



WICKED TEAMS TOP SAN JOSE TOURNAMENT

The Redwood City Wicked Fastpitch 14U and 10U softball teams each won divisions at the Bagby Classic in San Jose. The 14U team went 2-1 in pool play on Saturday. During Sunday's single-elimination round, Wicked Fastpitch started with an 11-3 win over the Palo Alto Heat, then beat the West Valley Slammers 4-3 (in an international tie-breaker). Those wins advanced the 14U team to the championship game against the Fremont Flyers. The game was a hard-fought contest

with Wicked Fastpitch prevailing 4-3. The Wicked Fastpitch 10U team also went 2-1 in pool play on Saturday. They began Sunday by beating the Newark Rocksters 14-2 and the Almaden Lightning 10-9 to advance to the title game against the Cupertino Inferno. After a long, hard day of softball, the 10U team ended up beating Cupertino 14-13 in their last at-bat to win the championship. Members of the 14U team above: (left to right) coach Steve Chandler, Sara Uribe, Allison Knapp,

Kallista Leonardos, Madison Chandler, Ginni Aispuro-Brown, coach Ponch Robles, Daisy Alvarado-Munoz, Isabelle Robles, Shannon Aguiar, Gianna Vennarucci, Kelci Carle and Sarah Banks. Members of the 10U team below: Samantha Carlos, coach Hector Carlos, Brenna Barrett, coach Jose Torres, Jeanette Marino, Kaitlyn Grech, coach Matt Presotto, Alessia Presotto, coach Jeff Grech, McKenna Jaworski, Alexandria Torres, Isabella Mas, Quinn Mitchell, Jordan Zirbes and Victoria Sanie.



Armstrong wary of 1st week in Tour

American star begins final quest for cycling's biggest honor today

BY SAMUEL PETREQUIN
Associated Press

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands — The Tour de France gets under way Saturday and Lance Armstrong says he doesn't expect to win the 5.5-mile prologue of what will be his last ride in cycling's premier event.

The short and mainly flat stage through the Dutch port of Rotterdam's city center doesn't feature major problems, but Armstrong has recently struggled in the discipline. He used to dominate his rivals in time trials during his heyday.

Last year, his failure in the Annecy time trial hampered his chances in his comeback attempt to win the Tour for the eighth time. Armstrong eventually finished third.

"I'm not going to win on Saturday, I know that," Armstrong said. "These time trials ... I don't know, it's just I've lost it."

Armstrong built his seven straight Tour victories with strong displays in the mountains and time trials. But at nearly 39 years old, he lacks explosiveness in the race against the clock.

Armstrong said this Tour is one of the toughest he'll tackle, with riders going through seven dangerous and treacherous cobblestone sectors in the third stage.

"The first week, we can't have any mistake," Armstrong said. "We can't lose time. I have to get through the first week neutral. There will be people, I think, that will be minutes behind."

"If you consider the first three or four stages in relation to the last four stages, it's a full race. There is three weeks of real racing. It's start to finish."

The Texas star has had a complicated season without much time to practice. He was expected to compete in time trials at the Circuit de la Sarthe and at the Tour of California, but had to withdraw because of illness and a crash.

"He did some time trial work, but it has been a catch-up constantly to find a good condition," said Armstrong's RadioShack sports director Johan Bruyneel.

Armstrong finished second at the Tour of Switzerland last month following a solid performance in the final stage.

Among the prologue favorites are Olympic time trial champion Fabian Cancellara of Switzerland, Bradley Wiggins and David Millar of Britain as well as Tony Martin of Germany.

"For sure, to win this stage is a big goal," Martin said. "Hopefully, I will be able to achieve this."

Armstrong's hopes have been boosted this year because there is only one big time trial scheduled during the three-week race, coming on the eve of the finish on the Champs-Elysees.

The course has 23 mountain passes and favors defending champion Alberto Contador, who is considered the best climber.

Contador says Armstrong can't be ruled out.

"I think he's stronger than last year," the 27-year-old Spaniard said. "There are maybe about 10 to 12 riders with intentions to win the Tour, and Armstrong is among them."

Contador had a tense relationship with the seven-time champion when they rode together on the Astana team last year.

"He seems very motivated, we'll have to look out for him," Contador said.

Contador is aiming to win the Tour for the third time, with help from Alexandre Vinokourov, a Kazakh star who is returning from a two-year doping ban.

"My relations with Vino are excellent, there's great trust between us, and it's impossible that something like last year will happen this year," Contador said.

The race features a daunting last week in the Pyrenees, with four stages in the mountains that form the border of France and Spain. The Tourmalet, one of the toughest climbs in cycling, will be scaled twice.