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Armstrong grabs 5th straight Tour

By John Leicester
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PARIS — Never did his reign look so uncertain. Never did he savor a victory quite like this one.

Only with his Tour de France title finally assured during the last leg on the cobblestoned Champs-Élysées, did Lance Armstrong celebrate by lifting a flute of champagne to a resounding "Cheers!"

Overcoming crashes, illness, hard-charging rivals and plain old bad luck, the Texan won his hardest but sweetest Tour on Sunday — a record-tying fifth straight that places him among the great-

est cyclists ever.

Unlike previous years, when he won by comfortable margins, the grueling 23-day, 2,125-mile clockwise trek around France pushed Armstrong to the limit.

"Before the Tour started I was very confident about winning. But before next year's Tour, I won't be so confident," he said.

Armstrong joined Spaniard Miguel Indurain as the only riders to win cycling's most brutal and prestigious race five times consecutively — a record Armstrong plans to break in 2004.

"It's a dream, really a dream," Armstrong said in French after climbing the podium while "The Star-Spangled Banner" rang out.

"I love cycling, I love my job and I will be back for a sixth. It's incredible to win again."

So action-packed was this Tour that Armstrong was prepared for the unexpected — even Sunday, on the largely professional final stage.

"If a plane landed in the race I wouldn't be surprised," he said before setting off from the Paris suburb of Ville d'Avray on the 92.4-mile ride through streets packed with cheering spectators, many waving American flags.

Armstrong shared the podium with five-time runner-up Jan Ullrich and third-place finisher Alexandre Vinokourov, holding their hands above his head in a fitting tribute to the two men who battled him to the end.

Armstrong's fierce duel with Ullrich made this centennial Tour the most gripping in years, drawing millions of fans who thronged winding mountain climbs and adorned villages along the route with banners for the riders. "Lance is God," said one sign in the Pyrenees.

Armstrong's 61-second victory hardly resembled the previous four Tours, when

Armstrong wins Tour



Lance Armstrong won a record-tying fifth Tour de France title Sunday. The 31-year-old cancer survivor and Miguel Indurain of Spain are the only two riders to win the Tour five times straight.

Tour de France results

YEAR	RANK	STAGE VICTORIES
2003	1	2
2002	1	4
2001	1	4
2000	1	1
1999	1	4

SOURCES: Associated Press; AP
Societe du Tour de France

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Urban forester maintains A&M landscape

By Megan Orton
THE BATTALION

Management of an 11,261 tree database is just part of Koby Weatherford's job as Texas A&M's urban forester.

The daily agenda includes tree evaluations, diagnoses, fertilizing, pruning and cutting down trees, Weatherford said.

"Most people drive through campus and see the trunks of the trees, and the bottom, but I'm just looking up," he said. "Sometimes it can be dangerous, but I'm just gawking at the trees."

Weatherford's interest in trees was sparked by an apprenticeship with a resident tree expert.

After graduating from Abilene Christian University in 1998, Weatherford moved to College Station and took a position as a tree maintenance specialist under Todd Watson, Weatherford's predecessor as urban forester.

"Working for him and being involved in the work on a daily basis was like going to school for four years," Weatherford said. "He knows just about everything there is to know about urban forestry and how to take care of the trees on campus."

Weatherford was an interim for Watson, and nine months later he found himself as the new urban forester.

"I spend a lot of time actually find-



SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

Koby Weatherford trims a branch in safety and style as Texas A&M's urban forester. Weatherford serves as both doctor and barber for the campus' more than 11,000 trees. Below: Weatherford assesses campus vegetation as he considers how to aesthetically improve and repair the area.

ing the work that needs to be done," Weatherford said.

It would take his staff, which consists of three maintenance specialists and himself, several years to visit every tree inventoried, he said.

"The business of landscape is sometimes seen as menial, and those of us who do it know that's not true, so it's kind of a common bond we share," Weatherford said. "If it wasn't for the guys that work for me and the guys I work for, none of it would be happening."

Weatherford and his team operate using a database that categorizes complaints and problems involving trees on campus and what kind of trouble they cause, such as a branch scratching on a windowpane or dead wood that has fallen in the way of traffic.

"My number one main concern for this campus concerning trees involves their safety," Weatherford said. "We don't want a limb falling on a student,

falling on a car, or damaging people's property."

A tree's health and its aesthetics are two other concerns that make visiting a tree necessary, Weatherford said.

"Some people think that just because a tree is green, that it is healthy, which is not always the case," he said. "Although lots of times you may not know what's wrong with a tree, there are steps you can take to deduce the problem."

The landscape team tries to save every tree it can, Weatherford said, but it cannot save all of them.

"A tree is just like any living organism in that it does have a lifespan. I wish every one could be saved and be there forever, but the fact of the matter is that they won't," he said.

Weatherford said when he and his team go out to cut down a tree, they are not just hacking away at it.

"Urban forestry and tree care have come a long way in recent years," he

said. "It's more of a science than people realize."

How you cut it, where you cut it and why you cut it that way are all very important, he said.

"The thing about managing such a large number of trees is that there's so many of them and each one is an individual," Weatherford said.

The trees on A&M's campus are mostly live oak, Weatherford said, but there are 91 types of trees inventoried on campus.

A&M's most famous tree is the large oak tree located in the Academic Plaza, commonly called the "Century Tree," known for its Aggie wedding ceremonies and proposals.

The Century Tree is more than 100 years old, which Weatherford said is ironic, because it adopted its name long ago, probably due to its immense size.

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Regents up spring tuition \$9 per hour

By Jodi Rogers
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents approved a \$9 per class-hour tuition increase Friday during its meeting at Texas A&M-Commerce after hearing student input.

The increase will set the University authorized tuition rate at \$55 per semester credit hour. That amount is in addition to the \$46 state-mandated tuition. The state-mandated and University authorized rates each increased \$2 per semester credit hour for the fall semester.

Student Body President Matt Josefy said he and three members from his executive committee were the only student representatives in attendance at the meeting from any of the A&M System schools.

Josefy said he told the board that students at A&M are concerned with how the extra funds will be spent.

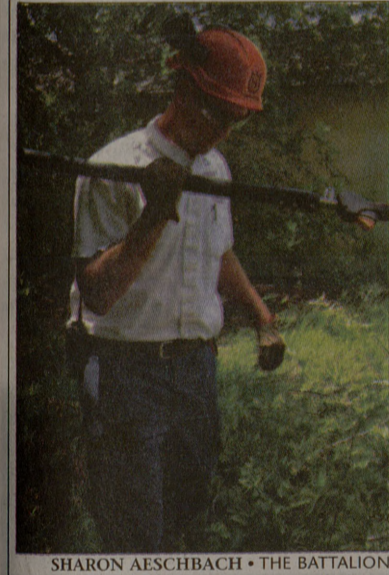
"If tuition is raised, it is being sold to us based on the added value that will bring to our education," he said. "I implore you and (A&M President Robert M.) Gates that if it is additional faculty interaction that we are paying for that these benefits are actually realized. If faculty are not used to reduce class size and increase student-faculty interactions, then reducing the

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TUITION INCREASE FOR SPRING AND FALL

- Board of regents approved the \$9 per credit hour increase for spring
- The increase sets the authorized tuition rate at \$55 per semester
- The state mandated and university authorized rate each increase \$2 per semester credit hour for the Fall 2003 semester

RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: A&M PRESIDENT'S OFFICE



SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

Body found near Waco may be missing player

By Angela K. Brown
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WACO — Investigators continued combing through chest-high weeds Sunday, collecting evidence in a field where they found a body that may be that of missing Baylor University basketball player Patrick Dennehy.

For the second straight day, authorities used farm equipment to cut down tall weeds and grass, some as high as 7 feet tall, in a rural area about five miles south of Waco.

A decomposed body was found Friday night and was taken on Saturday to the Dallas County Medical Examiner's Office for autopsy.

Officials said identification could take several days. An investigator at the medical examiner's office said Sunday night there was no information to release on the case and said all material would be released to McLennan County authorities. A sheriff's dispatcher said no one was available to comment on whether any information had been received.

The site where the body was found is north of gravel pits where authorities searched last week after the arrest of Carlton Dotson, who played basketball at Baylor last season and had been living with Dennehy since spring.

Dotson, 21, was arrested last week in his home state of Maryland on a murder charge



ALISON WOODWORTH • KRT CAMPUS

Emergency personnel search a dense field where a body, believed to be that of missing Baylor University basketball player Patrick Dennehy, was found near the campus in Waco on Saturday.

from Texas in Dennehy's death. He remains jailed without bond awaiting extradition to Texas.

Dotson was arrested July 21 after calling 911, saying he needed help because he was hearing voices, authorities said. Waco police said Dotson told FBI agents in Maryland that he shot Dennehy after the player tried to shoot him. But after his arrest, Dotson told The Associated Press that "he didn't confess to anything."

On Sunday, an investigator in a cowboy hat was placing small yellow flags around the site indicating pieces of evidence. At times, as he moved around, the grasses obscured all but the top of his hat. Throughout the day authorities in crime scene vans and other vehicles traveled the dirt road back and forth to the site.

McLennan County Sheriff

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U.S. urges end to Liberia's rebel attacks, blasts kill 16

By Alexandra Zavis
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MONROVIA, Liberia — Explosions rocked Liberia's capital Sunday as rebels and government forces battled at key crossings leading to President Charles Taylor's downtown stronghold and at least 16 people died when mortar shells hit their homes.

The U.S. ambassador to Liberia appealed to insurgents to lift their bloody eight-day siege of Monrovia and withdraw — even as government commanders and residents reported that the rebels were stepping up their drive into the city.

Rebels are pressing forward in their third attempt in two months to take Monrovia, an isolated and disease-ridden city of at least 1.3 million hungry

residents and refugees. Their goal: driving out Taylor, a former warlord behind nearly 14 years of ruinous conflict in the once prosperous West African nation.

The main rebel movement "needs to show that they have regard for the people of Liberia, that it is not indifferent to the great human suffering that is taking place here," Ambassador John Blaney told reporters at the heavily guarded, high-walled U.S. Embassy.

The U.S. ambassador urged the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) movement to pull back to the natural boundary of Po River, six miles outside the capital. The withdrawal would open

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