

Discovered a photo of Lance I took in 1997... (originally published on my Facebook page)



Trek's Team coordinator Mike M on the right, and he who must not be named, Lance Armstrong, on the left.

1997. Who knew. Mike M, Trek's team liaison (on the right in the photo), was pretty darned sure he knew. Knew that he'd signed the next big thing in pro cycling. I recall him calling me on the phone, at home, to tell me about it. He was that excited (and at the time, I was pretty high on Trek's dealer list). They flew me to San Diego to the training camp where I was supposed to be hugely impressed by the pro athletes on display... at the time, I was much more impressed by the... bike technology. I hadn't been totally sucked into pro cycling yet.

I was only 40 at the time and one heck of a lot faster than I am today. I could hold my own against the Trek engineers and such (some of whom raced fairly well), and not look totally foolish riding (not really long rides) with guys I should have been far more impressed with than I was. Pretty naïve in hindsight.

Two and a half years later I found myself in France, exposed to an entirely new and epic type of bike racing at my first TdF. I was quickly and thoroughly hooked. Had I any idea what the pinnacle of bike racing could be like when I started racing, I likely would have made some very different choices. In retrospect, I'm glad I didn't, but I'll continue to wonder, am I a has-been or a never-was.

From 2000 up through this year, I've been to every TdF except 2008 (the year Carlos Sastre won). It's clearly a bit of an obsession, and from 2007-on, an obsession I've shared with my son. 9 years ago he was 14, 5'3 or so, and had slimmed down to about 195lbs. He'd been as high as 220. Today he's 5'9 and 170. Cycling has transformed him, and our trips to the TdF have been a high point of each year for both of us.

Sucks that Lance turned out to be not just a dooper but an *hole, which kinda takes over the narrative for a great story.

Tuesday's Ride Update-

Just a few of us this morning: myself, Kevin (younger Kevin, not the Pilot), JR, and, for the climb up Kings, Marcus. Kevin and Marcus are in a whole different class and just rode on ahead; I rode hard the first part of the climb but fell apart further up and got passed by JR. So nothing new to report. Same as it ever was. :-)