

April 2001

Lance Armstrong Transcript

Did you ever see anything in Triathlon that made you look askance?

As a 15-year-old, no. It is difficult to remember the first time you would hear 'cheater, or performance-enhancing stuff' but certainly when I was a 15-year-old or 16-year-old kid, that stuff was a different planet. Not even close.

Even when I moved into cycling, nothing. When I came into cycling I was still very much a triathlete, in 1989 I was racing bikes and went to Moscow. I did some domestic racing but in my mind I had not crossed over, I had not committed to being a cyclist yet. I was doing runs in Moscow, we would go out on a training ride with the team, Chann McRae and myself would go out on a training ride after that. In these crazy slums in the backwoods of Moscow.

Q: This [cycling] was a sport with a sub-culture of doping. There must have been a time when you started to become aware of the possibility?

A: Certainly Tommy Simpson and stories, ~~that was not a positive test~~ that was a failure of a rider in. . . But I didn't know the history of the sport, I sort of got knocked around for that, who won the World Championships in 1981, I mean hell I don't know. I mean that was kind of the thing, there was this young American kid that came from a background with no cycling, doesn't know anything about our sport, hardly knows who Eddy Merckx is. Over time I've gotten educated and gotten to know these champions, Hinault and LeMond and Merckx and people like that, and Roche and Kelly and on and on. So I've become educated but when I came in at that time I had no clue.

And I don't know that, if you're asking when was the first day that I realised that perhaps this exists in our sport, I don't know the answer because at Motorola, look at, there are things, as you've just started the conversation, you're a sceptic of the sport, but I think that's a short-sighted answer. There are programmes in this sport

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A: [Nods his head]

Q: Even though you would have known he was a rider who was on Ferrari's books. I mean that was printed in loads of newspapers.

A: Again, David, you keep coming with all these side stories, I can only comment on Lance Armstrong. I don't want to speak for others, I don't dig in people's... I don't meddle in people's business.

Q: This is your best friend Lance?

A: But I don't meddle in their business, in their issues.

Q: A guy who is your best mate?

A: In an indirect, roundabout way, you are trying to implicate our sport again.

Q: Not implicate your sport, just trying to see if your best friend is linked with a doping investigation, I would have thought it natural that you would say 'Kevin, what's this about? Did you go to Ferrari? Is this being made up, did he put your name in his files when you never visited?' You never discussed it, ever?

A: No.

Q: Would it shock you to realise that there are Ferrari files on Kevin that indicate he was using EPO?

A: I wouldn't believe that.

Q: Even if you saw the files.

A: I wouldn't believe that.

Q: You say all the time 'where is the proof?' There are files that I have seen, that I have, where Kevin's haematocrit level is listed for July 1998 at 49.9%, the previous December it is listed at 41.2%.

Most medical people say, an almost 9% per cent difference in an haematocrit level in a six-month period is highly unusual.

A: ~~I haven't seen the files. I don't know.~~

Q: And you never asked Kevin how come he was listed in the Ferrari files. Did you ever visit Michel Ferrari?

A: I did know Michel Ferrari.

Q: How did you get to know him?

A: In cycling everybody . . . when you go to races, you see people. There's trainers, doctors, I know every team's doctor. It's a small community.

Q: ~~Did you ever visit him?~~

A: ~~Have I been tested by him, gone and been there and consulted on certain things? Perhaps.~~

Q: You did? Yeah. And now that you know of the investigation into Michel Ferrari and the recommendation is that it go to trial and he's going to be tried for criminal conspiracy?

A: I think the prosecutors and judges should pursue everybody, regardless of who it is. It is their job to do that. If it is a criminal investigation, if it is a sporting investigation, they should pursue that.

Q: What could Michel Ferrari do for you?

A: I am obviously very different from you David. I don't look at everything through the eyes of a cynic and somebody who says everyone is doped and therefore dope is the only way. I don't look at it like that. I think, excuse me I don't think, I know there are clean riders in there, there are clean elements to sport and there is training and there is physiology and there is motivation and

commitment. I know there are those things. And so if you consult on training, if you consult on race . . . there are many, many people that I would love to talk to and I do talk to, but it has absolutely nothing to do with doping. And, I have the proof of it. And I am not stupid, I wouldn't do that to myself. I've been through hell, I am not going to risk my life again, I don't want to go to that edge again.

Q: But just on Michel Ferrari, I am interested in this, because from what I've seen I couldn't see what he brought to the party for a long time and then he's been investigated for treating lots of bike riders with EPO and he's got a really big case to answer.

A: Perfect, that's where they should end up.

Q: But what did he do for you? You're saying your reason for going to him had nothing to do with EPO, so what did he do for you?

A: You can go to people and consult about training, I know you find that hard to believe.

Q: No, no, there are trainers and so he was a really good trainer?

A: Regardless of what goes on, I think that these guys that are under a lot of pressure, guys like [Francesco] Conconi, all of those guys: Gecchini, Ferrari, these Italian guys, they are fantastic minds, they are great trainers. They know about physiology. It is not about doping.

Q: Conconi wasn't about doping?

A: I don't know really. I have never seen Conconi, I only know what I read on the internet. All of these things are going to court, these things will be tried out in a court of law and there will be witnesses and there will be evidence and there will be testimonies and then we'll see.

Q: Conconi, you may be aware or may not, he was being funded by the IOC to find a test for EPO, and the people he was