Russian national team manager Nikolay Nerush said some strange things today in a release to the press.

Going against standard operating procedure for most test teams, Nerush went public about injuries on the squad. He said the Russian team's buildup for the World Cup has been hampered by a series of injuries.

Nerush did not name the players injured, but did say they were not in camp and we away rehabbing at some secure, undisclosed location.

"We face a serious problem in our preparations for September's World Cup. It's a huge spate of injuries that sidelined some of our team's leaders," Nerush told the Russian press. "There's a set of the first-line players, who have had to withdraw from intense practices for the World Cup because of medical reasons."

Nerush declined to name the players he was referring to.

Could this be a nod to the pressure the Russian team feels going into the World Cup? The Russian government, and Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has made several public comments supporting the Russian rugby cause, and will be in New Plymouth, NZ for the USA v. Russia World Cup match in September.

A public statement about injuries could possibly be a CYA moment for the Russian team.

The geographic splintering of the Russian squad is a complication on another level. The IRB requires all players in a team's World Cup pool to be constantly available for drug testing. Every player in the pool must submit a personal availability itinerary, which gives a location and a period of one hour, each day, where that athlete might have to submit to a surprise doping test.

Players must provide a list of their daily whereabouts to the IRB. If players are off rehabbing, but not being named, that provides a complication for the Russian team, and the IRB.

Nerush also said Russian players who are playing in England have not yet been released by their clubs, and that has also hampered their training.