



THE INFORMER

Publication for Your Reading
Enjoyment

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This is the first issue of the revived **DRSEA INFORMER** and it will be published once a month. The **INFORMER**, for the uninitiated, is the Dominican Republic Sports & Education Academy's method of informing the world of developments in Dominican baseball, as well as sharing aspects of Dominican life in general, and after almost 10 years in the Dominican Republic there still remains a lot to share as many of the issues and problems in baseball still exist and as such, still demands the DRSEA's attention and your support.

The mission of the DRSEA is to enhance the educational opportunities afforded to young and gifted athletes in order to provide them with the skills necessary for success in life after sports. Much of our attention is focused on young baseball players in the Dominican Republic because they face a unique set of circumstances that make them vulnerable to exploitation in great part due to a lack of education.

The DRSEA has come a long way in 10 years and is even credited by Major League Baseball executives with bringing about positive changes through its advocacy and programs which continue to grow and expand while remaining true to its roots.

The **INFORMER** will continue to be a voice for that advocacy by providing informative and timely information that will also be entertaining in scope. If you have not done so already, please sign up to receive the first two free issues of the **INFORMER** and consider becoming a regular subscriber.

Past issues of the **INFORMER** are available on our [website](#).

INFORMER

Subscriptions Support DRSEA Reading Program

After the first two issues, the INFORMER will be available to subscribers only. Subscriptions will support the DRSEA Reading Program. In both Cuba and the Dominican Republic, the cigar industry has long employed readers to entertain the cigar rollers while rolling and cutting the tobacco leaves. The lector reads aloud from newspapers and novels to help while away the hours. The readings

came to be regarded as a social and cultural right, and spurred many cigar rollers to learn to read, and also to social activism.

The DRSEA Reading Program, in keeping with a tradition in the cigar industry, el lector de tabaquería, sends people into Dominican communities to read to children.

The program has been an incredible success with often double the expected number of children showing up, frequently in the company of their parents. The success was reflected by reports by many parents of requests by their children to read to them, but often

the scarcity of books and the inability of parents to actually read, inhibited this. The new goal is to expand the reading program as well as provide books to families.





Thank Heaven for The Colmado

The colmado is the Dominican equivalent to 7-Eleven. Every neighborhood has one on almost every corner that serves as a typical convenience store that sells eggs, milk, bread and soft drinks, but also beer and other alcoholic beverages, canned and fresh produce, home products, and even cards to add minutes to a cell phone. But it also serves as a social gathering place where neighbors gather to swap gossip, watch a baseball game, play a game of dominos, or simply share a jumbo Presidente. Just pull up a chair and join in; most colmados will provide the chairs.

But where the colmado differs from the local 7-Eleven is its flexibility. You can buy a dozen eggs or just one. Need a bag of ice? You can get a five-pound bag or ask for 10 pesos worth scooped and tied in a small plastic bag. The same with sugar, flour, laundry detergent, and the like. Need just one Tampon? Done. A single dose of aspirin, no problem?

And, no money, no problem. Colmados offer credit and keep records in a running log of debits and payments, allowing many people to feed their families at the end of the month before the next paycheck arrives.

I have seen a secession of owners at my local colmado and all have been extremely genial in their service. Sometimes when I am heading home I have no money or am short the amount and I always get the product I need because they know I will return with payment. Trust is a large part of the colmado system.

I have even swapped out warm beer for cold beer and often use the store as a dropping point for laundry and other packages, and they never hesitate when I ask them to call a cab for me. Of course, I know they will get a kickback from the cab driver they call, but that is between them and the driver.

Colmados sometimes get a little ruckus with loud music blaring until all hours, and there is the occasional fight between those who have overindulged in rum or beer, but for the most part these corner conveniences are an intimate part of community life and an indelible part of Dominican culture.

Why Is the DR the Latino Country With the Most Use of Steroids in Baseball?

BY ALFREDO ALVAREZ

Reprinted from Empire Sports Media

So it happened again. This time, to one of the most beloved and respected stars in a country that breathes baseball: Former New York Yankee Robinson Cano. The Seattle Mariners second baseman was suspended yesterday for 80 games when he tested positive for Furosemide, a diuretic that is used in the treatment of heart failure and hypertension among other things. This medicine is included in the list of prohibited substances of The World Anti-Doping Agency because it can mask the presence of other substances in the body. Facing constant news that leaves you disappointed and with many questions, it is striking that again, it is a player from the Dominican Republic. What's going on? Here is my take.

More than 80% of the population of young Dominicans have a common goal: to reach the Major Leagues and succeed no matter what the Cost.

In a country where 40% of the population lives in poverty and many children leave school before the age of 15, baseball is an escape, a solution to their problems. For the 30 franchises in the Majors, Dominican Republic is like a big store, where they can go, and for a ridiculously cheap price get the next face of their organization. Is it that baseball in general is doing something to control this? It does not do anything in my opinion.

Statistically, there is not even room for debate, the Dominican Republic leads the other countries that have players in the Major Leagues by a large margin, with **more than 100 players since 1995**. Not to mention the minor leagues, where the numbers are terrifying.

To get substances of this type in Dominican Republic is as easy as getting an aspirin. There are the scouts called "buscones," who scout the players. After all, it is a vicious circle, they train them to sign contracts and they charge 10 to 40% of them. Unfortunately, this problem grows like a cancer in the Caribbean country and the solution is nowhere to be found.

Why does the government not take measures? Why doesn't the MLB do something about it? Because it is a win-win situation for all.



The Dominican Republic receives its highest income from tourism and baseball. The "buscones" become rich in the process and the Major Leagues are filled with Latin stars every day, which sell merchandise, fill stadiums and give much color and flavor to the baseball of the best league in the world. It is clear that the MLB has one of the best steroid controls of all professional sports today, but everything is within the country.

Why not go further? MLB commissioner Bud Selig appointed a committee, led by current New York Mets general manager Sandy Alderson, to review Major League and Club operations in the Dominican Republic. The results of the committee were published in September 2009, in

the so-called "Alderson Report", the first comprehensive investigation conducted by Major Leagues on the use of steroids in baseball in the Dominican Republic.

The report acknowledged that MLB had serious and long-term problems in the Dominican Republic, and recommended actions to create a reform. The report also acknowledged that the teams were hesitant to betray the "buscones" for fear that they would be denied access to the best talent. The MLB then created an international talent committee to better regulate the problems in the Dominican Republic and spoke about the implementation of an international draft, which would effectively end the culture of "buscones" in the country. But conversations about it have not been followed so far and the MLB has kept quiet about what the committee has actually done.

Although the numbers show that only 2% of the young male population on the island managed to reach the Major Leagues, more than 80% of young people believe they are in that 2%. They consider it failure if they don't reach the Big Leagues and many end up alcoholics, depressed and never able to recover from having failed their families and themselves.

What is the easiest solution I see? Education. The more you educate young people, give them study possibilities and show them how negative this can be for them, you would see fewer cases of this type, but unfortunately the Dominican government in addition to agreeing this situation has not done much either for improve the education system of the country or strategies so that more young people want to go to university and have a career outside of baseball diamonds.

MEET THE DRSEA ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEMBERS: WENDELL NILES



Wendell Niles is a highly trained and experienced graphic communications specialist with more than thirty years building brands and providing key communication services to public and private sector clients. In his current position, he is the founder and president of Niles Advertising & Display Solutions, Inc., a full-service graphic production company, specializing in signage and related media.

Over the last 30 years, Wendell has worked on diverse projects with the National Football League, Colgate-Palmolive Company, New York Life, AOL-Time Warner, Bulova Watch Co., Equitable Life Assurance Society of America, National Urban League, National Basketball Player's Assn., National Newspapers Publisher's Assn., African Heritage Network and more than 20 New York City government accounts.

Inspired by the success of African-American legends in advertising,

Wendell launched several design companies, each becoming an invaluable learning experienced in self-determination and entrepreneurship, all the while building a solid brand. Articles on Wendell have appeared in the New York Times, Black Enterprise, The Network Journal, New York Daily News, NV Magazine, KIP Business Report and other business publications. He has appeared on "Good Morning Fox -5 News, BronxNet and other public access shows.

Wendell is a graduate of the School of Visual Arts and the Hughie Mills Business Academy at Columbia University. He is a member of the One Hundred Black Men, Inc., National Minority Supplier Development Council (Co-Chair MBE Input Committee) and National Alliance of Market Developers, Inc.

Some of Wendell's achievements include receiving the Regional Service Firm of the Year Award from U.S.

Department of Commerce; being listed in the 107th Congressional Record; helping to erect the Adam Clayton Powell, Jr Memorial Statue on the plaza of the Harlem State Office Building in New York City; and helping to spearhead New York City Board of Education's "Adopt-A-Class" Program.

"I joined DRSEA's Advisory Council to provide assistance with marketing, to help establish the DRSEA brand," Wendell said, "and to help facilitate their mission to making a difference in the Dominican Republic. Thinking carefully about an advisory council's purpose, I want to share my business and life experiences to ensure that DRSEA is structured to meet the goals and vision of its mission."

Charles S. Farrell

UN PASO MAS Y LLEGAMOS

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