

What Is the Fallout from MLB's "East Coast BALCO"?

Written by Maury Brown
Wednesday, 30 January 2013 15:51

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ORDUR ALTIYAGOL
CREAMS: L-GLUT.
TEST @ 10%.
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KETO / IRU
9 SHOTS OF HCG / GHRP. @ .7iu.
CAL / MAG / ZINC. x 1 AM / 1 PM
6 SHOTS OF HGH @ 2.5iu
DITRA PM 25-50mg.
AMINO ACIDS P.M. ONLY.
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REBURNATION. } AS DIRECTED.

This note from Tony Bosch's ledger appears to show Alex Rodriguez using PEDs

It may have been a story that had its beginnings with Manny Ramirez in 2009. At the time, the former slugger who was then with the Dodgers, had a drug testing sample come up with high levels of testosterone. Upon further testing it was found that he had been using human chorionic gonadotropin, or hCG, a female fertility drug that is used to help kick start the body's ability to create testosterone. [Upon investigation](#), the prescription for the drug was written by a 71-year-old Floridian named Pedro Publico Bosch.

But, it was yesterday that the lid was blown off on what this Floridian company named Biogenesis is involved in that is giving it the name, the "East Coast BALCO."

A ledger of Pedro Bosch's son, Tony, shows that not only was Ramirez a client, but players that have been suspended last year for elevated levels of testosterone (Melky Cabrera, Bartolo

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Colon, and Yasmani Grandal), but Nationals starting pitcher Gio Gonzalez, Rangers outfielder Nelson Cruz, and baseball's highest-paid player, Yankees third baseman Alex Rodriguez ([see A Miami Clinic Supplies Drugs to Sports' Biggest Names](#)

). In the scathing article, documentation outlines how players were paying and receiving performance-enhancing drugs.

On Alex Rodriguez:

{T}here was his name, over and over again, logged as either "Alex Rodriguez," "Alex Rod," or his nickname at the clinic, "Cacique," a pre-Columbian Caribbean chief. Rodriguez's name appears 16 times throughout the records New Times reviewed.

There, at number seven on the list, is Alex Rodriguez. He paid \$3,500, Bosch notes. Below that, he writes, "1.5/1.5 HGH (sports perf.) creams test., glut., MIC, supplement, sports perf. Diet." HGH, of course, is banned in baseball, as are testosterone creams.

That's not the only damning evidence against A-Rod, though. Another document from the files, a loose sheet with a header from the 19th Annual World Congress on Anti-Aging and Aesthetic Medicine, lays out a full regimen under the name Cacique: "Test. cream... troches prior to workout... and GHRP... IGF-1... pink cream."

On Gio Gonzalez:

Gonzalez's name appears five times in Bosch's notebooks, including a specific note in the 2012 book reading, "Order 1.c.1 with Zinc/MIC/... and Aminorip. For Gio and charge \$1,000." (Aminorip is a muscle-building protein.)

On Nelson Cruz:

According to his July 2012 client sheet, Bosch sold \$4,000 of product to Nelson Cruz, whom he

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nicknames "Mohamad." Cruz, the power-hitting Dominican outfielder for the Texas Rangers, has whacked 130 bombs in his eight-year career without any links to performance-enhancing drugs. Until now. Bosch writes in his 2012 book: "Need to call him, go Thur to Texas, take meds from April 5-May 5, will owe him troches and... and will infuse them in May."

The story caused a massive ripple through Major League Baseball. The league and clubs issued statements on the matter, all of which points to an on-going investigation and a closing of ranks until the matter is closed.

"We are always extremely disappointed to learn of potential links between players and the use of performance-enhancing substances. These developments, however, provide evidence of the comprehensive nature of our anti-drug efforts. Through our Department of Investigations, we have been actively involved in the issues in South Florida. It is also important to note that three of the players allegedly involved have already been disciplined under the Joint Drug Program.

"The recommendations of the Mitchell Report have once again played a critical role in Major League Baseball's ongoing efforts against performance-enhancing drugs. MLB implemented all of the recommendations made by Senator Mitchell in 2007, several of which emphasized the significance of installing proactive investigative services.

"The establishment of our Department of Investigations has represented a critical advance in these comprehensive efforts. In the years since its formation, DOI's work has proven pivotal to bringing to light information regarding the use of performance-enhancing substances. Furthermore, DOI has built strong working relationships with federal and local law enforcement authorities. These relationships are crucial because only law enforcement officials have the capacity to reach those outside the game who are involved in the distribution of illegal performance-enhancing drugs.

"Vigilance remains the key toward protecting the integrity of our game. We have the best and most stringent drug testing policy in professional sports, we continue to work with our doctors and trainers to learn what they are seeing day-to-day and we educate our players about the game's unbending zero-tolerance approach. We remain fully committed to following all leads and seeking the appropriate outcomes for all those who use, purchase and are involved in the distribution of banned substances, which have no place in our game.

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"We are in the midst of an active investigation and are gathering and reviewing information. We will refrain from further comment until this process is complete."

The impacts of the story are far reaching. It also is a story that does not seem at its end. Here's some topics that have surfaced and possible answers:

Is there a common thread through the players associated in the ledger? The *New Times* story talks about how all the players have some ties, one way or the other, to the Miami area. That's true, but don't think that the league isn't looking into player representation. Remember the strange case of Melky Cabrera's fake website that he was going to try and use to feign ignorance on the substances that he had been using? At the time, there were potential allegations that his agent representation through ACES was tied to it. In looking at the list of players in the Bosch ledger, along with Cabrera, Gio Gonzalez, and Nelson Cruz are also ACES clients. Bartolo Colon is with the Wasserman Media Group, Yasmani Grandal is with The Legacy Agency, while Manny Ramirez explored coming back this season being represented by Barry Praver. In total, ACES doesn't

appear

to be the common theme because of the other players having different agents, but after the Cabrera debacle, it certainly doesn't help having two more players being linked Bosch. ACES could be getting a closer look.

Could the Yankees try and void A-Rod's contract? [They're looking into it](#), but it depends on a host of matters, namely whether there are direct ties that provide irrefutable evidence that Rodriguez used the drugs in question that are outlined in Bosch's ledger.

"(The Yankees) can't do anything until the MLB investigation is concluded and they take action, if any," a source told ESPNNewYork.com.

In 2004, [the Yankees explored getting out of Jason Giambi's contract](#) when he admitted using steroids. The loophole was the clause in the Uniform Player Contract that reads, "The player must agree to keep himself in first-class physical condition and adhere to all training rules set by the club." The key here was that Giambi

admitted

using. The problem now, as it was then, is you can't really act upon voiding a contract based on

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a newspaper story. There's going to have to be more... a lot more.

If the league gets enough evidence to suspend Rodriguez, could the Yankees consider releasing him? This is a different matter. Based upon his injuries, the heavy contract load on the Yankees' player payroll, and a case where he were suspended, the Yankees might simply look to release A-Rod. If so, the remainder of his contract would be eaten as a sunk cost.

If the Yankees release Rodriguez, how does it impact the Luxury Tax for the Yankees? If he were released, the average annual value (AAV) of \$27.5 million on his contract would count against the Yankees player payroll each year of the remainder of the contract which runs through 2017.

Could Rodriguez be called on the carpet by MLB? You can pretty much bet on this, and yes, the use of words has some meaning. Remember, Rodriguez has been scolded by the league before over gambling, and has been under close watch by the league since [admitting in 2009](#)

that he had used PEDs from 2001-2003 in his career. That was a convenient timeframe as the league had not yet begun drug testing until 2004. In 2003, the MLBPA and league agreed to do a "survey test" to determine if there was a need to institute a comprehensive drug policy that Rodriguez came up positive for testosterone and Primobolan. The ironic thing is, about the time he's holding a press conference to admit using PEDs is when Bosch's ledger picks up. It shows that he provided performance-enhancing substances from 2009 to 2012.

What about the other players, namely Gio Gonzalez and Nelson Cruz? There will be question to answer, that's for certain. But, as the league statement said, the investigation is ongoing and there's not going to be a whole lot being said until then. A good example was the statement from Nationals VP of Baseball Operations and General Manager, Mike Rizzo.

"The issue is currently being reviewed by Major League Baseball and it would be inappropriate for the Nationals to comment until that review is completed," Rizzo said.

Is this the end? The story is not going away. In fact, it seems that the story is far from over. After all the FBI and DEA are involved, and in that, we might not be done for years. Remember, the Bonds case, which had ties to BALCO, cost taxpayers millions of dollars with very little to

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show for it. It may be that in this case, Biogenesis is the focus (where did the actual hGH, and testosterone come from?), not going after Rodriguez or the other players, but the chance is always there. After all, it's not as if going after Bonds may have been a case of "trophy hunting."

What is the case is matter of history somewhat repeating itself. In BALCO, Victor Conte was not a doctor that could legally administer the drugs, but rather a nutritionalist and one that did analysis on an athlete's blood work. He eventually began moving PEDs to athletes in not only baseball, but other sports. In that, the parallels to Tony Bosch and Biogenesis are very similar. This story is not yet fully told.



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