

Tyler Farrar from Wenatchee.

For those of you who are following the Tour de France, you will recognize the name Tyler Farrar. He is from the town where I live, Wenatchee. The fact that he is not only in the Tour, but also doing well, has really created a buzz of excitement here. The local newspaper, The Wenatchee World, has a daily spot about the race so we can all keep up to date with how Tyler is doing. What we are holding our breath for, is the sprint into Paris. He will be against Mark Cavendish, the English missile, and other sprinters such as Thor Hushov and Alessandro Petacchi. My husband and I are amazingly addicted to the tour; we have it taped, and so, in the evenings, that's what we watch. Sorry kids, no cartoons. Tyler's father lives and works in Wenatchee; he is a surgeon, and is often seen biking in the local parks. Tyler must have been an unusual child for this area of the States. Most boys become deeply involved in baseball, basketball, or football. Now, soccer and hockey are also popular. However, Tyler started competitive biking when he was only thirteen years old. His father said that from then on, he knew that cycling was what he wanted to do. He is still young, only twenty-seven, so he has many years of cycling ahead of him. As far as his training is concerned, he lives in Ghent, in Belgium. His upbringing here in Wenatchee served him well for building strength and stamina for cycling. There are many, ideal roads for cycling in the hills here, as well as trails for mountain biking. I suppose the four very distinct seasons that we have here can also prepare a cyclist for hot and cold extremes while biking. Now that he lives in Ghent, however, he has all-year-long cycling because the climate is much milder, with less extremes. Being a sprinter means that he has explosive power towards the end of the race. He, like the other sprinters, tends to stay anywhere in the peloton until the end, when he makes his way to the front, and suddenly speeds towards the finish line. He has already won a stage in the Tour de France, and also in the Vuelta a Espana, and the Giro d'Italia, and others in less known races, so he has plenty of experience. So, when we spot him in the peloton, on the television screen, we get excited and hope to see a successful performance. Even though Mark Cavendish is one of my favorite cyclists, if Tyler beats him and wins the grand, final stage of the race, Wenatchee should commemorate his achievement with a statue in his honor.

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary and expressions: a spot (on tv, radio, written), to serve ...well, to tend to, to commemorate.

1. She has a spot on prime-time television, talking about the latest movies.
2. These rubber boots have served me well. I've used them for twenty years, and they still have no holes.
3. I tend to get phone calls whenever I am trying to take a nap.
4. The bronze statue was erected in the center of town, to commemorate independence day.

