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CLIPPERS FYI

Clippers' Chauncey Billups frustrated by not being able to play

The veteran, who suffered a left Achilles' tendon injury in February, says he thinks the Clippers' chances in the playoffs would be better if he played because of the intelligence he would bring.

By Broderick Turner

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He is the well-dressed player sitting on the Clippers' bench, the sage veteran offering advice and encouragement during this playoff push for his teammates and coaching staff.

But make no mistake, **Chauncey Billups** said, it has been killing him not to be dressed in a uniform and playing and helping the Clippers with his skills on the court.

Billups hasn't played in a game since suffering a season-ending left Achilles' tendon injury Feb. 6 at Orlando.

The 14-year veteran guard now says it was easier for him to not play when "I didn't travel."

But he has been on every trip in the playoffs.

Billups won an NBA championship with the Detroit Pistons in 2004, and he was named the Finals most valuable player.

So he knows he could have helped the Clippers, especially against a veteran team such as the San Antonio Spurs.

"I'm never going to say if I was out there we would win," Billups said. "But I feel like our chances would be much greater because of the intelligence that I bring. It's not because I'm going to go out there and score 30. I'm not that kind of guy.

"But I know how to control tempo, people, deal with personalities, egos. That's what I do. I think that's a big factor when you're talking about playoff basketball."

Billups has been told it will take a year for his injury to heal.

Even so, Billups, who turns 36 in September, said he will play next season.

He said returning to the Clippers is something he would like to do.

"I'm definitely going to give this a huge amount of consideration this summer. I feel like we've got some unfinished business a little bit," Billups said. "You never know what direction the team is going, if they even want me back. I've learned not to really assume nothing.

"I don't know if this is going to be my last time here. But if it is, I had a good time. But if not, I'm looking forward to continuing. I'm definitely going to be back playing next year. For sure and you can believe that. Believe it."

Schedule works

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All the worries about a scheduling conflict between the Clippers and Kings because of their playoff games Sunday at Staples Center turned out to be unfounded.

The Kings, who lost Game 4 of their NHL Western Conference finals series against the Phoenix Coyotes, started the game at noon.

The Clippers, who were playing the Spurs in Game 4 of the NBA Western Conference semifinals, started their game at 7:30 p.m., as scheduled.

After the Kings lost Sunday, it took 2 hours 20 minutes to change the ice rink into a basketball court for the Clippers to play. It took an extra 20 minutes because the workers had to find one last chair to put in place.

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