



Matters of Principal

"Cycling for everyone has more defeat than victory, even for the great Eddy Merckx who won over 400 races, more pain than wellness, more effort than glory, but all of that combined makes cycling so fascinating. The public wants to see the hell before heaven: the suffering before the win. You need to stay dedicated to your dream. The real cyclist is a person who after a bad race on Sunday wakes up on Monday and is ready to go out on the bike to train to get better."

- Rubens Bertogliati, former pro cyclist

Coming from a sporting background, I spend an enormous amount of my free time relaxing watching live sports, reading sports biographies and watching sports-based documentaries. Currently one of my favourite sporting events is taking place – the Tour de France. One of my bucket list items is to spend a week in France following the tour through the Alps (not saying I'll ride any of those mountains but I'll certainly be on the slopes waving my South African flag cheering the athletes on!)

I marvel at the power, strength and endurance required to get to the pinnacle of this demanding endurance sport. I watch in awe as the leading sprinters accelerate their bikes to 70 kph plus on an uphill gradient into the wind as they race for a stage win. One has to admire the commitment displayed by these athletes. It makes me proud as a South African to follow the progress of the South African sponsored team, NTT, and in particular, to look out for our home grown talent Louis Meinjties, Daryl Impey and Ryan Gibbons.

As with so many things, there is a sinister side to this sport too. Years ago, I read a book by Tyler Hamilton (pro racer and ex-team mate of Lance Armstrong) called "The Secret Race". It blew my mind. Recently, I watch the two-part series on DSTV called "Lance" – an eye opener into the dark underworld of cycling. In the late 2000s, I was Lance Armstrong's greatest fan. Here was a man who beat cancer, came back to defy all odds and win the greatest cycle race in the

world seven times and - in doing so - become the global icon for the fight against cancer. What was there not to admire? As we all know, that came crashing down in a pile of lies, deceit and dishonesty. Armstrong was a drug cheat. The only extenuating factor was that he was simply the best cheat in a sport that required/requires you to cheat in order to win. His actions called us to question the integrity of the entire sport.

You may wonder why I'm prattling on about cycling, but I think it illustrates so many valuable life lessons that we can grow from. First and foremost, if you want to succeed there are no short cuts: hard work and sacrifice is what it takes to get to the top. Watching sprinters, climbers, domestiques and general classification riders selflessly work together (and often at great personal expense) to ensure that one of their teammates takes the individual glory, that comes with a Tour stage win, is a priceless lesson in the importance of teamwork. However, the greatest lesson must come from the Lance Armstrong saga. Honesty and integrity have to be the cornerstone of how we live our lives because smokescreens, lies and living a double existence can only last for so long. At the end of all of this, we will be remembered for how we conduct ourselves, how we treat people and how trustworthy we are. Armstrong's actions have left a stain on the sport of cycling that to this day affects the current professionals. I for one find myself asking the question ... are they riding clean? The actions and behaviour of some of the top athletes in the world driven by Armstrong have made an indelible mark on our minds.

Watching the three South African pro cyclists powering their way around France with the best bike riders in the world tells me that anything is possible. What is there stopping a young Stanfordian, educated in the Northern Drakensberg mountains of Magoebaskloof, from being the next great South African cyclist plying his trade in the Tour de France? Why shouldn't we dream big? If Kenya can produce a 4-time tour winner in Chris Froome, why can't we?

Last but not least, as I watch the Tour wind its way through the most spectacular countryside, the footage serves as a reminder of how great our Creator is and what an unbelievably beautiful world we live in.

God Bless

GOLD once again



Stanford Lake College was awarded a Golden Arrow Award by PMR.africa last week following the Limpopo Provincial Business Excellence Survey.



BACK IN THE SADDLE

Ruben and two of his horses participated in the Blouberg Classic graded show in Vivo over the past weekend - their first graded show since the lockdown started. The weather was challenging, as always in Vivo, as they experienced four seasons in one day!

TI Quinta and Ruben jumped three classes at 1.20m high. At this show, the juniors and adults competed in the same class. In two of the three classes they came in second place!

Young Thembinkosi is being trained by Ruben, so he jumped in the 70 cm training show class. They had a beautiful clear round - great for the 3,5 yr old thoroughbred.

SNAP SHOT

Stanford Lake College

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Why ADVENTURE?

"Stop staring at the mountains. Climb them instead! Yes, it's a harder process but it will lead you to a better view!"

- Anonymous

We all have experienced something hard in our lives and something that has put us outside our comfort zones – like this Corona virus. All of us need to get a better view and what better way than to do it in the outdoors? This virus has made it more important than ever to get out in the open air. Like everything this year, change and challenges are a given (like the weather on the mountain this week), but who said you cannot have fun while experiencing those?



Happy kayakers.

We are continuing with the dad lessons AND having fun at the same time. The climbing tower is seeing some action and a few loud shrills are heard when the hands are slipping off grips – and then the laughter follows! We have also decided to go ahead with our last two expeditions of the year, but this time with a twist. The Grade 9s will do a shorter, but fun filled, local expedition in October, called the 'Wolkberg Dash'. The Grade 8s will do a new, shorter version of the 'Iron Crown Escapade' in November. Both information letters have been uploaded onto our new school website, please have a look.



The Treks are also a great challenge for staff

How can we go on expedition but still keep social distancing? Smaller groups will make this work and also sleeping in your own tent – no sharing. We appeal to the Stanford community for assistance please! If you have a hiking tent lying at home and it is not going on an expedition this year – please lend it to the dad Centre for these 2 expeditions. We are short of about 15 tents to assist our students! We will log it in and make a note of the state of the tent. The students that need tents will then sign it out from us. We will collect it at the end of the expeditions. Inspect them and then return to their owners.



The dad classes and expeditions are an integral part of life at Stanford. The programme is designed to get us (all of us) outside our comfort zones but still have fun while we do it! We learn very important life lessons in these times and they will stand us in good stead later in life when we face other challenges (like Corona). So what are we waiting for? Let's go climb that mountain.

During the week of 18 - 20 August, Mr Fullard was on a training and assessment course for his Trip Leader qualification for River Guiding. This took place near Clarens in the Free State on the Ash River, as it is the only proper flowing river this time of the year outside of the Cape. This is because the Ash River is part of the water system that provides water for Johannesburg from the Lesotho Highland Water Project. The course spanned over three days, consisting of theory work in the early mornings and evenings, and mostly practical work and exercises during the day. With the cold-front that moved in over the area, the temperatures dropped below zero and this, combined with the very cold water, made for a steep learning curve and a very icy experience. The course covered concepts like trip planning, client management, laws and legal proceedings around tourism, river safety and leadership, practical guiding and specialised rescue techniques and principals.

Mr Fullard said it was a busy, but very good three days on the river with lots to learn and practise. He successfully completed the practical assessment and theory exam during these three days. With only a logbook and trip-project left to do, he is steps away from his Trip Leader qualification. We are looking forward to many more safe trips down the river.

