

Stop the presses and hold the phone. The trade winds, they are a-blowing. Allen Iverson reportedly wants out of Philadelphia. The man they call "The Answer" has apparently had it with the roster full of question marks the 76ers have surrounded him with. News reports say he has asked the Philadelphia front office to find him a new team. Papa Cass talks about whether or not the Cavs are a potential trading partner for the Sixers, what it would take to get him, and whether or not it's worth it.



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It's something Iverson said he'd never do. But as we all know, a professional athlete's word and 75 cents will buy you a cup of muffler-shop coffee.

Actually, this divorce has been more messy and drawn-out than the one conducted by Prince Charles and Lady Di. All offseason, there were rumblings that it would be in the lottery-bound Sixers' best interest to trade Iverson and start a new rebuilding project. The rumor mill churned out scuttlebutt that Philly management was talking to the Celtics about a possible Iverson deal, but nothing ever came of it.

Now, it appears that Iverson is, in fact, going to be headed somewhere between now and the February trade deadline. The Celtics keep appearing as a logical choice.

There aren't really a lot of destinations that would satisfy both Philly's desire to clear cap space and get young talent/draft picks, and satisfy Iverson's desire to get back in the title hunt before his undersized body finally gives out.

But, one of those places could be ... Cleveland?

Ridiculous, right? Playing with fire? What have I been smoking? Go on, yuk it up.

Iverson would fill two very valuable needs for the Cavs: a reliable backcourt scorer, and a

tough-as-nails leader by example who will make his teammates look bad if they aren't giving 100 percent effort.

That hard-nosed veteran who still has some game left that I've been writing about? That's Iverson.

Now, about constructing a deal that would land him...

To take on Iverson's \$17-odd million salary this year, it would require the Cavs to give up one of their top two highest-paid players, either the \$9-plus million being earned by Zydrunas Ilgauskas or the \$13-plus million being earned by Larry Hughes.

Obviously, Hughes would be the better of the two because the salaries match more evenly and it would be a guard-for-guard trade. The NBA requires the financial give-and-take of all two-team trades to match to within 15 percent.

The Cavs would likely have to take on another long-term salary in the deal to entice Philadelphia to take something besides draft picks, which the Cavs don't have a lot of in the near future. Steven Hunter and Kyle Korver would be the two most logical choices.

Besides Hughes or Ilgauskas, the Cavs would have to load up the package with an attractive combination of expiring contracts or young players.

The Cavs' expiring deals include Ira Newble, Sasha Pavlovic, Anderson Varejao, Scot Pollard and possibly David Wesley.

One of the Cavs' two rookies, either Shannon Brown or Dan Gibson, would likely also have to be included. Brown makes more money and would help even out the deal, but Gibson is almost certainly the more attractive of the two at the moment.

If Danny Ferry can piece something together out of all of that, the Cavs can become the new home team for A.I.

There would be a significant amount of risk involved, and the Cavs would have to part with players you don't want to see them part with. But the combination of LeBron James and Allen Iverson could be a lethal one that propels the Cavs to the top of the East.

It all depends on how much of a gambler Ferry is.