

'Truthful' Armstrong Might Have Kept Tour Titles

United States Anti-Doping Agency executive Travis Tygart recently said Lance Armstrong might have kept up to five Tour de France titles had he fully cooperated with the anti-doping investigation which alleges the American is a cheat.

Armstrong could have been protected by an eight-year statute of limitations had he worked with investigators, said Tygart. The cyclist, seven-time winner of Tour de France, was accused by the USADA of using banned drugs and blood transfusions as part of an elaborate covert doping scheme. Armstrong said he had been tested hundreds of times and innocent but opted not to fight his case against the anti-doping agency in a formal court setting because he argues it is a "witch-hunt."

In the meanwhile, [the USADA has also banned supporters of Lance Armstrong from its Facebook page and even banned many Facebook users from commenting on its page.](#)

With Armstrong dropping the case, the USADA stripped him of seven Tour de France titles to erase one of the most incredible achievements in sports. The cyclist was given an option to answer the charges at arbitration, but declined leading USADA to impose sanctions. The anti-doping agency remarked that the cyclist and five others deliberately concealed their doping for almost a decade. Tygart also said that the lifetime ban on Armstrong may be revisited if he comes clean about doping in cycling and added that there would be a reduction in Armstrong's punishment if he would have been truthful and willing to meet to help the sport move forward for the good.

French anti-doping agency adviser Michel Rieu told Le Monde newspaper that Armstrong had a string of accomplices who helped him disguise use of performance-boosting EPO. Rieu added that Armstrong could thin his blood or replace his urine and was using EPO only in small quantities, so it was no longer there to detect.

The lawyers of Armstrong claim that the USADA doesn't have the authority to issue sanctions against their client, claiming that is the remit of the International Cycling Union. Armstrong's former coach Chris Carmichael said Lance Armstrong succeeded because he was the best trained, the most focused, the most disciplined, and the most dedicated to excellence and the cyclist was the most talented and gifted athlete there was out there.

During a deposition, French newspaper Le Monde reported claims by Betsy and Frankie Andreu that the cyclist had admitted using [performance-enhancing drugs](#) to his physician just after brain surgery in 1996. A former employee of Armstrong, Mike Anderson, claimed in 2005 that he discovered a box of androstenone while cleaning the apartment of Armstrong that was denied by Armstrong; Anderson and Armstrong reached an out-of-court settlement in November 2005. Armstrong was accused by his former teammate, Tyler Hamilton, that he and Lance had together taken EPO before and during the 1999, 2000, and 2001 Tours de France. According to Floyd Landis, Armstrong had been a willing participant. Two of his other accomplices, Frankie Andreu and George Hincapie, told federal investigators that they witnessed Armstrong taking banned substances. Before this, it was reported by French newspaper L'Équipe that six urine samples taken from Armstrong during the prologue and five stages of the 1999 Tour, frozen and stored at a French lab, had tested positive for EPO in recent retesting.

