It is an annual rite of summer, and the NBA's own version of 'Midnight Madness.' At 12:01 AM on July 1st, General Managers across the land will start ringing doorbells, calling cell phones, and firing off e-mails ... all in the hopes of landing the free-agents on the top of their wish lists. In Jesse's latest, he offers up a comprehensive look at all of this year's free agents, and which ones may be of interest to the Cavaliers.

My initial reaction to the Cavaliers' selection of Congolese swingman Christian Eyenga with the 30th overall pick in the NBA Draft was probably the same as that of a lot of other people: *"Who?"* I'm not ashamed to admit that I had no clue the 6'5" twenty year-old even existed before David Stern stepped to the podium last Thursday and announced the pick. I had my heart set on Sam Young, a seasoned player who cut his teeth at defensive-oriented Pitt and who might have been able to step in and help the Cavaliers immediately at one of their biggest weaknesses: size and strength on the perimeter. Instead we get Eyenga, who spent last season in the Spanish second division, might not even play in the United States next year, and most likely wouldn't be a factor even if he did, considering he couldn't even crack the top level of basketball in Spain.

I'm not going to get too apoplectic about the pick, because I'm too ignorant of the kid to really be passionate about him one way or another. I'd never heard of Zydrunas Ilgauskas when the Cavaliers picked him at number twenty in the 1996 Draft, and he turned out all right. And the 30th overall selection is almost always a crapshoot

anyway, especially in a Draft as weak as this one. Any opinion at all on my part toward the pick would be ill-advised, simply because when it comes to Christian Eyenga, I don't know what the hell I'm talking about.

Still, the bottom line for our purposes is that the Eyenga selection still leaves the Cavaliers with as many holes for next season as they had prior to the Draft. They still need a backup point guard, a lengthy perimeter defender, and a big man who can shoot and stretch the floor. The question is; how do the Cavaliers go about filling those holes with the time and money they have left before the season begins in October?

First off, let's take a look at Cleveland's options going into the free-agency period. The Cavaliers are over the salary cap, so they can't make any big, stand-alone signings, the kind that would bring in, say, Carlos Boozer. They have the Larry Bird exception that can be used to go over the cap to re-sign their own players (see Varejao, Anderson) or to sign those players as part of a sign-and-trade deal to bring in a premium player. They have the mid-level exception of around 5.8 million dollars that can be used on one or more free-agent players. They have a two million-dollar bi-annual exception that can be used on one player. Finally, they have the minimum salary exception that can be used on one player.

So in short, the Cavaliers have the ability to bring in at least

three new players to fill the holes in their roster. Good thing, because they need three players- the "stretch" forward, the tall wing (not counting second-round pick Danny Green, a 6'6" swingman) and the backup point.

Now, let's look at the unrestricted free agents on the market this summer, starting with the point guards.

Point Guard

Jason Kidd

Mike Bibby

Andre Miller

Stephon Marbury

Jason Hart

Brevin Knight

Smush Parker

Ronald Murray

Marcus Williams

Jacque Vaughn

Lindsay Hunter

Anthony Carter

Kevin Ollie

Quincy Douby

Mike Wilks

Obviously, the guy who jumps out on this list is Jason Kidd, a future Hall-of-Famer and one of the greatest point guards to ever play this game. Signing him to lead the second unit would be a coup along the lines of the Celtics picking up Bill Walton in 1985, and would have a similar effect on the fortunes of the Cavaliers. Some would say this team doesn't need Jason Kidd. I say if you have a chance to get a player of this caliber, you do it, no questions asked.

Unfortunately, bringing Captain Kidd to Cleveland with the bi-annual exception is probably a pipe dream. Dallas can offer him considerably more money and looks to have every intention of doing so . The next-best option after him in terms of a cheap signing is probably Anthony Carter, a 34-year old veteran who averaged 5.3 points in a little over 22 minutes per game with the Nuggets in 2008-09. Bringing in Carter with the minimum exception would be a cheap and easy way of bolstering Cleveland's ball-handling rotation (provided he's willing to take the pay cut, of course.) If you can't land a whale like Kidd, there's no need to break the bank for a bench player.

Let's move on to swingmen. This is a partial list.

Swingmen

Wally Szczerbiak

Desmond Mason

Anthony Parker

Dahntay Jones

Kareem Rush

Ron Artest

Trevor Ariza

Grant Hill

Matt Barnes

Ron Artest and Trevor Ariza are the best names on this list, but they probably aren't attainable. Houston has the means to keep Artest, and they mean to keep him. Ariza is a native of Los Angeles (Westchester High, UCLA) and would like to stay there. A lot of what happens with him depends on whether or not Lamar Odom will be willing to take less money to stay with the Lakers. If he does, it'll give L.A. the leeway to keep both him and Ariza. If he doesn't, if the Lakers are forced to spend upwards of ten million a year to retain Odom's services- Ariza goes bye-bye. It's hard to imagine the Lake Show keeping a role player- albeit a young, talented role player- over Lamar Odom, who in terms of pure skills and versatility is a top-ten player in the entire league.

The hope here is that either a.) Lamar Odom demands seven figures, forcing L.A. to re-sign him and lose Ariza, or b.) L.A. lets Ariza walk and some other team with more open money doesn't overpay him on the strength of his nice Playoff run.

Dahntay Jones and Matt Barnes are somewhat more realistic options. Jones bounced around the league for several years before blossoming as a starter in Denver last year ("starter" being a relative term; he played ten minutes per game fewer than his backup, J.R. Smith) while

Barnes did the same- including a brief stint in Cleveland's training camp in 2003- before finding his niche first with Golden State and then with Phoenix. Jones is a better defender and a better three-point shooter; Barnes is more athletic and has a more extensive record of being an effective player. Both are around the same age; Jones turns 29 in December, while Barnes turned 29 in March. My ultimate preference is Trevor Ariza, but Matt Barnes would be a halfway-decent fallback. The Cavaliers seem to be high on Anthony Parker, but I'm not: he turned 34 in June and his numbers dropped almost across the board last season.

Now on to the third need for the Cavaliers: the "stretch" forward who can spread the floor and knock down the deep jumper.

Stretch Forwards

Rasheed Wallace

Drew Gooden

Donyell Marshall

Um, yeah. That's pretty much it in terms of unrestricted free agents. Rasheed is the obvious choice here: he may be getting up there in years and he may also be utterly insane, but he has a sweet stroke from long range and a very solid track record in head-to-head match-ups against Dwight Howard. The flavor of the week, however, is a restricted free agent: Milwaukee's Charlie Villanueva. The 6'11" Connecticut product is exactly what the doctor ordered: young (turns 25 in August), coming off a breakout season in which he averaged 16.2 points and 6.7 rebounds, a passable outside marksman for his size and a superb free-throw shooter (84 percent last season.)

Problem is the Bucks can match any offer made to Villanueva. Whether they would is anyone's guess- they cleared up salary space when they dealt Richard Jefferson, but at the same time there are reports coming out of Milwaukee declaring that Villanueva isn't in their long-term plans. The Bucks just traded for another young power forward, Amir Johnson, and also have designs on landing Euro-forward Ersan Ilyasova. Villanueva for his part has been coy, dropping hints on his Twitter page that he wouldn't at all mind coming to Cleveland to serve as running mate for LeBron, his former teammate at the 2003 McDonald's All-America Game.

Getting Villanueva would be a serious coup. Failing that, Rasheed would look good in Wine & Gold, at least for a short period of time. The ultimate best-case scenario: the Cavaliers

successfully pull in Kidd, Ariza, and Villanueva and re-sign Anderson Varejao at a reasonable price, creating a rotation that looks like this:

Mo Williams/Jason Kidd

Delonte West/Trevor Ariza/Daniel Gibson

LeBron James/Trevor Ariza

Charlie Villanueva/Anderson Varejao/J.J. Hickson-Darnell Jackson

Shaquille O'Neal/Zydrunas Ilgauskas

I'm not 100 percent certain this scenario is workable under Cleveland's salary restrictions; if it isn't- don't hesitate to let me know, friend readers. If it is... wow. That's a championship rotation, especially in the backcourt, where there are mix-and-match possibilities to die for. Again, though, this is the best-case scenario. The real return on free-agency will probably

wind up being much more modest- say, Anthony Carter, Matt Barnes and Rasheed Wallace, or at any rate, one of Kidd, Ariza and Villanueva, but not two or all three of them.

That's my look at the Cavaliers' options in free agency. I just want to stress that I'm not the world's expect on these matters, and that if I got something wrong, or if I don't have my facts straight in one area or another, please let me know. I don't mind being wrong, as long as I have a chance to go from being wrong to being right. Now let's sit back and watch the fun unfold.