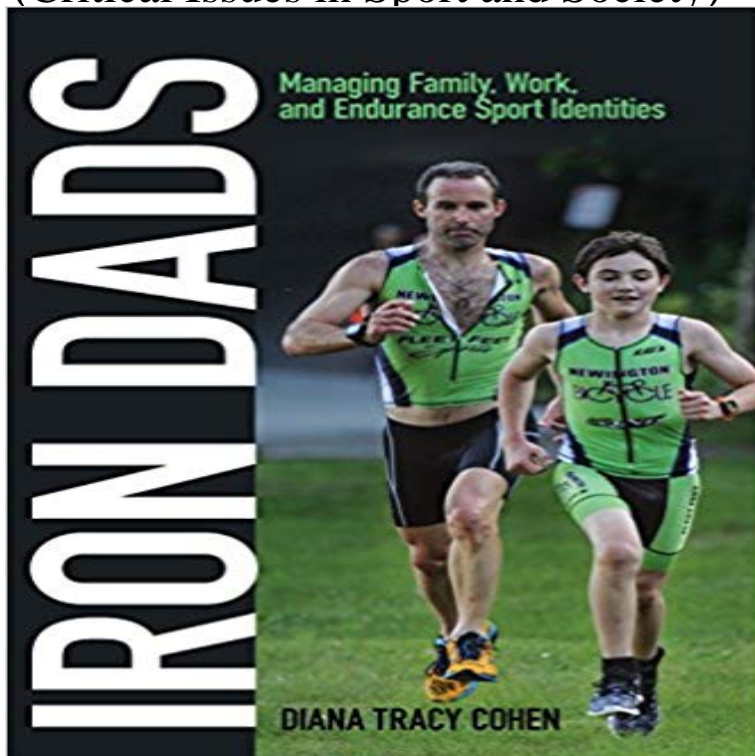


Iron Dads: Managing Family, Work, and Endurance Sport Identities (Critical Issues in Sport and Society)



Among the most difficult athletic events a person can attempt, the iron-distance triathlon a 140.6 mile competition requires an intense prerace training program. This preparation can be as much as twenty hours per week for a full year leading up to a race. In *Iron Dads*, Diana Tracy Cohen focuses on the pressures this extensive preparation can place on families, exploring the ways in which men with full-time jobs, one or more children, and other responsibilities fit this level of training into their lives. An accomplished triathlete as well as a trained social scientist, Cohen offers much insight into the effects of endurance-sport training on family, parenting, and the sense of self. She conducted in-depth interviews with forty-seven iron-distance competitors and three prominent men in the race industry, and analyzed triathlon blog postings made by *Iron Dads*. What sacrifices, Cohen asks, are required both at home and at work to cross the iron-distance finish line? What happens when work, family, and sport collide? Is it possible for fathers to meet their own parenting expectations while pursuing such a time-consuming regimen? With the tensions of family economics, how do you justify spending \$5,000 on a racing bike? At what point does sport become work? Cohen discovered that, by fostering family involvement in this all-consuming effort, *Iron Dads* are able to maintain a sense of themselves not only as strong, masculine competitors, but also as engaged fathers. Engagingly written and well researched, *Iron Dads* provides a penetrating, firsthand look at extreme endurance sports, including practical advice for aspiring racers and suggestions for making triathlons more family-friendly.

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