

More memories of Lance... the Version 2.0 reboot



Lance Armstrong getting a kiss from his girlfriend, who's holding their new child, immediately after winning the 2009 Nevada City Classic.

I created this post after going through photos I've taken over the years, looking for something that might catch my eye, maybe something to use in a promotional email.

Of course, I've got a ton of photos dealing with past trips to France, and that being on my mind a lot lately, I started focusing more on photos that were personal (meant something to me) as opposed to strictly business stuff. Below is the result, initially posted in a bicycle racing group on Facebook.

Lance's new beginning, Version 2.0, began quite symbolically. The photo above came just moments after winning the 2009 Nevada City Bike Race. A new baby, a kiss from his girlfriend, and all looked quite on track for a comeback. And there was this feeling that maybe he was doing this to prove it could be done clean this time. Were we naïve? I don't think so. It played into his hubris; this idea that he was so arrogant, so believing in himself that he was going to show the world it could be done without doping. Without, of course, admitting that he'd doped for the previous TdFs.

Initially he was an open book for testing, before shutting the door on the science that he claimed would prove he was clean. We're still looking for answers on that; Lance still, to the best of my knowledge, claims to have raced 2009 clean, taking 3rd in the TdF.

2009 was the second year I brought my son to the TdF. Curiously, Lance didn't mean that much to him; he was more caught up in the spectacle of the TdF in general. To my son, Lance was "just zis guy, you know?" It was a year later, 2010, that things became more interesting, as Lance's fall from 3rd to pack fodder saw Chris Horner waste his best shot at a TdF podium in service to a guy who just didn't have what it took.

I believe Lance could have stopped after taking 3rd and likely gotten away with his records intact. The French were happy; they had their perfect story. The heroic effort that fails. They celebrate effort more so than success, and that was the big flaw in the Lance story. Until 2009 when all that changed. But Lance V 2.0 was still built upon the core code of Lance V1.x. It was destined to fail, because Lance couldn't help but fall back to his vindictive nature and desire to use every trick in the book to win.