

Tonights game is the the biggest in Cavaliers history. It's that simple. With a win, the Cavaliers shock the basketball world by defeating the Pistons in six games and advancing to the Eastern Conference Finals. Swerb's juices are in full flow, and he's looking to do the same for the readers by putting into perspective exactly what the Cavaliers have a chance to do tonight.



*Great moments ... are born from great opportunity.*

*And that's what you have here, tonight, boys. That's what you've EARNED here tonight.*

*One game. If we played 'em ten times, they might win nine.*

*But not this game. Not tonight.*

*Tonight, we play with them. Tonight, we stay with them. And we SHUT THEM DOWN because WE CAN! Tonight, WE are the greatest basketball team in the world.*

*You were born to be basketball players. Every one of you. And you were meant to be here tonight.*

*This is your time. Their time is DONE. It's OVER.*

*I'm sick and tired of hearing about what a great basketball team the Pistons have. Screw 'em.*

*This is your time. Now go out there and take it.*

The above passage (slightly altered for tonight's game) is the locker room speech of Herb Brooks (portrayed by Kurt Russell) right before the USA Olympic hockey team played the Soviets in 1980 in Lake Placid. This speech, Coach Norman Dale's (portrayed by Gene Hackman) speech to his Hickory High kids before the state championship game, and Ricky "Wild Thing" Vaughn (as played by Charlie Sheen) emerging from the bullpen to his theme music and fan pandemonium ... are the most goose bump inducing cinematic moments in the history of sports films.

Each time I see one of these films, the same thought goes through my head:

*What must that feel like to experience in real life, with one of the teams you live and die for?*

Tonight is one of the biggest sporting events in Cleveland history, and arguably the biggest game in Cavalier franchise history. While a win this evening would not guarantee a championship, or even a berth in the NBA Finals, it's so big on so many levels for this team and for this city.

It's not going to be easy. The Pistons have not played all that well, and we've played to the absolute pinnacle of our potential. This is a Piston team that has been dominant with their backs to the wall the last two seasons. It's a team loaded with veterans who have been in this position before, and fought their way out of it.

To give you some idea of how tough this is going to be, the Pistons are six point favorites tonight. In our house! And are still 2-1 favorites to win this series.

We've got to get it done tonight. The prospects of going back to the Motor City on Sunday, with momentum shifted back to the back-to-back Eastern Conference champions is a frightening proposition. But we can get it done tonight. This Cavalier team plays incredibly impassioned at home, and were one of the top home teams in all of basketball that doesn't play their home tilts in Auburn Hills, Michigan. And this crowd is going to be insane tonight.

It's important in my view for the good guys to get off to a good start tonight, and to get that crowd into the game. We all saw what a first half sucker punch at the hands of the visitors can do to neutralize a home crowd in game five. The Pistons obviously know that, and will be an inspired group out of the gates, looking to do to us what we did to them Wednesday night.

If we can achieve that good start, and duplicate the defensive intensity and effectiveness we've seen of late, I like our chances to keep this one close heading into the last five minutes of the game. If we can do that, I like my chances every time out with #23 in my corner down the stretch.

Just one more night of quality basketball at both ends. Just one night with no visits from the ghosts of Earnest Byner and Jose Mesa. Just one more win, and we will have done the unthinkable, and officially fast forwarded the timeline for title contention for the LeBron James era.

This is your time. Now go out there and take it.