



For Immediate Release

MLBPA Statement Regarding Suspensions of Sergio Mitre and J.C. Romero

New York, NY, Tuesday, January 6, 2009 ... Major League Baseball Players Association General Counsel, Michael Weiner, today released the following statement regarding the suspensions of Sergio Mitre and J.C. Romero.

“Sergio Mitre and J.C. Romero were suspended for fifty games each by the Commissioner because they tested positive during the 2008 regular season for a Performance Enhancing Substance. Those suspensions were upheld by a neutral third-party arbitrator after hearing. We strongly disagree with the Commissioner’s discipline and with the arbitrator’s decision.

“Mitre and Romero both legally purchased nutritional supplements from national chain stores in the United States. Nothing on the labels of those supplements indicated that they contained a trace amount of a substance prohibited under Major League Baseball’s Joint Drug Prevention and Treatment Program. Neither player intentionally ingested this prohibited substance, but the arbitrator nevertheless found, wrongly in our view, that the players’ conduct violated the Program’s “no fault or negligence” standard.

“The Union respects the arbitration process and treats the decision as final. In our view, though, the resulting discipline imposed upon Mitre and Romero is unfair. These players should not be suspended. Their unknowing actions plainly are distinguishable from those of a person who intentionally used an illegal performance-enhancing substance.

“The Association and the Commissioner’s Office must now act to prevent future similar occurrences within baseball. The Association remains committed to a strong Joint Drug Program, but will continue to advocate forcefully for fair treatment of our members.”

-- 30 --