

## **Federer And Murray Welcome Biological Passports**

Roger Federer and Andy Murray, two tennis stars who have been outspoken in recent times to make a call for more stringent anti-doping measures in tennis, have welcomed the introduction of biological passports for players.

A few days back, the International Tennis Federation announced the move in London after a meeting of the Tennis Anti-Doping Program working group that includes representatives from the ITF, ATP, WTA, and grand slam tournaments. There was unanimous support for the introduction of the passport, which is used to detect variances in biological make-up that might indicate doping and has been introduced in cycling, the ITF said.

As Federer prepared to launch his defense of the Indian Wells ATP Masters title, he said that is a good news and added we have to do everything to ensure our tour is as clean as it possibly can be so that the cheaters think twice, that they get caught if they do cheat. The former world no. 1 added he believed the players were prepared to accept the measures, even though increased testing means more intrusion into the lives of players. He noted one reason was the long-delayed admission by cyclist Lance Armstrong that he used banned drugs in all seven of his Tour de France victories. The disgraced cyclist recently made a confession on a talk show after being stripped of the titles and given a lifetime ban from cycling for his role in systematic doping on his US Postal Service team.

The cycling issue has been around for quite some time, but what happened this year was obviously super-extreme and I think that really gets you sort of thinking, said the Swiss professional tennis player who, as of March 2013, is ranked world No. 2 by the ATP.

ATP executive chairman and president Brad Drewett said the men's circuit was behind the move and the players are clear that they support increased investment in anti-doping and we feel that this is the most effective way to show the world that tennis is a clean sport.

US Open champion Andy Murray of Scotland also welcomed the move by the ITF and said it is one of the best ways to ensure your sport stays as clean as possible and it's good tennis has made that jump.

The biological profiling system is considered as one of the most effective methods of detecting the use of performance enhancing drugs and blood boosters like EPO. The Athlete Biological Passport (ABP) is an electronic record of an athlete's biological values, which is developed over time from multiple collections of blood samples.

ITF President Francesco Ricci Bitti said the implementation of the Athlete Biological Passport is an important step in the evolution of the Tennis Anti-Doping Program as it provides us with a great tool in the fight against doping in our sport and added we also hope to have increased support from the national anti-doping agencies around the world who need to do their part if we are to win this battle and make our program more effective.