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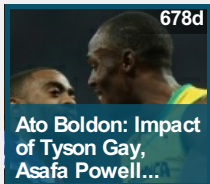
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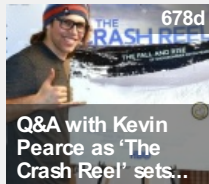
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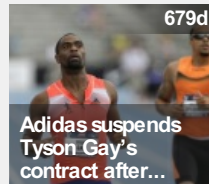
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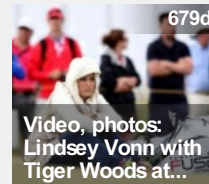
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## Ato Boldon: Impact of Tyson Gay, Asafa Powell positive tests on Usain Bolt, others in track and field

Ato Boldon | Jul 15, 2013, 5:54 PM EDT

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*In the aftermath of one of the lowest days of track and field since the BALCO scandal, OlympicTalk editor Nick Zaccardi reached out to NBC Olympics track and field analyst **Ato Boldon** for his observations of what's next after **Tyson Gay** and **Asafa Powell**'s positive drug tests.*

I had people asking me today, "How come **Usain Bolt**'s not testing positive if all these other Jamaicans are?"

Wait a minute. They may run for the same country, but they're not all sleeping in the same bed. Bolt and Powell obviously come from rival camps, Racers and MVP.

Bolt has never had anything remotely around him in either his junior or senior career indicating something like this. It's not exactly fair to him to say, well, look at all these Jamaicans.

You can't blame Bolt for something Powell does any more than you could have blamed Gay when **Justin Gatlin** tested positive in 2006.

I was in the sport at the time of BALCO, and I can name three or four guys who lined up with me on a weekly basis, who I considered my peers, who were very much involved in BALCO. Does that mean I was involved in BALCO? No.

I understand the doping questions are going to be asked of Bolt, and it's unfortunate.

Another question I was asked, back when **Veronica Campbell-Brown**'s positive test was revealed in June, was if I would be surprised by anybody failing a drug test in track and field anymore.

I said no, but it wasn't because of Campbell-Brown's case. Let me explain this. The fact is that the culture of track and field, especially right now, is that there are a ton of elite athletes who are scared to lose their legacy forever and lose their medals. They will not go into the steroid/human growth hormone area. They will not risk it.

However, they will take supplements. I took supplements every year of my career. It's not a coincidence that Campbell-Brown, Powell and Gay, assuming this all comes out as stimulants, that they are all pushing the envelope of 30 or older. They're trying to extend their careers a little bit.

What you're seeing is people thinking this supplement is fine and are assured it's not going to register a positive.

I pride myself on being clued into the sport, but I found out about the trainer for Powell and **Sherone Simpson** who was questioned in Italy with everybody else. And now reports say the hotel they were staying at has been raided.

The bottom line is people seek out these clubs and seek out these stars. It wasn't always supplements when I worked out at UCLA back in the day. It was, "I have this new thing, and it's going to help you train better, recover better." There's always something that somebody with a product is trying to pass off on elite athletes.



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One change I'd like to see from all of this is a distinction to be made between supplements and stimulants and what we call "the hard stuff" — steroids and human growth hormone.

A lot of people are waking up today, seeing the headlines scream "Gay" and "Powell" and "positive." The average fan thinks, oh, steroids.

On the Olympic testing level, if steroids or human growth hormone are a nine or a 10, what Powell took is in the four or five range.

Today, there are a lot of pro track and field athletes who are saying, "If I can't be 100 percent sure this supplement won't test positive down the road, I'm done. I'm not taking any supplements."

Sixty percent of athletes are doing that today. The other 40 percent are trusting what they've been taking, with no issues, sticking to that script and not adding any new stuff. Now you've got a divide.

It's a joke within the track and field community that civilians probably couldn't pass a drug test because of what's in their medicine cabinet. Now is the time to make a big distinction, to allow athletes to take certain supplements up to a certain category. Anything past that level, don't ask for leniency.

As for punishments, I would be surprised to see any of Gay, Powell or Campbell-Brown get more than six months, certainly nowhere near the possible two years. Go away and atone for your sins this year. We'll see them back next year, hoping the public and the sponsors forgive them and that they've learned the error of their ways.

**Adidas suspends its sponsorship of Tyson Gay**

Tags: [Asafa Powell](#), [Ato Boldon](#), [Tyson Gay](#), [Usain Bolt](#)

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