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Sports Stack

NBA's Roy Brought To His Knees With Arthritis

Written by [kylestack](#) on 12/7/2010 6:21 PM

Being a fan of the Portland Trail Blazers these days means watching your franchise players being brought to their knees—ironically by knee trouble. Two weeks ago, I wrote about center Greg Oden's continued issues with his surgically-repaired knees. Now, it's guard Brandon Roy whose battered knees will hinder his ability to remain among the NBA's elite—and which will notably impact the Trail Blazers' future success.



Within the last month, the Trail Blazers confirmed that Roy's left knee is arthritic. Roy, 26, has had so many surgeries on both knees, that there's no meniscus left in either one. No meniscus means there is nothing to absorb the pounding the joint takes by running and jumping, especially on the hardwood floors used in basketball. Now that his left knee—like his right—is grinding bone-on-bone, the three-time All-Star has lost the explosiveness that has helped him average 20.1 points per game in four-plus NBA seasons.

Worst of all for Roy, there's no solution to his problem. Since his left knee has weakened to an arthritic state, there's no surgery that can be performed to alleviate the constant swelling and pain he experiences. He's already reached the point in his young career where he has to adjust his game to account for his reduced burst and quickness.

His inability to reach his past effectiveness on the court presents a turning point for the Trail Blazers. The team's roster is built around the Oden/Roy duo, whom the team had hoped would combine their leadership qualities with their considerable talents to form the Blazers into a championship contender. While both players remain outstanding public faces of the franchise, their confidence has been affected by their knee injuries. Both are young men, in basketball and in life, whose careers have been irreparably changed by their bodies' inability to withstand long-term stress.

Every athlete faces the inevitability of his or her body eventually breaking down. Their challenge is to see how long they can sustain maximum performance until that time comes. Unfortunately for Roy and Oden, it's happened earlier than expected. Sports fans, like Trail Blazers fans in this case, have to accept that's the reality of sports. Athletes rise and fall, so we have to appreciate the times when they perform at their best.

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