

"This yellow jersey will stand the test of time" bothers me



Chris Froome on his way to winning the Tour de France's second individual time trial

With the latest revelations scheduled to come out within a few hours, we'll have confirmation of the rampant doping throughout the pro peloton during the Lance era. Is it OK if that makes me feel it's a bit disingenuous for Chris Froome to state "This yellow jersey will stand the test of time" without providing some context?

Specifically, that he's thankful for the improved doping controls that allow a clean rider, like himself, to compete and win the Tour de France and further, that he can't say, given the environment of earlier times, if he wouldn't have ended up on such a list himself?

It's one thing that those who were guilty of participating in doping during cycling's dark years stay silent. There's a sense of shame as well as the hope that the focus on Lance Armstrong would distract the public from thinking much of others. But the current generation of "clean" riders... are they actually better people than those who came before? Or seemingly-thankless beneficiaries of a new system that no longer rewards those who cheat?

Chris Froome doesn't come across as an arrogant person, but I think the current crop of cyclists in general lacks a bit of humility when it comes to understanding the changed circumstances in which they engage their chosen sport. It would have been nice, on the podium at the conclusion of the Tour de France, had Chris Froome acknowledged that, and pointed out that riders didn't decide to race clean to save the sport, any more than riders of the past cheated to destroy it.

Despite any revisionist attitude towards doping, he who must not be named (Lance) deserves severe penalties because of the way he destroyed lives, specifically Betsy Andreu and Emma, to protect the lie (that he was clean). Financial compensation to his victims, to an extent that it would be ruinous to the gains he received, is in order. But in the context of the sport, he stole his victories fair & square, just like many before and a few after him. His TdF wins should appear with asterisks, as should the majority of those who won during the period from 1992-2008 or so.