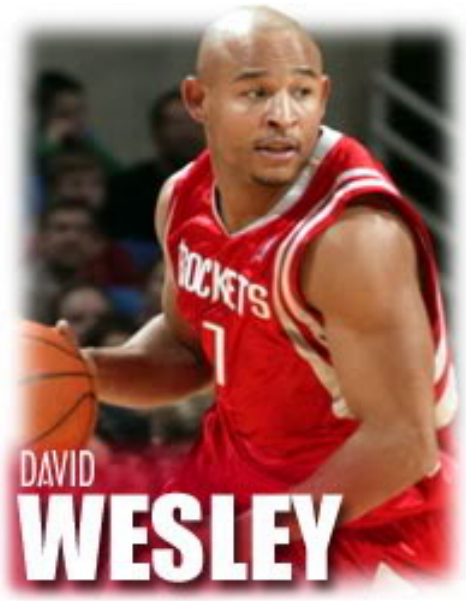
The normally reliable Bob Finnan of the Lake County News Herald broke a report Friday morning that the Cavaliers were close to signing veteran combo guard David Wesley away from Houston. Here's some thoughts on Wesley, and a link to Finnan's story.



On Friday morning, the Lake County News Herald's Bob Finnan released a story that indicated that the Cavaliers were close to signing Houston Rockets combo guard David Wesley to a short term free agent deal. Here's what Finnan wrote :

Cavaliers general manager Danny Ferry has been on the prowl for a veteran guard. Sources say the Cavaliers are close to signing veteran David Wesley. Wesley, who will be 36 on Nov. 14, could be signed with part of the Cavaliers' mid-level exception or possibly the bi-annual exception ($1.8 million). He played 71 games last year for Houston, including 59 starts. He averaged 9.9 points, 2.9 assists and 2.5 rebounds. The 2006-07 season will be his 14th in the NBA. Wesley has averaged 12.9 points, 4.5 assists and 2.1 rebounds in his career. He's a 42.5 percent career shooter, including 37 percent from the 3-point line.

If he's added, the Cavaliers would be overloaded at guard, especially after drafting Shannon Brown of Michigan State in the first round and Daniel Gibson of Texas in the second. Other guards on the roster are starters Eric Snow and Larry Hughes and backup point guard Damon Jones, whose name has surfaced in trade talks. The 6-foot-1, 203-pound Wesley can play both guard spots and would likely come off the bench in Cleveland. He was not drafted upon leaving Baylor in 1992. If Wesley is signed, he'd be the 15th player on the roster. Swingman Stephen Graham has a contract for next season, but it's not guaranteed.

If you remember correctly, Wesley was the player that was drag racing with Cavaliers fan favorite Bobby Phills before Phills unfortunate and untimely death. Wesley certainly wasn't at fault for the accident, and the two were the closest of friends. At the time, the pair were in Charlotte, and Wesley was playing at a near All-Star level ... averaging about 17, 4, and 4. The

loss of his friend hit Wesley hard, and he simply was never the same player afterwards.

Wesley has played the last three years in Houston, where he averaged 12, 11, and 10 points the last three seasons. Essentially, Wesley is cut from the same cloth as a Flip Murray or a Shannon Brown: he is a smallish shooting guard with some point guard skills.

My first reaction to this news, if true, is that this is likely a precursor to a trade of Damon Jones. Figure on Eric Snow and Larry Hughes as the teams starting guards, with Shannon Brown in line to be the first guard off the bench. Wesley would likely fill the fourth guard spot, and help to mentor fifth guard Daniel Gibson, the teams second round draft pick out of the University of Texas.

Wesley is a better ball handler and a better defender than Jones, and even at the advanced age of 36, would constitute an upgrade in my view. I am largely in favor of trading the one dimensional Jones at all costs if you can add a guy like Wesley. On the flip side, I hope this is just a one year deal, and I also hope it doesn't chew up any of the teams mid-level exemption. The chances of being able to count on a Wesley for anything at all for more than one season are likely overzealous.