

## Raptors Cure Their Road Blues at Q

Written by {ga=riverburns}

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Joakim Noah may not think so, but a trip to Cleveland can be pretty sweet. Then again, Noah doesn't play for the Toronto Raptors, who entered play on Tuesday night with just one road victory in fifteen tries.

Of course, the Cavs, who fell to 3-8 at home and 5-21 overall haven't exactly written the book on winning at home in 2012.

Playing without Andrea Bargnani and Kyle Lowry, the visiting Raptors leaned heavily on Jose Calderon at the offensive end and a great effort from Amir Johnson on the other end, en route to a 113-99 victory. For the better part of three quarters, this match-up was exactly what you'd expect to see from two bad teams, but the home team relinquished the lead at the end of the third quarter and put their best forward towards making the Association's lone Canadian chapter into Red Auerbach's Celtics.

Toronto challenged the Cavs in isolation all night, and they were not up to it. Calderon got them for 23 points and 6 dimes.

Johnson added 17 points and 6 boards, but his dominant performance did not translate to the stat sheet on this night.

Kyrie Irving, playing in a clear mask after dropping 41 in the black on the other night, was limited to 23, and appeared gunshy in the second half.

Anderson Varejao found himself to be the victim of a Hack-An-Andy strategy. He made 12 of 16 from the stripe, which equaled season-highs for both makes and attempts.

He still finished with a double-double (22 points, 10 boards), but it was Johnson that had the

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type of night that we usually see from Andy.

Johnson missed just on shot from the floor and was 5-of-5 from the line in his 29 minutes. The Raptors shot free throws at an 85% clip, in addition to Johnson's perfect night DeMar DeRozan was 8-of-8 and Linus Kleiza was 6-of-7.

The shooting touch extended beyond the arc for Alan Anderson, who iced the game with three fourth quarter triples on his way to 18.

In the anticipated battle of Jonas Valanciunas versus Not Jonas Valanciunas (Tristan Thompson), it would be the Cavs actual 4<sup>th</sup> overall pick from the 2011 NBA that played more minutes, scored more points, and grabbed more rebounds, but that certainly will not end that particular discussion. The clock is still ticking while Cavs fans wait for the 21 year-old Canadian big man to develop.

His 7 offensive boards were inspiring, but his overall game was not.

Alonzo Gee added 15 points for the Cavs, while Dion Waiters struggled in his first game back from injury with a 4-of-13, 8 point effort.

Both teams were on the front end of a back-to-back. The Raptors return home to face the Pistons tomorrow night, while the Cavaliers travel to Boston to take on the 12-11 Celtics.