When the Cavaliers started the game giving up an 11-0 run to the Washington Wizards, it felt like it was going to be a long night in Cleveland. The Cavs are an improved team in the past few years, but their penchant for starting out flat and being behind is a concern. Byron Scott had enough when he substituted four players after only 2:06 of the game had progressed. The addition of CJ Miles, Luke Walton, Marreese Speights and Wayne Ellington was just what Cleveland needed. The bench plus Shaun Livingston proceeded to immediately go on a a much-needed 8-0 run.

The Cavs were without Kyrie Irving for the first game after he suffered a sprained left shoulder against the Raptors on Sunday. Shaun Livingston made the start in his place and once again delivered. Livingston scored 12 points and had 6 assists in 31 minutes of play. Livingston is the type of veteran that a young team like the Cavs can use. He was quite good from a leadership perspective. There was one point where he was playing off the ball and directing traffic after a play broke down. It is quite the nice welcome after the "veteran leadership" of Antawn Jamison on the young Cavs.

The Wizards did lose the game, but John Wall should not be blamed. Wall had a strong performance. He finished wtih 27 points, 14 assists and 7 rebounds. He was hampered with foul

trouble through much of the game. Before the third quarter ended, Wall had 4 fouls. Despite that, he played over 10 minutes in the fourth quarter and had 10 points on 4-6 shooting.

The Cavs led the game 91-80 with 3:14 remaining in the game, but a 10-3 run by the Wizards made it a game down the stretch. A kay play came late in the fourth quarter when Shaun Livingston won a jumpball against Nene. It was simply meant to be Cleveland's night after that happened. Livingston, who is 6'7" and absolutely destroyed his knee on that fateful night in 2007 was able to beat 6'11" Nene on that play.

This win put the Cavs at a record of 22-40. In previous years, a lot of people would be panicking about the implications a meaningless win like this could have in the lottery. After their loss, the Wizards are 20-40. This is a different year and the circumstances are different. This victory did not come at the hands of Antawn Jamison, Anthony Parker and Ramon Sessions. They were consummate professionals in the locker room and on the floor at times, but they were never part of the future for the team. The Cavs were able to come back from a big deficit because of guys like Tristan Thompson and Dion Waiters. It did take the bench to stop the bleeding early, but Waiters' 20 points and Thompson's double-double were imperative.

As currently constructed, the Wizards are a rudderless team. They are not as bad as their record indicates, but they are also a long way from being a playoff team. With or without Kyrie Irving, it is important that the Cavs beat teams like the Wizards at home. In fact, Washington only has 5 wins on the road in the entire season. They had some very good individual performances, but the Cavs were able to overcome that and come away from the game with a victory.

Cleveland had 24 assists on 34 made field goals. Everybody was getting involved on the offense. Every player except for C.J. Miles and Marreese Speights notched at least 1 assist. On the other hand, the Wizards had 20 assists and John Wall accounted for 14 of them.

The Cavs travel to Texas over the weekend to take on the Dallas Mavericks and San Antonio Spurs on Friday and Saturday. Tip-off is at 8:30 on Friday night against the struggling Mavericks.