

Down two games to none, with two poor performances from LeBron James in the books. Sound familiar? It should, because that's exactly how the Eastern Conference Finals started against Detroit last year. The Cavs came home, held serve, then LeBron put on a performance from the ages in Game 5 before Boobie Gibson rained down threes in game six for four straight for the Cavs. Can they pull it off again this season? Peeks previews tonights game three.



There's a great deal of pain and sorrow today as we anticipate Game 3 of the Celtics-Cavs series. How could there not be after watching the first two games? The series has apparently officially ended. It's over. Take care of yourselves folks. Be careful not to trip over that bandwagon or the bodies that fell off the bandwagon on your way out.

The Cavs trail 2-0 against a quality team and left a win on the table in Game 1 in Boston.

You just don't recover from 0-2 after losing a close one to a quality team. It doesn't happen. Not ever.

In fact, I can't remember the last time the Cavs or anyone else got down 2-0 in the

playoffs to a quality team and came back to win the series. Apparently, no one else can either because, like we noted earlier, it just does not happen.

The really painful part is this is the second season in a row this has happened to the Cavs in the Eastern Conference playoffs. It's like de'ja` vu all over again and that really stings.

It's just like last season when the Pistons got off to that 2-0 series lead and went on to sweep the Cavs out of playoffs. It's just like a couple seasons ago when the Mavericks took a 2-0 lead on the Heat in the Finals and went on to sweep the Heat and bring Mark Cuban and Dirk Nowitzki their first NBA championship rings.

Done and over.

How much closer to last year can this series look?

- Last year's Game 1 against Detroit was the harbinger of things to come. LeBron James shot 5/15 and scored 10 points in a game the Cavs still had a chance to win but did not. Despite his shooting woes he did grab 10 boards and dished out 9 assists.

- Then in Game 2 the slide continued. James was 7/19 for 19 points. That brought his two game totals to a pitiful 12/34 shooting. LBJ was bottled up, frustrated and unable to find any room to operate. His teammates were of almost no help. The Cavs blew an early 12-point lead on their way to a demoralizing defeat. The fans and media wondered where James had disappeared to and they began to question his leadership ability, his shot selection as well as his playmaking ability.

- Stung by the local and national criticism, LBJ folded up the shop and the Cavs went down meekly at home in Games 3 and 4.

Nothings changed either:

- Against a good team like the Celtics James shot miserably in Game 1. He was 2-18 for 12 points. Despite his shooting woes he did grab 9 rebounds and dished out 9 assists.

- Like last year, Game 2 was a bit better for James but still relatively awful. He shot 6/24 from the field for 21 points. The Cavs blew an early 12-point lead on their way to a demoralizing loss on a night when LBJ's teammates were of almost no help.

- Critics, both locally and nationally, are all over James and the Cavs again.

So that's where the Cavs are once more. Down 2-0 to a quality team in the Eastern Conference playoffs.

They're favored by nobody and fancied by fewer.

Not favored by the odds-makers, not by the NBA 'experts', not by their own fans. And why should they be? What have they shown in the past that might indicate to anybody, *especially their own fans*, that they are capable of handling this deficit and digging out of this hole?

What has James done in his playoff career that would earn him some leeway and some respect? Why should the King get even the benefit of the doubt that he's capable of helping lead this team back from a 2-0 deficit? Maybe when he earns that trust and that respect we'll give it to him but not until then. He's been terrible. His teammates have been terrible. They blew another 12 point lead in a Game 2. The Celtics defense has bottled him up completely. We've seen how miserably this ends.

[We've seen it all before](#) .

No one is being asked to enjoy what they've seen thus far in this series. It's been brutal.

No one is asking that you demand less of James than he's given in the past. He deserves criticism for his poor play thus far.

But we've been here before with James and with this team. We've seen this show from the Cavaliers and the King in the playoffs. We've ridden this ride and we've bought the [t-shirts](#) to prove it.

The way I see it, we can act like the experienced playoff fans we've come to be or we can act like petulant children complaining about being bored by the movie before it starts.

I have no idea if the series will flip, if momentum will change and if the Cavs will turn things around. I do know that there is a track record for such things. I've seen the skies clear before when they looked darker than hell and when the leader of this team had, in Games 1 and 2, looked more like Ricky Davis than Michael Jordan.

But I'll wait a day to wail away.

And I'll clear room for those who fell off the wagon should Game 3 go to the good guys.