

Why Mess with Success?

Written by {ga=samamico}

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I don't want the Cleveland Cavaliers to trade for Amare Stoudemire.

I don't want the Cavs to trade for Antwan Jamison or Troy Murphy, either.

The Cavs have won 13 in a row, have the best record in the league, and have fared well against the foes likely to stand in their way en route to a championship this spring. Why make a deal?

I'm not a big fan of most NBA trades or rumors. I know, I'm in the minority. But I hear a lot of this stuff and think, "Why, why, WHY?"

I hear this stuff and think what a lousy NBA general manager I would make. I would probably win 13 games in a row, beat the Lakers and Magic twice each in two tries and think, "Why mess with success?"

Now, I understand that you have to listen to trade offers. I understand that when a player like Stoudemire is available, you need to sit up and pay attention.

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But I sure wouldn't gut the team to get him. I wouldn't trade J.J. Hickson and Zydrunas Ilgauskas, the two men whom the Cavs are supposedly talking about dealing in discussions involving Stoudemire.

There are some trades that make sense. Dallas pulled off a good one last week when it landed Washington's Caron Butler and Brendan Haywood for Josh Howard and a few other journeymen types.

Of course, that deal stinks for the Wizards, but at least you can understand their need to start thinking about the future.

As for the Suns ... well, I don't get it. I look at the Lakers and think that Kobe Bryant and Andrew Bynum sure have been injured a lot lately. I look at Denver and think the same thing about Carmelo Anthony, and how it's too early to even be certain the Nuggets are a Western Conference power.

Yet no one expected the Suns to be nine games above .500 at this point. No one expected them to be able to dare to dream about becoming a playoff darkhorse.

But if the Suns trade Stoudemire, those dreams will come to an end.

I know, I know. Stoudemire can opt out of his contract this summer and the Suns could lose him for nothing. And since the trading deadline is Thursday, they need to deal him now to avoid that risk.

Maybe that's why I'd be such a lousy GM. I would probably just worry about the summer in the

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summer. I would probably be too content if I was running a winning team.

I know I wouldn't have let Trevor Ariza walk and sign Ron Artest one month after Ariza helped me win a championship, as the Lakers did last off-season.

I know I wouldn't think a team that's won 13 straight games and has the best record in the league needs an overhaul -- which is what the Cavs would get if they traded for Stoudemire.

If Stoudemire came to Cleveland, he would be re-joining Shaquille O'Neal. Last year, they played together in Phoenix, and the Suns were 28-18 when they were both in the lineup. Not bad, but it's not 43-11, either. And 43-11 is what the Cavs are today.

Now, I love Stoudemire as a player, but there are a few things worth considering.

For one, he supposedly has scrambled eggs for knees.

For another, he has a reputation for being a lousy pick-and-roll defender. And does anyone besides me remember how the Magic pick-and-rolled the Cavs to death in the Eastern Conference finals last season?

Some also say Stoudemire needs the ball to be effective. He's not a consistent rebounder and he's not an accomplished shot blocker. He plays in a system that rewards him for running the floor while playing next to a future Hall of Fame point guard in Steve Nash.

Right now, the Cavs' point guard is Daniel Gibson. And even when Mo Williams gets healthy, well, he's no Nash. And understandably, Williams' priority won't be Stoudemire. The first, second and third options on the Cavs is LeBron James. Stoudemire would also be coming to a team where the power forwards (Hickson and Anderson Varejao) never have a play run for them.

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Is Stoudemire a better player than Hickson? Obviously, you know the answer. At this point in their careers, Stoudemire is far superior.

Does that make Stoudemire a better fit?

Well, yes. Probably.

Then again, Hickson is only 21 years old. He should be a junior in college. He played huge roles in Cavs wins over Orlando and the Lakers. He is an exceptional athlete who plays hard and understands what is expected of him on a winning team.

He could be a very good player in Phoenix (or anywhere) for a long, long time. But no matter where Hickson goes, it's gonna be a while.

That said, I realize this trade could work. It just might benefit both teams. It might be the move the Cavs need to ensure them of their first championship and prove to be favorable for the Suns in the long run.

But that's a lot of maybes, and when things are going so well, sometimes you should just leave well enough alone.

Sometimes, the best trade rumors are rumors for a reason. In real life, they might not work.

Sam Amico is the former editor of Pro Basketball News and currently a reporter for NBA.com and is a frequent contributor to Sportsime Ohio and TheClevelandFan.com. He can be reached at amico@probasketballnews.com.