

With the NBA Playoffs, the NFL Draft, and the start of Indians season all looming ... we're heading into my favorite time of the year to be a sports fan. In this Monday's column, Peeks addresses the Amar'e Stoudemire rumors, talks about Marcus Camby, and hits on the start of spring training out in Goodyear as well as the A-Roid soap opera. It's how we start the new week here on the site ... it's "The Weekend Wrap".



In a New York Minute

Let me get this straight; the Cavaliers are one of the top three teams in the NBA. They arguably are good enough, once they have their full complement of players healthy, to challenge for their first title as currently composed. And there is the possibility, unlikely as it may be, to add a perennial All-Star who is but 26 years-old in exchange for Wally Szczerbiak, JJ Hickson and a draft pick or two. And people here are reluctant to make a deal for Amare Stoudemire why?

Look, I get the fact that Stoudemire has long looked at defense as the time spent waiting for the next offensive possession. I understand

there's a bit of danger in disrupting the chemistry the Cavaliers have built since training camp last fall. I also realize Stoudemire has demonstrated a 'me first' attitude at times during his career that doesn't typically bode well for whatever team that deals for him.

But this is ultimately a 4-time All Star who is 26 years old and averages 21 points and 9 rebounds per night while blocking more than a shot a game. Where do I sign up and do Wally and JJ need a ride to the airport?

That's not a slap at either Szczerbiak or Hickson. If a deal isn't made I'm okay with that. Szczerbiak is a solid player who hustles his ass off and can provide instant offense off the bench. Hickson is an athletic, still raw, quick-jumping project who's actually contributed more than many would have expected early in his rookie year. Hickson could turn into an outstanding player. Of course, Hickson could also develop nicely and still never approach the level of Stoudemire and by that time Wally will be a shooting coach for some team or sitting on a beach in retirement.

I make that deal every day of the week and twice on Sunday. I don't worry much about the stigmas attached to Stoudemire. First off, he looks to be healthy following 2005 micro-fracture surgery which is a critical consideration. Secondly, he'd be coming to a team that, while relatively young, has its leadership established. It's hard for me to imagine Stoudemire being too big of a concern when there are players here like LeBron James, Ben Wallace, Zydrunas Ilgauskas and Mo Williams who know what time it is and who have clearly bought into the system that coach Mike Brown has laid down. It wasn't 6 months ago when many of the same concerns that are being voiced about

Stoudemire were attached to Mo Williams.

Williams seems to have answered those questions about his defensive effort and ability to play nice with an established star, no?

Short of some miraculous, out of thin air deal materializing in the next four days for Chris Bosh I'm seriously kicking the tires on a deal for Stoudemire if I'm the Cavs GM or a Cavs fan. There's no way I'm passing up an opportunity to increase the likelihood of a championship in Cleveland based upon some fear of what JJ Hickson *may* one day become.

Carpe diem Cavs fans. The name on the door is Cleveland. That means the number of diems to carpe is usually on the low side.

Etcetera

- Here's hoping that Cavaliers GM Danny Ferry still has Donald Sterling and Mike Dunleavy of the Los Angeles Clippers on speed dial should the Stoudemire possibility fall through. Clippers center Marcus Camby is still high on my wish list and would be far less expensive in terms of both money and talent if the Clippers are willing to deal him. Camby is 34 but he's a guy, as mentioned here last week, that can play both ends of the court effectively and would be an anchor in the front court defensively. Unlike Ben Wallace you don't need to take Camby off the floor in the waning moments of close games either since he shoots 75% or so from the line. Cap relief and/or young, cheap players should appeal to the Clippers.

- A divorce, a tryst with Madonna as well as with kaballah, an orange colored face and a steroid admission in the last year or so for Alex Rodriguez. The guy is self-destructing like Joaquin Phoenix. This tool has gone from hitting like Mickey Mantle to living like Mickey Rourke. Stay hot you snake.

- Good news out of Goodyear so far. It would appear that Adam Miller, the prized but oft-injured Tribe pitching phenom, navigated the highways or airplane steps that led him to Phoenix without any physical injuries to speak of. I'd love to see this kid just explode onto the scene season. With Carl Pavano and Anthony Reyes likely just minutes from the DL Miller has a chance to earn a spot in the bullpen out of spring that could grow into something much bigger. With this kid's talent he has that chance and that upside. But his medical history has me checking the internet with one eye reluctantly open waiting for that injury shoe to drop.

- I thought a quote from Eric Wedge out of Sunday's Plain Dealer was worth running here. Wedge was asked how he goes about motivating his players:

"I tell players that in every game they play there's a family of four that has saved all year to see that one game," said Wedge. "There's a father, a mother and two kids that have waited all year for this game and that they owe it to them to play as hard as they can. I guarantee you that happens every night in every ballpark in America. That's as real as it gets, and if it doesn't give you goose bumps as a player, you're in the wrong game."

Say what you will about Wedge, but that's an honorable and compelling approach. I'm not sure if that's an approach Pavano is actually on board

with, but in a blue collar town like Cleveland it should at least be appreciated.

The Cleveland Experience

Many thanks to Jim Barrett for sitting in this past Wednesday on the radio show while I whined and cried like sick toddlers do. And that was a solid appearance from News Herald Indians beat reporter Jim Ingraham too.

I'll be back in the co-host chair this Wednesday with Rich Swerbinsky and we'll be talking NBA trade deadline, Tribe spring training and (feeling a bit sick again) some Browns as well. Give us a listen or a download by hitting the podcast link on the front page.