

## DOCUMENT 2B-

Armstrong cycles hope across the miles

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*"People don't want autographs. They want to touch him because to them he's a hope machine," says Rick Reilly of Sports Illustrated on ESPN Classic's SportsCentury series.*

The mountains melt before him. The miles, thousands of them, fall away under his relentless, single-minded onslaught. Lance Armstrong, a lean, sinewy Texan, appears to be the closest thing to a machine that a human can come.

But the man on a bike has become far more than that, more than just the very best athlete in his sport. He is a symbol of hope and inspiration to all those cancer patients tethered to their chemotherapy drip poles. They see him pedaling with a demonic ferocity and he kindles in them a burning will and he replenishes their spirits.

In 1996, an oncologist pronounced a fatal sentence over Armstrong, assessing his chances of survival at less than 50 percent. Armstrong's response was to rise from his sick bed and win the oldest, longest, hardest race on earth -- the Tour de France.

And then win it the next six years to become the first to ever capture the race seven times. And as he pedaled on and on, there was no way to measure what he did by any of the conventional standards of sports because he didn't hit a baseball, didn't throw a football, didn't dribble a basketball. He rode a bike, and every July from 1999 to 2005, he was back again, an American in Paris, taking another triumphant trip down the Champs-Elysees.

With each victory, his legend grew, especially to cancer survivors throughout the world. .