

# Justice Department Files Formal Lawsuit Against Lance Armstrong

by Anthony Caruso on May 1, 2013

The U.S. Justice Department filed a lawsuit against Lance Armstrong ahead of the April 23 deadline to file a formal complaint, alleging that he violated his contract with the U.S. Postal Service.

USPS paid roughly \$40 million to sponsor Armstrong between 1998 and 2004, and the Justice Department argues that the cyclist violated his contract with the Postal Service by using performance-enhancing drugs to win his seven Tour de France titles, of which he was recently tripped.

The federal lawsuit names Armstrong, team director Johan Bruyneel and team management company Tailwind Sports. The Justice Department is seeking triple the damages assessed by a jury, according to The Associated Press. This may enable the government to recoup as much as \$120 million from the former cyclist and cancer survivor.

"Defendants were unjustly enriched to the extent of the payments and other benefits they received from the USPS, either directly or indirectly," read the complaint .

The AP notes that the Justice Department now bears the responsibility of proving that Armstrong both defrauded the USPS and damaged it. However, those defending Armstrong called the Justice Department's claims "opportunistic," noting that the USPS saw significant financial gains - roughly \$139 million - a result of its sponsorship of Armstrong and his team over a four-year period. Despite these gains, the USPS contract signed by Armstrong and his team required all to follow the rules that govern cycling and his admission of using performance-enhancing drugs may be considered a sports law violation, the AP notes.

Following Armstrong's admission of guilt, he has been banned from cycling for life, forced to step down from his Livestrong foundation and made to relinquish his titles and victories.