



Directed by: Alex Holmes

Produced by: Sam Brayshaw, James Erskine, Victoria Gregory

Cast: Greg LeMond, Kathy LeMond, Pedro Delgado, Laurent Fignon, Cyrille Guimard

U.S. Release Date: June 23, 2023

Rating: PG-13

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Hashtag: #TheLastRider

Genre: Documentary

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<https://roadsideattractionspublicity.com/filmography/thelastrider/>

Synopsis

The heroic true story of American cyclist Greg LeMond, considered to be one of the greatest cyclists of all time, who defied the odds for one of the most triumphant comeback stories in sporting history.

The first, and only, American to win the Tour de France, LeMond came back from the brink of death to beat his famed rivals in the historic and nail-biting race at the 1989 Tour de France.

Directed by Alex Holmes and featuring exclusive interviews with LeMond and his wife Kathy as well as never before seen footage, *The Last Rider* is an exhilarating portrait of one of the greatest athletes of our time.

Story

In 1986, Greg LeMond stood on top of the podium in front of the Champs Elysees as the first-ever American winner of the Tour de France. He had realized his lifelong dream and he should have been elated, but he was in bits.

It had been a hard-won victory. Betrayed by his mentor, Bernard Hinault, and his team, Greg had secured his win without support. But the damage of the betrayal went further than that. It had triggered for Greg a deeper trauma – memories of childhood sexual abuse by a family friend. He had used cycling to bury those memories, but as he stood on the podium all he could think was that now he was famous, would his abuser come forward and expose Greg's coveted secret?

For Greg what should have been a moment of triumph was the start of a slide into spiraling depression. Just months after his Tour victory, Greg was accidentally shot by his brother-in-law in a horrific hunting accident. Having lost half his blood volume and with shotgun pellets embedded in almost every major organ Greg's life was hanging by a thread.

The Last Rider is the story of how Greg came back from the precipice of death to reclaim his dream. It examines what it takes to recover, physically, psychologically, and emotionally to face the biggest challenge of your life. The film explores how the strength he found in his family, especially in his relationship with Kathy, his childhood sweetheart who became his wife, enabled him to accomplish one of the greatest comebacks in sporting history.

Comeback

1989, just two years after Greg was shot, he is once again on the starting line of the Tour de France. The world's media is sympathetic and impressed that he has made it this far, but no team will take him until a wild card entry pick gives him a spot. However, no rider or commentator imagines he will be able to complete the race. Greg and Kathy know differently.

Greg knows he was facing some intensely stiff competition: Laurent Fignon, a precociously talented two-time winner of the Tour. An irascible and occasionally arrogant character, Fignon has never received the public recognition he felt a French champion of the nation's greatest race deserved. He's in great form having just won the Giro D'Italia (in which Greg finished a poor 86th) and is convinced a third victory will ensure his place in the pantheon of the great athletes. This year's favorite however is Spanish rider Pedro Delgado, winner in 1988. Young and spirited, Delgado appears invincible in the mountains and that's where this year's race is likely to be decided.

What transpires over the next three weeks turns out to be the most ferocious, the most exciting and the most dramatic in the history of the sport.

Unexpectedly and unpredictably, Greg is at the lead, challenging Fignon and Delgado in a bitter battle for the coveted yellow jersey.

Delgado's hubris causes him to stumble at the peak of his career and leaves him battling every peddle stroke to regain his self-esteem and destroying himself in the process.

Fignon's flamboyant and destructive ego gets the better of him as he pulls Greg into a bitter personal battle that threatens to pull the race apart and speaks to his own overwhelming insecurity.

And Greg, the victim of childhood sexual abuse who rides to expunge the memory of that abuse from his mind, taps heroic reserves of resilience and determination.

The battle between the three riders is an edge-of-your-seat portrait of will and without doubt one of the most compelling struggles not just in cycling but in all of sport.

In the final stages, Fignon has Greg and Delgado beaten through the mountains and is confident he has done enough to take the spoils only for Greg to rise from the ashes on the very last stage, and in a feat that nobody thought possible, steal victory from his rivals.

Greg's ride on the final day's time trial remains the single greatest moment of cycling in the sport's history. He manages to ride from 50 seconds behind Fignon, regain that time, and beat the Frenchman by a further 8 seconds on the Champs-Elysees and ride into Paris as the winner. Nobody has ever seen anything like it. It's unlikely they ever will again.

As his victory is confirmed Greg is surrounded by people on the streets of Paris, but there is only one person he goes to find – Kathy. He pulls her into an embrace that contains within it a lifetime's worth of pain and adversity, only she knows what he has really been through and only he knows how much he owes her.

The American's dramatic win cements him as the greatest rider of his generation but also elevates the sport in the US which historically was largely dominated by the European market since its inception. The increased interest would lead to huge sponsorship deals for teams, bigger salaries for riders, corruption, and drug-enhancing performance.

But the tour will always have Greg LeMond and the two great men who drove him to an indelible place at the head of the sport.

The Making of The Last Rider

LeMond's story has been referred to as "one of the greatest sports stories never told." Director Alex Holmes first met Greg and Kathy LeMond when making *Stop at Nothing*, a film about disgraced cyclist Lance Armstrong. "It was a very dark story about a man who set out to destroy anyone who questioned his reputation, but it also shone a light on how honesty and integrity had once had a place in a sport that had become mired in controversy, and Greg and Kathy were emblematic of that," noted Holmes. Their love and support for each other was a beacon of hope and Holmes felt inclined to make a film that stood as an antidote to the era of doping and EPO, which had infected the sport.

The LeMonds had been approached before about Greg's life story, but having seen *Stop at Nothing*, they knew Holmes had the integrity to entrust the story with him. Holmes' previous film *Maiden*, about the first all-female crew to enter the Whitbread Around the World Challenge, found sports to be a great prism through which to examine human nature and human relationships. The indelible challenge to succeed and break barriers brings out the best and occasionally the worst in us. "Not all of us are athletes but we can all relate to the pursuit of a dream, and that occasionally obsessive drive that means we perform beyond even that that we might expect of ourselves." commented Holmes.

The Tour's three-week competition is one of the most extreme professional goals. Riders need to be in peak condition daily; LeMond overcame every setback he was faced with and fully committed to whatever it took to get there, honestly.

In the opening of the film LeMond says: "All people see is the success. But there's a moment you hit breaking point". The film reflects that all of us will hit a breaking point at some point in our lives - maybe more than one - and what matters is how we respond to that. LeMond's story shows us that, no matter how broken we are, we can still come back and find success.

The Last Rider presents an intimate portrait of resilience, self-belief, overcoming trauma, and the importance of love and family. Kathy LeMond noted "You don't need to be a fan of cycling; *The Last Rider* is a universal story of hope and human triumph."

About the filmmakers

Alex Holmes (Director)

Alex is a BAFTA-winning filmmaker with extensive experience in producing, directing, and writing acclaimed documentaries and dramas.

He is currently developing a narrative version of *Maiden*, the acclaimed documentary about the first all-women crew to take part in the Round the World Yacht Race, with Margot Robbie's Lucky Chap Entertainment and producers Felix Culpa. Holmes has produced a documentary film *Flight Of Bryan* about the first and only successful attempt at human-powered flight, and executive produced a film *Copa '71* about the 1971 Women's Soccer World Cup, the final of which drew the biggest audience for a women's sporting event but was subsequently written out of history by footballing authorities. He is scheduled to start shooting the second season of a drama *The Rig* for Amazon, which debuted January 2023

James Erskine (Producer)

Co-founder of New Black Films, James Erskine is an Emmy-nominated filmmaker whose theatrical documentaries include the IDA-nominated *Billie* the Indian Box office smash *Sachin: A Billion Dreams*, and the acclaimed *Pantani: Accidental Death of a Cyclist* as well as the Humanitas Prize-winning Amazon Originals series "This is Football" and Netflix Originals "Skandal: Bringing down Wirecard". His work has been released theatrically in over 50 countries.

Victoria Gregory (Producer)

Victoria is a highly established film producer with extensive experience in award-winning feature documentaries. Her work includes the Oscar-winning *Man On Wire* and the BAFTA-winning *Senna*. With a passion for telling true stories that will inspire and captivate an audience Victoria currently produces across all New Black Films projects including acclaimed films such as *The Battle of the Sexes*, the Oscar short-listed *Maiden*, *Billie* and her current project *Copa 71*.

Sam Brayshaw (Producer)

Sam has a background in both documentary and drama, working on various shows including the feature film *Stop at Nothing: The Lance Armstrong Story*, Channel 4's RTS-winning political drama "Coalition" and BBC 2's "Paula" in 2017. In 2018, Brayshaw associate produced documentaries *Hunting the KGB Killers* and *Maiden*, before producing *The Last Rider* this year.

END CREDITS

MRC STUDIOS PRESENTS

A NEW BLACK FILMS PRODUCTION

DIRECTED BY ALEX HOLMES

PRODUCED BY
JAMES ERSKINE
VICTORIA GREGORY
SAM BRAYSHAW

MUSIC BY SAMUEL SIM

THE LAST RIDER

Contributors
GREG LEMON
KATHY LEMON
CYRILLE GUIMARD
PEDRO DELGADO

Directors of Photography
RYAN EARL PARKER
TRISTAN CHENAIS
GUISEPPE TRUPPI

Research Consultant
MATT RENDELL

Production Assistants
THASHMIM MIAH
LILLIE TOON

Assistant Editor
ARTURO M. ANTOLIN

Line Producer (France)
LAURA BALDUINI

Line Producer (Spain)
PABLO BARRIENTOS

Camera Assistants
ENRIQUE FERNANDEZ (Spain)
BRIENNA TORRES (USA)

Sound Recordists
SERGIO FERNANDEZ
GREGORY GREY
MARTIN LANOT

Translators
PABLO GARCIA
YANN MORRISON

Archive Research
CONNOR REID
LILIANE ZEKRI

Subtitles
VOICEBOX

Facilities
LENS RENTALS
SALON
SHIFT 4
STANLEYS

FOR NEW BLACK FILMS LIMITED

Legal Services
CLAIRE WARNES

Production Accountants
CLARE BURGESS

Production Insurance
JAMES FOX
NIKKI THORNHILL
GALLAGHER ENTERTAINMENT

Banking
KARL DYE
COUTTS AND CO

Payroll Services
TC GROUP

Digital Cinema Mastering
ROUNDTABLE POST PRODUCTION

Supervising Digital Colourist

JACK JONES
Online Editors
ANDRÉS DEL CAÑO

Colour Assist
FRANCESCA BURTON

Director of Operations
BEN COULSON

Post Production Manager
ALICE BOREHAM

Audio Post Production by
GEORGE FOULGHAM SOUNDSCAPES LTD

Sound Re-Recording Mixer
GEORGE FOULGHAM

Assistant Re-Recording Mixer
MILES SULLIVAN

Sound Effects Editor
SIMON EPSTEIN

Dialogue Editor
PHILIP MOROZ

Audio Post Production Supervisor
EMMA COMANS

Archive
ABC SPORTS
ASO
CBS NEWS
DEAR PM
DENNIS RETHERS
ESPN
GETTY IMAGES
INA
JB PRODUCTIONS
JORGEN LETH
KINO LIBRARY
MICHAEL AISNER
NOS
POND 5
RTL
SCREEN OCEAN

UCI
VRT
V SQUARED

Stills
AP
GETTY IMAGES
GREG LEMOND
MIROIR DU CYCLISME
OFFSIDE/ L'EQUIPE
STEFANO SIRROTTI

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JAMES GLANDER
DAVID GUTIÉRREZ
BENOIT HEIMERMANN
JONI HENDERSON
SOPHIE HOLMES
JORGEN LETH
KEN MAKOWSKI
THIERRY MARIE
AUSTIN MCCARTHY
CHRIS OPENSHAW
HANNAH PAQUETTE
CHRISTINA RADBURN
RACHEL RAMSAY
JULIAN RODD
KELSEY VAN DEN BERGH
DAVID WESTHEAD
AARON WILLIAMS

Locations
CARS STUDIO (MADRID)
E-STUDIOS (PARIS)
LEMOND BICYCLES (KNOXVILLE)

Additional Music
OLIVER DIPRE

Orchestrator

TRISTAN NOON
Contractor
FAME'S SKOPJE STUDIO ORCHESTRA

Conductor
OLEG KONDRATENKO

Sound recordist
ALEN HADZI STEFANOV

Pro tools operator
TEODORA ARSOVSKA

Stage Managers
LILJA GRKOVSKI
RISTE TRAJKOVSKI

Music Score arranged and produced by

SAMUEL SIM