



When JJ Hickson was traded to the Sacramento Kings, the transaction was generally well-received. Much was made of his maturity, consistency and what he would want on the open market. Hickson is an unrestricted free agent on July 1st, 2012 and was [hoping](#) to be a maximum contract player. Chris Grant and the Cavs decided to cut their losses, give the keys to Tristan Thompson and make a trade for Omri Casspi and a heavily-protected first round pick.

The 11th hour pre-lockout trade is not really working out for either team. Casspi has yet to find his groove in Cleveland and is averaging a career low in minutes played, field goal percentage, three point field goal percentage, free throw percentage, rebounds and points per game. Hickson is also underwhelming for the Kings. He is averaging a career low in field goal percentage. Hickson is also averaging 8.7 less points per game compared to last year. His rebounding went from 8.7 per game in 2010-2011 to 5.3 during this current season.

In other words, neither guy is delivering for their new club. Casspi has been fairly quiet about his new and old teams. JJ Hickson has taken a different approach and has been quite vocal about not wanting to be a Sacramento King. In the Tom Reed [article](#) from Sunday night, Hickson stated that “I didn't see that coming at all. Unfortunately it happened and I'm a Sacramento King now.” Additionally, he [tweeted](#)

“It was sooooo refreshing being back in the Q....” on Sunday night.

What we have is a situation where a talented athlete wants to be in Cleveland and the team and fans turned on him. Hickson is not an all star, but in the right situation he can be a productive basketball player. For example, he averaged 18.4 PPG and 11.6 RPG in during the month of February last year. He also put up similar numbers in April and March. Byron Scott and Hickson had a well-documented contentious relationship, but it appears as if the coach’s message had begun to make an impression to the young power forward. JJ Hickson was taken fairly late in the 1st round of the 2008 draft and showed continuous improvement every year only to see himself traded to a less-than-ideal situation.

The most frustrating aspect of the trade is not how both players are underachieving for their new teams. The most disappointing thing is that Hickson turned out to be one of us. He loves Cleveland. Isn’t that something that we want in our athletes? Cleveland fans have a chip on their shoulder and want to cheer for guys who can relate to legitimately like playing in this market. Hickson is not showing a lot of maturity by throwing his new team under the bus, but the root of this is the fact that he is legitimately disappointed to not be a Cavalier or playing in front of Cleveland fans anymore. A lot of current and ex-Cleveland athletes play lip service to the city, but Hickson is proving that he was sincere when he [said](#) “I loved the fans in the Cleveland to the bottom of my heart.”

Hickson was treated like a pariah prior to last night’s game and his recent quotes about the city of Cleveland. He symbolized the old era that most people would rather forget. Byron Scott showered Hickson with tough love and that may have an impact on how Cleveland fans remember him. What didn’t help matters was when Hickson [tweeted](#) at LeBron James with adoration after game 1 of the 2011 finals. I was rather upset with Hickson after that showing, but I wish I could take it back. After all, Hickson would rather be in Cleveland. Isn’t that ultimately what we want from our athletes?