

Go Faster Food for Schools

Daniel McKimm, aged 20, 2014 British University Circuit Race Champion Go Faster Food for Schools Ambassador

Dan is from Bristol but now lives just outside Paris in France, where he is a full-time cyclist for National Division 3 team, AS Corbeil-Essonnes Cyclisme. He competes in national and international races all across France and is making the most of the opportunities that life on the continent has to offer.

I have a desire to compete and perform at the highest possible level. I'm a hard working, dedicated person, so I am always putting everything I have into my training and racing. At present, I train anything from 15 - 25 hours a week, depending on my racing schedule and my fitness goals. My dream is to be a professional rider and earn a living from the sport I love. Hopefully this day isn't too far away!

Food is integral to my sport – it's just as important as the training I do. I can't get away with eating junk and I have to be really careful about what I consume. Of course, I allow myself a bit of slack and freedom during the off-season to enjoy myself, but as soon as I begin preparations for a new racing season I revert back to my usual, disciplined self.

I have been a keen cyclist since I was 12 and I started competing in 2009. I usually begin racing at the beginning of March each year, and from then until September I will race at least once a week. In the summer months, it's not unusual for me to be competing two or three times a week. I'm very lucky; because I'm cycling full-time this season I have all day, every day to get out on my bike so it's easy for me to do the training that I need to do. In the past, I've had to balance my training with my studies and part-time job.

My favourite breakfast when I'm training or racing is porridge - it gives me energy throughout the day. When I'm out cycling, I have a seed and nut or cereal bar to hand to keep me going. Post training, I like to have a chicken salad or poached eggs on toast. You can definitely work up a hunger!

I first got hold of a copy of the Go Faster Food book a few years ago. Kate knew how keen I was to progress in cycling, so when she published the book she let me have a copy. I've since got hold of the Go Faster Food for Kids book as well, and I cook from both regularly. My favourite recipe is the Smoky Black Bean and Chorizo Chilli and I love to have it right before a race. I also love the lemon Chicken kebabs as it's such a simple recipe to follow, yet such a tasty and nutritious meal!

What I find really useful about the books is the nutritional breakdown at the bottom of each recipe page. It's important for me to know exactly what I'm getting from each meal so I can match it to my nutritional needs. So, I just flick through the books, find a recipe that fits the bill and get cooking.

On the whole, I don't think people realise how easy it is to make good food from scratch and I think they underestimate how little time it takes to make nutritionally-balanced yet delicious meals. If they did, they'd really reap the benefits and still enjoy their food. This is why I'm a Go Faster Food for Schools Ambassador - I'm more than willing to share what I've learnt with adults, children; anyone who will listen really! I would 100 per cent recommend any of the Go Faster Food books; I wouldn't be without my copy, even out here in France!