



Updated: February 9, 2009, 11:41 PM ET

Rodriguez: 'Sorry and deeply regretful'

ESPN.com

Comment Email Print Share

SC Exclusive: Alex Rodriguez Interview

Alex Rodriguez's full interview with Peter Gammons

Tags: [MLB](#), [New York Yankees](#), [Alex Rodriguez](#)

VIDEO PLAYLIST

- SC Exclusive: Alex Rodriguez Interview
- Obama On A-Rod

The following is an edited transcript of Yankees third baseman Alex Rodriguez's discussion with ESPN's Peter Gammons on Monday.

PETER GAMMONS: Alex, this weekend Sports Illustrated reported that in 2003 you tested positive for testosterone, an anabolic steroid known as Primobolan. What is the truth?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: When I arrived in Texas in 2001, I felt an enormous amount of pressure. I felt like I had all the weight of the world on top of me, and I needed to perform, and perform at a high level every day.

Back then, it was a different culture. It was very loose. I was young. I was stupid. I was naive. And I wanted to prove to everyone that, you know, I was worth being one of the greatest players of all time. And I did take a banned substance. You know, for that I'm very sorry and deeply regretful.

... The culture back then, and Major League Baseball overall, was very -- I just feel that, you know, I'm just sorry. I'm sorry for that time. I'm sorry to my fans. I'm sorry for my fans in Texas. It wasn't until then that I ever thought about a substance of any kind, and since then, I've proved to myself and to everyone that I don't need any of that.

PETER GAMMONS: You're saying that the time period was 2001, '2 and '3?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: That's pretty accurate, yes.

PETER GAMMONS: What kind of substances were you taking?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Peter, that's the thing. Again, it was such a loosey-goosey era. I'm guilty for a lot of things. I'm guilty for being negligent, naive, not asking all the right questions. And to be quite honest, I don't know exactly what substance I was guilty of using.

PETER GAMMONS: Where did you originally get the substance?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Again, at the time, you know, you have nutritionists, you have doctors, you have trainers. That's the right question today: Where did you get it? We're in the era of BALCO ... Back then, it was just about what.

There's many things that you can take that are banned substances. I mean, there's things that have been removed from GNC today that would trigger a positive test.

I'm not sure exactly what substance I used. But whatever it is, I feel terribly about it.

PETER GAMMONS: Now, when did you get the wake-up call?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: It wasn't until 2003. I was laying in my bed in Surprise, Arizona. We were doing a team conditioning down by the pool in Arizona. And I suffered a very serious neck injury that went all the way down to my spine. I missed about 2½ weeks of spring training, and I was scared I was going to miss time.

A-ROD: I TOOK A BANNED SUBSTANCE

Alex Rodriguez told ESPN on Monday that he took performance-enhancing drugs while playing for the Texas Rangers during a three-year period beginning in 2001.



[Story >](#) | [Transcript >](#)

- [Ex-union boss rips probe | Initial report](#)
- [What now for other 103 players?](#)

ANALYSIS

- [Experts: A-Rod must have known](#)
- [The Biz: A-Rod's Fiscal Future](#)
- [Gene Wojciechowski: Another beanball](#)
- [Rob Neyer: A-Rod sorry he got caught](#)
- [Buster Olney: Blaming those in power](#)
- [Jayson Stark: Baseball's last hope is gone](#)
- [Buster Olney: A-Rod must decide on a path](#)
- [Howard Bryant: Future king tainted](#)
- [Buster Olney: A-Rod tarnished forever](#)
- [Mark Fainaru-Wada: How did we get here?](#)
- ["Baseball Tonight" reacts to A-Rod](#)
- [Rob Neyer: A-Rod still a great player](#)
- [Primer on Alex Rodriguez](#)
- [Dick Vitale: Three steps for A-Rod](#)

VIDEO

- [A-Rod admits using steroids](#)
- [Peter Gammons: A-Rod was emotional](#)
- [1st and 10: Do you believe A-Rod?](#)
- [Tim Kurkjian: A starting point](#)
- [T.J. Quinn: Motivated by pressure](#)
- [Tim Kurkjian: Dark days ahead](#)
- [Michael Kay: A legacy destroyed](#)
- [Andrew Marchand: A-Rod's next step?](#)
- [Buster Olney: Analyzing the A-Rod news](#)
- [Buck Showalter: A-Rod, his former player](#)
- [T.J. Quinn: How A-Rod test was leaked](#)
- [Selena Roberts: Recaps A-Rod timeline](#)
- [Former Rangers employee reacts](#)
- [Looking at legal ramifications for A-Rod](#)
- [A-Rod reportedly tests positive for steroids](#)
- [A-Rod denies PED use to Katie Couric](#)

AUDIO

- [Steve Phillips: A-Rod will have a tough time dealing with his obvious distractions](#)
- [Mike Schmidt: No throwing stones at A-Rod](#)
- [Selena Roberts: Shares how the A-Rod story gained traction in her investigation](#)
- [Non-verbal expert believes A-Rod's apology](#)

I also had a streak of about 400 games consecutive played, or 300, I'm not sure what the number was. But it was that point in bed that I realized, what am I doing? Not only am I going to hurt my baseball career, but I'm going to hurt my post career.

It was time to grow up, stop being selfish, stop being stupid and take control of whatever you're ingesting. And for that, I couldn't be -- I couldn't feel more regret and feel more sorry because I have so much respect for this game, and, you know, the people that follow me and respect me. And I have millions of fans out there that are, you know, will never look at me the same.

PETER GAMMONS: Let's go back. How were you introduced to these substances? Was it at the gym? Was it from other players?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: The culture, it was pretty prevalent. There were a lot of people doing a lot of things. There was a lot of gray area, too. You know, back then you could walk in GNC and get four or five different products that today would probably trigger a positive test.

It wasn't a real dramatic day once I arrived in Texas that something monumental happened in my life. The point of the matter was that I started experimenting with things that today are not legal or today are not accepted and today you would get in a lot of trouble for.

Ever since that, that incident that happened to me in Arizona, Surprise, I realized that, you know what, I don't need any of it, and what I have is enough. I've played the best baseball of my career since. I've won two MVPs since, and I've never felt better in my career. Of that I'm very proud of.

PETER GAMMONS: So the test that was failed in 2003, that came off -- what were you using of the spring training before you got hurt?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: I'm not sure exactly of the timing of everything, because it is a long time. It's been almost six years. But I do remember thinking in my bed in Arizona, "What am I doing? Wake up. Stop being selfish." You get to a point where you get tired of being stupid and selfish and not being honest with yourself. And that's what I realized in '03.

So I am sorry for my Texas years. I apologize to the fans of Texas. And there's absolutely no excuse, and I really feel bad about it.

PETER GAMMONS: To talk a little bit about that culture. It was an underground culture. A player said to me last summer that he really believes in that period between about '98 and 2004, that the players who didn't do one thing or another were either scared or didn't care. Do you agree with that?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: I think you just felt a tremendous need to keep up and to play well. You know, it was hot in Texas every day. It was over a hundred degrees. You know, you felt like, without trying to overinvestigate what you're taking, can I have an edge just to get out there and play every day? And that's what it came down to. I can't speak for everybody who did. I can only speak for myself.

Regardless of what we want to [unintelligible] and say and justify, there's absolutely no excuse for what I did. I'm sorry. If I was a fan, a fan of mine, a fan of the Rangers, I would be very pissed off. And I can't take that back. But just realize that I'm sorry, and I want to do things to change.

I want to do things to influence children and realize they should learn from my mistake because, you know, it's the biggest regret I have in my life because baseball's given me everything, and I have so much respect.

There will be some people that say, you know, Alex is not a great player, going back to high school, I mean, they're just going to have this blanket cloud over my career. And for those, they may have their own point, but it feels good coming out and being completely honest and putting it out there and realizing that the more honest we can all be, the quicker we get baseball to where it needs to be.

PETER GAMMONS: To go back, you were 21 years old. You're saying at that point in your career, high school, No. 1 pick in the country, you're hitting .358 at the age of 21, you were completely clean?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: 100 percent. 100 percent. Even before that I had never even seen or even heard of the idea of taking any substance. I've been very fortunate to come up. I was up at 18 years old. I remember meeting you when I was a few months removed away from high school. I was all of 195 pounds or 200 pounds. That was a special time.

And you put my first year and you put my very last year in New York, there haven't been many peaks and valleys. I had the greatest year of my career in 2007. It's a year that I'm very proud of. Although we didn't win a championship, it was a year that was full of -- you know, it was a very historic year. Just to have 2007, 1996, that for me says a lot.

PETER GAMMONS: How much of the culture -- how prevalent was this culture in Texas at that time?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: You know, I've always been a guy that raced my own race. And I don't

was genuine

- Peter Gammons: Most remarkable day doing an interview
- Jayson Stark: Bonds, McGwire, Clemens and A-Rod must get into Hall of Fame
- Tim Kurkjian: Having a tiny bit more compassion for A-Rod
- Grading A-Rod's performance in interview
- Peter Gammons: The A-Rod interview
- Tim Kurkjian, Peter Gammons, John Kruk, Howard Bryant on A-Rod's admission
- Report didn't shock Ken Rosenthal

SPORTSNATION

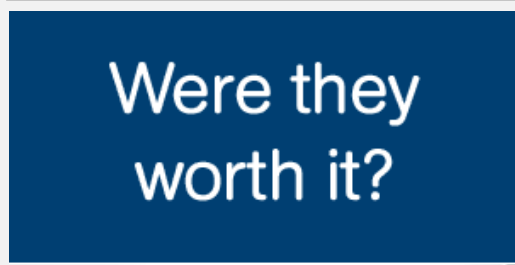
- [Vote: A-Rod's apology](#)

FROM '07: MITCHELL REPORT

- [Mitchell delivers his report | Read it \(pdf\)](#)
- [Players: Who's named in the report](#)
- [Recommendations from the report](#)

SEIZURE OF SAMPLES: DILEMMA REVEALED

- [Judges skeptical in BALCO seizure case](#)
- [Congress satisfied with PED testimony](#)
- [Selig: Seizure threatened drug program](#)
- [Waxman wants more from Fehr, Selig](#)
- [Waxman disputes 2005 steroid testimony](#)



MORE MLB HEADLINES

- [Astros' Tejada pleads guilty to lying to Congress](#)
- [Source: 8 test positive for banned substances](#)
- [Slugger Dunn, Nationals agree to two-year deal](#)
- [Francona confident Ortiz, Lowell will be healthy](#)
- [Source: Abreu, Angels agree to one-year deal](#)

RELATED SEARCHES

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| new york yankees | world series |
| baseball | boston red sox |
| alex rodriguez | texas |

MOST SENT STORIES ON ESPN.COM

- [Sports Guy: Super Bowl pseudo-diary](#)
- [Bilas: Defining toughness in college hoops](#)
- [Rick Reilly: Meet the luckiest fan in America](#)
- [Lakers C Bynum out 8-12 weeks with torn MCL](#)
- [Wojciechowski: Steelers do it the right way](#)

[Most Sent >](#)

like to look left, I don't like to look right. You just feel there's an energy. To say only Texas, that wouldn't be fair. But overall, you felt that there was -- I felt a tremendous pressure to play and play really well. I felt like I was going up against the whole world. I just signed this enormous contract. I got unbelievable negative press, for lack of a better term, for [Rangers owner] Tom Hicks and I teaming up together...

So I felt that I needed something, without overinvestigating what I was taking, to get me to the next level.

PETER GAMMONS: How long was it before you found out that what you were doing was actually illegal?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Again, at the time of that culture, there was no illegal or legal. It was just -- you have to understand the time. To take you back there, again, people were taking a number of different things, from GNC, to whatever.

To be quite honest with you, the first time that I knew I had failed a test 100 percent was when the lady from Sports Illustrated [Selena Roberts] came into my gym just a few days ago and told me, "You have failed a test."

PETER GAMMONS: [Major League Baseball Players Association COO] Gene Orza didn't tell you that? There's a report that says that he told all the players who failed drug tests in 2003.

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Gene was very specific in 2004. We had a meeting in September or August. Don't quote me on the date. But he said there's a government list, there's 104 players on it. You might or might not have tested positive.

At that point I said OK. That was five years ago. I never heard anything ever since. In my mind I assumed that, OK, whatever I was experiencing in Texas perhaps was OK, I'm OK. And in my mind, as I did my interview with CBS last year, I felt I haven't failed a test ... And that was my belief. Whether I wanted to convince myself of that or ... That's just where my mind was.

I felt it was important for me that all my years in New York have been clean, and I wanted just to move to the next chapter in my life.

PETER GAMMONS: ESPN surveyed a number of doctors and experts in this field, and they said the Primobolan could never be prescribed by a doctor. But it was accessible?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: First of all, I want to see these tests because I haven't seen them ... I am saying I'm guilty of being naive and not having all the information and being negligent. But I would love to see the tests before I start answering questions that I've never even heard before, probably yesterday for the first time.

So, again, I am guilty of being very naive, and I'm deeply sorry for that.

PETER GAMMONS: Now, you mentioned the Katie Couric interview. You were asked if you ever used steroids, human growth hormones or other performance-enhancing substances. You said no, flat-out no. In your mind, that wasn't a lie?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: At the time, Peter, I wasn't even being truthful with myself. How am I going to be truthful with Katie or CBS? Today, I'm here to tell the truth, and I feel good about that. I think my fans deserve that. I'm ready to put everything behind me and go play baseball. You know, we have a great team this year. I couldn't be more excited about the guys that we've brought in, Mark Teixeira, A.J. Burnett ... It's an important time in my life to turn the page and focus on what's next.

PETER GAMMONS: So from 2004 on, you have been completely clean?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

PETER GAMMONS: Have you even been able to check and find out how many times you've been tested?

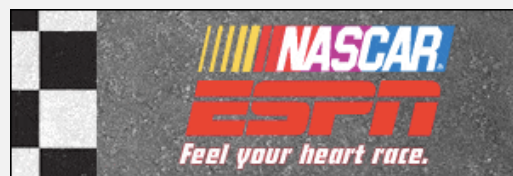
ALEX RODRIGUEZ: I don't know the real number, but I would guess at least eight to 10 times. But I would like to know that number. I know I've been tested quite a bit over the last five years.

PETER GAMMONS: You were tested during the WBC [World Baseball Classic] in 2006, is that correct?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Correct. I got tested in 2006. And also this year when I go down to Puerto Rico, I'm sure I'll get tested again in 2009.

Prior to Texas, I really had -- at that time in Seattle, I had never even heard of a player taking a substance, a steroid of any kind in my Seattle days. I mean, I know this lady from Sports Illustrated, Selena Roberts, is trying to throw things out there that in high school I tried steroids. I mean, that's the biggest bunch of baloney I've ever heard in my life.

I mean, what makes me upset is that Sports Illustrated pays this lady, Selena Roberts, to stalk me. This lady has been thrown out of my apartment in New York City. This lady has five days ago just been thrown out of the University of Miami police for trespassing. And four days ago she tried to break into my house where my girls are up there sleeping, and got cited by the Miami Beach police. I have the paper here. This lady is coming out with all these allegations, all these lies because she's writing an article for Sports Illustrated and



she's coming out with a book in May.

Really respectable journalists are following this lady off the cliff and following her lead. And that, to me, is unfortunate.

PETER GAMMONS: How do you go about making people believe you?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Well, I think coming into the league at 20 years, coming second to Juan Gonzalez as MVP is one good indication. And then, 14 years later in 2007, having the greatest year of my career is another. The other thing is, I'm going to have a sample of 14 years past this Texas era where I get to show and prove to the world who I am as a player. Hopefully I'm part of a championship team or two.

And I also, more importantly, have a chance to, you know, tell the story to kids so they can learn from my mistake. Because there's a story to be said here. I'm looking forward to that challenge.

But to me, '09, now I'm getting excited going to spring training. When you take this gorilla and this monkey off your back, you realize that honesty is the only way. I'm finally beginning to grow up. I'm pretty tired of being stupid and selfish, you know, about myself. The truth needed to come out a long time ago. I'm glad it's coming out today.

PETER GAMMONS: Two years ago when Barry Bonds was passing Henry Aaron, it was written a lot of places, well, the great thing -- when you pass Bonds, the great thing will be we'll finally have a legitimate home run champion. When you read those articles, did you worry a little bit about all this coming back to haunt you?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: You naturally have to worry. I mean, again, there's such a gray area. That era wasn't about facts. That era -- those words you just mentioned, I guarantee that half the guys that did that in any sport don't know what that is.

You basically end up trusting the wrong people. You end up, you know, not being very careful about what you're ingesting. And, yeah, it worried me completely, absolutely. And today, although I know that people are going to be very disappointed, just like I am, I feel good about moving forward and doing things the way I've been doing it the last five years and the way I did it prior to being in Texas. And that's a very important point for me.

PETER GAMMONS: A lot has been said about the fact that the union did not get those samples destroyed, which involves over a hundred players. Are you bitter at all that the union didn't get those tests destroyed?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: No, I mean, God has done this for a reason. There's a reason why. I can care less about what the union did. I could care less about what Selena Roberts did. This has to come out. This is very important.

The most important thing for me in my career is to be honest and forthright, to go into my '09 season as part of the greatest organization in the world, as one of the guys to go out and try to reach our goal.

And when you have that monkey on your back, it's really hard to be the person that you know you can be. It's hard to fulfill your potential that way.

PETER GAMMONS: Over the years, have you talked to anybody about this?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: No.

PETER GAMMONS: You haven't talked to [agent] Scott Boras?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Not one word. Not one word.

PETER GAMMONS: How much did you learn from Andy Pettitte coming forward and essentially admitting what he did last year?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: It was very commendable. I love Andy like a brother. He's one of my best friends on the team. I know he went through a very hard time.

But the one thing is all of us, 1 through 25, we supported him, we loved him, we didn't judge him. And going through this process, Andy has been texting me four or five times.

You know, one thing I'm learning as I get older, and hopefully a little wiser, is that honesty, the truth will set you free. I'm just proud that I'm here sharing my story. Regardless of what the union -- this is no one's fault. This is my fault. I'm responsible for this. And I'm deeply sorry for that.

PETER GAMMONS: Given the opportunity, would you like to go to Major League Baseball and say, "OK, what can I do to help kids across the country?"

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: 100 percent. I mean, that's what I've done with the Boys and Girls Club my whole life. You know, I was born in Washington Heights [N.Y.]. I would love to really get into that community and do things that are real, that are going to make a difference. And I have an opportunity here to help out a lot of kids. And I have nine years and the rest of my career to devote myself to children in the future and really bring awareness to, you know, where we need to head as a game. And I think we are headed in the right direction.

PETER GAMMONS: Would part of your message be that your best years were clean?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: 100 percent. One message is that what you have is enough. Hard work

is the most important thing, having a clear mind, and realizing that -- you know, having certainty is the most important thing, believing in yourself. And I've proven that in my career, at 18 years old when I came to the big leagues, and at 20 being second to Juan Gonzalez being MVP, probably my best year of all time, you know, followed by my 2007 year. And, again, no peaks and valleys. I mean, there's some peaks and valleys, but my career overall has been very consistent, not only in games played, but being out there for my team and performing at a high level.

I will hang my hat on that. And I just ask the American public to look at those three years as something that -- as an aberration. I screwed up in those years. I was stupid. I was naive. And ever since I've been doing the right thing and proud of.

PETER GAMMONS: Have you talked to Hal [Steinbrenner] and Brian [Cashman] about this?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Yes, I've talked to our front office, uh-huh.

PETER GAMMONS: And what do they say?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: They're supportive. I think overall they just want me to be truthful and be honest. What happened six years ago happened, six, seven, eight years ago. And they're ready for bigger and better things, which is winning a championship. We're a great franchise. We're moving into a new stadium this year. Our fans have been very patient with us. They're ready for us, you know, to turn up the heat a little bit. And I think we have a team that's ready to do all of that. I'm going to be a part of that team and do my best.

PETER GAMMONS: Everyone cares about what other people think.

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Uh-huh.

PETER GAMMONS: This weekend, there was a quote -- there was an unnamed Yankee front-office official who said his legacy is now gone. There's a column in the New York Daily News that started out, now it appears he really is A-Fraud, Alex Rodriguez can forget about have been his run at Barry Bonds' all-time home run record taken seriously and can probably forget about the Hall of Fame, too. What do you say about that?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry if Bill feels that way. He's one of the respected journalist I respect in New York. And, again, you know, I feel that -- I hope that people don't follow this Selena Roberts lady and take their lead. I hope they look at this and give it time and realize that this was three years that I'm not proud of, it's three years I'm going out there, but to really judge me on, you know, prior Texas and post Texas. And that's all I want.

Also, I have nine years remaining in my career where I can still do some pretty special things, I think.

PETER GAMMONS: Are you worried at all what it's going to be like those nine years in New York?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Look, I think New Yorkers like honesty. I think they like people that say the truth. I also think they like great players that know how to win. And I think winning's the ultimate medicine we can take here. If we can win a championship, if we can play well, if we can play well down the stretch, I think New Yorkers love to forgive you.

And right now, I made a mistake. I was stupid. I was an idiot, all these things. And I think New Yorkers can probably relate with that every once in a while. And I think they want to see me, now that I've come forward, continue and, like with Andy Pettitte, be a great player again. PETER GAMMONS: One of your goals all along has been to be in the Hall of Fame. Do you think a player who has tested positive or admitted to taking illegal substances is disqualified from Cooperstown?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: I hope not. I hope not. I mean, I think every case is different. I think you have to look at the data. If you take a career of, you know, 25 years, and you take away three, or you take away 2½, or you take away one, I think overall you have to make a decision.

I don't have a Hall of Fame vote. It would be a dream to be in the Hall of Fame, and I hope one day I get in. But my biggest dreams are now to win a world championship and to be the last team standing on that field.

PETER GAMMONS: Now, Jose Canseco talked a lot in his books about you. He claimed in his last book that he hooked you up with a guy that was very well acquainted with performance-enhancing drugs here in Miami. Is that true?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: That couldn't be more false. That's a hundred percent not true. And, you know, it's kind of interesting how "SportsCenter" and ESPN still quote this guy. No, it's a hundred percent false.

PETER GAMMONS: What do you think the drugs that you took, 2001 through 2003, what do you think it did for your performance?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: I'm not sure. I know that I've always enjoyed hitting in Texas. I think it's a wonderful place to play. It's a great place to hit. But I don't know ...

PETER GAMMONS: What do you think is the best evidence that you have been clean since 2004?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Well, I go back further, Peter. When I was 20 years old, I was 210. And

today I'm 225. I gained a pound a year for 15 years. That's not a lot of change. I'm also going to be on trial for the next nine years, so 14 years post my Texas era.

I think there's a great sample there for someone who has a Hall of Fame vote to say, OK, I have 20 years of clean baseball, and then make up their mind.

PETER GAMMONS: Do you think it will be hard in the first couple of years to deal with people who bring up "cheating"?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Well, the truth is the truth. Again, I think it's important to get it out there. You know, it might take five years. It might take 10 years. It may never go away. But, you know, being honest is absolutely the only thing for me to do right now.

PETER GAMMONS: You're one of the kings of the tabloids, your private life, your divorce, whatever. Do you start to get tired of celebrity?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Of?

PETER GAMMONS: Being a celebrity?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: It comes with the territory. It really does. I mean, I wouldn't trade my life for anybody. I think I'm really the most fortunate, have such appreciation. Even a day like today I feel very grateful for what God's been able to do for me.

With that, there's been some challenges that are necessary for me to get through. This being one of them. This being the biggest one of my life. You know, divorce was another major thing. It's been a rough couple -- 15 months here for me. But, you know, I have great certainty that I'm going to, you know, overcome this and become a better person for it and a better father.

PETER GAMMONS: As you get a little bit older, what will you tell your daughters?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: I was stupid for three years. I was very, very stupid. And I hope that, again, the Selena Roberts of the world do not try to go back to when I was 15 years old, whatever nonsense she's going to report in her book, or whatever nonsense she's -- whatever information she's collected through stalking me the last three or four years to ruin it more than I've done for myself.

I've made more mistakes than anyone, and for that I'm very sorry.

PETER GAMMONS: What will you tell kids around the country?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: You know, work hard. What you have is enough. You know, believe in yourself. Don't make the mistake that I made.

PETER GAMMONS: As you've been living with this, has this been more difficult than dealing with things like what came out in Joe Torre's book?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: This is by far the most serious thing that's ever happened in my life, along with, you know, my personal life, what happened with my breakup of Cynthia, you know, for the last 13 years. I mean, she was an integral part of my life, and we have two beautiful children. It seems like every year around this time somebody else is coming out with a book, you know, talking about me.

You know, again, I think God has a reason for everything, and I'm sorry we have to be in the middle of these controversies. But at the end of the day, I feel good today about coming forward and being honest and turning the page to the next chapter in my life.

PETER GAMMONS: Did you feel betrayed by Joe Torre?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: No. I haven't read the book, Peter. So, I mean, to even comment on the book wouldn't be fair to Joe, wouldn't be fair to myself.

PETER GAMMONS: Did you hear people call you A-Fraud?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: The one thing is, first of all, let me say I've always had a lot of respect for Joe as a manager. You know, actually the year when he left in '07, I was really excited, we had a huge turnaround. I thought we got along really well. I actually thought we were pretty close.

So I don't have any problems with Joe, and I will not comment on it now or during spring training. Until I read the book, I won't comment.

Peter, in our clubhouse, everybody makes fun of me. I'm talking about from the clubhouse kid, to every coach, Larry, Mike, Joe Torre. Every guy on the team. And I like it. I like taking it. I am not a good ragger, but I am a good receiver.

That's really a compliment the guys feel that comfortable that they can actually make fun of me at any time. So did I hear A-Fraud? We joked around about a lot of things. Listen, 25 guys have 25 different nicknames. So to me there's no harm, no foul there.

PETER GAMMONS: Are you worried now about how often you're going to have to answer these questions about those three years?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Um, well, I'm answering 'em here today. I hope soon enough we can put it in a vault and move forward. I mean, I know the consequences. But I know the truth is the truth.

PETER GAMMONS: Can baseball ever be as much fun for you as it was when you were

21 hitting .358?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, absolutely. I haven't been part of a world championship team. That's my only goal. I get to start a new chapter in my life where I can only focus on baseball, my team, the fans of New York, and recommitting a hundred percent of my focus.

I can't wait to get to spring training. Because to play with -- going through a divorce, this gorilla on my back, not being 100 percent honest and forthright and being transparent, I get to play baseball, the game I love most. That's my savior, the game of baseball.

So, yes, I mean, it can be as much fun as ever before.

PETER GAMMONS: If a young player or young person said to you, "Well, if you knew that what you were doing was illegal, why did you do it?" Would you be able to answer that?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Ask that question again, Peter.

PETER GAMMONS: When some young player or some player comes up to you and says, "All right, you knew that what you were taking was illegal. Why did you do it?" How do you answer that?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Well, I've answered that. I mean, I think it comes back to the culture was much different. It had a lot to do with me being stupid and selfish and naive and just, you know, I got caught up in this "everybody's doing it" era. So, you know, why not experiment with X, Y or Z?

You know, there's absolutely no excuses, and I feel deep regret for that.

PETER GAMMONS: Do you think it's possible over the next nine years to prove your innocence after 2003?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: I'm not sure. I'm not sure. I'm going to take it one day at a time, count my blessings every day for having an opportunity to play Major League Baseball, and continue what I've done the last five years, which is play very good baseball past all that era.

PETER GAMMONS: For the good of the game, would you like to see all those 104 names released from the positive tests in 2003?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: I don't have any interest in any of that. I mean, obviously I would defer to Major League Baseball, the commissioner's office, and the union to deal with those matters.

The one thing that I'm proud of is coming forthright about my own situation ...

PETER GAMMONS: Did you learn anything from the congressional hearings and some of the players with comments who have been in staunch denial? Did you learn from them?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: You know, again, I don't like to focus on anybody else but my situation. I think there's always something to be learned. There's a lesson to be learned in every situation.

I just know that for me, you know, putting everything out there and being honest was the most important thing.

PETER GAMMONS: Are you concerned that over the next few months this will hurt baseball?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Maybe over the next few months it will hurt baseball, but in the long run, I think it will help. I think any time you put the truth out there, I think it's very painful in the beginning, but I think at the end of the tunnel, there will be light. And, you know, I think the more of that that happens, the more light will be revealed at the end of the tunnel for the game of baseball as well.

PETER GAMMONS: Young players that you talk to, kids say, "All right, start with this, what do you regret most," what would you answer?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Start with what? What do you mean?

PETER GAMMONS: What do you regret most?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: Definitely not educating myself and realizing at the time. I mean, in hindsight we can all look back and say these are all my mistakes. Very simple to look at that right now.

Just probably overall my mistakes I made in Texas.

PETER GAMMONS: What do you think the headline will be tomorrow in New York?

ALEX RODRIGUEZ: I have no idea. I mean, you know, the one good thing is, I feel the truth will always set you free.

PETER GAMMONS: Thank you.

Transcript provided by ASAP Sports.

[Go to comments](#) | [Add a comment](#)

ESPN AT A GLANCE



A documentary about the history of black golfers speaks truths that need to be heard.

[Scoop Jackson »](#)



Someone other than Mr. Iginla is leading the way in Calgary, but don't get used to it.

[George Johnson »](#)



"Mostly I try to stay away from people and close to powder." Ah, to be Seth Morrison!

[Tim Mutrie »](#)



It's Rivalry Week. The Mag takes you deeper into some lesser-known college clashes.

[The Mag »](#)



Carl Edwards and Jimmie Johnson are more alike than you think. Except for ...

[Terry Blount »](#)



Paul Shirley explains why record shops like Amoeba Music in Hollywood still matter.

[Paul Shirley »](#)