

2009 RIDE CALENDAR

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LE TOUR DE FRANCE. PHOTOS BY JAMES STARTT

SHOOTING LE TOUR



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James Startt captured the action and emotion of the 95th Tour de France in sensational style. Look back at the 2008 race with RIDE Media's first calendar. Folding out from a large format (420mm wide x 300mm high) it features some spectacular shots of the world's greatest annual sporting event, its stars and the scenery. Make sure you don't miss this limited edition portfolio of beautiful images. Order yours now.

ride CYCLING REVIEW



• **JANUARY.** "STAGE ONE. ALEJANDRO VALVERDE WAS FLYING! I'll never forget the way he came into view on the climb outside of Plumelec. I was trying to focus on the one rider in the pack who would edge ahead. The way a telephoto lens compacts depth of field can make that hard sometimes. Not this day. Alejandro just flew around everybody, making it easy."

"When shooting a sprint you don't have a lot of options. All photographers are placed together so you have to rely on little things to make a difference, like tilting the frame to include certain elements in the background. I love the big screen... it really adds to a sense of drama, I think."

• **FEBRUARY.** "THE FINAL TIME TRIAL PROVED TO BE HARDER to shoot than expected. I drove it in the morning to find good spots but later in the day so many were facing the sun. I wanted a corner where the riders would blast by real close."

"Finally, on one of the last turns, I found what I was looking for... I love this one of Andy Schleck. He is just so lean after three weeks of racing but in the way his legs bend here, you can see the fluidity of his pedal stroke that makes him one of the most elegant riders today."

• **MARCH.** "A QUIET DAY IN THE TOUR AFTER THE ALPS. Two riders well down in the rankings escape. For each a chance to transform three weeks of mediocrity into success. Only one gets that honour and it goes to Marcus Burghardt who outsprinted Carlos Barredo after spending the day together."

"On the line Barredo slammed his hand on the handlebars in frustration. But instantly he came up to Burghardt and the two clasped hands in solidarity for a job well done."

• **APRIL.** "YEARS AGO WHEN I WAS GETTING INTO CYCLING I spent a spring in St-Malo and, borrowing an old five-speed Peugeot, pedalled to Dinan, a magnificent town framed by medieval walls. It was a picture I could not bypass."

"Arriving well before the riders, I pursued several options in an effort to gain the best perspective. I knocked on doors, climbed onto balconies... eventually it was from atop a stone pillar that I found my spot. I just had to wait and click."

• **MAY.** "ALTHOUGH NEITHER OF THE SCHLECK BROTHERS finished on the podium in Paris, they animated much of the Tour; Frank wore the yellow jersey and Andy won the white jersey awarded to the best young rider. On the Bonette Pass, the highest road in Europe, they appeared in control."

"A day later they would lose the overall lead to team-mate Carlos Sastre who attacked and won on the Alpe d'Huez."

• **JUNE.** "WHEN I DISCOVERED THAT THE TOUR WOULD CLIMB the Bonette Pass, I knew it was going to be a highlight of this year's race. In my 20 years on the race we had only climbed it once before, back in 1993."

"I remember the breathtaking loop at the top where riders climbing can actually see others descending. How cruel, I thought... but what a great picture!"

"Positioning myself on the ridge that provided a view of both roads I waited for the perfect shot, one with a peloton climbing while another descended. It never happened. That's photography. But with a crowd on one side while riders stream down the other, one still gets a sense of the spectacular."

• **JULY.** "AFTER TAKING THE YELLOW JERSEY AT HAUTACAM, Cadel Evans led the race for nearly a week. Everyone knew that holding onto the jersey in the Alps would be difficult."

"Attacks started early on the climb to Prato Nevoso in Italy and it was soon evident Evans would spend the week in the Alps very much alone as his team could offer little support. Finally he relinquished his yellow jersey to Frank Schleck."

• **AUGUST.** "CHRISTIAN VANDE VELDE HAD A GREAT TOUR! If it wasn't for one bad moment on the Bonette Pass, he would likely have finished on the podium. The Alpe d'Huez is never an easy climb to cover; the hardest section is at the bottom and there are so many barriers in the final kilometres."

"This year I waited at the finish and was not disappointed. Emotions run high as the riders finish in basically an uphill sprint. Here Vande Velde struggles to recuperate. He is on the verge of collapse. But it makes for a great picture..."

• **SEPTEMBER.** "OSCAR FREIRE, WEARING THE GREEN JERSEY, finally got his way, winning the stage into Digne les Bains. He was the only sprinter able to stay in the lead bunch as it splintered apart over the final climbs. Only Colombian rider Leonardo Duque could come close. This gesture, caught just after the line, demonstrates how the Cofidis recruit was pleased simply to rub elbows with a rider of Freire's stature."

• **OCTOBER.** "WHILE EVANS WAS FORCED TO WATCH FRANK Schleck on the climb to Prato Nevoso, Carlos Sastre made his first significant dent in the overall standings with a strong attack that allowed him to close in on the Australian leader."

"This shot pleased me most on the day. I thought it would serve me little as, along with many, I still didn't see Sastre as the eventual Tour champion. He proved me wrong..."

• **NOVEMBER.** "MAGISTRAL. HOW ELSE CAN YOU DESCRIBE Mark Cavendish's sudden rise. He makes sprinting look easy. And he just seemed to get better and more confident as the race went on. Here he easily had time to sit up and hold up three fingers as he took his third stage win. Pure class!"

"A tilt of the lens, or the focal distance chosen, can make a difference in sprint finishes... And Cav has character!"

• **DECEMBER.** "THIS IS MY BEST ACTION SHOT OF THE TOUR, hence a fitting final image. Everything came together: the right amount of blur, movement. Combined with the spontaneous gestures of the fans, the shot is packed with mood."

"Cadel Evans, of course, helps. Scarred and bandaged from his crash the previous day, he epitomizes gutsy in this shot. Thanks Cadel, for helping out here."

■ JAMES STARTT