

Mo, LeBron Crown Kings At The Q

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It wasn't the most artistically pretty win of the year. But Mo was absolutely beautiful. So is 35-8.

Defenseless: Cleveland slaughtered Sacramento on the boards, out-rebounding the Kings 49-25, and made more free throws (32) than the Kings attempted (26.) These numbers, plus the fact that the Cavaliers are good, and the Kings are, well, not, should have added up to a Cleveland rout, right? Wrong, and the reason for that was defense, or a lack thereof. Taking advantage of slow rotations, defenders ducking under screens instead of through or over them, and a lack of the usual top-shelf effort by the Wine & Gold on that end, Sacramento shot an even 50 percent, made 12-of-25 three-pointers, and hung more points on the Cavaliers than any other team this season. The poor defensive effort helped put Cleveland in an early hole, as the Kings took advantage of a bushel of wide-open looks to take a 44-33 lead with 7:22 remaining in the second quarter.

Mistuh Williams! Mistuh Big-Time Hoops Stah! Fortunately for the Cavaliers, while they didn't play defense as a momentary lapse, the Kings don't play it as a rule, and Mo Williams took full advantage, as the Wine & Gold stormed back from that 11-point deficit. Mo laced in 13 points in the final six minutes of the second period, pacing a 27-12 run that sent the Cavaliers into a 60-56 halftime lead. Mo' Better Baller had 25 in the first half, the highest total by a Cavalier in a half this season, on 9-for-12 shooting, with most of the points coming from long range.

Play of the Night, Part I: Late in the first quarter, with the Cavaliers in transition, LeBron threw an alley-oop pass for Tarence Kinsey. The Kinsey Report couldn't finish the play, but he did manage to save the ball to Wally Sczcerbiak in the corner. Wally's three-point try bounced

off the rim, but LeBron rose up from the weak side, grabbed the ball with his right hand, and hammered it home in one motion, giving the Cavaliers a 26-23 lead and waking up the slumbering home crowd.

Play of the Night, Part II: One quarter later, the Kinsey Report finished in the same fashion, as late in the second period he followed up a Mo Williams missed lay-up with an emphatic put-back dunk. Taking advantage of Delonte West's continued absence and the fact that I have as much chance of slowing down Kevin Martin as does Daniel Gibson, Kinsey logged 18 minutes, scored 9 points with a sparkling +13- second on the team to Ben Wallace- and at least gave the impression that he was trying to slow down Martin, who scored 35 on the night.

Play of the Night, Part III: Sometimes the halftime break can cool off a hot shooter. Mo Williams, however, stayed as torrid in the second half as he had been in the first. After missing his opening shot of the third period, the Alabama gunner nailed four straight three-pointers, the last three coming in a span of a little more than a minute and turning a 71-70 Sacramento lead into a 79-73 Cleveland bulge. The Cavaliers would not trail again for the remainder of the night.

Oh My God, it's Gorgeous! I'm speaking of the stat line for Maurice "Mo" Williams, which showed a career-high 43 points on 15-of-24 from the floor, 7-of-12 from three-point range, and 6-of-6 from the foul line, with 10 assists and 8 rebounds. I personally would rather not see Mo play in the All-Star Game, not because he doesn't deserve it, but simply because he could use the rest. The way he and this team have been playing, though, it's going to be tough to keep him off the floor in Phoenix on February 15.

LeBron's Line: Fresh off being [named](#) the Eastern Conference Player of the Week for the fourth time this season, LBJ put together his 20th

career triple-double, scoring 23 points (on just ten shots) with 15 rebounds, 11 assists, and three blocked shots in 37 minutes of work. Thanks to Mo's wonderful shooting and Cleveland's overall domination of the boards, LeBron had his triple-double secured by the middle of the third quarter. I didn't think his defense was quite up to his usual standards- he let John Salmons zip right by him several times- but other than that, LBJ's performance was once again the stuff MVP's are made of.

At This Rate, He'll Have His Own Militia Back Home: Sasha Pavlovic was once again pressed into starting duty, and once again the glowering Serb came through with a solid effort, scoring 12 points on 5-of-8 from the field and dishing out three assists. More than just the numbers, Sasha is playing a smarter game these days, making better decisions and avoiding the kamikaze drives and poorly considered shots that have plagued him throughout his career. It may not last, but we may as well savor this spasm of intelligent play from Mr. Pavlovic while it does.

Rising Rookie: J.J. Hickson's -5 +/- wasn't impressive, but he still looked sharp on Tuesday night, scoring 11 points, pulling down 8 rebounds, and displaying some impressive footwork in what Hubie Brown likes to refer to as "the painted area." He's still a baby, but J.J. already has more moves

right around the basket than any other big man on this team.

Back for One Night- the Wisdom of Mr. Cavalier: Late in the first half, after another Mo Williams bomb found cotton: "Eenee, Meeney, Miney... Mo, DEEP in the Q!" It's another phrase into the hopper for the [Austin Carr Drinking Game](#), a development that was probably inevitable.

Next: Thursday night at 8:00, the Cavaliers are right back on the road, in Orlando to face the Magic for the first time this season in a nationally-televised showdown of first-place teams.