

BOSTON HERALD

Dustin Pedroia benefits from procedure

New scope gives hope



By Michael Silverman / Red Sox Notebook

Saturday, June 11, 2011

TORONTO — A cutting-edge medical procedure which determined Thursday that [Dustin Pedroia](#) [[stats](#)] did not need knee surgery marked the first time that VisionScope technology, developed by [Red Sox](#) [[team stats](#)] team medical director Dr. **Tom Gill**, was used on a professional athlete.

The technique involves inserting a miniature, high-definition camera into a needle that is then inserted into a joint (such as a knee, elbow, shoulder, ankle) and manipulated to inspect any damage. In Pedroia's case, he, his agent and Gill watched on a TV screen in the office as the camera revealed a very small piece of cartilage behind the kneecap that was more an annoyance than a chief contributor to his recent discomfort. The camera revealed a deep bone bruise, which should heal with time.

“You can use VisionScope to determine if surgery is needed, to see how someone is healing from surgery or you can use it instead of an MRI — eventually, it could replace MRIs,” Gill said last night. A dye-injection MRI would reveal similar but less detailed data, plus it is far more invasive, requiring a few days to recover.

With Pedroia, the only way to have known the extent of the cartilage issue that an initial MRI had hinted at would have been to perform arthroscopic surgery, which would have sidelined him 4-6 weeks. The VisionScope procedure revealed that surgery was unnecessary in Pedroia's case.

Gill was quite pleased to hear that Pedroia was back in the starting lineup the day after the procedure.

Pedroia, who said that his knee was just a little sore from where the needle had been put in, was upbeat as well. Plus, he said he thought it was pretty neat to actually see what was in his knee. “It's got (butt)-kicking written all over it,” was Pedroia's description of the state of his inner knee.

Pedroia, who had three hits in the Sox' 5-1 win last night, said he does not weigh enough for the artificial turf the team will play on for the next six games — here and in St. Petersburg, Fla. — to be a nuisance for him. He and the Sox do not expect his knee to be a concern going forward.

“If there’s ever a day and he comes in and needs to not play, he won’t,” manager [Terry Francona](#) said. “He plays; it’s what he does. I wouldn’t look for him to have too many days off.”

Pedroia will require consistent icing and other treatment on the knee.