



Speed Kings: The 1932 Winter Olympics and the Fastest Men in the World

Andy Bull

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A story of risk, adventure, and daring as four Americans race to win the gold medal in the most dangerous competition in Olympic history.

In the 1930s, as the world hurtled toward war, speed was all the rage. Bobsledding, the fastest and most thrilling way to travel on land, had become a sensation. Exotic, exciting, and brutally dangerous, it was the must-see event of the 1932 Winter Olympics at Lake Placid, the first Winter Games on American soil. Bobsledding required exceptional skill and extraordinary courage—qualities the American team had in abundance.

There was Jay O'Brien, the high-society playboy; Tippy Grey, a scandal-prone Hollywood has-been; Eddie Egan, world champion heavyweight boxer *and* Rhodes Scholar; and the charismatic Billy Fiske, the true heart of the team, despite being barely out of his teens. In the thick of the Great Depression, the nation was gripped by the story of these four men, their battle against jealous locals, treacherous US officials, and the very same German athletes they would be fighting against in the war only a few short years later.

Billy, in fact, went on to talk his way into the Royal Air Force—despite their Brits-only policy—and was there to fight the Nazis during the Battle of Britain. King of speed to the end, he would become the first American fighter pilot killed in WWII.

The exploits of Billy and his teammates make up a story that spans the globe, from Golden Age Hollywood to seedy New York gambling dens, to the most fashionable European resorts, the South Seas, and beyond. Evoking the glamour and recklessness of the Jazz Age, *Speed Kings* will thrill readers to the last page.

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