

# SPORTS

## Armstrong Ahead in Tour de France

By IAN PHILLIPS  
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SESTRIERES, Italy (AP) - Lance Armstrong took a huge step toward victory in the Tour de France today by surging ahead of his rivals on the tough first mountain stage and keeping a firm hold on first place.

The American's victory in the race's ninth stage, a 133.4-mile climb in the Alps, was his third stage victory, after the prologue and Sunday's time trial. He now leads the field by a commanding 6 minutes, 3 seconds.

With about six miles left, the American left the leading pack of seven riders with a decisive sprint. No one was able to catch him.

Crossing the finish line, he held his arms aloft and looked to the sky.

In second place was Switzerland's Alex Zülle, 31 seconds behind, followed by Spain's Fernando Escartin,

one minute, 26 seconds behind.

Then came the tortuous climb to the jagged, snow-capped peaks of the Col du Galibier, where Armstrong edged ahead of the pack and arrived fifth at the summit.

The rain then stopped, and after a rapid, dry descent, the Texan got stronger and stronger, and nobody could match his efforts.

The mountain stages were seen as a big test for Armstrong, not known as a top climber. But he has shown exemplary form since the Tour began.

The American is enjoying an incredible comeback from testicular cancer that spread to his lungs and brain before it was diagnosed in October 1996.

The 27-year-old Texan has been training hard for the mountain stages.

"The phony war is over," he said after Sunday's victory in the time trial. "Now the real one begins."

## World Cup Soccer Created Answers! ...Questions?

By BARRY WILNER  
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LOS ANGELES (AP) - The three-week joy ride to the World Cup title isn't over for the U.S. women's team. The celebrations have only just begun.

The critical question, though, is what lasting effect the most celebrated team and most successful event in women's sports history will have.

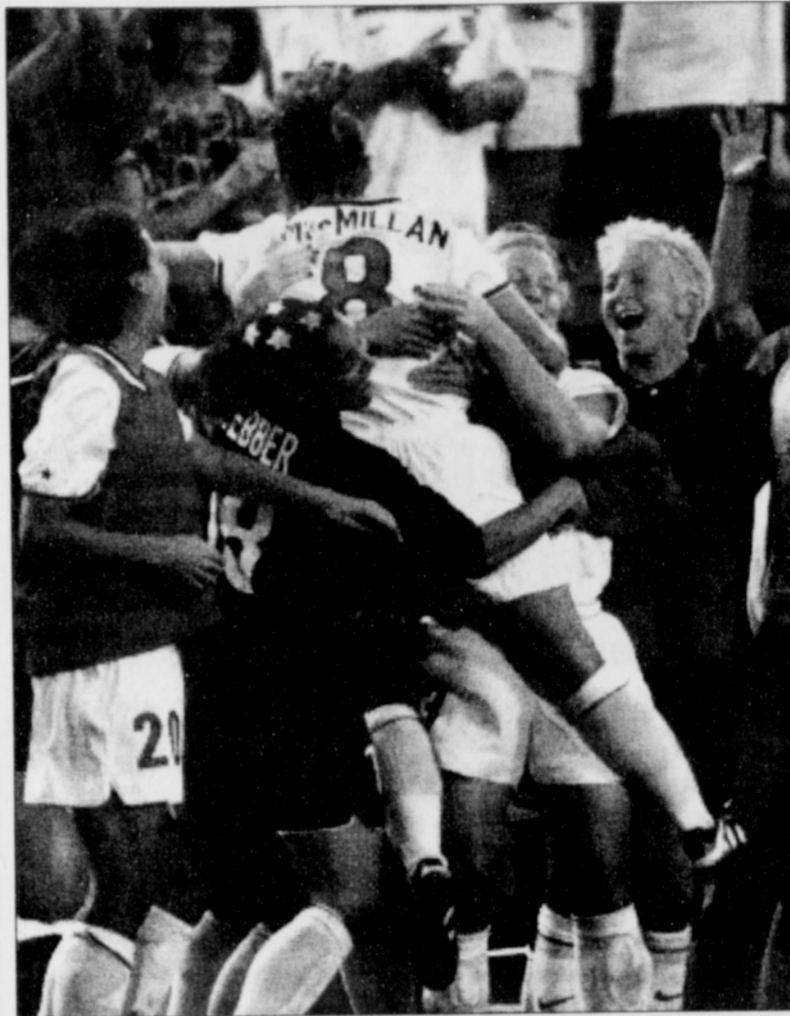
Will the legacy of the women's team be "establishing this Women's World Cup as the event responsible for the development of women's sports," as tournament organizer Marla Messing predicted?

Might soccer no longer be relegated to the backpages of America's sports section, or not included at all?

Could what all of those impressive grass-roots numbers - as many under-12s playing the game as any other sport - finally translate into more popularity on a general level for soccer in the United States?

"The legacy I want to leave is that no longer can anyone take women athletes lightly," U.S. forward Tiffeny Milbrett said. "There are no more excuses for not embracing the game. You can't say it will not draw; we proved that wrong from the first game of this tournament. You can't say it is not marketable and you can't say it is not popular."

No U.S. women's team ever has been embraced by the public the way this squad was on its way to the final, which it won Saturday 5-4 on penalty kicks after a 0-0 tie through 120



U.S. Women's World Cup Soccer Team jubilant over winning championship.

minutes. Ever since Brandi Chastain's kick won it, the women have been on a whirlwind tour that took them to Disneyland, to downtown Los Angeles and, today, across

the continent for television appearances in New York.

More personal appearances are scheduled, with several players appearing in golf pro-ams preceding PGA and LPGA events. Television and print ads are upcoming. Adulation is everywhere.

Nobody expects normal. On Saturday, the final was the most-watched soccer game ever on U.S. network television, with ABC estimating an audience of 40 million. The game posted a

13.3 overnight rating and a 32 share for the network, 4 percent more than the previous record, a 12.8 for the 1994 men's World Cup final, also played at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif.

On Sunday, they were the guests of honor at Disneyland, the centerpieces of a parade attended, naturally, by hundreds of young girls and boys. Then they were honored at a rally in downtown L.A., where they were told their bonuses, originally set at \$12,500, were raised to between \$40,000 and \$50,000.

After some deserved time off, most of the champions likely will gather for a victory tour, followed by the U.S. Women's Cup in early October. Several veterans, including 33-year-old Michelle Akers, who left the final after regulation time due to exhaustion and a slight concussion, might skip that event.

Most of the U.S. women team members want a professional league of their own. And despite startup costs as high as \$50 million, they sound determined to get it.

"It's time," Millbrett said. "And it will happen."

"We never expected anything like what this World Cup turned into," FIFA spokesman Keith Cooper said. "It has been wonderful for soccer and it has been wonderful for the women athletes."

"But to think anyone can recreate this is unfair. This was just a very special, very memorable event."

Perhaps. But not in the minds of the women who won it and the people who watched it.

"The goal is to take what we've learned about women's equity, what we've learned about women as equal partners and not subordinates, and export it around the world," Steinbrecher said. "I think we're on the cutting edge of a revolution."

## Local Athlete Competes in First United States Scholar-Athlete Game

GTECH'S Contribution Provides Opportunity for Local Students



Rafael DeLa Cruz, GTECH's vice president of Latin American operations, welcomes Hanna MacKay to Rhode Island.

Over 1600 scholar-athletes and scholar-fine artists representing all 50 states participated in the inaugural United States Scholar-Athlete Game from June 26 through July 2 at the University of Rhode Island and in Newport, Rhode Island, Hannah MacKay of Portland represented Oregon in the Games.

MacKay's participation in the game was made possible by the contribution of GTECH Corporation. GTECH made a corporate donation of \$26,000 - each of their 26 sites sponsoring a student in their community for \$1000. The donation covers transportation, room and board, and entry fees.

"We are proud to support the communities in which we work," said Bill O'Connor, chairman and chief executive officer of GTECH. "The inauguration of the US Scholar Athlete Games provided us the opportunity to reach out to children of our communities and offer them a chance to expand their education and life experiences."

"Our sponsorship of the US Scholar-Athlete Games demonstrates GTECH's commitment to involve itself in every community that it serves," said Robert Kilingman, account general manager for Oregon. "We're particularly pleased that Hannah MacKay

was able to represent Oregon during this weeklong celebration of academic, athletics and the arts." Scholar-athlete participated in one of 14 sports program including baseball, basketball, bridge, chess, field hockey, golf, soccer and tennis. Scholar-fine artists chose from six programs including art, choir, dance and theater. MacKay, 17, competed in the choir component of the Games. A junior honors student at Franklin High School, MacKay is a member of the Franklin concert choir and the reflections solo ensemble. In her spare time, she works on various community service projects through her church youth group.

During the week, GTECH invited the 26 students to visit their corporate headquarters in West Greenwich, Rhode Island so GTECH employees could welcome the students and wish them luck. Each student received in recognition of their participation a GTECH hat.

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## Franco Plays His Way to GMO Win

By GREG BEACHAM  
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MILWAUKEE (AP) - Carlos Franco would rather play than practice. Thanks to that philosophy, he's now the richest rookie in PGA Tour history.

Franco shot a 5-under-par 66 Sunday in the Greater Milwaukee Open and beat Tom Lehman by two strokes for his second tour victory in nine weeks. The son of a Paraguayan greenskeeper entered the GMO after two weeks of vacation because he wanted tournament pressure in the week before the British Open.

"I played very simple this week, no nervousness," Franco said in halting English. "I came here for practice, so to win is just unbelievable."

Thanks to his \$414,000 winner's check, he became the first tour rookie to exceed \$1 million in earnings and moved into the top 10 on this year's money list. Franco, just one of four multiple winners on tour this year, pushed his yearly winnings to \$1.38 million.

His GMO victory also put him in some elite company. The last player to win two titles as a rookie was Tiger Woods in 1996.

But that doesn't intimidate the likable Franco, who disdains practice on

tournament days, saying, "Practice is practice, tournament is tournament." He also doesn't like to slave over his clubs when he's at home in Asuncion ("Vacation is vacation").

Franco played a fourth straight day of solid, unspectacular golf. He finished with a four-day score of 20-under 264, the best 72-hole mark in GMO history.

He trailed Jerry Kelly by one stroke entering the final round. But Kelly, a Wisconsin native cheered by scores of fans, fell off the pace early and never caught up.

"I don't have to worry about the other (golfers) when I'm playing the way I'm playing," Franco said. "I didn't think I would win this easy, but it's very nice."

Lehman birdied the last two holes to slide in front of Kelly and take second at 266.

"I did a lot of things right this week ... but (Franco) kept making birdies, and that's what he needed to do," Lehman said.

When Franco won the Compaq Classic in New Orleans in May, he skipped the previous two tour events, just as he did before the GMO. He became the first golfer since Greg Norman in 1989 to win in Milwaukee on his first try.

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