Written by Maury Brown
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THIS IS BREAKING NEWS....

Baseball Commissioner Allan H. (Bud) Selig announced today that, effective immediately, Minor League players will be subject to random blood testing for the detection of human growth hormone under Major League Baseball's Minor League Drug Prevention and Treatment Program. Major League Baseball is the first United States professional sports league to conduct blood testing.

The National Center for Drug Free Sport, the organization that currently performs all urine sample collections under the Minor League Drug Program, will perform all blood sample collections. All blood samples will be collected post-game from the non-dominant arms of randomly selected non 40-man roster players at select Minor League affiliates. Blood samples will be shipped to the Sports Medicine Research and Testing Laboratory in Salt Lake City for analysis.

"The implementation of blood testing in the Minor Leagues represents a significant step in the detection of the illegal use of human growth hormone," said Commissioner Selig. "The Minor League Program employs state of the art testing procedures and the addition of HGH testing provides an example for all of our drug policies in the future."

Major League Baseball's Minor League Drug Prevention and Treatment Program, which commenced in June, 2001 and included testing for steroids, was unilaterally implemented by

Commissioner Selig. Since Minor League players are not members of the Players Association, blood testing for HGH is not a subject for collective bargaining. The Minor League program has continued to the present, with refinements in the list of prohibited substances, the number of random tests, testing procedures, and the penalties applicable for failed tests.

“This represents a major development in the detection of a substance that has previously been undetectable and been subject to abuse,” said Dr. Gary Green, Medical Director for Major League Baseball.

“The combination of widespread availability and the lack of detection have led to reports of use of this drug amongst athletes. This is the first generation of HGH testing and Major League Baseball will continue to fund the Partnership for Clean Competition for ongoing research to refine testing procedures in this area.”

Source: Major League Baseball

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