

Armstrong Fails To Block Government Lawsuit

[Lance Armstrong](#), the American former professional road racing cyclist, has lost his bid to block a \$100m (£79m) lawsuit by the US government.

The U.S. Justice Department had accused the cyclist, who had won the Tour de France a record seven consecutive times from 1999 to 2005, before he was banned for life and stripped of his titles, of defrauding the government by accepting millions of dollars in sponsorship money from the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). The U.S. Anti-Doping Agency accused Armstrong in a report of engineering one of the most sophisticated [doping schemes in sports](#).

On Monday, a federal judge cleared the way for a U.S. government lawsuit that seeks nearly \$100 million in damages from the former professional cyclist to go to trial. Judge Christopher Cooper of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia wrote in a 37-page ruling that the Court must deny Armstrong's motion for summary judgment on this issue because the government has offered evidence that Armstrong withheld information about the team's doping and use of PEDs and that the anti-doping provisions of the sponsorship agreements were material to USPS's decision to continue the sponsorship and make payments under the agreements.

Armstrong's cycling team, the now-defunct Tailwind Sports Corp, received around \$32.3 million from USPS from 2000 to 2004. Cooper said in his ruling USPS looked to capitalize on the Tour de France victories of Armstrong as well as his "compelling personal story." The US federal government now wants the money back and Armstrong may likely end up paying triple under the [False Claims Act](#).

In defense, the attorney of Armstrong claimed USPS suffered no damages and received far more in value from the sponsorship than the amount paid by it. The Judge responded by saying the argument should be decided by a jury at trial.

Cooper wrote the Court concludes that the monetary amount of the benefits USPS received is not sufficiently quantifiable to keep any reasonable juror from finding that the agency suffered a net loss on the sponsorship, especially if one considers the adverse effect on the Postal Service's revenues and brand value that may have resulted from the negative publicity surrounding the subsequent investigations of Armstrong's doping and his widely publicized confession. The Judge also said determination of damages must therefore be left to a jury and the Court accordingly declines to grant Armstrong summary judgment on damages and will set the case for trial.

The former cyclist admitted to making use of banned performance enhancing drugs in seven of his Tour wins.

In another development, Armstrong's former directeur sportif Johan Bruyneel poured scorn on legendary cyclist Greg LeMond. Bruyneel said LeMond has an unnatural obsession with tarnishing the reputation of Lance Armstrong. Bruyneel, who is currently serving a 10-year ban for his involvement in doping, said LeMond has realized that people are less and less outraged by Lance, because it has become clear that he was only one of many who were doping, and that is why LeMond is now looking for something new with which to tarnish his name. Armstrong's former directeur sportif added LeMond is not going to manage it and went on to comment that they can keep trying until the year 3000 and they are not going to find mechanical doping.