



I have half a mind to beg each reader of this column to mail Mo Williams an alarm clock.

Any time Williams would like to wake up and maybe even show up to play in this second round series against the Boston Celtics would be fine by Clevelanders.

Yes, a tremendous effort by LeBron James on Friday night in Game 3 wrestled the home court advantage back into the Cavaliers' favor, but if James, Shaquille O'Neal and Antawn Jamison, who combined for 55 of the 87 Cavalier points in Sunday's Game 4, would have gotten any help from Williams and his backcourt mates, the Cavaliers could easily be looking to close out this version of the Celtics dynasty for good on Tuesday.

But the guard position and the point guard position specifically, contributed next to nothing Sunday, while the Celtics got a herculean effort from their PG Rajon Rondo to knot the series at 2-2.

Delonte West and Williams combined play 56 minutes and shot a combined 3/16 from the floor.

That's simply not going to get it done. Not when James is the focal point of a strong Celtics defense and not when West and Williams are looking at a lot of open shots. West isn't a shooter as much as he's a scorer. He can knock down the intermediate shot and find creases to the basket but the Celtics packed that part of floor with big, wide bodies in Game 4 and dared the Cavaliers to beat them from the perimeter. It didn't happen and you can bet your house the C's will employ the defensive philosophy Tuesday night when the series returns to 'The Q'.

I have faith that the Cavs will win this series 4-2. But for that to happen Williams and/or some of those backcourt players, are going to have to pour in some points to take some of the pressure off the big men.

And Another Thing

I'm not going to get all over the Cavaliers for giving up a triple-double to Rajon Rondo. The Cavs have all but shut down Paul Pierce and you're going to allow certain other guys to get theirs when you lock down Pierce. So Rondo scored 29 points. Fine, But good God almighty, how does a 6'1", 170lber find his way to 18 freaking rebounds?

Seriously, I understand the guy is a fine rebounder for a guard, but come the hell on. 18 rebounds for a guy who likely barely reaches feet tall and isn't a bruiser? That's embarrassing and you damn well better figure out a way to emphasize to whomever is checking that midget that they better find a way to put a body on him Tuesday night.

If I have to watch Rajon Rondo go into the tall timber, grab another rebound and then race to other rim for a lay-in I'm going to puke.

In Case You Needed Something Else to Worry About

Can Paul Pierce really go 'Mo Williams' for this entire series? The Celtics have this series all tied up without getting much of anything at all from their future Hall of Fame forward.

He's been miserable.

I'm just reluctant to believe this entire series is going to pass and Pierce is going to continue to plod along averaging just 10 points per game. Hey, it might very well happen. Pierce is 32 years old and has a lot of wear on his tires. He's facing an All-NBA defensive challenge in the form of LeBron James and he's had precious little room to operate. But the guy still has some gas in the tank and some tricks in his bag and he's playing alongside a guy in Rondo who's throwing up some ridiculous assist numbers.

The Cavs would be wise to look for Pierce's big punch coming up shortly. If he's not hurt and he's physically able he's going to be heard from in some way before this series is over.

The Bottom Line

This series is tied 2-2 and the Cavs have earned back the home court advantage. It's pretty much where we all thought it would be after four games, give or take your level of optimism. How it got to that point may not have gone according to Hoyle, but it is what is. If the Cavaliers take care of business and make some adjustments, get what they've gotten before from guys like Mo and Delonte and maybe a bit more from somewhere else, they should win this series.

As fans we live and die with each game and our moods swing according to the most recent one. There was near-panic and certainly depression after last Monday night when the C's ran the Cavaliers out of 'The Q'. That swung back to near-elation when James and the Cavs handed Boston the worst loss in Celtic playoff history on Friday night.

Now we're back to questioning whether this team can do what's necessary to move on and advance. We're bi-polar when it comes to our sports teams. Maybe you can sleep better tonight if you try and understand the teams DO NOT get so wrapped up in an individual game. They look at these series as a constant game of adjustments and tinkering. You won't see Daniel Gibson come out Tuesday to face down Rondo. You won't see Zydrunas Ilgauskas getting big minutes. What you'll see is Mike Brown make a couple of subtle adjustments to try and trim down some of Rondo's effectiveness.

There is no magic elixir that will cause Rondo and Mo to switch stat lines. It's still going to come down to execution and hitting open shots. If that doesn't make you feel better, well, you're probably not alone. But that's where we are right now in what comes down to a three game series for the right to play Orlando (yes, I've declared the Magic the winner of that series in a landslide).

Speaking of the Bottom Line

You don't have to look far above it to find the Indians place in the AL Central.

If your interest in the Tribe is waning (and judging by the attendance 'waning' would properly summarize the general interest in the Tribe) I have a suggestion that's long overdue: fire Eric Wedge.

I am so tired of Wedge molycoddling this team through spring training only to see them get off to slow starts in April and May. It's happened for far too many years now. He has to go. And while we're trimming the fat, what do you say we finally cut the cord with Hitting Coach Derek Shelton? This team is hitting .241 as a team and he's simply not getting the job done.

That should do it really. Fire Wedge and Shelton because they're clearly the issue. And if you want to make a really bold move that will reinvigorate the fan base and energize the club, how about offering Sandy Alomar Jr. the job as catching instructor and first base coach? He's a hero from those glory days of the mid-90's and he'd be terrific for a young catcher like Lou Marson. Marson would be an impenetrable human wall if Sandy taught him the art of blocking balls in the dirt. That would immensely help the pitching staff who would then have the confidence to throw any pitch in any count knowing there's no way possible it could ever get past Marson if he was schooled by Alomar Jr.

Yes, that's my master plan. Can we make this happen?

Incidentally, congratulations to 'Sweet' Lou Marson for notching his first RBI of the season in the Indians 29th game of the season. Marson got that RBI with a blistering infield single Sunday against Detroit. Marson is now right on the tail of guys like Tim Lincecum, Ubaldo Jimenez, Jason Marquis and Edwin Jackson. Given that those guys are all starting pitchers who see the field just every five days, you have to think Marson has a chance to catch each of them by the All-Star break if all goes well.