Back-To-Back Games With the Pistons Loom

In what was perhaps the worst game of LeBron James career, the Cavs fell at home to the Wizards 102-94 last night. The Cavs are now 1-2 since the break, and have allowed 99 or more points in five of their last six games. And back-to-back games with the 45-9 Detroit Pistons are slated for Sunday and Monday.

This was simply not LeBron's night. He failed to make a field goal in the second half, shooting 0-8 from the field and 4-12 from the foul line from the midway point on. He ended the game 8-19 from the foul line, dropping his free throw percentage to a season low 72.5%. He had four of the teams eighteen turnovers.

Despite the poor performance from their star, the Cavs still had chances in this one. They led 54-51 at the half, and actually led the game with just under five minutes to play. However, clutch Wizard three pointers, and missed Cavalier free throws down the stretch were the difference. And a Caron Butler three ball with 25 seconds left sealed the deal for Washington.

New addition Flip Murray logged 24 minutes in his first game as a Cavalier, and finished with 4 points, 4 assists, 2 rebounds, 2 steals, and a turnover. He played a little more than expected right out of the gates, which was prompted by coach Mike Brown pulling Sasha Pavlovic just four minutes into the game for lackluster defensive effort. Sasha would not see the floor again the entire game.

The Cavs also resigned swingman Stephen Graham, this time for the remainder of the season. This came just a day after a roster technicality forced them to waive Graham to add Lee Nailon to the roster for one day. Nailon was acquired along with a second round pick from Philadelphia earlier in the week, and was officially waived before the game. Graham played 14 minutes and had 4 points.

The loss drops the Cavs to 32-23, just three games ahead of the Wizards, who have now beaten them twice in the last two weeks, winning the season series 2-1 versus the Cavs. Memories of last year's second half swoon are still fresh, and two games with the vaunted Pistons loom. A sweep at the hands of the Pistons would put the Cavs at 1-4 to start the second half, and put a lot of pressure on this team.