

Fifty years of *passion*, fifty years of Friendship

Our Club, dear friends, has exercised its guardianship of mountain cycling for half a century. We can feel proud of that fact, but we must continue to set an example.

Fifty years is a good age for any association. It's a sign of vitality and of staying power, and also of continuing interest and of success.

If one autumn morning in 1969, climbing with four friends that superb Col Luitel, I had the simple idea to bring together cycloclimbers in an association, it was above all for you, my dear friends, the builders and the maintainers of the workings and good health of our Club.

Together, we have created a tool that all mountain cyclists can use, but in addition, we have met, and talked, and enjoyed each other's company.

During these last fifty years, nothing but good company, discoveries and happiness! Even if, sometimes, a stone has caused some of us to stumble or stray from the road ahead, the most important thing has always remained.

To illustrate, not without some emotion, these 50 years of the Club, I have chosen this moving testimony, one of the many hundreds of messages I have received. It comes from a letter from a lady of Savoie :

'...my doctor diagnosed breast cancer. After an operation and a fairly taxing treatment, I emerged tired, but glad to have come through it. But soon I suffered a relapse. Another operation on the other breast, and a very long course of treatment. At the end the surgeon told me he could do no more for me, and that I should try to exercise. Having leafed through your Club's revue at a friend's house...I decided. I bought a bike, and started to work at climbing 100 cols. Today I have beaten my illness and I have just climbed my 100th col - and it is the most beautiful day of my life - thank you!

That is also the Club des Cent Cols.

I hope our Club will keep intact its guiding principles. Those which, during 50 years, have made it grow and have given it an international fame. It is the same spirit that will inspire us in the future, as it has done in the past, and it is the soul of our Club des Cent Cols.

The greatest pleasure in our Club is the opportunity to ride together and the joy that brings. It's the affection between friends as passionate as ourselves, and it is the realisation of a dream. It is this friendship, this happiness, that I wish for all of you.

Jean Perdoux
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