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## Hawks centers Jason Collins, Zaza Pachulia ready for more

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**Jason Collins** worked on his body, and **Zaza Pachulia** got his mind right as they look to take on bigger roles for the Hawks this season.

New coach **Larry Drew** plans to use a “big” lineup this season, with Pachulia (6-11) or Collins (7-0) at center and **Al Horford** (6-10) shifting to power forward. The plan wouldn't work without Collins losing significant weight and Pachulia re-energizing after butting heads with former coach **Mike Woodson**.

Collins has the most dramatically altered physique among the returning players. He said he did it with a modified diet, cardiovascular conditioning and weightlifting over the summer.

Collins' weight ballooned last season, and his lack of mobility was a liability. Collins played a total of 115 minutes in 24 games and had more fouls (21) than points (16) or rebounds (14).

The possibility of more playing time was motivation for Collins to get in shape and re-sign with Atlanta as a free agent.

"That sounds great to me," he said. "It also will allow Horford to play some power forward. **Josh [Smith]** won't have so many minutes and can be fresh for the playoffs."

Pachulia was Horford's primary backup last season and averaged 14 minutes. But his minutes fluctuated at times throughout the season and was at times a source of friction with Woodson.

"It wasn't that easy dealing with the same thing not only last year, but the last couple years," Pachulia said. "But I feel good. I had a great summer."

Pachulia was the captain for his native country of Georgia this summer. The squad became the first Georgian team in any sport to qualify for a European Championship.

Buoyed by that experience and the promotion of Drew to coach, Pachulia said he's ready to bounce back from what was his least productive NBA season since he was a rookie in 2003-04.

"I'm getting my confidence back," Pachulia said. "It wasn't a great year for me last year. After talking to [Drew], I've cleared out my mind."

“New energy is always good. Positive energy. He's been telling us since Day One it is not going to be same as last year.”

### **Captain Horford**

Horford started coming into his own as a team leader last season, his third in the NBA. He was one of the most vocal critics of Atlanta's effort during the team's Eastern Conference semifinals loss to Orlando.

Drew made Horford's leadership status official by naming him a captain along with **Joe Johnson** and Smith.

“It's exciting,” Horford said. “It's a position you want to be in. I felt like I was one of the leaders last year. This really just solidifies my position with the team.”

### **Injury report**

Guard **Pape Sy** (back) has yet to practice, but Drew said the medical report from his visit with a doctor Tuesday was positive.

“It's not as serious as we thought it might be,” Drew said. “He is going to take a little more time to rest it.”

Horford injured his left ankle when he landed on someone's foot. He sat out the final portion of practice.

“Nothing too serious,” Horford said.

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