

Former UCI President Admits Wrongdoings

Hein Verbruggen, the former UCI president, has remarked that he might have spoken to former American professional road racing cyclist Lance Armstrong after he failed a drugs test at the 1999 [Tour de France](#).

Armstrong recently accused Verbruggen of coming up with something and the ex-UCI head said he did advise Lance Armstrong to produce a prescription after the event, in apparent breach of anti-doping rules. Armstrong, in his first Tour post-cancer, tested positive for Cortisone after he won the prologue time trial.

Verbruggen, who served as UCI president from 1991-2005 and is still honorary president of cycling's world governing body, had earlier attacked the credibility of Armstrong. He described the allegations made by Armstrong as illogical. This was after Lance claimed that the then-UCI president asked to come up with the prescription for avoiding another doping scandal, just a year after the Festina affair threatened to sink the 1998 Tour de France. Armstrong added that Verbruggen had remarked this is a real problem for me, this is the knockout punch for our sport and so we've got to come up with something.

Verbruggen said he might have told Lance that the world governing body of cycling requires a prescription but he is sure that was handled by the UCI's anti-doping department and not him. He also remarked that the prescription could be done afterwards according to UCI rules. However, the UCI rules state that the [Therapeutic Use Exemptions](#) (TUEs) should be declared prior to testing and it is clear from facts that an exception was made by the UCI for Lance Armstrong, who went on to win the first of his seven Tour de France titles.

This admission by the UCI's honorary president may find himself in huge trouble as the conversation between the head of the cycling's governing body and Armstrong, who had tested positive, raises serious questions about the judgment of Hein Verbruggen and suggests a possible breach of anti-doping protocol. The ex-UCI president however said he is willing to participate in a new commission currently being set up by the UCI and the World Anti-Doping Agency and expressed confidence that he will be exonerated. It was recently indicated by UCI that Verbruggen may be called before a separate independent commission being set up to investigate Armstrong.

After Armstrong's allegations against Verbruggen, Craig Reedie, the new president of the World Anti-Doping Agency, said it is essential that Lance Armstrong should take part in the drive to clean up the sport through a truth and reconciliation process. Reedie remarked he read the interview of Armstrong with interest and it rather illustrated that the sport had a serious problem all those years ago and it has brought it to a serious head. In defense of the current UCI regime, they have been very active in trying to tackle the problems of the past. He added that [Lance Armstrong](#) is certainly seen in the public eye as the biggest sinner of that generation but if he chose to take part in a properly organized independent commission it would give them the best chance of achieving a proper result.