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**RELEASE DATE: IMMEDIATE**

## **STAGE 6 OF 2010 AMGEN TOUR OF CALIFORNIA IS SET FOR A DEFINING DAY OF RACING**

*Stage 6 Route from Palmdale to Big Bear Lake is the Most Challenging Stage*

BIG BEAR LAKE, Calif. April 14, 2010 – Today officials of the Amgen Tour of California announced the Stage 6 route from Palmdale to Big Bear Lake. On Friday, May 21 the world's top professional cyclists including Lance Armstrong, Levi Leipheimer, Dave Zabriskie and George Hincapie will battle it out on the Tour's most challenging route known as the queen stage. The route from Palmdale to Big Bear Lake consists of 135 miles and more than 12,000 feet of climbing. The grueling queen stage is specifically designed to challenge cyclists, and should have a significant impact on the overall standings of the Amgen Tour of California (ATOC).

“The May timing of the 2010 edition of the AMGEN Tour of California is going to allow us to visit some challenging new areas of California that previously were not possible due to the weather,” said Andrew Messick president of AEG Sports, presenter of the race. “The Stage 6 route from Palmdale to Big Bear is the perfect example, with our first-ever mountain finish at a 7,000 foot elevation.”

Palmdale City Hall will serve as the backdrop for the most difficult stage in the five-year history of the Amgen Tour of California. After a five-mile neutral section heading south on Sierra Rd., the route makes a left turn onto Angeles Forest Highway. Facing the riders is the imposing San Gabriel mountain range, and within a few miles the first of seven King of the Mountains (KOMs) will be crested. After a blistering descent from Mill Creek Summit, the route turns to Upper Big Tujunga and then onto Angeles Crest Highway (Hwy. 2).

The cyclists will encounter a number of climbs, including five KOMs, along Angeles Forest Highway and Hwy. 2 as they strive to reach Dawson Saddle, the highest point of the entire tour at 7,900 feet. From Dawson Saddle the racers will have their first sprint to Wrightwood at an elevation of 5,960 feet.

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The peloton of riders will cross Interstate 15 on an overpass, and make their push east onto a curvy Highway 138 to Silverwood Lake. In the distance the cyclists will see mountain vistas that surround Big Bear Lake, which looks quite intimidating from afar. From Silverwood Lake a steep and windy climb into the San Bernardino Mountains begins on their way to Crestline.

The race then moves onto Highway 18, which is known as the Rim of the World Highway, because of its narrow stretch of road that sets on the edge of the San Bernardino Mountains. This portion of the race goes through the mountain communities of Sky Forest, Running Springs and Arrowbear.

Just outside of Arrowbear the racers will encounter the last long sustained climb of the day. The riders will have a steep climb all the way to Lakeview Point, which tops out at 7,112 feet. At this point the cyclists will be treated to a stunning view of Big Bear Lake, the jewel of the San Bernardino Mountains.

From Lakeview Point the racers will sprint along a portion of Highway 18, known as the Arctic Circle. The racers will kick it into high gear as they give it their all on this final sprint to Big Bear Lake. The race route enters Big Bear Valley at Big Bear Dam, but rather than crossing the dam and heading through the City of Big Bear Lake, the riders will continue on the north shore of the lake and race along the shoreline for about three miles. The cyclists will ride through the quaint mountain town of Fawnskin and pass by some of Big Bear’s most recognizable locales, such as the Big Bear Discovery Center, Serrano Campground and the East Boat Public Launch Ramp. The cyclists will cross over Stanfield Cutoff to the City of Big Bear Lake and make a mad dash for the finish line at the base of Snow Summit Mountain Resort at an elevation of 7,000 feet.

The race starts in Palmdale at 9:30 a.m., and is expected to end in Big Bear Lake sometime between 3:20 p.m. and 4 p.m. By the end of stage the race the riders will have climbed more than 12,000 feet. The Amgen Tour of California’s first-ever mountaintop finish in Big Bear Lake could very well be a determining factor in the outcome of the final standings.

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**About the Amgen Tour of California**

*The largest cycling event in America, the 2010 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 from May 16-23.*