



The Los Angeles Clippers have not had a lot of success in Cleveland. You would have to go all the way back to the 2001-2002 season to find the last time that they were able to beat the Cleveland Cavaliers on the road. The date was March 10, 2002 and the Cavs were wrapping up what would become a 29 win season. To put things into perspective, of the 22 players that participated in that game, only Elton Brand and Andre Miller continue to collect NBA paychecks.

The home winning streak against the Clippers came to an end on Friday night. When news broke that Kyrie Irving would miss his third straight game with a hyper-extended knee, it all but guaranteed that this would happen. The Clippers are one of the few elite teams in the NBA and the Cavs have to play a near flawless game to beat them. For example, Cleveland beat the Clippers in Los Angeles on November 5, 2012 by a score of 108-101. It took a fully healthy roster and 7 made three pointers by Dion Waiters for the narrow win.

For the first time in three games, the Cavs did not start the game very badly. Tristan Thompson once again had a good start for the Cavaliers. His activity on the boards helped him record 6 points and 6 rebounds in the quarter. Not to be outdone, eastern conference rookie of the month Dion Waiters was even more aggressive than Thompson. He took and made 4 shots en route to 9 points. Foul trouble plagued Waiters throughout the game. Byron Scott had to make the tough decision to sit Waiters after he picked up his second foul with 2:51 remaining in the first. The Cavs trailed by 1 point when the substitution happened and they were outscored by a 9-2 margin to end the quarter.

The second quarter was dominated by C.J. Miles. Even though he scored 9 points, he took 5 three pointers in the quarter in the process. Miles is never shy with the ball, but taking that many threes in one quarter of play is excessive. Despite the 42.1% shooting by the Cavs in the second quarter, they were still within striking distance of the Clippers by the time the first half ended. This was mostly because the Clippers were shooting very poorly from the free throw line. Deandre Jordan led the charge by missing all four of his free throw attempts. Despite his difficulties at the line, Jordan played a very solid game. He finished the game with only 10 points and 5 rebounds, but the mismatch between he and Tyler Zeller was very clear. He was able to back up Zeller into the post and either draw fouls or dunk with ease.

The Cavs were outscored by a score of 55 to 44 in the second half. Cleveland had a well-balanced attack in the third and fourth quarters, but it was not enough to overcome 13 points by Jamal Crawford on only 5 shots.

A promising sign for the Cavaliers is that Dion Waiters is averaging 22.8 points on .567 shooting in his last four games. At this point in the season, one of things Cavaliers fans should be looking at is how the young players are doing. With Waiters' recent play and Tristan Thompson's ability to seemingly get a double-double whenever he wants, the future looks fairly bright despite the losses that are piling up.

Before the game, Byron Scott said that the game plan should be to "pack the paint as much as possible." This is because Blake Griffin tends to take jump shots if he is encouraged to by the defense. Griffin shoots very poorly from anywhere outside of the paint. Before the game on Friday night, Griffin was shooting 34.1% from that part of the court. Griffin took all but one of his shots from underneath the basket. The end result was him only taking 12 shots and scoring 16 points. The Kia commercial that runs in seemingly every break during Cavs games states, you can make a career in the NBA out of "only dunking."

