

## Cavs, James Look Terrible In Embarrassing Loss



The Cavaliers season of streaks hit a new low last night, losing 99-79 to the Golden State Warriors in Oakland, CA. The team is now 0-5 on their current west coast trip that concludes tonight at Utah before they head back home for a game against the Pacers on Tuesday.

This Cavaliers season has been defined by four prolonged streaks. After starting the season 9-2, the team went on to lose seven of their next nine, capped off by an embarrassing 100-94 home loss to the lowly Hawks. They responded from that loss to win eight of nine, including an impressive 97-84 win on New Years Eve over the Pistons before a raucous home crowd. Presently, the team is on a six game losing streak, and has lost seven of eight overall ... falling to 20-17 on the year.

In front of the fourth largest crowd in franchise history, the Warriors coasted to victory last night thanks to great starts to the second and third quarters. They scored the first nine points of the second quarter, holding on to take a 54-43 halftime lead. Mike Dunleavy and Jason Richardson combined for 32 of those 54 first half Warrior points, and Dunleavy also did a great job on LeBron James, who was just 2-12 from the field in the first half, and was also plagued with foul trouble, picking

up his third foul with six minutes left in the first half. James ended the game with just 14 points (his lowest total of the season), hit just 5 of his 22 attempts, and committed six turnovers.

The Warriors then started the second half by scoring the first ten points of the third quarter, pushing their lead over twenty points ... where it would stay the rest of the game. The Cavaliers were unable to generate any type of a rally, making just two of seventeen attempts from three-point range, not hitting their first one until the 1:45 mark of the third quarter.

Adding insult to injury for the Cavaliers was the fact that Golden State played the game without all-star point guard Baron Davis, who was suspended for his role in a fight earlier this week.

The Cavs offense continues to flounder in the absence of injured shooting guard Larry Hughes. The loss of Hughes has forced the Cavs to play a lot of three on five offensively, with guys like Mike Wilks and Alan Henderson getting more floor time, in addition to the offensively challenged Eric Snow and Ira Newble. And while they show flashes of talent ... Sasha Pavlovic, Luke Jackson, and Anderson Varejao still hurt you more than they help you when out on the floor due to a lack of consistency. Pavlovic fouled out last night in 22 minutes of chasing Jason Richardson around the floor.

Offensively the team is just lost right now, and when not bailed out by amazing performances from LeBron, is very hard to watch playing offense in the half court. There is no flow, poor ball movement (despite the fact the Cavs have a lot of good passers), and if the team actually has any offensive plays or sets – it's not apparent to this author. Inexplicably, Drew Gooden did not get one shot attempt in the second half after being one of the few to do anything offensively early, scoring 16 first half points before his friends and family in his hometown. One must wonder what, if anything, rookie head coach Mike Brown knows

about executing an NBA offense. The only other consistent offensive players besides LeBron on this team are constantly misused on that end of the floor.

The Cavs continue to shoot poorly from three, and from the foul line, and free agent additions Damon Jones and Donyell Marshall have contributed next to nothing when not knocking down jumpers. Jones particularly has been atrocious of late, making just 13 of his last 55 attempts from downtown over the last 13 games, just a 23% hit rate. Jones has brought little else, if anything, to the table this season, and is looking like a horrible allocation of free agent dollars thus far, also turning the fan base against him in the process with his big mouth and inflated ego.

Now just three games above .500, and only 2.5 games above the presently eighth seeded Wizards, the team faces a crucial stretch of fourteen games (seven home, seven away) before the All-Star break that will likely go a long way in defining Mike Brown's rookie campaign as head coach.