

# THE Hoopla

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## “LOOK AT ME!”

BY ROGER JOYCE/15 JULY 2014

When this year's Tour de France ironically began with three days of cycling in England, idiocy rose to a new level of well...idiocy. Don't take my word for it though, here's how American rider Tejay van Garderen described the new craze that's sweeping Le Tour: "...it's a dangerous mix of vanity and stupidity."

Let me state for the record now that Tejay is not referring to the competitive stunts of his fellow-cyclists to gain the yellow jersey. No, he's talking about those on the side of the course that "...stand in the middle of the road with their back turned whilst 200 cyclists come at them, just to get a selfie."

Get the picture? Well, they do, even if it means that the best cyclists in the world have to swerve to avoid them or - as happened in London - collect one on the way through.

If that weren't baffling enough, there's always someone who wants to raise the bar higher.

At last weekend's running of the bulls in Pamplona (an event worthy of an article on it's own to question: WHY?), a contestant fleeing los toros, slowed down to, guess what? Beg for mercy, apologise for such cruelty? No, he slowed down to pull out his mobile phone and click off a selfie. More fool him though, as the long arm of the Pamplonan Police will soon be fingering his collar, he having apparently run foul of the laws guarding preventing "dangerous behaviour" on the streets of the Spanish city.

"Dangerous behaviour"?! Am I missing something here? This event is about being chased through the narrow streets of a Spanish city by a dozen bulls.

I'm reminded of an episode of Seinfeld in which Jerry said to George Costanza: "If there was a village where all the village idiots lived, you'd be the village idiot of that village."

Now today, maybe not so dangerous, but equally thought-provoking, Japanese performance artist Megumi Igrashi, aka Rokudenashiko (loosely translated as "good-for-nothing girl), has been arrested for emailing data that enabled others to print of pictures of her vagina. She's been taking selfies of herself.

A quick search on the internet, coupling the words "selfie" and "narcissism" yields many a depressing article linking the self-obsession smartphone trend to mental illness, and offers even more deeply disturbing photo's of those who obviously can't get enough of themselves.

When Time Magazine choose their "Person of the Year", in making their selection, they consider this question: "For better or for worse, who has done the most to influence the events of the year?" No doubt, Time's 2014 cover shot will be a selfie.

Another quote comes to mind: "I may not be much, but I'm all I think about". Indeed.