

TEXAS RANGERS

## Pudge again says he never used steroids

BY JEFF WILSON

[jwilson@star-telegram.com](mailto:jwilson@star-telegram.com)



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COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. — With all the questions that will be fired toward [Ivan Rodriguez](#) this weekend by media from around the country, on Friday morning he addressed the one uncomfortable issue that has dogged him for years.

Performance-enhancing drugs.

“I never took it,” he said. “Never.”

The topic was broached in his new book, “[They Call Me Pudge](#),” which hits bookstores Tuesday. Excerpts have made the rounds, and the issue of performance-enhancing drugs is addressed in the first chapter.

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It's bound to come up Saturday when he faces a larger pool of media rather than a quaint sessions with writers who cover the Texas Rangers, as was the case Friday.



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Rodriguez credited intense workouts, which during the season started in the morning before night games, and the natural development that comes with a 19-year-old rookie maturing into his prime years for the reasons behind the muscle he put on during his career.

“When you are strong mentally and physically and go out and play hard, that’s what you do, you have great years,” he said. “That’s what I say and I still say it: My conditioning was always there, every time. That’s one of the things a lot of people don’t see, my workouts in the morning, nine o’clock, a lot of people still in bed and I am out there running, getting ready for 7:05. That’s what you get. You get here and be a Hall of Famer.

“That’s just the way it is. There was a reason they called me ‘Pudge,’ stocky, strong. I had that as a little kid.”

*Jeff Wilson: 817-390-7760, @JeffWilson\_FWST*



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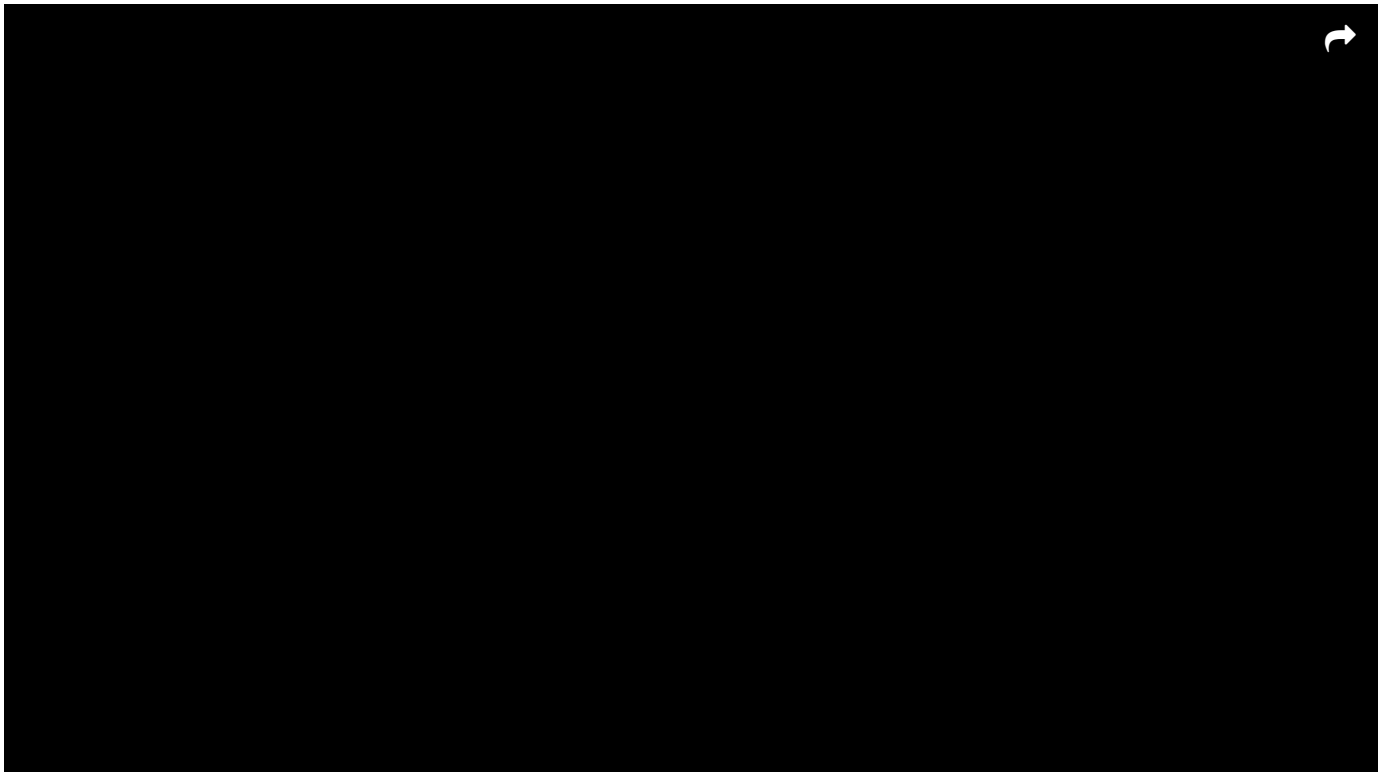
**Kenneth C. Fults Unk**

You sir are a joke. You can't get that big then reverse as you did without using steroids. Everyone even your teammates knew this.

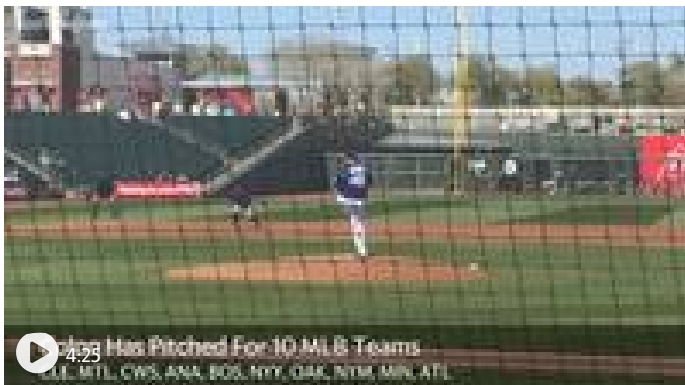
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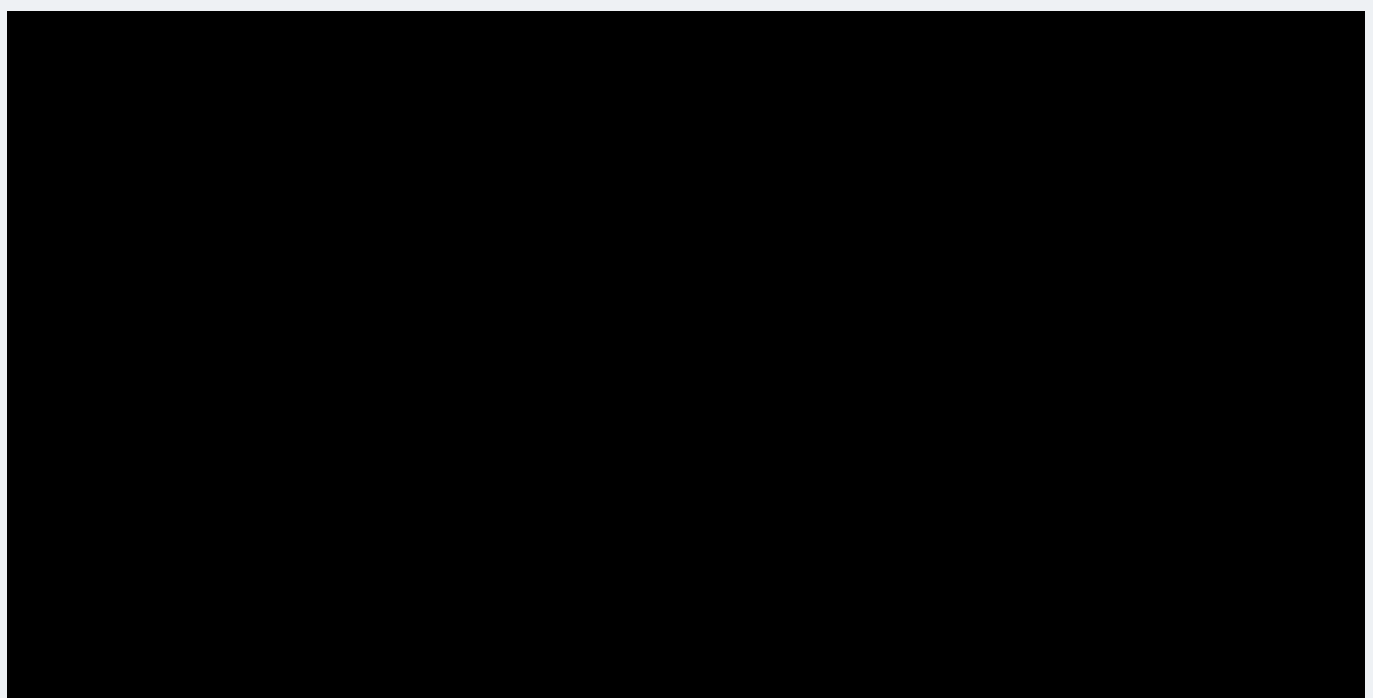
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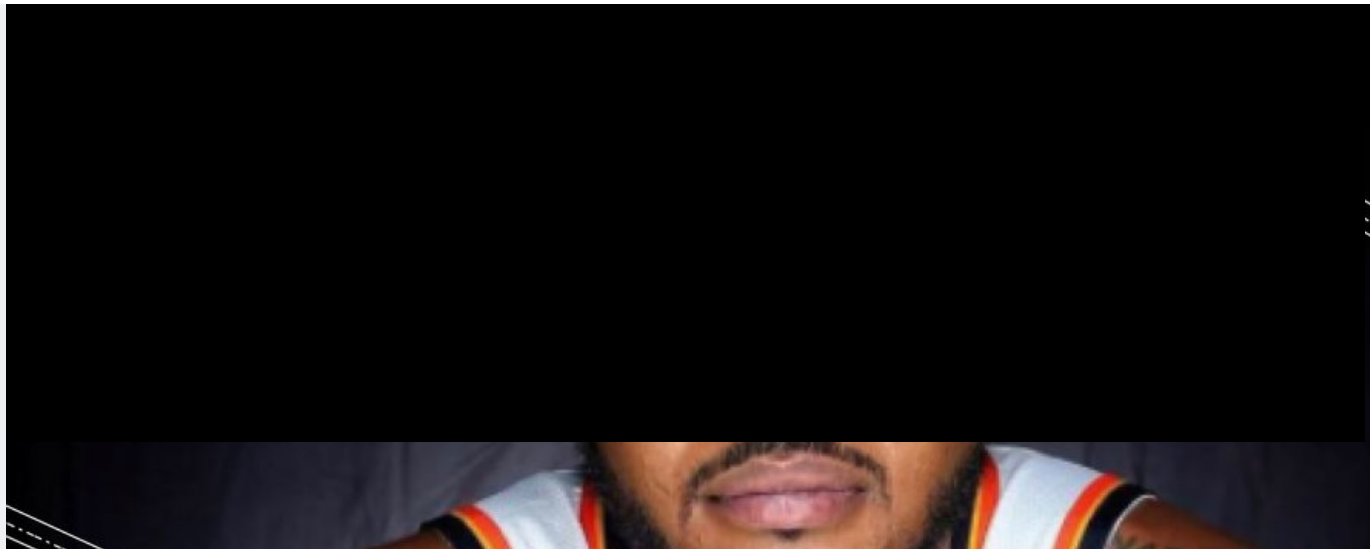
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