

Swerb is full of piss and vinegar this morning after last night's second half collapse by the Cavaliers. In his synopsis of last night's 106-96 loss in game four, Swerb takes a closer look at what went wrong down the stretch for Mike Brown and the boys.



I'm convinced. The worst thing that can occur for this Cavaliers team is for LeBron James to get off to an incredible start.

If you're reading this, you most likely watched last night's game, so a quick recap will suffice. LeBron scores a Cavalier playoff record 18 first quarter points. The Cavs get seven more from LeBron in the second, and a huge 12 point second quarter from Flip Murray. They led 57-46 at the half. They run the lead to 63-50, then proceed to get outscored 56-33 the rest of the way, and lose by ten.

Like we've seen so many times when LeBron gets off to a good start, the rest of the Cavs players and coaches were baited into LeBron watching. As LBJ went scoreless in the third quarter, he looked like a heavyweight taking a couple of rounds off to try and get his legs back for a late round knockout. The rest of the Cavaliers wanted the 6th round TKO, and were standing around with their members in their hands waiting for it to happen.

According to the post game presser, talk radio, and internet message boards ... I see the outcry from Mike Brown and Cavs fans at the officiating as misguided. Don't get me wrong, we didn't get as many calls as Washington, but it's not why we lost. The officials had nothing to do with the Cavs 23 turnovers, the Wizards 14 offensive rebounds, and the mind-boggling lack of offensive ball movement and efficiency the team displayed in the second half. The majority of the charge calls

were indeed charges. Mike Brown should be complaining about the predictable panicked drives to the basket with five seconds on the shot clock that led to those charges, and not the officials that called them.

The Cavs have some serious offensive issues right now. They've been masked by the facts that Washington is a terrible defensive team, and also by LeBron's individual performances in games one, three, and four. Should they be lucky enough to get past this pesky Washington club, they will be fully exposed by the Pistons ... the polar opposite of the Wizards defensively. This team is in desperate need of a point guard that can run an offense and dribble penetrate. This was never more evident than the second half last night. And not helping matters is Coach Brown's lack of creativity in play calling. Do the Cavs have a play besides "LeBron One" and "High Pick & Roll"?

Flip Murray helped provide a spark in the second and third quarters last night, but he gives up as many points as he scores, even on his best offensive nights. And he's not good enough of an outside shooter to be able to rely on, as we saw last night when he disappeared in the fourth quarter, as did many of his teammates. It's pick your poison with Flip and Hughes, as Larry is the equivalent of Ira Newble offensively right now, with no sign of morphing back into the 2004 Larry even somewhat evident.

And Zydrunas Ilgauskas. Where have you been? Led by the scared of his own shadow Brenda Haywood and the built like a shooting guard Antawn Jamison, you'd be hard pressed to find another team in this league, let alone the playoffs, softer inside than the Wizards. I have so much anger on this topic ... I'm going to let it go for now, and dedicate an entire column to it tomorrow.

The Cavs played like shit in D.C., and got bailed out by a superhuman performance from LeBron in game three. They still have the home court, but these last three games have exposed a lot of glaring weaknesses that still have me pretty worried.