Tradition versus Innovation

Cycling is the first genuinely modern sport insofar as it was born with the invention of a machine, and manufacturers have done much since the invention of the penny farthing to improve its functionality. As a consequence, the Tour de France is being transformed by invention, deletion of competitions in the race, the annually changing route and format, improvements of the cycle, and new technology. There has been a constant battle between conservative and progressive forces. A telling example is the introduction of the derailleur gear invented in the 1890s, which makes it possible for riders to move the chain from one chain drive to the next. Henri Desgrange forbade the use of that gear until he resigned as Tour de France director in 1936, arguing that if the riders were allowed to use that device it would be the same as allowing them to change the cycle. The difference between riding in flat terrain and in the mountains made the fixed gear inconvenient, so in 1911 a couple of riders used an alternative solution. They mounted a big chain drive on the one side of the wheel and a small chain drive on the other side. When they arrived at the foot of the mountain, the riders jumped off the bike and turned the wheel around. This found Desgrange accepting because in his view the essence of the Tour was a man working his way on his own with his cycle and this stricture was not violated by turning the wheel around.

Desgrange’s rigidity in this matter was underlined in 1913 when the leading rider, Eugene Christophe, broke the front fork of his cycle on a downhill run. Since it was against the rules to receive help of any kind, he put the cycle on his shoulders and ran 10 kilometers to the nearest blacksmith. Here he made himself a new front fork out of a piece of iron, whereupon he continued in order to finish the race, only to be informed that he had incurred a time penalty due to the fact that a boy had given him a hand with the bellows.

Today this has changed completely. Modern riders are getting all sorts of support on the road. In case of a puncture, they get a new wheel from their service car. Food bags are provided in special food zones and if they need water or energy bars they can get those from the service car as well. This, however, has not made conflicts between conservatives and liberals obsolete.

The most recent conflict in this respect occurred in the Tour of 2010 when the organizers decided that at certain stages radio contact to the riders was banned, which made it more difficult for the sports directors to make tactical decisions for the riders on the road. The sports directors protested, arguing that it reduced the safety of their riders insofar as they could not inform them about crashes and other dangers ahead of them. Conflicts of all sorts are also part of the Tour de France’s history and enhance its popularity.

Verner Møller

Further Reading

Tretiak, Vladislav (1952–)

Vladislav Tretiak, born April 25, 1952, in Dmitrovo, Russia, is a former Russian ice hockey player recognized as one of the greatest goaltenders in the history of the game. Tretiak’s rise to international stardom was paved by his stellar performance at the 1972 Summit on Ice Series between Canada’s NHL stars and the USSR, when he helped the Soviet Nationals surprise the ice hockey world, en route to a narrow loss to Team Canada, which in his own words meant that “the myth of Canadian invincibility” was ultimately destroyed. Tretiak went on to star for the national squad, backstopping them to two Olympic gold medals (1976 and 1984) as well as one Canada Cup victory (1981). During his 15 years with the Nationals, he also won 10 world championships and assembled an unprecedented 1.79 goals-against average in 98 international games. In addition, Tretiak won 13 Soviet National League titles while capturing the national most valuable player (MVP) honors five times, and winning the coveted Golden Stick as the outstanding player in Europe 1981–1983. Tretiak was drafted by the Montreal Ca-
nadiens in 1983 (143rd overall) after the Soviet authorities blocked his move to the NHL.

Tretiak retired in 1984. In 1989, he was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame as the first Soviet-trained player to be so honored. In 2008, Tretiak was voted to the International Ice Hockey Federation's (IIHF) Centennial All-Star Team. Since retirement he has worked as a goaltending consultant, as well as the head of the Russian Ice Hockey Federation. Tretiak has also moved into politics, having been elected to the Duma in 2003. In 2008, Tretiak became a leading figure in the formation of the Kontinental Hockey League (KHL), a Russian professional ice hockey league that is heavily capitalized and hopes to challenge the NHL for the best European players.

Tobias Stark

Further Reading

Turnen

See Gymnastics, German (Turnen)

Union of European Football Associations

The Union des Associations Européennes de Football (Union of European Football Associations, UEFA) is the administrative and controlling organization for European association football. Apart from a few national leagues, the UEFA body represents national and club competitions, and controls monetary transactions and media rights across the strongest part of the entire Fédération Internationale de Football Association (International Federation of Football Associations, FIFA) confederation. The UEFA was founded on June 15, 1954, in Basel, Switzerland, following debates and concerns about the unification of domestic football in France, Italy, and Belgium. Until 1959, the headquarters were located in Paris but moved to Bern in 1959. Since 1995 it has resided in Nyon, Switzerland. Initially it controlled 25 national associations; today there are 53 national football associations affiliated with the UEFA, thus making it the largest of the six continental federations of FIFA. The No. 1 spot applies to soccer results as well: At the time of writing, the top 3 as well as another 9 of the top 20 teams in the FIFA world rankings are members of the UEFA. The current UEFA president is former French soccer star Michel Platini. The UEFA runs a number of international and association competitions with a high media profile and vast income.

Despite its professional interests, the UEFA's external face has always been closely linked to the more democratic and charitable aspects of football. According to the UEFA's official website, the guiding principle of the initiators in the early 1950s was the fostering and development of unity and solidarity in the European soccer community. Now, over 50 years later, the UEFA's mission remains very much the same. In recent years, however, a number of significant clashes with the European Commission (the most famous case being the Bosman ruling) and the lobby organization of European association football clubs that existed between 2000 and 2008, known as the G-14, have taken place. Among the disputes is the claim made by G-14 that national associations should pay players’ wages while they are on international duty and provide compensation in the case of injuries.

The main venue for men’s national teams is the UEFA European Football Championship. The first finals were held in 1960, then under the name of the European Nations Cup. In 1964, however, the tournament changed its name to its current title. In addition, the UEFA facilitates national competitions at under-21, under-19, and under-17 levels. As regards association football, the UEFA is the host of the Champions League, first held in 1955, and previously known as the European Champion Clubs Cup (or just European Cup) until 1992, and the UEFA Europa League, formerly the UEFA Cup, the latter often referred to as the
Sports around the World

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