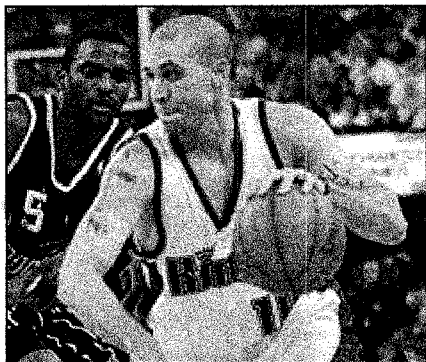



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## A Team In Search Of... "It"

Bob Souza - 5th April, 2005 1:52 AM



If anyone knows where "it" is, please let the Kings know.

Now.

Phone, email, write a letter – drive over there if you have to. Take a bus. Just don't waste any more time.

Whatever "it" is, this is a group that sorely needs it. Call it heart, toughness, chemistry, consistency – or as Rick Adelman referred to "it" as fire – makes no

difference. Without "it", this team is headed for an early playoff exit. Assuming they still get there.

That special something is missing: "it"... where could it be?

The three new guys were supposed to provide a puckish attitude. Somebody forgot to tell the T'Wolves. They never got the memo. They pushed the Kings around so easily it was as if they were plowing through a marshmallow factory.

"We were way too soft," Corliss Williamson grouched. "And that's not supposed to happen, especially on our home court."

Amen, brother. Marshpillows.

When you shoot 38.4% for the game, you can't afford to give up easy baskets. While this team has never been known for defense, maybe it's time they started thinking about some. Could be a trend.

And what's happened to the shooters? Peja Stojakovic and Mike Bibby only took 3 shots apiece in the 4th quarter, although for Bibby that might have been a good thing, since he finished just 7-21.

When things don't go your way, it's best to whine and coax out a few technicals. Helps to cover up the deficiencies. But certainly not the look of a team with "it".

Up and down. Up and down.

The ride doesn't get any more unpredictable than this. One night – say, the Philly game, for instance – the Kings look like they've got it all figured out. The collective light bulbs come on. Then suddenly, they morph into a high school team, embarrassed by the likes of a Golden State.

Okay, cheap shot. The Warriors are a young and vastly improved team, playing good basketball. And if the Kings aren't careful, they won't be retaining their claim as the cream of the Northern California crop. Imagine that.

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There was a time when the Kings had plenty of "it". Back in the day. Occasionally they still find themselves with "it". But they just can't seem to hang on – might be too greasy a commodity this year.

Maybe the guys are waiting for Brad Miller or Bobby Jackson to show up healthy and pass some "it" around the locker room. Everybody gets a full spritz and all is right with the world again. Just like those teams we vaguely remember.

So they await the arrival of the Sonics, who might still be licking wounds from their recent loss to the Warriors – and perfectly ripe. A team to be "had", so to speak. A springboard into the post-season.

But unless the Kings can acquire "it", a favorable outcome shouldn't be expected.



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