The Cavs have hit a new low on the season, falling last night at home in double overtime to the Philadelphia 76ers, they of the 12-30 record, sans Allen Iverson and Chris Webber, and on the second night of a back to back. The Cavs have now lost five of their last six (including back to back home games) and have slipped to 24-18 on the season. John Hnat checks in to relive the horror from last night.

THE SUMMARY:

When this season began, Philadelphia had two major players of note: Allen Iverson and Chris Webber. In recent weeks, they have lost both of those players (Iverson in the big trade to the Denver Nuggets, Webber in a contract buyout). The consensus opinion is that the Sixers are tanking this season in hopes of landing some high picks (including the likely big prize, Greg Oden) in next summer's draft.

You never would have known it by the way they played last night. The Sixers beat the Cavs, 118-115, in a game that needed two overtimes to be decided.

The Cavs jumped out to an 8-0 lead, and that would prove to be the largest margin held by either team during the course of the game. The Sixers rallied to tie the game at the end of the first quarter, 18-18. The game was also knotted at the end of the first half (41-41). The two teams continued to trade the lead throughout the third quarter, with Cleveland holding a slim

three-point margin (66-63) heading into the fourth quarter.

The fourth quarter saw the two teams trade baskets yet again. The Cavs did manage to claw their way to a six point lead with 1:57 remaining after Zydrunas Ilgauskas hit a jumper. But with Philly's Andre Iguodala scoring seven points in that final 1:57, and with Larry Hughes missing a key free throw with 16 seconds remaining, the two teams were tied at the end of regulation. (Cleveland did have a chance to win the game, but LeBron James missed a layup, and Ilguaskas's following put back missed the mark as well.)

The first overtime was more of the same: a few lead changes, neither team gaining much of an advantage, and a key missed free throw (this time by LeBron with nine seconds to go) that essentially cost the Cavs the victory.

Finally, in the second overtime, Philadelphia put the game away. Philly scored 12 of its 18 points in the session from the free throw line (note to the Cavs: they hit all 12 of their attempts in that overtime, and missed only one of their 27 attempts during the entire game), and that was enough to overcome a barrage by LeBron, who scored 13 of the Cavs' 15 points (including three three-pointers, a couple of which he shot from a different area code) in the session.

LeBron led all scorers with a season-high 39 points. Hughes and Ilgauskas contributed with 26 and 23 points, respectively. Iguodala's 34 points led the Sixers, who had six different players score in double digits.

WHAT I LIKED ABOUT THE GAME:

Not Taking Him For Granted: LeBron's 39 points were a season high, and he had a couple of spurts where he absolutely carried the team. The most visible one was in overtime; he did

score all but two of the team's 15 points during the quarter, and was raining three-pointers in a way that few others can; had Gilbert Arenas been there, they would have had a nice game of HORSE going. LeBron also had a nice run during the fourth quarter, in which he slammed home a strong dunk (give credit to Anderson Varejao for setting a nasty pick to make the drive possible), then hit a layup and free throw on the next possession, then followed that up with a sweet pass to Ilgauskas for an easy basket.

Maybe He's Up To Twice A Month: Sasha Pavlovic provided some punch from the bench, hitting six of his eight shots for 12 points (that's right, he didn't even attempt a three-pointer). He has earned his way back into Coach Mike Brown's rotation, getting significant playing time during the fourth quarter and the overtimes. It is easy to forget that he is still only 23 years old, and still has room to grow. He's showing signs that he can have more than the occasional good game, and that can only help the team.

Back To The Boards: After getting abused by the Orlando Magic on the boards on Monday night, the Cavs returned to dominating the glass against the Sixers. Three Cavs (LeBron, Ilgauskas, Varejao) each had 10 rebounds, and the Cavs had 21 more caroms than the Sixers on the night (counting team rebounds). That difference resulted in the Cavs having 22 more shot attempts than Philadelphia, which will usually – *usually* -- get you the win.

The Daily A.C. Report: This feature has to become a regular part of the column (especially with the Newble/Pollard/Dwayne Jones “who will score first?” drama having subsided). At least once a night, Cavs' announcer Austin Carr utters a line that cannot help but make you smile. Last night, it was this gem, which he said during the fourth quarter: “Believe me, making the basket is part of the execution of the play.” Thanks, Austin! It never would have occurred to us before! Please, Fox Sports Ohio, put A.C. on the road telecasts as well. Nothing against Scott Williams (who normally is the color commentator for away games), but too much A.C. is never enough.

WHAT I DIDN’T LIKE ABOUT THE GAME:

EEEE-Fense: It's not like there's any D. The Cavs' vaunted defense allowed the Sixers to make 52.4% of their shots (43-82) last night, the third time in the last four games that the opposition made more than half of its baskets (Orlando made 54.5% on Monday night; Denver shot at a 50.4% clip last Friday).

Most disturbing is the number of wide-open looks that the Cavs gave to the Sixers. Some of those were the standard “open guy on the perimeter” shots that are bound to happen when you double team somebody else. (That being said, why do you ever let Kyle Korver spot up? The guy can do one thing, and that's shoot. It's not like he is going to take you off the dribble.) But the Cavs also surrendered several baskets in the paint, the result of Sixers big men being wide open after a Cavs' player missed his assignment. (I will report here that Drew Gooden played only 23 of the possible 58 minutes last night. You, the reader, can decide if those two items have any connection.)

Bear, Newspaper, Woods: But not in the way that you would normally think. The Cavs actually did a respectable job of making their free throws last night, hitting 25 of 34 (73%) from the line. Alas, they have a penchant for missing the free throws when they are most important. As mentioned before, both Hughes and LeBron missed free throws that could have been game-winners (Hughes at the end of regulation, LeBron at the end of the first overtime). During the second overtime, LeBron missed both attempts from the line. (Those misses were mitigated somewhat, as he got the rebound after the second miss and put in a layup.)

$36 Million Bought The Cavs ... What, Exactly?: The combined line for Damon Jones and Donyell Marshall, two of the high profile free agent signings from the 2005-06 off-season: 0 points, 0 of 10 from the field (including 0 of 5 from three-point range), three rebounds, two assists, 25 combined minutes played. For Jones, it was a tough night at the office; he has contributed in several other games recently. For Donyell ... it may be time to be very concerned about him. His shot has abandoned him, and he appears to be coasting when he is on the floor.

The Miller High Life Commercials: Guys, it's 2007. $11.50 is not THAT much for a hamburger...

The Wendy's Commercials: ...except at Wendy's, where $2.99 will, from all appearances, buy you a side of beef on a bun and enough French fries to make Morgan Spurlock hurl. (And if you enjoy fast food fries, you may not want to watch this video.) But why in the world are they eating in a library?

WHAT LIES AHEAD:

The Cavs and Sixers meet again, this time in Philadelphia, on Friday evening. Cleveland will then return home for a nationally televised ass-whip, er, game against the Suns on Sunday afternoon.