



I thought I knew the NBA. I have been following the league for years. I have seen good teams, I have seen bad teams and I have seen treadmill teams. There are varying degrees, but every single NBA team falls into one of those aforementioned categories. While the Indiana Pacers are technically contending for a championship, it would take a series of magnificently large miracles to make that happen. On the other hand, the Miami Heat are playing like a buzz-saw and look unstoppable.

When the Lakers traded for Steve Nash and subsequently traded for Dwight Howard, Cleveland fans quickly began to worry about how that would affect the Cavaliers in the upcoming draft. When Cleveland traded Ramon Sessions to the Lakers, part of the package was the ability to swap this year's Heat pick with that of the Lakers. Even though Miami was coming off a championship, the Lakers added two hall of fame level players and gave up very little to do so. The discourse changed to about how the difference in picks would now be negligible.

Instead, the Cavs are counting on a team led by Mike D'Antoni, Dwight Howard and a fresh-off-surgery Metta World Peace to win the next two games against the San Antonio Spurs and Houston Rockets. To add insult to injury, the Cavs are also finding themselves in a position where they are counting on Antawn Jamison. We've seen this movie before and we know how it ends. At the time of writing, the Lakers have a 1 game lead on the Utah Jazz for the 8th and final playoff spot. However, the Jazz's next two opponents are the Minnesota Timberwolves and

Memphis Grizzlies.

In his 1969 novel "Slaughterhouse-Five," Kurt Vonnegut continually segued between topics with the refrain "so it goes." I can't help but think of that line when I think about the current state of Cleveland sports. The Los Angeles Lakers, who have only missed the playoffs 5 times in their 65 year history, need to win out the season in order to get in as an 8th seed. Without Kobe Bryant, that is a tall order. To make matters worse, the Lakers have only missed the playoffs twice since the NBA lottery was instituted in 1985.

Literally the one time in my adult life where I actually want the Lakers to be good, they're not. I can't even enjoy myself some schadenfreude at the expense of obnoxious Lakers fans.

So it goes...

The Cavs are stumbling towards the finish line. It seems like everybody has given up on the season and are anxiously awaiting the end of the year. The star player, the young and promising prospects, the end of the bench guys, the owner, the media, the fans and most importantly the coach. Byron Scott probably isn't the right man for this job. He has been accused of being more interested in tee times than game time in the past and it is painfully evident where this reputation comes from. He carries himself as a man who couldn't possibly care less about what happens from here on out. Whether or not the Cavs win another game this year seems to be of little concern to him. He seems to not care if he gets fired, either. I can't blame him. He's an experienced coach who has been to the finals, has won championships as a player and who will find himself on another sideline sooner than later.

Byron Scott has not been playing with a full deck. He came to Cleveland hoping that he would be coaching a committed LeBron James. Instead, he found himself on the sidelines coaching a team of castoffs and in the lottery. Scott should get a free pass for at least a few years due to the circumstances of the rebuilding of the Cavs. He didn't really sign up for that, but he signed off on it. It was understood that there would be a lot of losses. It was also understood that when guys like Antawn Jamison needed a breather, he would look at the bench and see players like Samardo Samuels. In addition to not having a roster built for winning games, the Cavs have had

more than their fair share of injuries. Anderson Varejao has played a total of 81 games out of a possible 230. Kyrie Irving has played 107 out of 146. Dion Waiters has played 58 out of 80 games. The only member of the young core who has been healthy is Tristan Thompson. He played 139 out of 146 games.

The Cavs have had more than their fare share of injuries. They have dealt with a lack of depth due to the nature of the rebuild. Many teams have gone through this sort of adversity in the history of the NBA and few coaches have ever held various distinctions that Byron Scott holds. A glaring example is the 26 game losing streak in 2011. There have been many bad teams who have had injuries, but none ever lost 26 games in a row. No other coach in Cavalier history has ever lost a game by 39 points at home like the Cavs did when the Bulls sans Derrick Rose won by a score of 114-75. According to Elias Sports, Byron Scott has the third worst winning percentage with one team with a minimum of 200 games. Again, there have been plenty of coaches who have led bad and injured teams to better winning percentages after 200 games. When teams are up by 20 points with 9 minutes left, they are 4382-2. Of course, the Cavs under Byron Scott are one of those 2 teams. Once again, there have been a lot of bad and injured teams to be up 20 points with 9 minutes left in the game who did not lose. In fact, the vast majority of them win. When getting a 20 point lead, the Cavs have a sub-.500 record of 3-4. The rest of the NBA was 379-12 as of April 9th.

It is doubtful to me that Byron Scott is the right person for this job, but firing him at this juncture would be a mistake. Despite his negative accomplishments, he truly has not had a fair chance to coach a good team. Kyrie Irving has the potential to be a superstar. Tristan Thompson is looking like a better pick every single time he plays. Dion Waiters is playing better as the season progresses and only has improved chemistry with Irving keeping him from being half of one of the more dynamic backcourts in the league. Byron Scott deserves a fair chance at proving to people like me that he is capable of leading this team to the playoffs. I have my questions about his committment and ability to do so, but he should have the right to try. Additionally, there will be a lot of head coach vacancies this summer. The Cavs should only fire Scott if they believe that they can improve their situation. As of this moment, it is unlikely.

The only thing that we can do is hope for a few more losses and some luck in the lottery. This is not the kind of progress that one would have hoped for a year ago after seeing how good Kyrie Irving is and having a few more top 5 picks. The Cavs should be looking closely at the wins and losses of the Phoenix Suns. It looks like losing that 26 point lead to the Suns on November 10 might actually work out for the Cavs.

So it goes.