



JIM C'S QUIZ OF THE WEEK MONDAY - 7/23/2007

The 94th Tour de France (July 7 to July 29, 2007) started, believe or not, in London.

HOW DID THE TERM “*TOUR DE FRANCE*” ORIGINATE?

Tour de France (aka: the Tour) is the most prestigious, challenging professional cycling competition in the world. Less than one third of the starting competitors actually complete the 3,600 km race.

Origin: A feud erupted between two French sports newspapers in 1903 when *Le Vélo* won a plagiarism suit against *L'Auto-vélo*, who was forced to become simply *L'Auto*. Worried that a name change would kill the newspaper, *L'Auto*'s editor decided a publicity stunt was required and “the greatest cycling trial in the world” was born.

When the winner Maurice Garin (the 'Chimney Sweep') entered Paris to a crowd of 20,000 paying spectators, *L'Auto* sold 130,000 special edition copies, 100,000 more than normal circulation had been six months earlier. The race was a huge success, and the tidal wave of support for the race led to the closing of *Le Vélo* in 1904.

The idea of the yellow jersey for the race leader was invented in 1919 to ensure that the spectators lining the route would be able to clearly see who was winning. Choosing the color was easy - *L'Auto* was printed on yellow paper; thus, the “maillot jaune” was born.

Conventional Wisdom: Tour de France = The Elite Race in Cycling

Moment of Zen: Life is surely more than just a cycle