

David Ortiz Addresses Media, Red Sox Issues Statement in Support

Written by Maury Brown
Saturday, 08 August 2009 13:34



David Ortiz addressed the media today at Yankee Stadium before Game 3 of the current series between the Red Sox and Yankees took place. Ortiz and the MLB Players Association called the press conference to address a report in The New York Times in which Ortiz was named as being part of a list of 104 players that tested positive for PEDs as part of a 2003 Survey Test between MLB and the players to determine if mandatory drug testing would be implemented in 2004.

Before the press conference, both the [MLBPA](#) and [MLB](#) released statements regarding the 2003 drug tests. In both statements, the sides cautioned that the leaked names may not be accurate.

"Major League Baseball does not possess the list of names and is unable to assess the accuracy of leaks relating to individual names. The continued leaks related to the 2003 survey test results are in direct violation of court orders."

Michael Weiner, the incoming executive director of the MLBPA said, "First, the number of players on the so-called "government list" meaningfully exceeds the number of players agreed by the bargaining parties to have tested positive in 2003. Accordingly, the presence of a player's name on any such list does not necessarily mean that the player used a prohibited substance or that the player tested positive under our collectively bargained program."

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The MLBPA then continued, "[I]n 2003, legally available nutritional supplements could trigger an initial "positive" test under our program. To account for this, each "test" conducted in 2003 actually consisted of a pair of collections: the first was unannounced and random, the second was approximately 7 days later, with the player advised to cease taking supplements during the interim. Under the 2003 program, a test could be initially reported as "positive", but not treated as such by the bargaining parties on account of the second test. "

Ortiz said at the press conference that he used legal nutritional supplements that, at the time, could have led to the positive test. An on-going issue in baseball today involves players from the Dominican Republic using supplements that, while legal in that country, are on MLB's banned list of substances. David Ortiz is from the Dominican Republic.

The Red Sox issued the following statement regarding the testing program in 2003:

The Players Association made clear in its public statement today that there are substantial uncertainties and ambiguity surrounding the list of 104 names from the 2003 survey test. Indeed, there is even uncertainty about the number of players on this 2003 government list, whether it is 104, 96, 83, or less. Many of those uncertainties apparently relate to the use of then-legal nutritional supplements that were not banned by Baseball.

David vigorously denied ever buying or using steroids. As important, Major League Baseball has informed us that David has been tested every year since the implementation of the MLB/MLBPA program in 2004 and, under the program, he has been tested 15 or more different times. We have been informed that, during this entire 6-year period (2004-2009), David has never tested positive for a steroid. Also during this period, David voluntarily submitted himself to the Olympic standard of drug tests administered in connection with the World Baseball Classics in 2006 and in 2009. We are informed he did not test positive for steroids under those tests either, and he participated actively in both international tournaments.

Last week, David said he would keep people informed after he personally looked into reports of his inclusion on the 2003 survey test. He has done so. David Ortiz is a team leader, and his contributions on the field and in the community have earned him respect and a special place in the hearts of Red Sox Nation.

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We appreciate the attention given to this specific matter by the Players Association and the Office of the Commissioner. The Boston Red Sox continue to support all efforts to rid the game of steroids. We again salute Commissioner Selig for his staunch and continuing leadership in eradicating the use of steroids in Major League Baseball.

MORE ON THE 2003 MLB "SURVEY TEST"

- [MLB Releases Statement Regarding 2003 Drug Test](#)
 - [Prior to Ortiz Press Conference, MLBPA Releases Statement Regarding 2003 Drug Test](#)
 - [MLBPA Releases Statement Explaining Why "Survey Test" Results Were Not Destroyed](#)
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Maury Brown is the Founder and President of the [Business of Sports Network](#) , which includes The Biz of Baseball, The Biz of Football, The Biz of Basketball and The Biz of Hockey. He is contributor to Baseball Prospectus, and is available as a freelance writer

• [Brown's full bio is here.](#)

He looks forward to your comments via email and can be [contacted through the Business of Sports Network \(select his name in the dropdown provided\)](#)

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