

Could there be anything better for the NBA ?

The more NBA players in Europe the better. The movement of players is taking away the stigma and fear that younger players perceive when they are asked to play in Europe before signing an NBA contract. Knowing that they will be competing against Josh Childress, Earl Boykins, Carlos Arroyo, et al, and getting a chance to get real minutes, AND make good money is a win for everyone.

I know a lot of people think a team that loses a player could get really hurt by the move. In reality, if a team truly has a good handle on your skill level and ability to contribute to the team, they will pay to that level. If they aren't sure, then the player going to Europe is a huge win. The player gets paid, but more importantly, the team gets to further evaluate the player in a high pressure situation.

High pressure ? Absolutely. When you are the highest paid American player on your team overseas, you better be a star that produces, on a team that wins. If as a player, you improve your game (and the 2 a day practices over there give you that opportunity), then you can come back to the states after a shorter season and your value will have improved. If you are a player that went over to be the star and didn't star... Well, you probably will have a long career in another country.

From the NBA team's perspective, not only do we get additional evaluation time, but we still retain the same rights we had the day before you left, and I don't want to speak for any other team, but the hardest part of a player leaving is his going to a team you compete with and having to see him and read about it all the time. When a player defects overseas and you still hold the same rights, it's not nearly that bad.

And one last question that's been getting asked a lot. What about a guy getting far more overseas than he could get paid in the NBA ? Yes, yes, yes. Nothing better than competition for the NBA.

With the exchange rate, 25mm a year paid in Euros is the equivalent of about 12mm paid in Euros just a few years ago. So NBA players look like bargains. If we lose a few players, that's not a bad thing. In fact a couple All Stars going over there is a GREAT GREAT thing.

Let me explain why. Let's say for the sake of example a couple players got 25mm, 50mm or whatever a year pay and they play on teams that just dominate. They rip apart every team they face. What happens next ? People wonder who the best teams in the world are. When that discussion becomes serious, the NBA and those winning overseas teams get paid.

European Soccer has done a phenomenal job of inventing tournaments that drive huge revenues and TV dollars. This would allow the NBA to do the same thing. Take a Christmas break, or do it in the summer, where the top 6 records in the league play the top 6 teams over there, with the revenues from the event being split primarily among the participant teams rather than equally among all NBA teams. Not only would that be a great revenue source for all the teams involved, but it would create a huge economic incentive for the other 24 NBA teams and all overseas team to become top tier teams.

Then of course we could create our own World Cup type tournament every 4 years.

All of this could open the door to create more NBA owned competition. I'm not saying it would be easy or automatic. Quite a few parties that don't always see eye to eye would have to come to agreement, But the timing for all of that is right and it's an amazing opportunity for players, leagues and teams alike.

Who would have ever thought that the combination of Josh and the drop in the dollar could create such a wonderful opportunity.