

## This photo shows why I have my doubts the 2020 TdF can run as planned



July 20, 2017, atop the Izoard at the Tour de France. Me and a few, maybe tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands of my closest friend. A picture's worth a thousand words. It's hard to believe that everything is still in place to run the 2020 Tour de France in a normal fashion; "social distancing" and Grand Tour Cycling, as we have come to know it, don't really co-exist. But so far, everything says things are good to go.

In general, it wouldn't be that difficult to avoid overly-packed situations, if you're willing to watch the race pass by from a less-than-optimal spot. Unless you're on Alpe d'Huez, which is packed from bottom-to-top, there will be plenty of less-interesting places where spectators are fewer, especially on the descents. You'd miss the angst and suffering but after 20 years of going for the same thing, the same shot more-or-less, doing something different could be fun.

Whatever they allow is likely irrelevant though, as I doubt France (or any other reasonable country) is anxious to let Americans into their country. I'm thinking we might, maybe, have a two-week window in which Trump could declare a national mask requirement and get things to settle down a bit, and then, maybe, we could travel again. It's interesting that I don't find travel itself fearful; International flights are likely to have very light loads and the filtration systems in planes are advanced far beyond anything you'll encounter outside of a lab. It's pretty clear that it's places like bars and parties clubs that are the new petri dishes, while elsewhere things aren't so bad.

Since the Tour de France is held on public roads and it would be impossible to fence off access for the entirety of a 100 mile stage, it would be seemingly impossible to run it without spectators. And even if it's terribly inconvenient and sub-optimal viewing, just being able to say you were there, at the 2020 Covid-19 edition of the Tour de France... that would be a story to tell for years down the road. It's not likely a story I'll get to tell, and I'm not entirely sure it's going to be a story anybody gets to, as Covid-19 cases begin to reassert themselves in France, and elsewhere, as they've tried to regain some sense of normalcy and end the most-draconian measures Covid-19 has brought us.

Kevin and I still have tickets for the flights, we still have reservations, but the only money that has been spent was for the flights, and they were both very inexpensive and can be changed to any other date or destination for the 9 months following. So no financial risk, but my desire to travel, to get away, to spend 10 days thinking about something other than the craziness that is the bike biz currently, has never been stronger.