



## Armstrong does not appear for summons in French doping probe

By Pierre-Antoine Souchard

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PARIS (AP) — Three-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong did not answer a summons in a French probe into whether his U.S. Postal Service team used doping products during the 2000 Tour, his lawyer said Wednesday.

Armstrong and nine teammates had been summoned to appear Tuesday before investigators seeking additional information in connection with an inquiry into whether the 2000 team violated anti-doping rules. The Texan cyclist notified investigators that he would not show up.

Armstrong "refuses to be a guinea pig for any experts who want to make a name in legal medicine," said his lawyer, Georges Kiejman. Le Parisien newspaper, which reported the story on Wednesday, said the other team members also failed to appear.

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U.S. Postal says it respects anti-doping rules, and Armstrong, who won the Tour de France for a third time in a row last year, has repeatedly denied taking banned substances. He has never failed a drug test, but in France he has been dogged by suspicions of doping.

A judicial official who asked not to be named said the team's refusal to appear "totally blocks the inquiry."

Francois Franchi, the assistant to the Paris prosecutor handling the inquiry, said in October that tests on blood and urine samples taken from the team during the 2000 Tour had not revealed any evidence of doping.

However, Investigating Judge Sophie-Helene Chateau had asked the cyclists to turn their medical files over to a court-

appointed expert who wanted to check for products that might have been used to conceal any evidence of doping, the judicial officials said.

The inquiry, opened in November 2000, seeks to determine whether the U.S. Postal team violated a 1999 law concerning the prevention and suppression of the use of doping products.

Dan Osipow, director of operations for the U.S. Postal team, contacted in California by telephone, said he could not provide an immediate comment on the report.

"I want to speak with everyone in our organization before commenting," Osipow said. Asked where Armstrong is, Osipow said that he didn't know but added that "the team is in full training mode right now."

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