



The Cleveland Cavaliers paid homage to the 1983 film *A Christmas Story* on Wednesday night by giving out bobbleheads in the shape of the infamous leg lamp from the movie. Perhaps the promotions department would have been better off doing a *Groundhog Day* promotion because games against the Bulls are starting to be all too familiar for the Wine and Gold.

The script reads as follows: The Bulls build up an insurmountable lead in the first quarter, a questionable player exceeds his season scoring average in the first quarter, the Cavs rally, Joakim Noah shoots some ugly free throws, Tom Thibedau leaves his starters in way too long and the Cavs ultimately lose by a lot. The Cavs followed the script to a tee.

Cavs coach Byron Scott was not too disappointed with the outcome. "I'm proud of our guys," said Byron Scott. "They're battling. They're playing as hard as they can right now." The Cavs have been losing their games badly, but they cannot be accused of not giving effort every night. Wednesday night marked the 10th straight game that Varejao had a double-double with 15 rebounds. The last time he didn't do so was on November 17th when he had a lackluster 4 point and 7 rebound game against the Dallas Mavericks.

An issue with this team as currently constructed and with all of the injuries is that the margin of error is minuscule. The team cannot afford to get down 16 points after the first quarter. Combine that with giving up a career night to Marco Belinelli and winning will prove to be difficult. "A lot of things are not going our way," said Scott. "Besides that first quarter when we let it kind of get out of hand - couldn't make a shot and couldn't get stops - after that we played pretty solid. But that's the problem right now with us. We've got to play a damn near perfect game on both ends of the floor." Byron Scott is correct in the sense that the Cavs outscored the Bulls 74-68 after the first quarter. One has to wonder if the Bulls played a little more relaxed after starting the game on such a high note.

The new-look starting lineup featuring Daniel Gibson got off to a poor start. The Cavs shot a woeful 31.3% from the field in the first quarter and went into the second quarter with a 27-11 deficit. As dreadful as their offense was, the defense left much more to be desired. The Bulls shot a blistering 66.7% in the first quarter. To make matters worse, journeyman Marco Belinelli doubled his season average during the quarter with 10 points 80% shooting.

Byron Scott was quick to make a substitution. Unhappy with the way Alonzo Gee was playing defense, Scott substituted him for Omri Casspi after only two minutes of play. Asked about that, Byron Scott said that the reason was "defensive mistakes." Byron Scott said that he is "Not concerned, just to let him know again that it is not acceptable. I pulled him out, talked to him about it, waited a couple minutes and put him back in." Byron Scott was clearly satisfied with Gee after that because he played him the entire third quarter.

This loss marked the 10th straight loss to the Chicago Bulls. In fact, the last time the Cavs beat the Bulls was when they beat them in game 5 of the 2010 playoffs series. The Cavs currently stand at 4-15 on the season. Good effort is nice to see, but this team is going to eventually have to win some games. The Cavs travel to Minnesota to play the Timberwolves on Friday night. Tip-off is at 8:00 pm.