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CHARLOTTE, North Carolina -- Charles Oakley , one of the NBA's all-time tough guys, may not return to the Charlotte Bobcats ' bench next season because of a painful back condition he says was caused during an assault last year in Las Vegas.

Oakley, who was in his first season as an assistant coach, had to be carried from the bench before a game in San Antonio on March 19. He missed Charlotte's final 13 games with a sciatic nerve problem.

The 47-year-old Oakley, still moving gingerly, attended Charlotte's workout of draft prospects Saturday. As he contemplates surgery, Oakley said he told general manager Rod Higgins to consider replacing him on coach Paul Silas' staff.

Silas said Saturday there's no timetable for making a decision.

"I want to do what's best for the team, always," Oakley said. "We'll have to see what happens and if I'm not back, they'll have someone just as good as me or better."

Oakley has sued the Aria hotel-casino, claiming he was beaten by security guards in May 2010. Oakley is convinced the incident led to his current condition.

"I wasn't going to sue, but they just did too much damage to me," said Oakley, who filed the suit last month. "It just handicapped me for a period of time and they think it was a joke. I don't want to go into too much detail, but I never tried to assault them. They tried to assault me.

"I'm not a troublemaker. People say, 'You got into a lot of incidents.' Yeah, but it was on the basketball floor."

The complaint contends five officers wrestled the 6-foot-9 Oakley to the ground and punched and handcuffed him after a verbal dispute over whether Oakley could return to a VIP pool area.

It said Oakley was taken to the hospital with injuries to his neck, back, head and wrist. Oakley said Saturday two slipped disks suffered in the incident led to the sciatic nerve condition.

"It's like having a nail in your tire. You can only go so far and then the nail keeps going in, going in," Oakley said. "Once it reaches the peak, the hole gets bigger and all the air comes out of your tire. The damage to my disk -- it just couldn't take no more."

The complaint alleges negligence, assault, assault with excessive force, battery, false imprisonment and defamation. It seeks unspecified general, special and punitive damages.

MGM Resorts International, which owns the resort, has declined to comment since the suit was filed.

Oakley, a former teammate of Bobcats owner Michael Jordan in Chicago, was known as a relentless rebounder and collector of hard fouls in his 18-year career. Oakley, who ranks 20th in NBA history with 12,205 boards, also played for New York, Toronto, Washington and Houston.

Oakley was proud to prove he could coach. He routinely worked out with players in practice and was credited with helping Bobcats center Kwame Brown's development late last season.

Then Oakley's body gave out in a jarring scene in San Antonio.

"I hate to go out like that," Oakley said. "It looks like somebody got knocked out of the ring and couldn't get back on his feet. But I'm back walking and hopefully getting my back back together and back to 100 percent."

Oakley said he's moving better and recently started riding a bike. He hopes to avoid surgery.

"I just want to get back to normal," Oakley said. "It's draining sometimes, but you've got to stay strong. ... Hopefully, I'll be back coaching someday. If not, I've got to continue living."