

## **Laser surgery may be choice for hobbled Jackson**

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Indianapolis-- One day after being named the Hawks' starting off-guard, Jim Jackson revealed he may not be able to hold that position very long. Jackson said Monday that tendinitis of his knees is so severe he is almost certain he'll undergo a radical new procedure to ameliorate the problem.

"I can't jump off my left leg the way I need to. I can't cut the way I need to," Jackson said Thursday after practice. "I owe it to this team to give them the level of play they expect and I can't do that now. What's more, unless I do something to fix the problem, I'm afraid it's just going to get worse."

Jackson, who will start tonight against Indiana, said he underwent surgery over the summer to correct the problem. He was fine through the first game of the exhibition season and has played with increasing pain since, his mobility limited, his effectiveness blunted.

"What I want to do is take advantage of a new procedure that's performed in Canada, but not yet approved by the (Food and Drug Administration). I've done my homework. It's a laser treatment. It burns away scar tissue and the tenderness that accompanies tendinitis. Best of all, you don't have the extended rehab that you must undergo with surgery."

Jackson, 28, said recovery time is two to four weeks. He would rather have the surgery sooner than later "because I want to be able to play my best by March and April. I looked at the schedule and December seems like a good month. A lot of days off. A lot of games at home."

The Hawks are aware of his intentions, Jackson said. "I've kept them informed and they said they will support me in whatever I want to do. And what I want to do is show the Hawks and the people of Atlanta the way I can play basketball. I've got all this freedom from (coach) Lenny (Wilkins) and I can't take advantage of it. I'm settling for jump shots instead of driving for the basket. I'm not playing defense nearly as well as I know how. I feel like I'm short-changing the team."

Jackson said he knows one shining example of the procedure's benefits. "I know Lee Mayberry had it done in Vancouver. Lee had bad tendinitis and now he's playing in Orlando and nothing's bothering him. He feels great. I want that for myself."

In the event Jackson has laser surgery quickly, that will render moot Wilkins' decision to bring Isaiah Rider off the bench. By necessity, Rider would return to the starting lineup as soon as Jackson has the procedure.

### Layups

More bad news: Don't look for LaPhonso Ellis to join the active roster until mid-December at the earliest. "My (personal) doctor told me it's eight weeks to heal a calf (tear) and it's been four weeks, so I need four more," Ellis said. He has started jogging. . . . There is a capacity figure for basketball in Philips Arena. Hawks executive vice president Lee Douglas said that after a very careful accounting, the official capacity is 19,445. So far, the Hawks have come close once. The home opener drew 18,514. . . . Who knew Jason Terry could turn out to be the best 3-point shooter the Hawks have ever had? Terry is .524 (11-for-21) so far. Steve Henson's .463 (37-for-80 in 1992-93) is the franchise's all-time best.

ILLUSTRATIONS/PHOTOS: Not 100 percent: Guard Jim Jackson of the Hawks is hoping a new laser surgery will correct tendinitis in both knees. / BEN GRAY / Staff

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