

Partnership for Clean Competition Hosts Anti-Doping Conference

The Partnership for Clean Competition (PCC) – which aims to ensure integrity in sport by supporting high-quality, high-impact, novel research – hosted its first anti-doping conference on Thursday, March 4, at Major League Baseball's headquarters in New York City. The conference brought together scientists, medical professionals and representatives from sports organizations for an all-day "Science Behind Anti-Doping" symposium, sharing in-depth information and biological strategy.

The PCC is an innovative research collaborative founded by the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), Major League Baseball (MLB) and the National Football League (NFL), whose focus is to fundraise and make targeted grants in support of non-partisan and independent scientific research.

"Today's workshop gave an introduction to the lay of the land for anti-doping," Cornell professor **J. Thomas Brenna** said after giving a highly academic lecture called "Characterization of the Human Urinary Steroidome" during Session 2 devoted to anti-doping research developments. "We can see that there is a dedicated group scientifically, legally and elsewhere that are turning their attention to anti-doping research, to retaining the integrity of sports.

"In the anti-doping world, like in many areas of society, we have always been fighting a last battle, like being screened at airports. Today, you can see there is a concentrated effort to get out in front and draw in scientists as well as other experts. There is a lot to do, but now there are some resources available."

The conference was presented by the PCC and the UCLA School of Medicine. Along with the many scientists and physicians in the room, guests included: **Bob Lenaghan**, Associate General Counsel of the MLB Players Association; **Rob Manfred**, Executive Vice President, Labor Relations & Human Resources; USOC COO and three-time Olympic kayaker **Norman Bellingham**; NHL Deputy Commissioner **Bill Daly**; **Andrew Levinson**, executive director of the PGA Tour's anti-doping program; NBA EVP/General Counsel **Richard Buchanan**; **Adolpho Birch**, NFL vice president of law and labor policy; **Doug Logan**, CEO of USA Track & Field; **Bryan Smith**, medical consultant to the Atlantic Coast Conference; former Astros GM **Tim Purpura**, now EVP/COO for Minor League Baseball; **Sonja Keating**, senior vice president and general counsel at the U.S. Equestrian Federation; **Mark Bockelman**, director of NCAA drug testing at the National Center for Drug Free Sport; and also a White House representative.

MLB president **Bob DuPuy** gave the keynote address and said: "Baseball knows that the threat of drug use will never go away. We are committed to a long and continuous battle. And over time, we have come to realize that the issue of performance-enhancing drugs must be attacked with a multifaceted strategy.

"We think the partnership has undertaken an outstanding research project, and it has provided our sport with a unique opportunity to interact with people involved at the cutting edge of the effort to rid all sports of performance-enhancing drugs."

"It was very successful," said **Travis Tygart**, USADA CEO and one of four members of the PCC board of governors. "Obviously it shows the complexity of the science involved with anti-doping, and I think a lot of people hopefully walked away with a better understanding of that, and also how important it is when it comes to the rights to protect clean athletes. We want to reassure clean athletes out there that this group, PCC, is doing its part to ensure that innovative, scientifically sound testing is in place."

The PCC was formed in January 2008 to combine the resources and expertise of many of America's leading sports entities to underwrite meaningful and scientifically legitimate anti-doping research. It has secured \$11.5 million in funding through 2011, has reviewed 60 grant applications and has approved nine grants totaling \$3 million.

"The PCC is first and foremost about the science," said **Adolpho Birch**, Vice President of Law and Policy at the NFL. "We are committed to the proactive development and funding of innovative research that will improve our ability to detect and deter the use of performance-enhancing substances. We believe that our efforts will have a broad impact in our society, beyond the world of sports."

Priorities for the collaborative include underwriting research that addresses:

- Approaches to more cost-effectively detect and deter the use of banned and performance enhancing substances at every level of sport
- Identification and detection of designer substances
- The consequences of doping, from both a medical and ethical perspective
- Development of new methods to detect known substances abused in sport, including such performance enhancing drugs as Human Growth Hormone (HGH)

Panels at the symposium began with a timeline look by **Dr. Larry Bowers** at the evolution of anti-doping (it started in 1928 when the International Amateur Athletic Federation banned the use of stimulants but had to rely on athletes' word of honor), and then focused on such topics as current testing techniques, potential enhancements to detection, "Some Lessons From Cheaters," and the adjudication process.

"The main benefit of this conference is collaborating as a group, which hasn't been brought together in this fashion before," Bellingham said. "I think it's about preserving the purity of sport – virtually all athletes want to compete on a level playing field."

"We are so proud of our Olympic Team and the athletes in Vancouver – arguably our best winter team ever. But we're most proud of their performance off the field of play, the way they respected themselves and their country. It focused the attention back on the athletes."