

Knick deploy high-tech mics to record Carmelo Anthony's on-court chats



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A Garden technician holds a sensitive mic at Sunday's game to eavesdrop on what Carmelo Anthony and his opponents say. James Dolan ordered two of them to be used at each game to avoid more "he said, he said" situations like the one that arose between Anthony and Kevin Garnett.

Big Brother is watching.

And in the Knicks' case, he is listening, too.

League sources have confirmed Knicks owner James Dolan, in the wake of the highly volatile trash-talking war between star Carmelo Anthony and the Celtics' Kevin Garnett last week, ordered two technicians to hold high-tech, sensitive microphones at opposite ends of the Madison Square Garden court to record all in-game conversations by and around his star.



AP

SOUNDS OF VIOLENCE: After Carmelo Anthony went into a rage last Monday following a trash-talk exchange with the Celtics' Kevin Garnett (left), Knicks owner James Dolan ordered technicians with special microphones to sit courtside and record his star's audio, likely as protection in case of future spats.

The devices first were used during Friday's Garden loss to the Bulls then were employed again Sunday against the Hornets.

Post photographs show one of the technicians brandishing the sophisticated gizmo (known as a parabolic microphone) at Sunday's game.

According to a league source, the decision to employ the microphones was made to protect the combustible Anthony from another "he said-he said" dispute by having an audio record of what's said on the court. The carefully calibrated mics transmit audio feeds into recorders in trucks on the Garden loading docks.

All of this was the result of the actions during the Celtics-Knicks battle eight days ago. In that game, sources told The Post, Garnett made a comment about Anthony's wife, La La.

The website Black Sports Online reported he said La La "tastes like Honey Nut Cheerios."

The verbal sparring resulted in technical fouls against each player. Following the game, Anthony attempted to confront Garnett, once outside the visiting locker room and again by the Celtics' bus. His actions earned him a one-game suspension from the league.

The league did not seem concerned by the development, first reported by the Newark Star-Ledger.

"There are no prohibitions against having audio equipment in the arena," an NBA spokesman said.

Anthony was unavailable for comment following Knicks practice last night and the team declined comment on the taping escapades.

The Knicks left for London last night for Thursday's game against the Pistons.

"I heard about it, but I don't know about all of that, I don't know where it came from," said coach Mike Woodson, claiming he did not see any extra devices Friday. "Absolutely not. I'm distracted in other areas, and that's watching these guys run up and down the floor and play basketball."

Several opposing executives reacted with surprise over the matter.

"As a player, I would be angry; as management, I would be angry," said one opposing exec. "Did they have them near both benches? What's to prevent them from shipping information to the home team?"

"It's one thing if it is done for media purposes. That happens all the time," the exec continued, suggesting a "sounds of the game" type of segment. "But people are aware of that. This borders on bugging a phone or putting a camera in someone's office. It could border on 'Spygate.'"

Another exec voiced similar concerns over the potential of listening in on conversations, but two others said it likely was done to appease and protect Anthony.

"I am amazed at it, first of all," one of the other executives proclaimed. "You have to find out, does Carmelo know and are they picking up sound in the huddles? But I'm sure [Dolan] was protecting Carmelo."

Another rival exec said while he was not aware of any such actions in the past, "I'm sure they were trying to placate Carmelo Anthony over anything else. But it would [tick] me off if I didn't know about it."