

Cavs Bounce Back, Seal Season Sweep Of Spurs

Written by {ga=hermanfontenot}
Sunday, April 05 2009 7:00 PM -

They say nothing cleanses the soul like getting the hell kicked out of you, and if that's the case, the Cavaliers came into Sunday's matinee with San Antonio blessed with a soul as clean as a Finnish bathroom. With renewed defensive intensity, the return of Mo Williams's shot, a superb afternoon from Delonte West and a brilliant offensive effort by Number 23, Cleveland broke its two-game losing streak and upped their record to 37-1 at the Q by routing the Spurs, 101-81.



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Like a Superstar Should: Cleveland came out of the tip slow and sluggish and San Antonio took advantage, methodically building a 9-4 lead in the first three minutes. Then LeBron took over. Repeatedly burying the same eighteen-footer from the wing with which he [beat Golden State](#), he tallied the next fourteen Cavalier points and outscored the Spurs single-handedly to give Cleveland an 18-15 lead. The Cavaliers would never trail again. LeBron took advantage of single-coverage from Michael Finley, simply shooting right over the smaller defender without the pressure of double-teams. The Spurs would be

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more aggressive in sending extra men at LeBron as the game went on, but they'd made the mistake of letting him go off in the first place.

All told, LeBron scored 18 first-quarter points on 6-of-9 shooting, including six straight made baskets at one point. Despite the lackluster start and some questionable defense throughout the period, Cleveland escaped with a 28-27 lead. His timing once again impeccable, LeBron carried his team until they were ready to run on their own- which they did. Or at least, Mo and Delonte did.

LeBron's Line: 38 points on 14-of-21 from the field, 2-of-5 from three-point range, and 8-of-8 from the line with seven rebounds, six assists, and only two turnovers in 37 minutes of work.

Our Guards RULE (for today): LeBron started the second period taking his usual rest, but the Cavaliers kept right on rolling. Cleveland outscored the Spurs 12-2 with Number 23 on the bench to build their lead to 40-29, and did it thanks mainly to the tandem of Mo Williams and Delonte West. The two combined for all but two of their team's points during the run, setting the tone for a great afternoon by both players.

Mo shrugged off a recent cold spell (less than 39 percent in the last three games) to shoot 9-of-16 from the field, 4-of-6 from downtown, and score 22 points with five rebounds and four assists. In addition to his lights-out shooting, he broke down San Antonio's defense with his baseline drives, opening up the middle for easy baskets by Cavalier big man (as well as one missed dunk by Big Z.) Mo also didn't commit a single turnover, an impressive feat considering how much dribbling he did.

Delonte was just as effective: 22 points on 10-of-15 shooting (2-of-2 from three) with six rebounds, an assist, and a steal. Comfortable in his corner office, he hit several from that area in the second half, including some daggers whenever the Spurs mounted a rally. With Mo and Delonte ripping cord with regularity and

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beating their counterparts off the dribble, LeBron was able to switch into facilitator mode and take advantage of San Antonio's quicker double-teaming.

Big One, Little Two: Tony Parker showed up on Sunday afternoon, leading his team with 24 points on 9-of-16 shooting. But he didn't get much help, especially from Tim Duncan and Manu Ginobili. Tim played only 27 minutes and took only seven shots, making two. He finished with a church mouse-quiet seven points and six rebounds. Manu was even worse: 2-of-9 from the field, including misses on all six of his three-point attempts, and four points. Several of the misses were on open looks and helped abort San Antonio's attempt to come back in the second half.

The only Spur other than Parker to score in double figures was our old buddy Drew Gooden, who banged and thumped for 14 off the bench. Everyone else was ice-cold. San Antonio shot a frosty 39.2 percent, including 4-of-16 from behind the arc.

Channeling [Kenny Anderson, Dennis Scott and Brian Oliver](#) : LeBron James, Mo Williams and Delonte West combined to score 82 points on 33-of-51 shooting (64.7 percent.) The other eight Cavaliers who saw action combined to score 19 points on 6-of-21 shooting (28.6 percent.) The only bench points came from Joe Smith, who scored seven and made the biggest play of the game.

Biggest Play of the Game: Cleveland had a 69-60 lead late in the third quarter when Joe ripped the ball away from Tony Parker as he drove the lane. Smith then led LeBron absolutely perfectly on a long lead pass, finding the streaking James for a breakaway hammer. San Antonio never got closer than nine after that.

The D-Jax Experiment: With Anderson Varejao *hors de combat* with right wrist pain (he was in civvies, sporting what looked like Flavor Flav's pocket watch on his uninjured wrist) the starting duty at the four devolved to Darnell Jackson. Playing a team thin on low-post bangers, the former Jayhawk scored four points-

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all from the line- and grabbed five rebounds in 24 minutes.

It'd be nice if J.J. Hickson knew how to play individual defense and box out. But he doesn't. So D-Jax will continue to play.

Bronze this Stat: Cleveland never trailed after the 5:28 mark of the first quarter.

Bronze This Stat II: LeBron James has now made 18 in a row at the foul line. No idea if that's the longest streak of his career.

Bronze This Stat III: The Cavaliers are now 33-1 when they give up fewer than 90 points.

Magic Number? Down to two for top seed in the East.

Next: Wednesday evening, when the Wizards come to town looking to take the season series.