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## News for February 13, 2002

*Edited by John Stevenson*

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#### **Simeoni testifies: "Dr Ferrari prescribed EPO"**

Italian rider Filippo Simeoni has admitted to taking EPO and growth hormone under the instruction of Italian sports doctor Michele Ferrari, in the latest stage of the hearings against Ferrari in Bologna, yesterday. Ferrari is accused of sporting fraud and illegally acting as a pharmacist.

Simeoni, who is riding for Mario Cipollini's Acqua e Sapone team this year, said that he started taking drugs in 1993, and in 1996-7 Ferrari prescribed him EPO and human growth hormone. "I started to go to DR Ferrari in November 1996 because I'd heard he was very good, very professional. I went to Ferrara (where Ferrari had his office) and the doctor set me up with a training program, including levels of progression."

Simeoni said he had initially been prescribed EPO, and in March and April of 1997, "we spoke about andriol (testosterone) which I was to use after hard training sessions with the aim of increasing my muscular power."

Simeoni said he obtained the drugs from pharmacies in Switzerland, and his visits to Ferrari were paid for by Carrera, his team at the time. When the team refused to pay for another year, Simeoni said he stopped seeing Ferrari.

The magistrates produced as evidence instructions for the rider, allegedly written by Ferrari, marked with asterisks. The magistrate asked if these asterisks indicated illicit substances.

"They indicated I was to take andriol after long rides, of five or six hours," said Simeoni. "DR Ferrari told me to be careful not to take testosterone too close to competitions to avoid being controlled positive."

"To avoid possible problems, DR Ferrari recommended I use Emagel the morning before controls, and another product to decrease my haematocrit."

After giving evidence, Simeoni said, "I decided to tell the truth to break the 'omerta' in the hope that it can help to fight the problem of doping which involves cycling and sport in general."

"It's difficult to fight doping but to do so we have to improve the controls. It's very expensive and it's not easy but it's the best thing to do. Unfortunately, doping techniques always travel faster than anti-doping tests."

Simeoni told journalists that he had not been subjected to any pressure by his fellow riders after he had made the decision to testify. "I think most of them are on my side because they've all dedicated their lives to cycling and love this sport. It's in their interests that we're protected."

The case continues on February 19 with the testimony of Gianluca Bortolami (Tacconi), originally scheduled to testify yesterday, and others.

#### **Kelly set for comeback?**

*By Gerard Cromwell*

Just when you thought it was safe to take that old dusty bike out of the shed and apply for an Irish third category licence, the competition seems to be hotting up already.

Last night at the launch of Cycling Ireland in Dublin, former world Number One Sean Kelly was asked a seemingly innocuous question by RTE's Jimmy McGee. Did he ever think about racing again? "Well, yes," said the four times Tour De France points jersey winner. "I've often thought about it all right. But then, when you go out with some of the lads who are going to be racing and you get a hammering, you don't be long about changing your mind!"

"So you're not going to ride the FBD Milk Ras then Sean?" enquired Jimmy as the laughter died.

"No. There was talk of me riding the Ras, but I just don't have the condition. If there was time for me to train, then yes I could do it. But I'm away for maybe five weeks on the road and in cycling you can't go away for so long because



## Armstrong settles scores with Simeoni

By Lons-le-Saunier, France

July 24, 2004 - 11:20AM

Lance Armstrong displayed his well-known determined side, but in bizarre fashion today after chasing down an early attack by Italian Filippo Simeoni on the 18th stage of the Tour de France.

The 32-year-old US Postal leader finished the stage with the main peloton at 11mins behind a group of six riders from which Spaniard Juan Miguel Mercado had emerged to sprint home ahead of Vicente Garcia-Acosta and win the stage for his Quick Step team.

Armstrong, who has also won four stages on this year's race, retained his 4min 09sec lead on second placed Italian Ivan Basso, of CSC, and is well on his way to a record sixth yellow jersey.

But despite his total domination, Armstrong also showed his unforgiving side, especially with Simeoni.

The 32-year-old Italian is a key witness in the trial of Italian sports doctor Michele Ferrari, with whom Armstrong has admitted collaboration in the past, and earlier in the race confirmed his intention to take Armstrong to court for defamation.

Simeoni wants to sue the five-time winner over comments made in French newspaper Le Monde in July 2003.

The article quoted Armstrong as saying that Simeoni had "lied" when he gave evidence to investigators saying was Ferrari who had showed him (Simeoni) how to use the banned blood booster EPO (erythropoietin) effectively.

The comments did little to improve Armstrong's image vis-a-vis Ferrari, who in the cycling world is looked at with suspicion as much as with curious admiration for his knowledge of advanced training methods.

Today the Domina Vacanze team rider's attempts to get into the six-man breakaway were kept immediately in check, as though Armstrong was intent on trailing him wherever he went even though Simeoni is not a threat in the general classification.

And the message from Armstrong seemed clear: 'Me and the peloton don't like what you've said about Ferrari, and we won't let you forget it'.

Race leaders rarely need to chase down such attacks, and although stranger things have happened in cycling it still shed Armstrong in a curious light.

Simeoni, for one, wasn't happy: "Armstrong today showed everyone the kind of champion he is," said the Italian, who has never implicated Armstrong in any evidence he has given about Ferrari.

"If he was truly a big champion, he wouldn't have to preoccupy himself with modest riders like me."

When questioned, Armstrong later insisted: "I was protecting the interests of the peloton. The other riders were very thankful," he said before hinting at his real motives.

"All he (Simeoni) wants to do is destroy cycling, destroy the sport that pays him.

"I can't say how many riders said thank you very much.

"They understand that it is their job, and they don't want somebody from within destroy it," added Armstrong, who took his petulance a stage further by poking fun at the journalist from *L'Equipe* newspaper who had interviewed Simeoni two weeks ago.

But despite Simeoni's outcry, Australian veteran Scott Sunderland believes Armstrong's behaviour wasn't out of the ordinary.

"That sort of stuff does happen, and it has for years. I remember a lot of rivalries between teams in the past," Sunderland said.

The 37-year-old Alessio rider admitted that Simeoni's card had been marked by some in the peloton, and that Armstrong was within his rights.

"Filippo Simeoni spoke out and from what I can gather was throwing accusations around, saying things like you can't win anything on the big Tours if you're not taking stuff (drugs), so I think a lot of guys have just taken offence.

"It was stupid for Simeoni to do that, especially if he's still in the peloton and riding the big races.

"Plus, he's (Simeoni) talking about what happened in 1996 when things were a bit out of control. Since then things have really moved on as far as fighting against doping is concerned," added Sunderland.

"As far as Lance is concerned, I think he was on an easy day and he wanted to show Simeoni that if he was going to attack he would find it difficult.

Ferrari, who once claimed that EPO was no more harmful than orange juice, is set to go on trial in Italy for sports fraud and the distribution of banned substances.

The fallout from the trial, scheduled for later this year, could raise further questions about Armstrong's links with the Italian doctor.

- AFP

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# Bicycling

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2004 Tour de France: Armstrong and Simeoni Have Words

## Armstrong Hunts Down Rider

Personal disputes mar Armstrong's perfect Tour.

Joe Lindsey

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Photo by AFP/Getty Images

What does it mean to be a patron of the Tour de France?

Is a patron simply the strongest rider of his era, or is there something more? In the true sense of the word, there is. A patron is not just a champion, but a godfather of sorts, a man who can dictate the moods and mores of the peloton, who can turn even a seemingly meaningless stage to his end. Typically, it is also a benefactor of sorts, a man whose magnanimity can elevate the dignity of the sport through observation of its most time-honored precepts, key among them sportsmanship.

We saw a patron on Tour today, but it was not a benevolent one.

Instead, the ugliest side broke out of the race's grandest champion today when Lance Armstrong bolted out of the pack to join Filippo Simeoni, who had just before broken free himself in an attempt to bridge up to the break.

On reaching the six-rider move, Simeoni said Armstrong looked over at him and smirked,

"Bravo. Nice move." When Jose Vicente Garcia Acosta pleaded with Armstrong to drop back and let the break have an honest chance to continue, Armstrong reportedly told them he would gladly do that, under one condition: Simeoni was not to continue in the break, either. Faced with the choice of sinking the chances of six riders or his own, Simeoni drifted back to the pack, accompanied by Armstrong.

In between, the two riders talked, with Armstrong even briefly placing his hand on Simeoni's shoulder. "Armstrong and I spoke as the peloton was catching us but I prefer not to say what he said," Simeoni told BICYCLING's European Correspondent, James Startt, at the finish of stage 18. "It was too serious." Once back in the field, Armstrong spoke and laughed with numerous riders and at one point made the sign of zipping lips.

Simeoni is one of cycling's most anonymous riders. In an 11-year career he has had just one significant win, a stage of the 2000 Regio Tour, and as a career gregario, or helper, he has done little to distinguish himself good or bad. But two years ago Simeoni hurled himself into a most unwelcome and glaring spotlight when he became a key witness in the ongoing trial of Doctor Michele Ferrari, a by-turns acclaimed and notorious physician, who was being tried in the Italian province of Bologna for sporting fraud. Armstrong had publicly disclosed only months earlier that he was one of Ferrari's clients.

In his testimony before the Bologna court on February 12, 2002, Simeoni described how Ferrari showed him how to use the banned red blood cell booster EPO more effectively. Ferrari denied the charges, but Armstrong, in a carefully prepared interview broadcast on RAI TV in Italy on the eve of that year's Milan-San Remo World Cup opener, said that Simeoni had lied. He repeated the claim in an article in *Le Monde* in April 2003, saying that Simeoni was "a compulsive liar" and had doped long before meeting Ferrari.

In response, Simeoni decided to sue Armstrong for defamation, saying Armstrong's comments had hurt his career. In a lengthy interview published in the French sports daily *L'Equipe* during the first week of this year's Tour de France, Simeoni said he had been unfairly singled out by Armstrong. "[Lance] has tried to defend his own image vis-a-vis Ferrari, but I've never accused Armstrong personally, I would never do that," he said to the paper. The lawsuit, he said, was "not a question of money. If I'm awarded money, I'll give it to charity."

Ferrari, who runs a coaching service called 53x12 and continues to consult with Armstrong, should see his long-running and exhausting case finally go to trial later this summer after more than two years of preliminary hearings.

Although not the only cyclist to testify against Ferrari in court, Simeoni is the only active cyclist. Fabrizio Convalle, winner of a stage of the Tour of Italy in 1990, testified he had taken unknown products provided by Ferrari and an amateur cyclist, Carlo Cobalcini, said before the court that he paid Ferrari to treat him, treatments that included procurement of EPO. But neither Convalle nor Cobalcini are professional cyclists today. Axel Merckx and Gianluca Bortolami, two other clients of Ferrari, failed to appear before the court although their presence was requested.

Armstrong said today that he chased down Simeoni "to protect the interests of the peloton." On the face of it, it seems a bit disingenuous to suggest that attacking a rider who sat almost three hours down on overall time and didn't figure in any of the superlative jersey classifications was for the best. But Armstrong wasn't referring to the race.

"All he wants to do is destroy cycling, destroy the sport that pays him," Armstrong said of the reason for his actions. In his phrasing, Armstrong--intentionally or not--recalled Greg LeMond's statement last week, when the three-time winner said in an interview with a French newspaper, "The problem with Armstrong is that you're either a liar or you're out to destroy cycling," speaking of how Armstrong deals with riders who allege that doping in the sport is widespread.

"When I went back to the group I can't say how many riders said thank you very much," said Armstrong of the reception given him by the other riders. "[Simeoni] is not a rider that the peloton likes to be up front because all he does is attack the peloton and say bad things about other riders and the group in general." That may be, but the peloton was content enough on Stage 9 to let Simeoni get 10 minutes up the road at one point with Euskaltel's Inigo Landa. The pair were caught just 100 meters before the stage finish, but not because of any particular animosity toward either rider; there were important sprint points on offer. As well, Postal did no work to bring back the pair and Armstrong, if he was perturbed by the events, showed no sign of it. Nine stages later, it was a different story.

Simeoni, though, has suffered since he testified. Rupert Guinness, the veteran Australian journalist who covers the sport for various publications, wrote in his story on [VeloNews.com](http://VeloNews.com) that Domina Vacanze team leader Mario Cipollini didn't want Simeoni on the Tour team, according to DV director Vincenzo Santoni.

Santoni didn't seem impressed with Cipollini or how Simeoni was treated by some riders when he did drift back from the break, and defended his rider to Italian RAI TV.

"We had to plead with to stay in the race," Guinness quotes Santoni as saying. "He is someone who makes sacrifices for the team."

Further defending his actions, Armstrong said that part of the problem lies with the press. "The problem with journalism is that you guys don't research the story. Simeoni - there is a long story there. All they want to write about is part of the story."

Simeoni had doped before he worked with Ferrari; Simeoni admits it himself. And he won a reduction of his sentence in exchange for his testimony, from two years to six months and, eventually to four on the decision of the Court for Arbitration in Sport. He is certainly no angel, and his testimony should be examined with the same scrutiny and care as that of any other material witness to such an important case.

But Armstrong declined to say what else might remain in the full story.

He seems mystified that anyone could question his relationship with Ferrari, despite the

fact that doping allegations have dogged Ferrari since at least 1996, when Sandro Donati, who blew the lid off EPO use in pro cycling with a firebomb of a report that implicated Ferrari's mentor, Francesco Conconi, testified against Ferrari in one of the good doctor's first doping trials.

On Friday, Armstrong took a needless risk to emphasize a personal point. Laurent Jalabert, now retired, wrote on his diary on the Tour web site that in his opinion Armstrong had gone up the road to send Simeoni a message: "You'll never win a race again."

And Armstrong's seemingly self-satisfied air on returning to the peloton--the "zip the lips" gesture and so on--seems to back up that premise, whatever his comment about looking out for the peloton (which, probably, can look out quite well for itself). But what does Armstrong really gain from publicly pursuing such an ugly agenda?

Armstrong's comment that other riders supported him is ugly as well. For one, it underlines that cycling still has an omerta, or a code of silence. While the rider's union might be a laughable one from the standpoint of labor relations with team management or the UCI, it clearly enforces rigid conformist behavior among its own. Simeoni's ostracization is just another sad chapter in a book that includes sections on Jesus Manzano, Christophe Bassons, Jerome Chiotti, Paul Kimmage and any other pro cyclist who has the temerity to say publicly that not only did he dope, but others do too, even if no names are used.

Simeoni will very likely not be a professional cyclist next year. He has, after all, bit the hand that fed him, pissed off the world's most powerful cyclist and appears to have few allies in his court. Perhaps he can get a ride with Amore e Vita, the controversial Italian team which is known for throwing last-chance contracts at reformed dopers (last week, they offered just such a gig to David Millar, who was sacked by his Cofidis team).

Bike racing will probably always have doping of some kind, and there will be many riders, even clean ones, who want to protect their earning power ignoring its problems, saying "we do more than anyone to combat doping," and so on.

But this issue speaks to something else besides the sport's unhealthy little addiction; it speaks to Armstrong. What does it take for this man to be satisfied? And how are we, fans of the sport, to reconcile two utterly adverse sides of a champion? How can a man who has stared death in the face, who knows the value of his own wonderful life and has shown such remarkable, limitless and genuine compassion to his fellow cancer survivors, be so needlessly petty? From here, it looks like hate, pure and simple.

Armstrong now has six Tours, \$16 million plus a year, Sheryl freaking Crow, his incredible benefit to the sport and to the cancer community and the adoration of millions of fans. Is that success so insubstantial that he must go out of his way to make someone else fail?

It's a sad epitaph to what should have been a perfect Tour for Armstrong, one where his dominant performance and sublime form confirmed him as the best racer of his era, and one of the best of all time.

I wrote weeks ago that Lance Armstrong had two sides--the public Armstrong you see on television and in his books, and a colder, spiteful one that is largely private. I wrote that if Armstrong lost this Tour de France that we might see that the private one was more his true self.

Ironically, it is instead while winning it that it has come to the fore.

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Wednesday, December 14, 2005

## Armstrong to face trial in defamation case

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Reuters

ROME -- Seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong will go on trial for defamation next year after losing a preliminary hearing against Italian rider Filippo Simeoni on Wednesday.

Italian judge Nicola Insiti decided that the American Armstrong should go on trial in Simeoni's home town of Latina near Rome on March 7 after he called Simeoni a liar in an interview with the French newspaper Le Monde in 2003.

Simeoni had given evidence in 2002 during the trial of Armstrong's former coach Michele Ferrari and said Ferrari had given him doping substances.

Ferrari was found guilty of sporting fraud and illegally acting as a pharmacist on Oct. 1, 2004, but has appealed against the verdict.

"The judge decided that even though Armstrong's comments were published in France, the act of defamation against Simeoni occurred when Simeoni read the newspaper via the internet," the Italian rider's lawyer Giuseppe Napoleone told Reuters.

Armstrong's lawyer Enrico Nan said he would fight the location of the trial.

The 34-year-old Armstrong will not have to attend the trial but could, under Italian law, face a jail sentence of between one and six years if found guilty.

Simeoni and Armstrong have clashed several times in recent years.

Armstrong was placed under formal investigation in August 2004 for 'private violence' against Simeoni after he chased the Italian down during stage 18 of the 2004 Tour de France.

But that investigation was closed earlier this year.

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## Simeoni-Armstrong case reaches court

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Wednesday, Mar 8, 2006 12.00am

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Filippo Simeoni's defamation case against Lance Armstrong finally reaches an Italian court, which is

PIC BY TDWSPORT.COM

The case brought by Filippo Simeoni against Lance Armstrong following comments made by the American in French newspaper *Le Monde* in April 2003 finally reached an Italian court in Latina on Tuesday. Neither Simeoni, who is due to start Tirreno-Adriatico today, nor Armstrong was present, ensuring the jousting was left to their lawyers.

Armstrong's brief, Enrico Nan, asked the court to drop charges in the defamation suit because a foreigner should not be held responsible in Italy for comments made to a French newspaper "even if the internet can be read anywhere".

The judge hearing the case adjourned proceedings until April 13, when Simeoni is expected to appear in court.

In January, a court in Paris refused to hear a defamation suit brought by Simeoni against Armstrong for the same comments made in *Le Monde*, ruling that the statute of limitations had expired and that the Italian rider's lawyers had misinterpreted French law.

- The organisers of **Amstel Gold** have offered wild card entries to the Unibet.com, Landbouwkrediet-Colnago, Chocolate Jacques, Skil-[Shimano](#) and Barloworld for their race on April 16. The field will, of course, be completed by the 20 ProTour teams.

- CSC's **Christian Vande Velde** was forced to quit Paris-Nice on Tuesday after crashing into team-mate Michael Blaudzun 80 kilometres from the stage finish in Belleville. "It was just plain bad luck that Michael and Christian crashed into each other and it's too bad we have to do without Christian. He's having his left shoulder x-rayed this evening and hopefully he doesn't have any broken bones," said team boss Bjarne Riis. "Blaudzun fought hard to get through the stage. He suffered quite a lot of pains in his knee but did manage to complete, which is actually pretty impressive. We'll have a problem sticking to our plan with only six riders because the race will get tougher from tomorrow."

The news about Vande Velde came on the back of an injury setback suffered at last weekend's Three Days of West Flanders race by **Matti Breschel**. The young Dane crashed with Robbie McEwen in the bunch sprint on the final stage, and x-rays showed he has broken two vertebrae. "This means Matti won't be taking part in any of the spring Classics," said CSC DS Tristan Hoffman. "It's very unlucky because it was obvious that he was in great shape. The doctors estimate a period of at least three to four weeks before he's able to resume his training."

Milram's **Mirko Celestino** also faces some time off after he also crashed during the second stage at Paris-Nice, breaking his right shoulder blade.

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## Armstrong responds to Simeoni

By Neal Rogers

Published Nov. 9, 2008

Updated Nov. 9, 2008 at 12:55 PM EDT

### Photos

By Neal Rogers

— Armstrong speaks with Rogers in Las Vegas earlier this year. Lance Armstrong says he isn't responsible for the dismal state of Filippo Simeoni's career, nor has he ever done anything to intimidate the Italian champion.

Photo: Kurt Jambretz - Action Images

In an interview with *VeloNews* Saturday, the seven-time Tour de France winner said he was bothered by Simeoni's comments as they appeared in the Spanish daily *AS* and later reported on [VeloNews.com](#).

Not given the opportunity to respond until now, Armstrong offered his reaction to Simeoni's comments about the American's return to racing, the Italian's current search for a team and what really happened on stage 18 of the 2004 Tour de France.

### On the comeback

Simeoni told *AS* journalist Quique Iglesias that he neither accepted, nor acknowledged, Armstrong's comeback to pro racing.

"It looks like he couldn't stand this time away from the front pages," Simeoni said. "He says he's coming back for his foundation, which I honor, but there has to be something else. I suppose it's to clean his image."

Armstrong said Simeoni couldn't be further from the truth.

"First off, nowhere does it say you are prohibited from retiring and coming back to racing," Armstrong said. "I can come back if I want to come back. People could argue that my name has been in the news plenty over the last three years with relationships alone, and I don't care for that. [The Lance Armstrong Foundation] **passed** Proposition 15 in Texas [in October 2007], and we've had success in Texas and the U.S. To say my name wasn't in the press since I left racing is ridiculous. And I don't need Simeoni's permission to come back. My intent is pure, it's a reality, and we are moving forward with it."

### The 2004 Tour

Armstrong's **contentious relationship** with Simeoni — dating back to comments Armstrong made in April 2003 about Simeoni's testimony against Dr. Michele Ferrari — is well documented. However when it comes to the events of the **18th stage of the 2004 Tour de France**, Armstrong said that the Italian's version of what took

place is simply not true.

"First off, I did not chase Simeoni down," Armstrong said. "I was simply following his wheel. That is the truth of the matter. I never bridged across to Simeoni. He was in front of me, people were attacking, he accelerated, and I stayed on the wheel. We have footage of the race that will back that up. There was never more than bike length between us. There was no gap closed. There's a big difference between following wheels and closing a gap."

The now-famous photo from stage 18.

Photo: *Agence France Presse*

Armstrong said he'd naturally expected the peloton to follow, and was surprised to see that the pair had opened a gap when they reached the day's breakaway a few kilometers later.

"I was completely shocked when I turned around and there was no one on my wheel," Armstrong said. "I was fully expecting to see the rest of the group, because I was in the [yellow] jersey. But Simeoni pulled for two minutes, and I followed his wheel. That's racing. He really was a minor story that day. I knew T-Mobile would have to work, and that was good for us, to make your biggest adversaries work to chase down a break. It was two minutes at the biggest gap, and that meant they would have to work hard to chase us down."

And what about the infamous images of Armstrong flashing Simeoni the international "zip the lips" gesture? Armstrong said that had nothing to do with Simeoni's comments about Armstrong's relationship with Ferrari, and everything to do with the Italian rider's loud protests in the breakaway group.

"People will say that was all about the *omerta*, the code of silence," Armstrong said. "That's nonsense. It's because Simeoni was yelling at everybody, about everything. We joined the breakaway, and everyone was working except him. He was sitting on. I was working with guys in the group. He would not pull, but he was yelling about everything."

As for Simeoni's claims that once he and Armstrong returned to the peloton his colleagues berated him with insults, telling him he had "dirtied the name of the peloton and spoiled the plate that I had eaten from all of my life," Armstrong said simply, "That wasn't my intention. I was racing my bike. I can't apologize for racing my bike."

Armstrong waits for the peloton after the encounter. Simeoni can be seen riding ahead.

Photo: **Graham Watson**

### **Simeoni's career**

Iglesias' AS piece also focused on how Simeoni, the 2008 Italian national champion, has been unable to land a contract with a continental pro or ProTour team for 2009. His absence from next year's Giro could make him the first tricolore in memory without an invitation to Italy's most important race.

Simeoni suggested that Armstrong, who brought the Giro international attention after announcing that he intends to compete in 2009, might have something to do with the Italian's recent employment woes.



"I would like to think that Armstrong wouldn't veto my presence [in the Giro], but everything is possible," the 37-year-old Simeoni told AS. "I don't believe in anything anymore."

However Armstrong fired back that Simeoni would not be able to race the Giro because his Flaminia team, a continental pro team in 2008, is not currently part of the UCI biological passport program.

Giro director Angelo Zomegnan, head of RCS Sport, recently announced that all teams participating in the 2009 event must be part of the UCI biological passport. However Zomegnan said the same prior to the 2008 edition, yet invited CSF Navigare, which was not part of the 2008 passport program.

The UCI has not yet announced teams expected to participate in the 2009 biological passport, but it is unlikely that a smaller-budget squad such as Flaminia would have the means to afford participation.

"It's not my fault if Simeoni doesn't have a team and is not accepted into the Giro," Armstrong said. "If you are the Italian national champion and you don't have a team, I think it says something about you, not about me. I would think he would have offers to be on a ProTour team, and apparently he does not. If you were an Italian team director, and you had the opportunity to hire the tricolore, and you could hire him for next to nothing, and you still didn't, what does that tell you? Those are questions for him, and for the teams in Italy. If he cannot do the Tour of Italy because he's not part of the biological passport, then that's a question for him, for the UCI and for RCS. Those are the rules. He ought to look at the rules. That's got nothing to do with me."

## Photo Gallery

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**Neal Rogers**

An interest in all things rock 'n' roll led Neal into music journalism while attending UC Santa Cruz. After several post-grad years spent waiting tables, surfing and mountain biking, Neal moved to San Francisco, working stints as a bike messenger and at a software start-up. He moved to Colorado in 2001, taking an editorial internship at VeloNews. He never left, and is now Velo's editor in chief. When not traveling the world covering races, Neal can be found riding his bike, skiing, cooking, or attending a concert. Follow him on Twitter at [@nealrogers](#).

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## Simeoni: Justice has come a bit late in Armstrong case

By: Cycling News Published: August 25, 10:38, Updated: August 25, 10:43 Edition: [First Edition Cycling News, Sunday, August 26, 2012](#)

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### Italian recalls 2004 Tour de France clash

Filippo Simeoni has welcomed the news that [Lance Armstrong](#) has opted not to contest the charges of doping and conspiracy levelled at him by the United States Anti-Doping Agency, but the Italian noted that justice had taken a long time in coming.

"I think that justice has come, even it's come a bit late," Simeoni told [Radio Sportiva](#). "In the mind of the fans, the winner of those Tours will still be Armstrong."

Simeoni also warned that the challenge is now for cycling as a whole to continue the fight against doping with the same rigour shown by USADA in recent months. "You need to continue on these lines for many years to give credibility to the sport," he said.

In what would be one of the defining acts of his "patronage" of the Tour de France, Armstrong clashed with Simeoni on the road during the 2004 edition of the race.

Armstrong had branded Simeoni "an absolute liar" in an interview with [Le Monde](#) in 2003 after the Italian had testified before an Italian court that Dr. Michele Ferrari had advised him to use EPO and testosterone in the late 1990s.

Ferrari, who was Armstrong's trainer, has also been charged with doping by USADA, along with Armstrong's then US Postal manager Johan Bruyneel, who is currently in charge of RadioShack-Nissan.

"The story with Armstrong caused me a lot of pain and did me a lot of damage from a sporting point of view," Simeoni said. "In 2004, everything was done to stop me from riding the Tour de France, there was even pressure from my own teammates."

Simeoni eventually was selected for the Acqua & Sapone team for the 2004 Tour, but when he infiltrated the early break on stage 18, the yellow jersey Armstrong bridged across, forcing Simeoni to drop out of the break.

"He spoke with the other members of the break and everything went up in smoke," Simeoni said. "When I understood that Armstrong was forcing me to sit up, he said bad things to me, and thinking of them now only makes me feel angrier."

"When I complained about these things, he was in charge of cycling and nothing was done about it. I paid for things that weren't just: in the end, I only told the truth."



Armstrong instructs Filippo Simeoni to return to the peloton on stage 18 of the 2004 Tour de France.



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## Bassons and Simeoni say Armstrong probe is overdue

By: Daniel Friebe Published: June 14, 21:28, Updated: June 14, 21:46 Edition: [First Edition Cycling News, Friday, June 15, 2012](#)

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### American's old foes nonetheless welcome USADA efforts

Two men who clashed infamously with [Lance Armstrong](#) during his reign as the [Tour de France's](#) dominant rider, Christophe Bassons and Filippo Simeoni, today welcomed news that Armstrong will [face doping charges](#) from the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA).

Bassons said that USADA's action was "important" but also long overdue. "It's a shame now that it's coming 15 years after it all happened. It's a shame because the evidence was there for years. I knew all along what was happening, so this doesn't change anything for me. I don't need fifteen pages of documents to tell me what I knew already," Bassons told *Cyclingnews*.

Simeoni had similarly mixed feelings. The Italian said the possibility of Armstrong being condemned for doping left him "cold". Simeoni also "can't understand why suddenly now they're investigating him, when for years he was allowed to do whatever he wanted."

Armstrong last night dismissed the investigation as a "witch-hunt". "I have never doped," he affirmed in a statement.

Bassons and Simeoni had of course tackled Armstrong about doping, in their own ways, long before this latest round of allegations. In 1999, Bassons was riding the Tour de France for La Française des Jeux but also penning a daily column for *Le Parisien*. After writing that the peloton had been "shocked" by Armstrong's stage-win at Sestriere, Bassons was confronted by Armstrong on the road to Alpe d'Huez the next day and invited to stop his innuendo or else leave the sport. Two years later, sure enough, Bassons quit professional cycling at age 27. He now works for the French Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Today Bassons expressed his hope that anyone found guilty in the USADA probe will be banished from cycling. He also, though, partly supported Armstrong's claim that the seven-time Tour champion is being singled out, while those who have given evidence against him seem set to escape without penalty for their own misdeeds.

"I can understand why they're offering plea bargains. History tells us that, unfortunately, that's the only way people will talk. It also provides very valuable intelligence when they do that," Bassons said. "What is wrong is giving them complete immunity in return for information. When there's a crime, there has to be a punishment. If there's not, what's happening here sets a dangerous precedent."

"As for Armstrong's entourage, if found guilty, they can't be allowed back in to work with teams in the future," he continued. "In general I'm against making doping a criminal offense, except when there is trafficking involved, but there's no reason why we can't rid the sport of people who have facilitated doping on this scale."

On the UCI's role in the affair, and in particular allegations that they were complicit with what USADA is calling the US Postal team's "conspiracy", Bassons called for a radical rethink of sports federations' role in anti-doping.

"It's that old chestnut: you can't have the body in charge of promoting a sport also policing it. Give responsibility for anti-doping to WADA or national anti-doping agencies. But not to the federations," he argued.

Filippo Simeoni was involved in his own notorious spat with Armstrong at the 2004 Tour de France. Two years earlier, Simeoni had testified before an Italian magistrate that doctor Michele Ferrari had advised him to use EPO and testosterone in 1997, a claim that prompted Armstrong to brand Simeoni an "absolute liar" in an interview with *Le Monde* in 2003. The following year at the Tour, Armstrong thwarted Simeoni's breakaway attempts and allegedly threatened to "destroy" the Italian in a mid-race exchange on stage 18.

Simeoni now owns two bars in Sezze, between Rome and Naples. The 40-year-old claims to have "left cycling behind completely", although he happened to be riding his bike when *Cyclingnews* reached him today.

While he applauded USADA's efforts, he also said that whatever comes of the investigation will bring scant consolation.

"This all leaves me a bit cold now. I've taken myself out of that world completely," he said. "I just can't understand how



Armstrong instructs Filippo Simeoni to return to the peloton on stage 18 of the 2004 Tour de France.



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justice has taken this long. There was always evidence, but nothing was done. Is what they've got that much more crushing now? Armstrong was allowed to do whatever he wanted for years. He was a superhero, untouchable. Now this. I suppose it just shows how the balance has shifted; before, I think there were forces greater than our understanding working to protect him; now there's probably also a reason why they've decided to take him down.

"We'll see how it goes," Simeoni summed up. "I prefer not to dwell too much, because I have too many regrets if I do. This whole business really cut me down in my prime. Now it'd be nice to just get justice, although I still fear that this could rumble on for months if not years."

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