

He's the gift that keeps on giving for Cavaliers fans. First the Pistons passed on Dwayne Wade and Chris Bosh to draft him. And just recently, his signing with Memphis essentially assured that Anderson Varejao would remain a Cav. He's Darko. Erik Cassano talks about him, as well as the Cavs free agent targets and summer league signees in this Sunday morning column.



Darko Milicic is the gift that keeps on giving to the Cavaliers.

First, the Pistons passed on Chris Bosh and Dwyane Wade to take Milicic, the modern generation's Sam Bowie. I don't know about you, but I'm glad I don't have to find out the answer, "What would have happened had the Pistons drafted Chris Bosh?"

A Detroit dynasty, that's probably what. A team that would have absorbed the loss of Ben Wallace, no problem. Instead, the pick Joe Dumars burned on Darko minutes after the

Cavs

took

LeBron

James played more than just a small role in the

Cavs

' ability to upset the Pistons and get to the franchise's first NBA Finals last month.

Then, Thursday, Darko did the Cavs another favor.

The Grizzlies were kicking the tires on Anderson Varejao. I was convinced that after losing out on Chicago's Andres

Nocioni

, the Grizzlies would become desperate to make a splash and get the attention of their fans by overpaying for the wild-haired conversation piece from the reigning

Eastern Conference champions.

I was prepared to click on one of the national sports Web sites in the next few days and find out that Memphis had signed Varejao to an offer sheet in excess of \$50 million, forcing Cavs GM Danny Ferry to make a very difficult decision concerning an important part of his team's bench.

Then, Darko stepped in, armed with his tempting nine-letter selling point, "potential." He only averaged 8 points and 5.5 reboundes per game last season, but Memphis bit on Darko's ever-present potential to develop into a star player -- and the fact that he was an unrestricted free agent after Orlando removed their qualifying offer to him last week -- and signed him to a three-year deal worth around \$21 million.

Now, Varejao has [virtually nowhere to turn](#) to get a bloated contract. If Ferry waits it out as this fact slowly dawns on Varejao and his camp, he can get Varejao signed to a reasonable contract.

Ever since the NBA Finals ended badly, we have been collectively concentrating on what the Cavs need to do to get better this summer. But the first job is to make sure they don't backslide by losing major pieces. The events of this week have helped bring that closer to reality.

*"It's ironic, I had the brew, she had the chronic
The Lakers beat the Supersonics"*

I can't see the Cavs signing Derek Fisher. Apparently, Branson Wright can't either -- at least anymore.

For the past few weeks, Wright, the Plain Dealer's lukewarm-at-best Cavs beat reporter, had been reporting that Fisher was not only considering the Cavs as a destination, he was a "likely" candidate to sign with the Cavs

. In a piece on potential
Cavs
point guards for next season,
Branson
gave Fisher a 45-percent chance of signing with the
Cavs
, his highest grade on whatever convoluted scale he used. Earl
Boykins
was next at 40 percent.

In [Tuesday's edition](#) however, Wright backed way off his Fisher prediction,
writing that the chances of the Cavs signing Fisher are
not good. Fisher might look to re-join the
Lakers
, where he started his career and won three titles.

This is my question: Was Fisher's supposed interest in the Cavs a product of
Wright's imagination all along? As Roger Brown would say, "
hmmmm
....."

Yes, the Cavs need help at point guard. Yes, the Cleveland Clinic has a
world-class cancer treatment facility, which would make Cleveland an attractive
destination for Fisher as his daughter battles a rare form of eye cancer. But where
does it say that adds up to Fisher in a Cavs uniform?

Where does it say that Fisher even wants to sign a contract right now? Didn't he
ask out of his deal with the Jazz to concentrate on getting the best treatment for
his daughter? Wasn't that the whole point, that he didn't want to think about
basketball at the moment?

And even if he did want to sign somewhere, what on Earth makes anyone think
Fisher would want to sign with the Cavs, who already have undersized guards
Larry Hughes, Eric Snow, Daniel Gibson, Shannon Brown and Damon Jones
clamoring for playing time?

It is possible for Fisher to seek treatment for his daughter at the Cleveland Clinic
and not play for the Cavs. I don't know if that crossed Wright's mind. Or maybe
that just makes for bad copy from a basketball writer.

Note to Branson Wright: The next time you speculate, you might want to run your idea through the logic machine before you put it in the paper.

*"Drunk as hell but no throwin' up
Halfway home and my pager still blowin' up
Today I didn't have to use my AK
I have to say, today was a good day"*

The Akron Beacon Journal's (and sometimes-contributor to TheClevelandFan.com)

[Brian](#)
[Windhorst](#)

has been watching

Cavs

summer league action in

Las

Vegas. Two non-roster guys to watch, he says, are Kevin

Pittsnogle

and Darius Rice, both lanky big men.

Of particular interest to me is Pittsnogle, the former West Virginia star, who I wanted to see the Cavs pick with their last second-rounder a year ago.

Pittsnogle might be a low-cost way to round out the big-man corps, especially since it appears there's no real place for Scot Pollard in Cleveland.

Pittsnogle is a 6'-11" big who can shoot it from the outside. He's a little soft to be a decent rebounder and he doesn't have much of a post game, but that doesn't really make him much different than

Donyell

Marshall, does it?

The only difference is Pittsnogle might actually make his shots.

With Big East pedigree and a skill set that can help the Cavs, my guess is Pittsnogle will get an invite to training camp in the fall. And he might have a decent shot to make the team, depending on the state of the roster three months from now.