

TIGERS TO PUSH ANSTEY INTO STARTING FIVE

Written by Daniel Eade

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Believing they still are a legitimate threat to crack the top 4 by seasons end, the Melbourne Tigers are set to push Chris Anstey into the starting line-up in a final roll of the dice to spruce things up.

After being held scoreless in the Tigers 68-77 defeat to the New Zealand Breakers, Anstey is set to push rising star Daniel Johnson to the bench. After missing the opening 12 games of the season while recovering from hip surgery, Anstey has come off the pine since returning to the line-up three games ago.

With an injury list as long as the Nile, the Tigers have been forced to re-shuffle their line-up through the season on multiple occasions and it will be the second time this season that Johnson has lost his starting gig. After starting the season in the post due to the absence of Anstey, Johnson lost his spot for one game when he was replaced by Ben Knight in the starting five. That was the same game that Knight suffered a season ending knee injury and upon losing Knight, Johnson was again elevated into a starter.

Averaging 12.3ppg and 5.5rpg, Johnson has shown promise this season and kept a spark alive in a very dark season for the Tigers.

But it is a move that needs to be made, Anstey's all-round ability cannot be wasted if the Tigers are serious about making a run from so far back. Anstey's knack for forcing opponents to alter shots is a key formula in any defence the Tigers put forward. Without doubt, when at full fitness, Anstey is the league's premier defender.

The Tigers have not waved the white flag and continue to insist that they have one final charge in them and it starts with Anstey being back in his most comfortable role. Starting centre.

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