

## **Armstrong wins 7<sup>th</sup> Tour de France**

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**25 July, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Armstrong wins 7th Tour de France**

**BNE:** American cyclist Lance Armstrong has firmly established himself in cycling's record books by sealing a remarkable seventh consecutive Tour de France. It is arguably the greatest sporting achievement ever. There are few sporting events more grueling than cycling's most famous and prestigious showpiece with its 21 days of tortuous mountain climbs covering over 2,000 kilometres. Armstrong outshone and outpaced his rivals with the dogged determination and grit that also saw him overcome life-threatening cancer. The victory is a fitting finale to the end of his distinguished cycling career. He retired from his sport after the race and goes out in style – at the top.

The start of the final day's racing had a familiar look about it with Armstrong donning the coveted yellow jersey. His aim was to finish the race in one piece and avoid any crashes that might jeopardize his chances of victory. Hearts fluttered at the approaches into Paris as his teammates slid from their bikes ahead of him in slippery conditions. Armstrong applied his brakes and deftly avoided the heaped bodies and bicycles. Race organizers finished the race early and declared Armstrong as the winner. Jim Ochowicz, head of the USA cycling team, paid tribute to the champion's "drive and determination to be the best". Armstrong will now spend some well earned time with his family.

## WARM-UPS

**1. BICYCLE HISTORY:** In pairs / groups, talk about your history with the bicycle. Can you remember the first time you rode a bike? How important are bicycles to you now? What are your happiest or most painful memories on a bicycle? Do you have a bicycle now?

**2. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think Lance Armstrong is the greatest sporting hero ever. Students B think someone else is the greatest sporting hero ever. Change partners often.

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Cycling / record books / Tour de France / determination / rivals / cancer / retirement / yellow jersey / family time*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. BICYCLE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with bicycles. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. MY DETERMINATION:** Write down three things you are determined to do in your life. In pairs / groups, talk about those things. Give each other advice on how you can achieve the things you are determined to do.

**6. GRUELING SPORTS:** Is the Tour de France the most grueling sporting event? Which of these events do you think are grueling and why? In which of these events would you like to be champion?

- a. Tour de France
- b. A triathlon
- c. Round the world yacht race
- d. A 15-day sumo tournament (six times a year)
- e. A 5-day game of cricket
- f. The soccer World Cup
- g. A game of ice hockey
- h. A US Master's golf tournament
- i. Other

Change partners and compare what you talked about.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. A French cyclist has won his seventh cycling race.                    | T / F |
| b. A seventh victory is arguably the greatest sporting achievement ever. | T / F |
| c. Armstrong also overcame cancer.                                       | T / F |
| d. Armstrong retired from cycling immediately after the race.            | T / F |
| e. Armstrong started the day wearing a red, white and blue jersey.       | T / F |
| f. Armstrong fell off his bike in the rain on slippery roads in Paris.   | T / F |
| g. Race organizers called an early finish to the race.                   | T / F |
| h. Armstrong will now spend some time with his teammates.                | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| a. sealing         | perseverance  |
| b. grueling        | imperial      |
| c. dogged          | punishing     |
| d. grit            | prized        |
| e. fitting         | wearing       |
| f. donning         | acclaimed     |
| g. coveted         | clinching     |
| h. jeopardize      | skillfully    |
| i. deftly          | apt           |
| j. paid tribute to | indefatigable |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                       |                                 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. firmly                             | prestigious showpiece           |
| b. There are few sporting events more | yellow jersey                   |
| c. cycling's most famous and          | in style                        |
| d. outpaced his rivals with the       | earned time with his family     |
| e. goes out                           | grueling                        |
| f. donning the coveted                | avoided the heaped bodies       |
| g. crashes that might jeopardize      | tribute to the champion's drive |
| h. deftly                             | established himself             |
| i. paid                               | dogged determination and grit   |
| j. spend some well                    | his chances of victory          |

## **WHILE READING / LISTENING**

**SPOT THE MISTAKES:** Half of the words in bold in each paragraph are right and half are wrong. Circle the incorrect words and replace them with words that fit.

### **Armstrong wins 7th Tour de France**

**BNE:** American cyclist Lance Armstrong has firmly established himself in cycling's **CD** books by sealing a remarkable seventh **conservative** Tour de France. It is arguably the greatest sporting achievement ever. There are **many** sporting events more grueling than cycling's most famous and **prestigious** showpiece with its 21 days of **tortuous** mountain climbs covering over 2,000 kilometres. Armstrong **outshone** and outpaced his rivals with the **dogged** determination and grit that also saw him overcome life-threatening cancer. The victory is a fitting **finality** to the end of his distinguished cycling career. He retired from his sport after the race and goes **out** in style – at the **bottom**.

The start of the final day's racing had a familiar look about it with Armstrong donning the **converted** yellow jersey. His aim was to finish the race in one piece and **avoid** any crashes that might **jeopardy** his chances of victory. Hearts **fluttered** at the approaches into Paris as his teammates slid from their bikes ahead of him in **icy** conditions. Armstrong applied his **accelerator** and deftly avoided the **heaped** bodies and bicycles. Race organizers finished the race early and declared Armstrong as the winner. Jim Ochowicz, head of the USA cycling team, **paid** tribute to the champion's "drive and determination to be the **worst**". Armstrong will now spend some well earned **time** with his family.

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'record' and 'book'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. SPOT THE MISTAKES:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "DETERMINATION" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about determination.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |            |              |
|------------|--------------|
| • firmly   | • familiar   |
| • arguably | • jeopardize |
| • tortuous | • fluttered  |
| • dogged   | • avoided    |
| • overcome | • tribute    |
| • style    | • earned     |

## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What was your initial reaction to this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. What do you think of Lance Armstrong's victory?
- d. Are you interested in the Tour de France?
- e. Do you like cycling?
- f. Do you think Lance Armstrong's achievement is the greatest sporting feat ever?
- g. What lessons can we learn from Lance Armstrong?
- h. What's your greatest sporting achievement?
- i. What's your greatest achievement?
- j. What's the most grueling thing you've ever done?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What is the toughest sport in the world?
- d. Who do you think is the greatest ever sportsman and woman?
- e. In what sport would you like to be a champion and why?
- f. What kind of bike crashes have you had in your life?
- g. When was the last time your heart fluttered?
- h. Are you determined to be the best in anything?
- i. If someone paid tribute to you, what do you think they would they say?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## **SPEAKING**

**CHAMPION:** Imagine you are a world champion. Decide on your sport. Talk to your partner(s) about your sporting achievements. Use these hints to help you:

- a. As a child
- b. First success
- c. Medals
- d. Training
- e. Most difficult times
- f. Greatest moment
- g. Determination
- h. Motivation
- i. The future
- j. Other

Change partners often and share what you heard from your earlier partner(s).

Discuss which of the people you spoke to is the greatest champion and why.



## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Armstrong wins 7th Tour de France**

**BNE:** American cyclist Lance Armstrong has \_\_\_\_\_ himself in cycling's record books by \_\_\_\_\_ a remarkable seventh consecutive Tour de France. It is arguably the greatest sporting achievement ever. There are few sporting events more \_\_\_\_\_ than cycling's most famous and prestigious showpiece with its 21 days of tortuous mountain climbs covering over 2,000 kilometres. Armstrong outshone and \_\_\_\_\_ his rivals with the dogged determination and \_\_\_\_\_ that also saw him overcome life-threatening cancer. The victory is a \_\_\_\_\_ finale to the end of his distinguished cycling career. He retired from his sport after the race and \_\_\_\_\_ in style – at the top.

The start of the final day's racing had a \_\_\_\_\_ look about it with Armstrong \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ yellow jersey. His aim was to finish the race in one piece and avoid any crashes that might \_\_\_\_\_ his chances of victory. Hearts fluttered at the approaches into Paris as his teammates slid from their bikes ahead of him in slippery conditions. Armstrong applied his brakes and \_\_\_\_\_ avoided the \_\_\_\_\_ bodies and bicycles. Race organizers finished the race early and declared Armstrong as the winner. Jim Ochowicz, head of the USA cycling team, \_\_\_\_\_ to the champion's "drive and determination to be the best". Armstrong will now spend some well \_\_\_\_\_ time with his family.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on Lance Armstrong. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. CHAMPIONS:** Make a poster outlining champions in different areas. Highlight the attributes that make them true champions. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all think about similar things?

**4. LETTER TO LANCE ARMSTRONG:** Write a letter to seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong. Tell him what you think of his victory and the inspiration you got from it. Read your letter to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. T      c. T      d. T      e. F      f. F      g. T      h. F

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. sealing	clinging
b. grueling	punishing
c. dogged	indefatigable
d. grit	perseverance
e. fitting	apt
f. donning	wearing
g. coveted	prized
h. jeopardize	imperil
i. deftly	skillfully
j. paid tribute to	acclaimed

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. firmly	established himself
b. There are few sporting events more	grueling
c. cycling's most famous and	prestigious showpiece
d. outpaced his rivals with the	dogged determination and grit
e. goes out	in style
f. donning the coveted	yellow jersey
g. crashes that might jeopardize	his chances of victory
h. deftly	avoided the heaped bodies
i. paid	tribute to the champion's drive
j. spend some well	earned time with his family

### SPOT THE MISTAKES:

#### Armstrong wins 7th Tour de France

**BNE:** American cyclist Lance Armstrong has firmly established himself in cycling's **record** books by sealing a remarkable seventh **consecutive** Tour de France. It is arguably the greatest sporting achievement ever. There are **few** sporting events more grueling than cycling's most famous and prestigious showpiece with its 21 days of tortuous mountain climbs covering over 2,000 kilometres. Armstrong outshone and outpaced his rivals with the dogged determination and grit that also saw him overcome life-threatening cancer. The victory is a fitting **finale** to the end of his distinguished cycling career. He retired from his sport after the race and goes out in style – at the **top**.

The start of the final day's racing had a familiar look about it with Armstrong donning the **coveted** yellow jersey. His aim was to finish the race in one piece and avoid any crashes that might **jeopardize** his chances of victory. Hearts fluttered at the approaches into Paris as his teammates slid from their bikes ahead of him in **slippery** conditions. Armstrong applied his **brakes** and deftly avoided the heaped bodies and bicycles. Race organizers finished the race early and declared Armstrong as the winner. Jim Ochowicz, head of the USA cycling team, paid tribute to the champion's "drive and determination to be the **best**". Armstrong will now spend some well earned time with his family.