

## Cavs End West Coast Bender With Loss In Denver

Written by {ga=samamico}

Monday, November 12 2007 7:00 PM -

---

The Cavs showed the effects of a month long frenzy around the globe that took the team to China, and then all over the west coast in the seasons first couple weeks ... as they fell to the Nuggets 122-100 in Denver last night. Still, the Cavs finished the west coast jaunt with a 3-3 record, and did so against some of the best teams in the NBA. Sam Amico pipes in on last nights game, and also the potential end of the Eric Snow era here in CTown.



Well, look at this way -- at least the toughest West Coast trip of the season is over.

That's the best thing you can say about the Cavaliers' 122-100 loss at Denver on Monday. And while the Cavs and their tired legs mailed it in on this night, they finished a respectable 3-3 on the six-game swing (and are 4-4 overall).

Or as Fox Sports Ohio color commentator Austin Carr said, &quot;The Cavs found themselves on this trip.&quot;

In other words, the defending Eastern Conference champs proved to themselves that they still can be a force. Just imagine what will happen if someone steps up and play consistently well next to LeBron James. One thing's for sure -- the

## Cavs End West Coast Bender With Loss In Denver

Written by {ga=samamico}

Monday, November 12 2007 7:00 PM -

---

candidates are there, with center Zydrunas Ilgauskas, second-year guard Daniel Gibson, and even free-agent signee and swingman Devin Brown showing signs of offering unrelenting support.

As for the Denver game itself, well, it just wasn't gonna happen for the Cavs. They had won a tough game in Los Angeles against the improved Clippers the previous night, and were minus the services of guard Larry Hughes after just four minutes. Hughes was ejected for two quick technical fouls, which took place after he argued with an official following a missed a 3-pointer.

"I got hit four straight times on four jump shots by (Carmelo Anthony)," Hughes said afterward. "I got smacked good on four straight shots. I asked (the official) to call a foul. I said what needed to be said."

No matter, Hughes was ejected just two games after returning from a bruised knee.

Throw in the fact the Cavs didn't have Sasha Pavlovic (back spasms), and not only were they utterly exhausted, but they were fairly undermanned.

None of this is to make excuses for the Cavs. As coach Mike Brown pointed out afterward, "Denver got off a (four)-game road trip in a short amount of time," he said. "It wasn't as if they were sitting here for five days waiting on us."

Mostly, the Cavs let themselves down on defense -- their calling card during last year's run to the Finals.

That could be evidenced by Denver's point total and shooting percentage. The

## Cavs End West Coast Bender With Loss In Denver

Written by {ga=samamico}

Monday, November 12 2007 7:00 PM -

---

Nuggets hit 55 percent from the field (44-of-80) and an eye-popping 54 percent on 3-pointers (12-of-22). Nearly all of the Nuggets drove to the basket with ease, as the Cavs stood around and were either unable or simply refused to play help defense.

Perennial Cavs killer Allen Iverson made 14 of 20 shots to finish with a game-high 37 points. If the game weren't out of reach and Iverson had stayed on the floor, there's a good chance he could've gotten 50 with just a few more shots. J.R Smith added 29 points by making 7-of-8 treys (and 10 of 13 shots overall) and Anthony finished with 22 points, nine rebounds and six assists.

Meanwhile, James had 27 to lead the Cavs, but uncharacteristically managed to grab just one rebound. He also was the leader of the Cavs' woes at the free-throw line, making 8 of 14, with no attempts in the second half. As a team, the Cavs were a miserable 21-of-38 on foul shots.

But that was just one night, just one game in an otherwise successful start to the season. Had the Cavs played the previous six opponents all at home, you can be sure their record would look different. And the good news is they will indeed be playing all six at home before the seasons ends. (Mark your calendar for the rematch with the Nuggets on Feb. 10).

Things won't necessarily be gravy for the Cavs from here on out (they rarely are in today's NBA), but say this much -- there won't be another trip like this for the rest of the season. And despite how the West Coast Swing from Hell ended, the Cavs have plenty to feel good about. Overall, they won three games and played pretty well in two of the losses.

Can't feel bad about that.

QUICK THOUGHTS

## Cavs End West Coast Bender With Loss In Denver

Written by {ga=samamico}

Monday, November 12 2007 7:00 PM -

---

\* Not sure if this is a good sign or bad, but Ira Newble finished with an impressive 17 points and eight boards in 26 minutes off the bench. Shannon Brown added 12 points and four rebounds in 14 minutes, but committed four fouls.

\* It's hard to tell if Shannon Brown will be an NBA player. He's obviously a good athlete who knows how to score, but his ballhandling is atrocious. With Hughes, Pavlovic and Devin Brown ahead of him, the second-year guard will really have to prove himself if he is to return next season.

\* Second-year forward Cedric Simmons saw his first extended action of the season -- assuming you can call 18 minutes extended action. In Simmons' case you can, and he showed potential as a rebounding/shot-blocking type. The young man had better work on those free throws, though. He finished 0-of-6 from the line against Denver.

\* By the way, I really hate watching Carmelo Anthony dunk. He refuses to grab the rim and really SLAM the ball, instead choosing to softly dropping it through the hoop. Apparently, he's trying to avoid injuring his fingers. But come on, Carmelo. Start sending it home like you mean it.

\* Former Cavs general manager Wayne Embry believed that little guards started to lose their legs after the age of 30 -- one reason Embry traded Mark Price later in Price's career. But theory doesn't seem to apply to Allen Iverson, He turned 32 in March and hasn't lost a step, or one bit of quickness on his crossover dribble.

\* Nuggets coach George Karl had this to say after the game: "Even though LeBron had a great game, his great game came from getting fouled. We took away what we wanted to take away, him making other people better."

SNOW ON WAY OUT?

## Cavs End West Coast Bender With Loss In Denver

Written by {ga=samamico}

Monday, November 12 2007 7:00 PM -

---

The Detroit News has reported that veteran Cavs guard Eric Snow sold his house in Cleveland and may be eyeing a move to Atlanta. Snow has been out since the start of training camp after knee surgery. He was with the Cavs for the first two games of their Western trip, but left for personal reasons. According to the News, &quot;The suspicion is he will ask the Cavs to buy him out of the two remaining years of his contract, which he hopes would allow him to sign with the Hawks.&quot;

*Sam Amico can be reached at [samico@hoopsworld.com](mailto:samico@hoopsworld.com).*