

## The Notebook: Cavs 103, Bobcats 90

Written by {ga=mrburns}

Tuesday, April 10 2012 10:41 PM -

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### The game in 300 words or less

It was a battle of undersized guards as the Cavs handed the Charlotte Bobcats their 13<sup>th</sup> straight loss. It's fair to say that this game that didn't feature much defense. Lester Hudson's third straight game of 20-plus points helped the Cavs fight off strong shooting nights from Kemba Walker and Gerald Henderson, in addition to several big lead swings.

Anthony Parker was back on the court and delivered 19 points in the encore performance to his 27-point explosion last week in Milwaukee. I doubt that I'm the only one who's surprised to see Parker score with such volume and efficiency, as the Cavs search to fill the enormous void left by Kyrie Irving for the past few games.

After leading for most of the first half, the game was very much in doubt when the Bobcats grabbed the lead in the third quarter. A combination of Charlotte's poor shot selection and some Lester Hudson (!) heroics put the Cavs back in the lead for good and turned the game into a

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pretty comfortable victory.

As bad as the defense was at times, the game never felt sloppy; largely because both teams barely cracked double-digit turnovers.

With Kyrie Irving out, Tristan Thompson received all the rookie attention and he continues to struggle with consistency from game to game. Tristan followed a monster 15 and 15 performance against New Jersey with a ho-hum 6 and 7.

With 11 games in 16 days and just 5 home games remaining (largely against contenders), this was a nice win for the fans who continue to come out and support the struggling Cavaliers.

### **Kyrie Watch**

Although they're just playing out the string on this season, the Cavs are still so much more watchable with Kyrie on the floor. Irving has been sidelined after he re-aggravated his sprained right shoulder last week in San Antonio.

Similar to the Anderson Varejao injury, I don't really see the benefit of rushing Irving back this season. Particularly when you consider the grueling schedule over the next two weeks, bringing either player back doesn't seem to do much other than sell a few more tickets while risking further injury. I hope the Cavs err on the side of caution with their two best players.

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### On Lester Hudson

Maybe I'm getting a little carried away with a guy who's here on his second ten day contract, but can you convince me why Lester Hudson shouldn't get a chance to be a part of the Cavs' rotation next season?

Hudson might not be terribly efficient, but he can get to the hole and provide some scoring off the bench, essentially filling the hole left by the trade of Ramon Sessions. I'm not suggesting that Hudson is Ramon Sessions, but he can probably fill a role somewhere in between Sessions and Flip Murray – a guard who can come in off the bench, score in volume, and get to the rack.

### Gearing up for the draft

The Browns aren't the only team getting primed for the draft. Although there are still two weeks to play, fans are already looking ahead to what should be a very deep NBA Draft class that hopefully will bring the Cavs a wing scorer to complement Kyrie Irving.

Obviously we don't know where the Cavs will pick because of the NBA Lottery process (anywhere between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> worst record is conceivable), but the good news is that there should be some quality options wherever the Cavs end up in the lottery order.

If the Cavs have the good fortune to get the top pick again, they wouldn't hesitate to pull the trigger on power forward Anthony Davis. However, if they aren't at number one, as they likely won't be, they will focus on a shooting guard or small forward. Expect to hear names like Michael Kidd-Gilchrist, Harrison Barnes, Jeremy Lamb, and Bradley Beal quite a bit between now and late June.

The Cavs have some quality pieces (Anderson Varejao, and to a lesser degree Alonzo Gee and

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Tristan Thompson) and a solid centerpiece (Kyrie Irving) that they can start to build around, and they really need to find the Robin to Kyrie Irving's Batman. That guy will likely be a wing player who can fill it up, and he will likely come via the draft due to Cleveland being a smaller market that struggles to attract blue chip free agents.

### **MJ's mess of a franchise**

If any team desperately needs to win the lottery and select Anthony Davis, it's the Charlotte Bobcats. There doesn't seem to be much of a plan down in North Carolina, and Charlotte fans can't be encouraged by the franchise's very spotty track record in the draft.

Seriously, who pays Tyrus Thomas \$40 million over 5 years? Why burn a lottery pick on an undersized guard like Kemba Walker when you already have DJ Augustin filling a similar role?

The only guy on the Charlotte roster who I view as an NBA starter is Gerald Henderson. Bismack Biyombo and Kemba Walker might be able to get there, but neither guy is a sure thing.

Since arriving in the league in 2004, the Bobcats are playing under .400 basketball. They have only cracked 40 wins and qualified for the post-season just one time, 2009-2010, when they were promptly swept out of the first round by the Magic.

I know these last few Cavs games might not be very pretty to watch, but when you start to feel bad for yourself just remember that you could be one of the four Bobcats fans who has to watch that rudderless ship sail aimlessly through the NBA landscape.

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**Up next: Wednesday, April 11, vs. Indiana, 7:00, FSN Ohio**