

Just the Truth, Chris

Written by {ga=jerryroche}

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The last time we heard from Cleveland Cavaliers general manager Chris Grant was on Dec. 11, 2010. At that time, he said, "It's still a process. We're still finding out strengths and weaknesses of our team, and we'll continue. We're constantly evaluating it, as every other team in the NBA is. As we move forward, we'll continue to do that."

Now, barely one month later, Grant has to be aware of the Cavaliers' strengths: nothing. And their weaknesses: everything. And word from him is ... nothing.

As the roster is now composed, the Cavs have to be the youngest, shortest, least talented team in the league. Three rookies and 10 players with four years' experience or less. One seven-footer; no other player taller than 6-foot-9. Starting guards who are 6-foot-1 (Mo) and 6-foot-2 (Booby). Not one player among the 80 most efficient players in the league (Antawn Jamison is 86th). Yeah, Andy Varejao is 6-11 and a more efficient player than Jamo, but he's out for the year, so dis-include him, if you will.

The Sad Stats

The Cavs' defense has totally collapsed -- even before the perpetual motion machine from Brazil went down for the season. They are 23rd in the league in points allowed (104) and last in

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the league in opponents' three-point field goal percentage (42.6) -- more than three percentage points higher than any other team. Opponents have scored more than 100 points 27 times.

They have no beef in the middle, so when opposing guards beat ours (quite frequently, frankly), the result is an uncontested lay-up. When our guards and forwards sag down to help defend the middle, opposing perimeter marksmen find themselves wide open. It's an unending circle of incompetence -- a spiral downward, actually. Whether the defensive maladies are the result of inexperience, lack of talent, psychological blocks, massive injuries, or lack of coaching are immaterial.

Neither can this team score. They are 26th in points per game (94). They've hit 100 points just nine times. And they are last in scoring difference (-9.44), 29th in blocks-per-game differences (-2.30), 28th in assists difference (-2.75), 27th in rebounding difference (-3.62). Out of 30 teams.

Where to, Chris?

Using parlance that echoes other professional sports general managers in Cleveland (are you listening, Mark Shapiro and Chris Antonetti?), Grant talks about "process" and "moving forward." The former is what has killed the Indians for the past 10 years, and the latter usually is not the same as "moving up."

Father Time will force the Cavs to move forward, as he does to all of us. The best we can say is that "moving forward" in this case must necessarily equate to "moving up," since there's nowhere else for the Cavs to go. Unless, of course, their cement boots keep them at the bottom of the cesspool that the National Basketball Association has become.

For now, though, Grant has largely disappeared from the public eye. And who wouldn't, especially following that embarrassing loss to the Lakers earlier in the week?

Prior to the start of the season, most everybody expected the Cavaliers to be bad -- bad enough to be a lottery team. Today, we're talking humiliation and the No.1 choice in the college draft.

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Of course, we're also talking about a work stoppage in the NBA for 2011-2012 -- which means that college underclassmen may not declare for the draft -- which means that the best talent out there (the first time in eight years that the Cavs have a high draft choice) is Duke senior Kyle Singler, a 6-foot-9 small forward who TCF founder Rich Swerbinsky equates to NBA superstar (wink-wink) Kiki Vandeweghe. No John Wall. No Blake Griffin. No Derrick Rose. And certainly no Traitorous-Scuzball-Who-Shall-Not-Be-Named.

Well, then, maybe Grant can build the team with free agents. Guess again. "The Cavs have never signed a free agent, in his prime, stud in the history of the franchise," notes TCF editor Brian McPeek -- and nobody will argue that it probably will never happen. If the Traitorous-Scuzball-Who-Shall-Not-Be-Named will turn down an additional \$20 or \$30 million (on top of a \$90 million contract) to play elsewhere, why would anyone sign to play in Cleveland, given the state of the team, money notwithstanding?

Just the Truth, Man

To most every Cavalier basketball fan, the future looks grim indeed. And Chris Grant disappearing from the face of the Earth does not help. You can criticize Grant's predecessor all you want, but at 6-foot-10 he was very visible and he tried his darndest to improve the Cavs from year to year.

So tell us what your plans are, Chris. If you've deliberately tanked the season to get the top draft choice, you can at least hint that you're playing rookies and D-Leaguers because you have no other choice. That wouldn't break any league or moral rules, would it? If your plans include trading for as many draft choices as possible at some time in the near future, tell us. If your plans include signing some quality free agents in the off-season, tell us how you're going to do that (puh-leeze).

If your "process" requires that fans just be patient for two or three or four or five or six years, tell us.

With the season ticket base about to go bust, we don't need Houdini for general manager. We

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need someone we can trust.

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