

Armstrong Vows To Help Doping Inquiry

Lance Armstrong has vowed to cooperate honestly and openly with an independent commission into the doping past of cycling having conceded that the life ban imposed on the disgraced cyclist might not be reduced in exchange for a full confession.

The American ex-cyclist confirmed via his Twitter account his willingness to testify before a strong panel of three members (a politician, professor, and a war crimes investigator), the composition of which was announced recently by the UCI, the sport's world governing body. [The Cycling Independent Reform Commission](#) is chaired by Dick Marty, a Swiss member of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly and former state prosecutor who is considered an expert in organized crime and drug abuse. His vice-chairmen are Ulrich Haas, a German law professor at the University of Zurich and a specialist in anti-doping, and Peter Nicholson, a former military officer who has led several war crimes investigations for the United Nations. The UCI President set a deadline of the end of 2014 for the commission to complete its work and vowed that it would be completely autonomous.

The UCI president, Brian Cookson, confirming the commission had already begun its work, said this commission will investigate the problems cycling has faced in recent years, especially the allegations that the UCI has been involved in wrongdoing in the past. Cookson added that their work will also be focused on understanding what went so wrong in our sport and they will make recommendations for change so that, as far as possible, those mistakes are not repeated. The immediate predecessors of Cookson, [Hein Verbruggen](#) and Pat McQuaid, are also expected to be approached. Both former UCI Presidents are accused of helping in covering up the doping activities of Lance Armstrong and others though both have vehemently denied any wrongdoing.

In November last year, Lance Armstrong indicated that his participation in the truth & reconciliation commission will be dependent on whether he was treated like everybody else who took part, drawing particular attention to the disparity between his lifetime ban (that he termed as death penalty) and punishments for those who also doped during his seven Tour de France victories.

It later emerged that the commission would be prevented from giving Lance Armstrong any incentive like what is provided to other cyclists who spoke against him though the commission would be empowered to offer what amount to full amnesties to those not already convicted of doping offences. It was also revealed that the commission would not be empowered to allow Armstrong to return to competing in triathlons.

Meanwhile, Johan Bruyneel, a United States Anti-Doping agency spokesperson, said that Armstrong despite publicly claiming he wants to help has repeatedly rejected the opportunity to do so and has shut the door on his chance. He added that much of the information we understand that Armstrong could have provided is of little, if any, value now, as it has already been uncovered through other avenues or soon will be.

Armstrong was banned by the United States Anti-Doping Agency for indulging into banned [performance enhancing drugs](#) to win his seven Tour de France titles.