Mr Nargund for overlooking the positive effects of cycling on the human body.
- 1p 36 Which conclusion does the writer of the article draw in paragraph 5?
- A** Publications such as Mr Nargund’s research on cycling might lead to a decrease in people’s health.
B The main reason for publishing articles on the risks of cycling is to increase newspaper sales.
C The negative effects cycling has had on famous cyclists shows how dangerous it is for men.
D The risks that male cyclists run are not taken seriously by scientists other than Mr Nargund.
- 1p 37 “So, ... men?” (titel)
Welke van de onderstaande citaten geeft een bevestigend antwoord op de vraag in de titel?
- A** “the chance ... regularly” (alinea 2)
B “the most serious ... permanent” (alinea 2)
C “I’ve heard ... media.” (alinea 3)
D “you’d ... clear” (alinea 4)

Bronvermelding

Een opsomming van de in dit examen gebruikte bronnen, zoals teksten en afbeeldingen, is te vinden in het bij dit examen behorende correctievoorschrift, dat na afloop van het examen wordt gepubliceerd.