

## Lance Armstrong To Challenge USPS Claims

According to recent reports, Lance Armstrong is planning to argue that the case of United States Postal Service against him is too old to pursue. The banned cyclist will also be arguing that he never submitted a false claim to the government, according to a person close to Armstrong's defense team.

The legal team of the disgraced cyclist, who won seven consecutive Tour de France titles, will argue what the U.S. government knew or should have known about doping on the U.S. Postal Service cycling team but made no attempts to stop it. This strategy demonstrates the technicalities that the 41-year-old retired cyclist will seek after it was recently announced by the [U.S. Justice Department](#) that it has joined a civil fraud case against Lance Armstrong under the False Claims Act.

The cyclist vehemently denied all accusations of performance enhancing drug use but succumbed to damning report by the United States Anti-Doping Agency that included testimony from eleven teammates of Lance Armstrong (Frankie Andreu, Michael Barry, Tom Danielson, Tyler Hamilton, George Hincapie, Floyd Landis, Levi Leipheimer, Stephen Swart, Christian Vande Velde, Jonathan Vaughters, and David Zabriskie). While Lance Armstrong was banned for life, two other members of the USPS Team, Dr. Michele Ferrari and Dr. Garcia del Moral, also received lifetime bans for perpetrating this doping conspiracy while three other members of the USPS Team: Johan Bruyneel, the team director; Dr. Pedro Celaya, a team doctor; and Jose "Pepe" Marti, the team trainer, decided to contest the charges.

The case against Armstrong may be stronger after he recently confessed to using performance enhancing drugs to win seven Tour de France titles during a TV talk show but a big early hurdle for the government will be the statute of limitations.

In 2010, the suit was first filed by cycling cheat, Floyd Landis, Armstrong's former USPS teammate, and it was argued that Lance Armstrong and his teammates defrauded the government through their doping scheme on the USPS team. The suit argues that Armstrong and others violated their USPS sponsorship contracts and that the government should get its money back as they used banned drugs and blood transfusions to boost themselves on the bike. From 2001 to 2004, the United States Postal Service paid \$31 million to sponsor Armstrong's team and Landis under the False Claims Act can seek to recover triple that amount for the government that would possibly be more than \$90 million.

The attorneys of Armstrong will be arguing that the whole case should be thrown out due to the six-year statute of limitations, which started when Landis filed the case in 2010. On the other hand, the government is expected to argue that the fraud was concealed and that the six-year rule should not apply. The government's case may receive a setback from the fact that the USPS team hired a public-relations firm to boost its image instead of investigating or filing of a false claim when doping allegations swirled around the team. Furthermore, since Armstrong never entered into a contract with the USPS or the government, he could not have submitted a false claim to them. The contracts by USPS were with Tailwind Sports, the management company of the cycling team of [Lance Armstrong](#) but Tailwind also never certified that its riders wouldn't or didn't dope.