



**U.S. CYCLIST HAMILTON RECEIVES TWO-YEAR SUSPENSION FOR BLOOD DOPING**

**COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.** (April 18, 2005)

The United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) announced today the decision by an independent arbitration panel from the American Arbitration Association (AAA)/North American Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), finding that Tyler Hamilton of Boulder, Colo., an athlete in the sport of cycling, committed a doping violation for transfusing another person's blood. Hamilton, 34, received the maximum two-year suspension for a first-time doping offense.

Following the full evidentiary hearing, the majority of the AAA/CAS Panel directly rejected Hamilton's defenses and found that his positive sample was "due to a homologous blood transfusion." Based on blood screens taken in the spring and summer of 2004, Union Cycliste International (UCI) warned Hamilton and his team that Hamilton was suspected of manipulating his blood. Following these warnings, UCI target-tested Hamilton and he tested positive.

"UCI took the necessary action to protect the integrity of its sport," said USADA Chief Executive Officer Terry Madden. "This decision shows that sport is committed to protecting the rights of all clean athletes and that no athlete is above the rules."

A transfusion of another person's blood is a prohibited method under the USADA Protocol and the UCI Anti-Doping Rules, which adopted the World Anti-Doping Code and World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) Prohibited List. This form of blood doping allows a person to increase their red blood cells, thereby increasing their aerobic power and endurance.

Hamilton tested positive at the Vuelta de Espana on September 11, 2004 and forfeits all competitive results achieved from that date. His two-year period of suspension ends on April 17, 2007.

The case was referred to USADA for handling by the UCI. The scheduling of the case was expedited by USADA at Hamilton's request. However, the AAA/CAS Panel provided Hamilton over a month extension following the hearing to submit any additional evidence in his defense. USADA did not object to the extension.

USA Cycling, the national governing body for the sport in the United States, will carry out the sanction.

USADA is responsible for managing the testing and results management process for athletes in the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement. USADA is equally dedicated to preserving the integrity of sport through research initiatives and educational programs.

A copy of the AAA/CAS decision is available in the results management section of the official USADA Web site (<http://www.usantidoping.org>).

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