

## It's a Wrap: 19-63

Written by {ga=jerryroche}

Wednesday, April 13 2011 10:51 PM - Last Updated Thursday, April 14 2011 10:12 AM

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Hope for the future. A tip of the cap to the past. That's the way the "Season from Hell" ended for the Cleveland Cavaliers Wednesday night.

Rookie Alonzo Gee dribbled the ball out as time expired, 20,000 chalupa-crazed fans rose to their feet, the Cavs beat the Washington Wizards 100-93, and confetti and streamers fell from the ceiling of Quicken Loans Arena. (Apparently, Cavs management was happy as hell to see the season end, too.)

Not much later, Joe Tait finished 39 years behind the Cavs' radio microphone with a slight variation on his popular wrap: "Have a good life, everybody!"

If the game itself had been a symphony, it would've been "Chopsticks," not Chopin. The two teams were among the worst the NBA had to offer this season, and the ball seemed to bounce between and among them like a football.

Shots hit the side of the backboard; players dribbled the ball on the endline; some passes were fumbled, others hit heels; bodies collided; dunks got blocked. It was a game where five players with various colored jerseys could go up for a rebound and not one come down with it.

## Game Summary

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Okay, so it wasn't an artistic success. But the Cavs -- who finished with the second-worst record in the league and trailed by as many as 13 points -- never gave up on either the season or the game.

They started slow: six turnovers in their first 13 possessions to trail 35-23 at the end of the first quarter. With the Wizards' bench crew getting much of the floor time, the Cavs came back and trailed by only three at the half, 50-47, and three entering the last quarter, 74-71.

They took their first lead of the second half on a three-pointer by Luke Harangody, 78-76, with 8:59 left. Seconds after that, Christian Eyenga hit another for an 81-76 lead. Washington took another brief lead, but the Cavs took over for good when Ryan Hollins made the second of two free throws to give them an 86-85 lead. The icing on the cake was a turnaround three-pointer from the corner by Anthony Parker with 1:34 left on the game clock and 0:01 left on the shot clock. That gave them a 98-91 bulge.

A prime indication of the way the game went was the performance of point guard Ramon Sessions, who scored a game-high 27 points but turned the ball over five times. Backing up Sessions were J.J. Hickson with 15 points and 13 rebounds, Hollins with 12 and 6, and Daniel Gibson with 10 points.

The Wizards -- even though they had 11 steals and 10 blocked shots -- petered out in the fourth quarter, thanks to the play of guys who are usually glued to the bench. Yi Jianlian, Larry Owens and Othyus Jeffers each played more than 24 minutes while Kevin Seraphin and Mustafa Shakur each played more than 16 minutes.

## Looking Forward

When the 2011-12 season begins about five months from now, the roster will probably change drastically. Here's how players may be treated:

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>> Anderson Varejao: will be back to full strength after sitting out most of the season with an injury; could've been the Cavs' MVP had he played the entire season.

>> Antawn Jamison: will be back to full strength after sitting out the second half of the season with an injury; the "old pro" and "wily veteran" of the Cavs.

>> Samardo Samuels: will be back to full strength after ending the season with a groin injury; proved himself to be a possible star of the future in his rookie season.

>> Baron Davis: finished the season playing at about 55% because of various injuries; will log as much time as his body allows next season at point guard.

>> J.J. Hickson: unimpressive at center; when rotated to power forward late in the season showed enough talent to become a future star in the league.

>> Anthony Parker: solid as the No. 2 guard; will be 36 years old when next season begins; retirement not out of the question.

>> Ramon Sessions: Cavs' high scorer during the final stretch run; needed playing time could come next season every time Davis needs a blow.

>> Daniel "Boobie" Gibson: surprised fans with a more well-rounded game than just outside shooting, but still a tremendous liability on defense; could be trade bait or relegated farther down the bench next season.

>> Alonzo Gee: rookie improved by leaps and bounds (literally); could be a valuable bench player next season.

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>> Luke Harangody: ditto; role player at best.

>> Ryan Hollins: spent stretch run as starting center by necessity; could/should be relegated to the end of the bench next season.

>> Manny Harris: probably deserves a shot at an NBA roster, but could be a victim of the numbers game next season.

>> Christian Eyenga: ditto; raw and undeveloped, he may be a luxury the Cavs can't afford.

>> Semih Erden: status incomplete; will at least get a look in September and October.

>> Joey Graham: good enough to be an end-of-bench player for the worst team in the league; if the Cavs aren't the worst team in the league next season (heaven forbid!), he'll be gone.

### Final Observations

And now some final observations on what is rightly termed the "Season from Hell":

>> The Cavs finished with the second-worst record in the league. While they were going out with a bang, the stinkin' Minnesota Timberwolves went out with a whimper, losing 15 in a row to end the season by falling 121-102 to Houston.

>> Fox Sports Ohio's last fan poll of the season: What's the best reason to be optimistic about the Cavaliers? J.J. Hickson's development (17%), Two draft picks (37%), Baron Davis (23%), a healthy Andy (23%). Sportscaster Austin Carr's predictable opinion? "All of the above."

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>> At times during the second quarter, the telecast was a shameless promotion of the American Hockey League's Lake Erie Monsters. Sideline reporter Jeff Phelps interviewed two of the Monsters, Carr and Fred McLeod had an extended interview with Monster coach David Quinn, and video cut to Monster players on the sideline and throwing t-shirts into the stands -- all while the game continued on the court.

>> Tait's last words on WTAM, the Cavs' flagship radio station: "So that's going to do it for yours truly -- in more ways than one. It's been a real ball over the years that I've spent talking to you folks, and I enjoy the response I received from you very, very sincerely. We'll see you down the line. This is Joe Tait -- have a good life, everybody!"