

Statement of Lance Armstrong
April 9, 2001

I am happy to be here today, back in the great city of Paris, home of great food, art and culture and so many wonderful memories for my family. I will be making my statement in both English and French for the benefit of all the French citizens who are interested in what I have to say. I would ask them to understand that my French is far from perfect but I am working on it every day.

As many of you know it has been a trying winter for me and for my United States Postal Service teammates. In November of last year, a formal investigation was launched into our team regarding the alleged use of performance enhancing drugs.

I am very happy to report to you today that we have received confirmation that the results of the testing of our urine samples have proven to be negative. As I, and others, have said all along: I did not use performance-enhancing drugs in winning my two Tours de France and that truth has now been borne out by science. To be clear, we have learned that our urine samples did not contain EPO or any other banned substance, as we knew they would not.

We have learned that there is still work to be done on the testing of our samples and we welcome it. Specifically, we understand the French investigators plan to continue to test our urine samples and they also intend to test our blood samples as well. I welcome the continued testing so that there will be no doubt that neither I, nor any member of my team, did or took anything illegal.

First, I would like to address the issue of the on-going investigation. I must reemphasize that I have, from day one, supported and encouraged this investigation. Any allegation of doping should be studied in detail. I believe that a capable and diligent judge has carried out this investigation and that I have been treated fairly in this process. I have made myself or any member of the US Postal Service Team available to Judge Chateau at any time, in France, to answer any questions she might have. I reaffirm that commitment today. It is my opinion that this process has been carried out with integrity and I am confident that will remain the case as it winds down in the very near future. Also, I would also like to reaffirm that I, and my team, have willingly cooperated in this process and have supported the immediate release of our frozen blood samples from UCI headquarters in Lausanne. Mr. Hein Verbruggen, President of the UCI, reports to me that the transfer is now complete.

Today, I would also like to address the issue of my treatment by the media. Most members of the media have treated me fairly and I am grateful to them. However, many of you have rushed to judgment and concluded that, without banned drugs, my performances are and were simply impossible. Well-known and respected journalists in France and in the United States have defamed me with only my championship performances as evidence. Let me remind you that I didn't just arrive on to the Champs Elysees in 1999 without any prior history of success at the highest levels. In fact, in 1993 I was crowned cycling's youngest-ever World Champion and in 1994 its youngest-ever Tour de France stage winner. Through hard work, determination and persistence, I have succeeded at every increasingly difficult level and winning the Tour was a natural progression of those accomplishments, not an aberration as many of you have said. I am proud of my many accomplishments, but most of all, of my battle over cancer and my return to the sport I love. When I returned, I made a conscious choice to train harder and to focus on stage racing, which I had never done in the past. And, my performance in the 1998 Vuelta inspired me to focus all my energy on one race: the Tour de France, cycling's crown jewel.

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Today, I challenge many of you in the media to reconsider your positions in light of the facts.

I look forward to racing again this week in France and over the next few months I plan to do a few other races here. And, of course, I will be on the start line on July 7th, ready to defend my two Tour titles.

I am happy to take any questions you might have.