

## LeBron Explodes For 45, Cavs Beat Wolves

Written by {ga=samamico}

Wednesday, November 21 2007 7:00 PM -

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LeBron James is the best basketball player in the world. End of story. And what he is doing early on in this season, carrying a depleted Cavaliers team on his back has been downright amazing. LBJ is averaging an eye-popping 40, 10, and 10 in his last four games, and last night ... had 45, 8, and 5, including 17 in the fourth quarter to drive the nails in the T-Wolves coffin. Sam Amico breaks down the game for us.



When LeBron James plays like this, not even Lex Luthor could stop the Cavaliers.

Luther is Superman's rival, the guy who carries the kryptonite. James is the one with the cape, the guy who carried the Cavs to a 97-86 road win over the Minnesota Timberwolves on Thanksgiving eve.

Adding more support to the theory that he is the best player in all the world right now, James erupted for 45 points, eight rebounds and five assists. Even more amazing than the numbers is the way James went about compiling them.

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In the fourth quarter, he hit a couple of 3-pointers from the North Dakota state line to bury the young Wolves' hopes. OK, James wasn't really in North Dakota, but you can bet the Wolves defenders felt like making a run for the border after James imposed his will upon them.

It's been nothing new for James this past week - as he averaged an eye-popping 39.5 points, 9.5 rebounds, and 9.5 assists in the last four games.

"I don't know how he keeps doing what he does," coach Mike Brown told reporters. "I'm watching him, and I get exhausted. That's how good it is to be able to do that night after night after night."

Late in the fourth quarter, the Cavs clinged to a six-point lead. Then James hit a three-pointer from about 30 feet from the basket. Then he hit another with a defender in his face. Then Minnesota called a timeout. When everyone came back onto the floor, the first thing James did was steal a pass and dribble down the middle of the floor for a wide-open dunk.

All of that is the good news, as the Cavaliers (6-6) pulled to .500 with two very winnable weekend games on the horizon (Saturday vs. Toronto, Sunday at Indiana).

Now for the so-so news ...

The Timberwolves (1-8) are a young team and not very good. Yet it took everything James had to overcome them. That's fine when you are 12 games into the season. But what about 22 games? 52 games? The playoffs? How long before James has had enough of having to do almost everything alone?

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Cavs general manager Danny Ferry has been contemplating making some sort of move, and has reportedly been in touch with veteran free-agent big men Alan Henderson and Dale Davis. Well, please, Mr. General Manager, stop thinking about it and DO SOMETHING.

Granted, power forward Drew Gooden (17 points, 9 rebounds) and especially, center Zydrunas Ilgauskas (9 points, 10 rebounds) have been making the most of their extended minutes. But everyone else has been inconsistent (read:Sasha Pavlovic) or completely unreliable (Larry Hughes).

With Hughes out (or even with him in), this is Pavlovic's chance to shine, to become more than just the everyday role player who drew no interest during free agency. Instead, it's obvious he missed training camp, as his game has become entirely too predictable - and last night, resulted in a frustrated Brown sticking him on the bench.

Meanwhile, point guard Daniel Gibson remains explosive, but is in just his second year. It would be unfair to push him into the role of regular hero.

As for the rest of the roster, well, some of these guys won't be in the league when their contracts expire. Heck, some of them shouldn't be right now.

That is why it's so important for the Cavs to make some sort of move, no matter how small, and see what develops.

After all, James is great, but he shouldn't have to be Superman every single night of the season.

## QUICK SHOTS

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- \* The Cavs got just 10 points from their bench on a combined 4-of-17 shooting. Devin Brown scored six of those, but made just 2 of 8 shots.
  
- \* On the plus side, young center Dwayne Jones had a nice game with 10 rebounds and tons of hustle. Jones has potential to be (dare we say it?) Anderson Varejao-like in another year or two.
  
- \* Eric Snow made his season debut against Minnesota following knee surgery. He played 13 scoreless minutes.
  
- \* This was the Cavs' first look at the Timberwolves without Kevin Garnett in a decade. Garnett, of course, is now part of that three-headed monster in Boston (along with Paul Pierce and Ray Allen) that is expected to unseat the Cavs as Eastern Conference champions.
  
- \* Meanwhile, Wolves forward Al Jefferson appears to be the team's new Garnett. At least, he could be that good in a few years. Jefferson tallied 30 points on 12-of-20 shooting and grabbed eight rebounds.

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