



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**2009 AMGEN TOUR OF CALIFORNIA WILL SHOWCASE STRONGEST FIELD OF PROFESSIONAL CYCLISTS EVER ASSEMBLED IN UNITED STATES**

*Lance Armstrong, Two-Time Defending Champion Levi Leipheimer and 2008 Olympic Champion Fabian Cancellara Lead Star-Studded Field of Cyclists in America's Most Important Race*

**LOS ANGELES**, January 29, 2009 – The *2009 Amgen Tour of California* will assemble the best-ever collection of the world's top cyclists when America's most important road race begins February 14, in Sacramento with its Stage 3 Start in San Jose, 10 a.m.-noon, Tuesday, Feb. 17, at Park & Alamaden in downtown San Jose. Featuring a field that includes seven-time Tour de France Champion **Lance Armstrong** and two-time defending *Amgen Tour of California* Champion **Levi Leipheimer** (both racing for Astana), the 136 rider peloton also is expected to include 2006 Giro d'Italia Champion **Ivan Basso** (leader of team Liquigas); 2008 Olympic Champion in the time trial **Fabian Cancellara** (Saxo Bank); 2006 *Amgen Tour of California* Champion **Floyd Landis** (Ouch presented by Maxxis); 2005 World Champion **Tom Boonen** (Quick Step); three-time World Champion **Oscar Freire** (Rabobank); two-time United States National Champion **George Hincapie** (Team Columbia); and the top American performer in the 2008 Tour de France **Christian Vande Velde** (Garmin-Slipstream). Other anticipated participants include, 2008 Tour de France Champion **Carlos Sastre** (Cervélo TestTeam); four-time Norwegian National Champion **Thor Hushovd** (Cervélo TestTeam); 2008 U.S. Professional Champion and Olympic Gold Medal Winner **Tyler Hamilton** (Rock Racing); **Mark Cavendish** (Team Columbia), widely considered to be the world's best

sprinter; 2008 Best Young Rider in the *Amgen Tour of California* **Robert Gesink** (Rabobank); and 2008 Tour de France Best Young Rider **Andy Schleck** (Saxo Bank).

"It is clear that this year's *Amgen Tour of California* has the greatest field ever assembled in our country. We have legendary champions like Lance Armstrong, an extraordinary array of the best professional cyclists riding today and many of the most talented young riders in the world," said Andrew Messick, president of AEG Sports.

The 750-mile, nine-day stage race, modeled after the Tour de France and presented by AEG, will take 17 of the world's top professional cycling teams from Sacramento to San Diego County from February 14-22.

"I will be competing in the Amgen Tour of California," confirmed Lance Armstrong. "The level of competition, the challenge of the course and the highly professional atmosphere makes it the ideal situation for me to continue my training. I have also chosen the Amgen Tour of California because of the race's record of supporting Cancer awareness and research thru their Amgen *Breakaway from Cancer* initiatives and their commitment to partner with our Lance Armstrong Foundation. I look forward to racing once again in the United States in what we consider the best race outside of Europe.

The unprecedented field of riders expected to compete in the fourth-annual event, which drew a record 1.6 million spectators in 2008, includes two Tour de France Champions (Armstrong, Sastre), a Giro d'Italia Champion (Basso), 10 World Champions (Armstrong, Boonen, Cancellara, Michael Rogers, Cavendish, Brett Lancaster, Stuart O'Grady, Francisco Chicchi-Jr, Yoroslav Popovych-Jr. and Janez Brajokovic-Jr.), 26 Olympians and eight Olympic medalists (Armstrong, Cancellara, Hamilton, Leipheimer, Gustav Larsson, O'Grady, Rogers and Hayden Roulston) and 25 past and current National Champions.

Renowned riders from the previously announced 17 professional cycling teams competing in the race include the following:

- **Lance Armstrong (Austin, TX)** – Astana

Making a comeback after a three-year retirement, the legendary Armstrong has won the Tour de France a record seven times. Racing for Astana under his former team's general manager Johan Bruyneel, Armstrong enters his first ***Amgen Tour of California*** fresh from retirement. His resume includes wins at the San Sebastian Classic (1995), Tour of Switzerland (2001), Duaphine Libere (2002, 2003), Tour DuPont (1995, 1996) and a bronze medal at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, as well as a World Championship (1993) and a U.S. Professional Championship (1993). During his reign atop the world's biggest big race, Armstrong amassed an amazing 22 stage wins. His LIVESTRONG brand is now a global symbol of hope.

- **Ivan Basso (Italy)** – Liquigas

In 2006, Ivan Basso won his country's biggest race, the Giro d'Italia. The same year he also won the prestigious Criterium Internationale race. In total, he has won five stages of the Giro d'Italia and a stage of the Tour de France. He enters his second ***Amgen Tour of California*** as his team's leader for the first time.

- **Tom Boonen (Belgium)** – Quick Step

One of the greatest sprinters in the world, Boonen enters the ***Amgen Tour of California*** with his eyes on winning a stage. The 2005 World Champion, Boonen is a great one-day rider who could win any bunch sprint. Boonen's recent resume includes an impressive six stage wins at the 2007 Tour de France, as well as the sprint points jersey; two stages at the Vuelta a España; two wins of the Ronde van Vlaanderen; and two dramatic wins at the world's toughest one-day race, the Paris-Roubaix (2005, 2008).

- **Fabian Cancellara (Switzerland)** – Saxo Bank

Perhaps the world's best time trialist, Cancellara won last year's opening Prologue at the *Amgen Tour of California* and went on to win an Olympic gold medal in the individual time trial and an unprecedented bronze medal on the road at the 2008 Beijing Games. A three-time stage winner and yellow jersey bearer in the Tour de France, Cancellara also has won two World Championships in the time trial competition. A six-time time trial national champion of Switzerland, he has won the two "monuments," Paris-Roubaix and Milan-San Remo, as well as the Italian stage race, Tirreno-Adriatico. He has posted more than 20 time trial wins in his professional career and is a favorite to win the opening Prologue in this year's *Amgen Tour of California*.
- **Mark Cavendish (Britain)** – Team Columbia

2008 was a remarkable year for Cavendish, as he amassed 14 victories at major stage races. He won two stages at the Three Days of De Panne; two in the Giro d'Italia; four in the Tour de France; three in the Tour of Ireland; and three stage wins and the sprint points classification at the Tour of Missouri. He started cycling as a BMX racer, building his speed at a young age. He transferred that energy over to velodrome racing and won two World Championships in the Men's Madison Title. Cavendish is widely considered to be the best sprinter in the world today.
- **Oscar Freire (Spain)** – Rabobank

When it comes to performing well in big races, Freire has done it as well as anyone in professional cycling. A three-time World Champion, Freire also has won four stages at the Tour de France and seven stages at the Vuelta a España. He's also won three prestigious European races, including the Tirreno-Adriatico, Ghent-Wevelgem and is a two-time

winner of Milan-San Remo. Last season, he fulfilled a career goal of winning the sprint points jersey at the Tour de France.

- **Tyler Hamilton (Boulder, CO)** – Rock Racing

Hamilton is most known for his courageous Tour de France breakaway win at the 2003 race while riding with a broken collarbone. Hamilton recently won the U.S. Professional Championships in August and, earlier in the year, won the Tour of Qinghai Lake in China. He has won an Olympic gold medal in the time trial at the 2004 Athens Games; two overall wins at the Tour of Romandie; overall win at the European classic Liege-Bastogne-Liege; and stage wins at both the Tour de France and Giro d'Italia.

- **George Hincapie (Greenville, SC)** – Team Columbia

American cycling icon Hincapie turned professional at age 20, and since then has been the member of a record eight winning Tour de France teams, during which he served as the main lieutenant for Lance Armstrong's historic seven wins. He has claimed his own victories throughout his 15-year career as well including, winning two stages at the 2005 Tour de France and the 2006 U.S. Professional Championships; a stage of France's Dauphine-Libre; as well as winning the 2007 Tour of Missouri. Hincapie also is a two-time U.S. National Champion (road race) and a five-time Olympian. In the *Amgen Tour of California*, Hincapie has claimed three stage wins, including two in the inaugural race in 2006, in which he placed fourth overall, and a thrilling win on a rain-soaked final day in Pasadena last year.

- **Thor Hushovd (Norway)** – Cervélo TestTeam

Hushovd remains one of the best sprinters, as well as prologue specialists, in the world. He is a threat to win the opening Prologue at the *2009 Amgen Tour of California*. A six-time stage winner and sprint points jersey winner of the Tour de France, the Norwegian remains a

threat to win any sprint. A well-rounded rider, Hushovd also is a four-time Norwegian National Champion and winner of stages in both the Giro d'Italia and Vuelta a España. In 2006, he won the prestigious Belgian Classic Fleche Wallone.

- **Kim Kirchen (Luxembourg)** – Team Columbia

Kirchen had a breakthrough year in 2008, winning the Pais Vasco race in Spain and winning a stage at the Tour of Switzerland and the Belgian Classic Fleche Wallone. To cap off his year, Kirchen led the Tour de France for four days and found himself in the green points jersey for several others. He has finished seventh and eighth in the Tour de France in 2007 and 2008, respectively. He also is a three-time National Champion of Luxembourg.

- **Floyd Landis (Temecula, CA)** – Ouch presented by Maxxis

The *2009 Amgen Tour of California* will be Landis' first competition in two and a half years. A one-time domestique of Lance Armstrong, Landis began his ascent to team leader in 2005, capping things off the following year by winning both the *2006 Amgen Tour of California* and the Tour de Georgia. In 2009, Landis has re-emerged with a new American team and is set to race again at this year's *Amgen Tour of California*. A former mountain biker, Landis suffered from a degenerative hip condition which forced him to receive an artificial hip replacement at the end of 2006.

- **Levi Leipheimer (Santa Rosa, CA)** – Astana

Leipheimer enters the *Amgen Tour of California* as the two-time defending champion. Leipheimer is a four-time, top-10 finisher at the Tour de France and won a stage of the race in 2007. That same year, he won the U.S. Professional Championships, while also winning two stages at the Tour de Georgia and one at the Tour of Missouri. In 2008, he won a bronze medal at the Beijing Olympics. His dominance is

noted in his home state, as he has won four stages of the *Amgen Tour of California* while garnering top honors twice, as well as the KOM jersey in the inaugural race.

- **Michael Rogers (Australia)** – Team Columbia

Hailed as one of the world's most talented riders, Rogers finished in the top-10 in both the time trial and road race competitions at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. The three-time World Champion in the individual time trial followed that up with finishing second overall at the Tour of Missouri. After suffering through mononucleosis and a strain of Epstein-Barr syndrome, the tough Aussie seems to be back in top form, recently winning the time trial in the Australian National Championships this month.

- **Andy Schleck (Luxembourg)** – Saxo Bank

Hailed as the next great stage racer, Schleck has been racing professionally for the past three seasons. The younger brother of Frank Schleck, he finished first in the Best Young Rider competition in the 2008 Tour de France and the 2007 Giro d'Italia, where he also placed second overall. This past August, he finished fifth overall in the 2008 Olympic Road Race in Beijing.

- **Christian Vande Velde (Lemont, IL)** – Garmin-Slipstream

Vande Velde has developed into one of the best all-around riders in the world in the past two years. After years of being a domestique for top teams, Vande Velde placed third overall at the *2008 Amgen Tour of California*, led the Giro d'Italia for a day, placed fourth overall at the Tour de France and was the overall champion at the Tour of Missouri this past season. He also placed 17<sup>th</sup> overall at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. His breakthrough as a team leader came when he won the Tour of Luxembourg in 2006, followed by placing second overall at the 2007 Tour de Georgia.

- **Jens Voigt (Germany)** – Saxo Bank

A long-time force in the peloton, Germany's Voigt is one of the most admired cyclists in the professional peloton. Over the years, he has won two stages of the Tour de France and the Giro d'Italia. A threat to win any road stage, Voigt has an impressive background, including wins in his country's national tour (2006, 2007), the Tour of Poland (2008), the Tour of the Mediterranean and the Criterium Internationale, which he has won four times overall. In the *2007 Amgen Tour of California*, he battled Levi Leipheimer throughout the eight-day race, eventually finishing second overall.

- **David Zabriskie (Salt Lake, UT)** – Garmin-Slipstream

As the only American to win a stage of all three Grand Tours (Tour de France, Giro d'Italia, and Vuelta a España), Zabriskie is one of the most talented time trialists in the world. He is a four-time U.S. National Champion in the time trial and has won two medals at the World Championships. After spending several seasons with the former top-ranked CSC team, Zabriskie is now with American team Garmin-Slipstream and has used that as a springboard for success. One of the most colorful personalities in the peloton, Zabriskie is a threat to win the Prologue or Individual Time Trial at the *2009 Amgen Tour of California*.

*\*Complete team rosters to follow in the days leading up to the race*

For more information about the *2009 Amgen Tour of California*, please visit [www.amgentourofcalifornia.com](http://www.amgentourofcalifornia.com).

#### About the Amgen Tour of California

The largest cycling event in America, the *Amgen Tour of California* is a Tour de France-style cycling road race, presented by AEG, that challenges the world's top professional cycling teams to compete along a demanding

course. Building on last year's third-annual stage race, which attracted 1.6 million spectators, the *2009 Amgen Tour of California* will be expanded to cover more than 750 miles over nine days from February 14-22, 2009.

#### About Amgen

Amgen discovers, develops, manufactures and delivers innovative human therapeutics. A biotechnology pioneer since 1980, Amgen was one of the first companies to realize the new science's promise by bringing safe and effective medicines from lab, to manufacturing plant, to patient. Amgen therapeutics have changed the practice of medicine, helping millions of people around the world in the fight against cancer, kidney disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and other serious illnesses. With a broad and deep pipeline of potential new medicines, Amgen remains committed to advancing science to dramatically improve people's lives. To learn more about Amgen's pioneering science and vital medicines, visit [www.amgen.com](http://www.amgen.com). To learn more about Amgen's Breakaway from Cancer initiative, visit [www.breakawayfromcancer.com](http://www.breakawayfromcancer.com).

#### About AEG

AEG is one of the leading sports and entertainment presenters in the world. AEG, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Anschutz Company, owns or controls a collection of companies including facilities such as STAPLES Center, The Home Depot Center, Sprint Center, The O2, Nokia Theatre L.A. LIVE and NOKIA Theatre Times Square; sports franchises including the Los Angeles Kings (NHL), two Major League Soccer franchises, a Women's Professional Soccer league team, the Los Angeles Sol, two hockey franchises operated in Europe, management of privately held shares of the Los Angeles Lakers, the ING Bay to Breakers foot race and the *Amgen Tour of California* cycling road race; AEG Live, the organization's live-entertainment division, is a collection of companies dedicated to all aspects of live contemporary music performance, touring and a variety of

programming and multi-media production. For more information, visit AEG today at [www.aegworldwide.com](http://www.aegworldwide.com).

### About the City of San Jose

From its founding in 1777 as California's first city, San Jose has been a leader, driven by its spirit of innovation. Today, San Jose stands as the third largest city California, behind Los Angeles and San Diego, and the Capital of Silicon Valley—the world's leading center of innovation. The city, the 10th largest in the U.S., is committed to remaining a top-ranked place to work, live, learn and play, and, with more than 150 miles of bike lanes and paths, aggressively supports cycling as a viable alternative form of green transportation. San Jose's commitment to cycling earned the city a National Bicycle Friendly Community Award from the League of American Bicyclists. As an epicenter of cycling in the San Francisco Bay area, San Jose is part of one of the world's largest great cycling communities in North America

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