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## Croshere out with sore back

• An MRI reveals the veteran forward has mild disk inflammation

By **Geoff Lepper**  
STAFF WRITER

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LOS ANGELES – Austin Croshere arrived at the Warriors' shoot-around Friday morning thinking his sore back might be healthy enough to allow him to play in this evening's rematch with the Utah Jazz.

Instead, he went to see Los Angeles-based back specialist Dr. Robert Watkins in the afternoon and was told he needed to rest seven to 10 days to try to put a halt to what has been a recurring problem over the last few weeks.

An MRI revealed mild disk inflammation, a team spokesman said. Croshere will continue to rehabilitate under the care of Warriors team physician John Belzer. In addition to tonight's game, Croshere is expected to miss next week's contests against Cleveland and Dallas, his former team.

"Obviously, I didn't go into it thinking that would be the case," Croshere said of the rest order. "Seven to 10 days right now seems like a long time, but over the course of a whole season, it's not that much time, especially if I can get back to being 100 percent healthy."

Croshere's back initially troubled him approximately four years ago when he played for the Indiana Pacers and suffered what he called "singular incident." That led to a diagnosis of a bulging disk, and ever since, he's averaged one bout of back soreness per season.

This year has been different. Croshere sat out practice Oct. 8 because of what the team called back spasms and since then, the stiffness has gone away for a few days at a time but never permanently.

"This is the first time that

it's really kind of persisted for a while," Croshere said. "There were times where I definitely felt fine playing and practicing, and then there were other days where I felt maybe I should take a day off, because it was kind of sore."

"Then you say, 'Hey, you know what, I'll just play through it, it'll warm up or the adrenaline will get going and I'll be fine.' Then you wake up the next morning and you realize that's not the case; you should have gone with option B."

With Croshere out, coach Don Nelson went to Al Harrington as his first choice backup center, although Patrick O'Bryant did also get called upon in the first half.

Off the glass

Since Croshere didn't plan to sit out in Utah, he didn't bring a specific outfit to wear on the bench tonight. "I'm going to go a little more casual tomorrow, put it that way," said Croshere, who was wearing a natty suit Friday. ... Rookie forward Stephane Lasme took over Croshere's spot on the active roster, suiting up for his first regular-season NBA game. "I'm excited, but I'm not ecstatic," Lasme said. "I'll be more excited if we win." ... Nelson said Brandon Wright was not considered for the 11th-man slot because he missed a week with a sore back. "He's only practiced once," Nelson said. "I couldn't expect anything out of him in a game." ... This being the Clippers' home opener, there was liberal use of flame machines and fireworks. Unfortunately, the special effects created a slick-floor effect that caused the game to be stopped for nearly a minute early in the first quarter while ballboys at either end of the floor tried to clean things off.

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