



HAIR-RAISING DELIVERY

PHOTO BY MARK BLINCH / REUTERS

Serena Williams of the US booms a serve to Italy's Francesca Schiavone en route to a 6-3, 6-2 sweep of their opening-round match at the Rogers Cup tennis tournament in Toronto on Wednesday.

Union backs A-Rod in launching appeal

Head of players association calls 211-game ban 'way out of line'

By ASSOCIATED PRESS
in New York

The Major League Baseball Players Association formally appealed Alex Rodriguez's 211-game suspension on Wednesday, sending the case to an independent arbitrator.

Union spokesman Greg Bouris confirmed the appeal and said the players association had no further comment.

Rodriguez, who played third base and batted third for the New York Yankees in their 6-5 loss to the Chicago White Sox on Wednesday night, said he had "no reaction" to the filing of the grievance.

"I don't think any of us thought it was going to be any different," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said.

"As for reaction, it's kind of what I expected. It's part of the process negotiated between MLB and the PA, and you let it play out.

"I expect him to play a lot. We need him to help us."

Major League Baseball declined to comment.

Rodriguez was suspended through the 2014 season on

Monday when MLB penalized 13 players following an investigation into Biogenesis of America, a Florida anti-aging clinic accused of distributing banned performance-enhancing drugs.

The other 12 players accepted 50-game suspensions, but Rodriguez said he planned to fight.

Union head Michael Weiner said the punishment for the slugger was "way out of line."

Rodriguez's suspension was scheduled to begin Thursday, but he is allowed to keep playing until the grievance is heard by arbitrator Fredric Horowitz.

Horowitz isn't expected to rule until November or December, at the earliest.

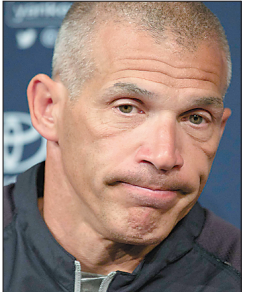
Coming back from hip surgery in January, Rodriguez played his first game of the season Monday night in the series opener at Chicago.

The three-time AL MVP singled in his first at-bat and was 3 for 11 with two walks in the three-game sweep by the White Sox. The 38-year-old was booed lustily throughout the series, except when he was hit by a pitch in the third inning of the Yankees' 3-2 loss



I expect him to play a lot. We need him to help us."

JOE GIRARDI
YANKEES MANAGER ON A-ROD'S RETURN TO THE LINEUP



on Tuesday night.

The Yankees are off on Thursday and then open a three-game series against AL Central-leading Detroit on Friday night in New York.

It will be the first home game for Rodriguez since the suspension was announced.

"I am curious what it's going to be like Friday," Girardi said. "I'm not sure. And I don't really know what the appropriate response is."

"I don't think it's my right to tell people how to respond to certain situations."

Rodriguez, who agreed to a 10-year, \$275 million contract with the Yankees in December 2007, is MLB's active leader with 647 career homers.

He played a major role in New York winning the 2009 World Series, batting .365 with six homers and 18 RBIs in the postseason that year.

In an interview on MLB

Network radio on Wednesday, former teammate Johnny Damon said the 2009 championship would be diminished if Rodriguez used performance-enhancing drugs during the playoff run.

"I really haven't gotten to think that far, but if that's how he was able to hit in the post-season, like he did that year, then yeah, absolutely," said Damon, who has been friends with Rodriguez since they were teenagers.

"Then you start going and saying, 'Well, was anybody on their team cheating?'"

"There's just so many different factors that determine if a team wins, and A-Rod was a huge determining factor."

Asked about Damon's comments, Rodriguez said he wasn't aware of them.

"I talk to Johnny all the time so no disappointment whatsoever," Rodriguez said.

qingdaospecial

Beer in Qingdao fuels festival of food, fireworks and fun

By XIE CHUANJIAO
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An evening gala replete with superstars and gorgeous fireworks, the 23rd Qingdao International Beer Festival offers a full range of activities that boost the city's brand image and promote economic growth, organizers said.

The 16 days of revelry from Aug 10 to 25 at the Beer City in Laoshan district in Qingdao, Shandong province, is the largest beer festival in Asia and the most influential in China.

"It combines tourism, leisure, trade exhibition, culture and entertainment with unique beer culture in the local area," said local officials.

Under the theme "Cheers with the World, Qingdao", the national acclaimed event kicks off with a gigantic barrel of fresh beer at its opening ceremony, which will be followed by a parade.

Other activities include carnivals, a drinking competition, a trade exhibition and a closing ceremony party.

Meanwhile, a total of 15 grand tents offering delicacies from around the world will be set up at the main venue.

There will also be a carnival amusement square featuring live performances, a gourmet cuisine expo and a Munich royal crystal palace.

To improve the quality and branding of the festival, the organizing committee signed a letter in June to seek collaboration with the organizers of Munich Oktoberfest in Germany, one of the three largest global beer festivals.

The organizing committee said that the Munich palace in Qingdao this year will be set up at the Convention and Exhibition Center north of the Beer City, and it is decorated with

Western motifs. The festival will also draw on Munich's management expertise to provide a comfortable, safe and pleasant experience for tourists and locals.

The carnival amusement park offers 26 large thrill rides and 30 kinds of gaming facilities, all of which comply with strict safety standards.

Since the first Qingdao International Beer Festival was held in 1991, the festival has earned a number of honors.

It ranked among China's top 10 festivals for seven consecutive years from 2006 to 2012.

To provide a more pleasant environment for participants, the 26-hectare Beer City includes 20,000 square meters of green space with trees and a variety of flowers.

The area is equipped with more than 40 world-class jumbo amusement facilities.

The festival also highlights cultural diversity.

In addition to the main event, the local government will hold more than 50 large and small events, such as the Thai Culture and Art Festival, the Hong Kong International Fashion Luxury Expo, the Qingdao Music Festival, the Taiwan Gourmet Food Festival and the 2013 German Products Exhibition.

Also, the festival will incorporate beer with other elements, including culture, trading, gourmet cuisine, entertainment, tourism, sports and leisure, according to an official report from the Qingdao Convention and Exhibition Center. "The beer-themed events will cater to the demand created by visitors and people involved in the gala," said local officials.

The 1,000-meter-long Tsingtao Beer Street has been set up along Dengzhou Road where the original Tsingtao brewery was located.

IF YOU GO

Beijing-Qingdao:

Thirteen high-speed trains leave daily, and the trip takes five hours one way. There are also 15 one-hour flights.

Shanghai-Qingdao:

Four high-speed trains make the five-hour one-way trip daily, and there are 23 flights that take from one to two hours.

Beer City

Beer City will open at 9 am and starts to get busy after 3 pm. Daytime admission is 10 yuan, nighttime admission after 3 pm will be 20 yuan. Temperatures in downtown Qingdao will be around 28 C to 32 C.



There will also be a wine culture activity this month. Its amenities include a wide range of bars, restaurants, museums and leisure facilities.

In the West Coast, where the city's development zone is located, a golden beach and a pedestrian street have been set up to host the district's fourth beer carnival and its second world city music festival as well as a series of tourism events.

Shinan district, as the traditional center of the city, will join the August festival spree by hosting Qingdao's first micro film competition, its first daily apparel innovation contest, a beach volleyball tournament, and a bay-themed photography competition.



1. Visitors from China and abroad enjoy the evening gala and local culture at the Beer City in Qingdao, Shandong province.
2. The national acclaimed event starts with a gigantic barrel of fresh beer at its opening ceremony.



EVENTS AT THE 23RD QINGDAO INTERNATIONAL BEER FESTIVAL

ACTIVITIES	TIME	ADDRESS
Global Drinking Competition	Aug 10 to 24	Central Stage, Beer City, Century Square
American Sassy Jazz Orchestra Concert	Aug 18	Qingdao Grand Theater
Fitness and Body Building Contest	Aug 20	Central Stage, Beer City, Century Square
All-Gathering-Together Gala	Aug 21	Central Stage, Beer City, Century Square
All-International Chess	Aug 21 to 22	Heineken Fashion Pavilion, Century Square
Hong Kong Police Band Parade	Aug 22 to 26	Beer City, Century Square
Hong Kong Fashion & Shopping Exhibition	Aug 22 to 26	No 1 & No 2 International Convention & Exhibition Center
Opera Canon	Aug 23 to 24	Qingdao Grand Theater