

NBA Testing Questioned By USADA

U.S. Anti-Doping Agency head Travis Tygart has remarked that it is not difficult for [NBA players](#) to beat drug-testing program of the league.

Tygart added that the testing program of NBA that is built on six urine tests a year is not at all powerful to beat. In an interview, Tygart remarked he believes that the athletes are unfortunately being let down by the system and added he had said it before that players are going to do anything possible to win if there's no chance of getting caught, and they're overly competitive. The USADA chief said this could include using these dangerous drugs because they will give you a performance-enhancing benefit.

Tygart also went on to remark that we are hopeful at some point the athletes are supported and given the opportunity to be held to the highest standards and said they do it when they're subjected to the Olympic testing, a year out before the [Olympic Games](#). Travis Tygart added they're under our jurisdiction subject to blood testing and out-of-competition, no-notice, no blackout periods for when they can't be tested and they fully support it. He also said we've never had a player say they didn't want to be part of the program because of the testing. The USADA chief advocates the World Anti-Doping Agency code for the NBA that would result in an end to the league-run testing program. Tygart said that is the inherent conflict that we see when a sport attempts to both promote and police itself and that's why the code calls for independence.

The league's general counsel, Rick Buchanan, defended the present testing system and remarked we think we have a program that is as good as any other in pro sports. Buchanan disagreed to the views expressed by Tygart and said we don't think there's any conflict where we can't have the best, state-of-the-art program. Buchanan, who oversees the NBA's testing, also said that NBA is working on the issues that were brought by Tygart as the weaknesses of NBA's testing program, including the lack of blood testing for human growth hormone and [biological passport testing](#). Buchanan remarked we need to get that done and suggested that there have been delays in the context of NBA's ongoing search for a head, and overall questions about growth hormone testing.

Tygart also said an updated system could be achieved with new leaders within the league. He remarked hopefully with new leadership at the commissioner's office now, hopefully the lines of communication will open up and they'll see the benefits of putting in a program that is going to adequately protect the integrity of the game because no one wants to see a game that's altered by an unfair advantage by one team.

Meanwhile, NBA commissioner Adam Silver, who replaced David Stern recently, said he doesn't believe there is a high level of PED use in the league. In response to a question from bestselling author Malcolm Gladwell at the conference, Silver said he have no reason to believe the use of PEDs are widespread in the NBA. He remarked both because we test and because, No. 2, it's not part of the culture of the NBA. Silver also said there are great journalists out there like

[Gladwell], somebody would be out there and would've found somebody who's willing to talk about it. We're fortunate in the NBA that there is a cultural view that those types of drugs are not helpful to core performance.