

Ripped IN the Headlines

**By Reg P. Wydeven
January 26, 2008**

When I was a kid, my buddy Pearl and I would hang out in his basement and watch his dad work out. We would read his 'Muscle and Fitness' magazines, many of which featured Arnold Schwarzenegger, our favorite body builder.

We liked Arnold so much, we even watched his movie about bodybuilding, 'Pumping Iron.' Inspired, we began working out using Pearl's dad's weights. We lifted all through high school for football, and Pearl was always a lot stronger than I was. I would have been much better at lifting if the weights weren't so heavy.

Well, it turns out that the source of our inspiration took some shortcuts. Arnold later admitted that he used anabolic steroids before competitions and prior to filming his action movies to get ripped. While celebrities and drug scandals have always gone hand in hand, instead of getting high, now they're getting huge.

Former Senator George Mitchell's 20-month investigation into performance enhancing drugs in Major League Baseball resulted in a voluminous report that named names. The biggest name listed in the report was that of Roger Clemens, the 7-time Cy Young award-winning pitcher.

Clemens was one of 20 New York Yankees named in the report after his former trainer, Brian McNamee, informed Mitchell that he injected Clemens with steroids and HGH about 16 to 21 times during 1998, 2000 and 2001 before MLB banned performance-enhancing substances.

Clemens responded by filing a defamation lawsuit against him in Harris County District Court in Texas. The lawsuit claims that 15 statements McNamee made to Mitchell were "untrue and defamatory." Clemens asserts that only after McNamee was pressured by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew Parrella and IRS Special Agent Jeff Novitzky, key members of the BALCO prosecution, did he claim he injected Clemens.

According to his suit, Clemens states that his "good reputation has been severely injured." The lawsuit further states that "McNamee's false allegations have also caused Clemens to suffer mental anguish, shame, public humiliation and embarrassment." Clemens asked that damages be determined by a jury.

As a result of the Mitchell report, Matthew Mitchell (no relation) is now suing Clemens' New York Yankees. He's suing the team for \$221, the amount he paid for tickets to five Yankee games he attended between 2002 and 2007. His claim is filed under "failure to provide goods paid for," as the players were "artificially enhanced."

If Mitchell gets the money back for his tickets, he may seek refunds for CDs he purchased, too. Several performers, including R&B music star Mary J. Blige, and rap musicians 50 Cent, Timbaland and Wyclef Jean were identified in an Albany investigation as possibly having received or used performance-enhancing drugs.

Albany District Attorney P. David Soares launched an investigation into steroid trafficking last year, but instead of focusing on the celebrities, law enforcement officials are targeting the doctors, pharmacists and clinics that provide the drugs.

Last but not least is Olympic track star Marion Jones, winner of three gold and two bronze medals in the 2000 Summer Games. Last year Jones was stripped of the medals for using steroids. Most recently she was sentenced to 6 months in prison, two years of supervised release and 800 hours of community service after pleading guilty to charges of ingesting performance-enhancing steroids and lying to federal investigators.

If this trend continues, Jones will have plenty of company in jail.

This article originally appeared in the Appleton Post-Crescent newspaper and is reprinted with the permission of Gannett Co., Inc. © 2008 McCarty Law LLP. All rights reserved.