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Armstrong inspects Adelaide cancer centre

19:59 AEST Mon Jan 17 2011

Lance Armstrong's connections with Adelaide will persist well beyond his racing in the Tour Down Under.

The record seven-time Tour de France champion visited the city's Flinders Medical Centre on Monday to inspect construction of the cancer research centre that bears the name of his foundation.

The Livestrong Cancer Research Centre will be part of the Flinders Centre for Innovation in Cancer that will open next year.

"Our commitment is one that will last ... as long as we need it to last, hopefully that's not forever," Armstrong said.

"So we look forward to being back here the day the doors open."

Armstrong nearly died from cancer in 1996 and recovered from the disease to win his seven Tour titles.

Apart from his cycling fame, Armstrong has become world-famous for his cancer charity advocacy.

"The only day we can say it's going great is the day we don't have to deal with this disease," he said.

"If somebody comes up to me and asks 'how's Livestrong going?', the day that I can say 'hey, it's going great' is the day I say 'we're out of business - they don't need us anymore."

Armstrong and South Australia have been very good for each other, with the cyclist starting his competition comeback at Adelaide's Tour Down Under in 2009.

This will be the third-straight year he has competed in the Tour and this time, it will be his last overseas bike race before he retires again.

The South Australian government has never revealed what fee it paid, apparently to Livestrong, for Armstrong to race.

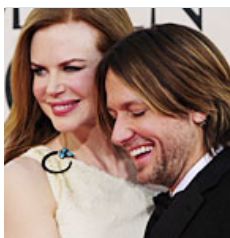
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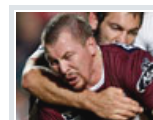


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But Armstrong's presence has been a massive boost for the race, dramatically boosting crowd numbers and overseas interest.

Also on Monday, South Australian Premier Mike Rann announced Adelaide's newest bike path would be called the Livestrong Pathway.

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