

Being aware of the potential dangers and problems posed by a loss of control over the technical aspects of cycling, the UCI Management Committee has today, Tuesday 8th October, taken a number of measures here in Lugano.

In doing so, the UCI wishes to recall that the real meaning of cycle sport is to bring riders together to compete on an equal footing and thereby decide which of them is physically the best.

The features which have contributed to the world-wide development and spread of the bicycle are its extraordinary simplicity, cost-effectiveness and ease of use. From a sociological point of view, as a utilitarian and recreational means of transport, the bicycle has given its users a sense of freedom and helped create a movement which has led to the considerable renown and popular success which cycle sport enjoys. The bicycle serves to express the effort of the cyclist, but there is more to it than that. The bicycle is also a historical phenomenon, and it is this history which underpins the whole culture behind the technical object.

If we forget that the technology used is subordinate to the project itself, and not the reverse, we cross the line beyond which technology takes hold of the system and seeks to impose its own logic. That is the situation facing us today. New prototypes can be developed because they do not have to take into account constraints such as safety, a comfortable riding position, accessibility of the controls, manoeuvrability of the machine, etc. The bicycle is losing its "user-friendliness" and distancing itself from a reality which can be grasped and understood. Priority is increasingly given to form. The performance achieved depends more on the form of the man-machine ensemble than the physical qualities of the rider, and this goes against the very meaning of cycle sport.

The many effects of this rush to extremes risk damaging the sport of cycling. These include spiralling costs, unequal access to technology, radical innovations prepared in secret, a *fait accompli* policy, damage to the image of cycle sport and the credibility of performances and the advent of a technocratic form of cycling where power is concentrated in the hands of a few powerful players, to the detriment of the universality of the sport on which its future and continued development depend.