Well ... that played out pretty nice! Cavs beat the Bucks. Bulls lose to the Nets. Wizards choke away a game against the Pacers. And the Cavs not only secured the #2 seed, but a first round matchup against the depleted Wizards. And avoid the Heat, Bulls, and Pistons until the East Finals! New contributor Nick Allburn checks in this morning to make sense of it all for us.

In miraculous fashion, on the last day of the season, the Cleveland Cavaliers regained possession of the second seed in the Eastern Conference. The Cavs delivered a 109-96 thrashing to the Milwaukee Bucks, while about an hour later, the New Jersey Nets handed a 106-97 loss to the red-hot Chicago Bulls. I *did not* see this coming. As a Cleveland fan, as a rule, you never expect luck. After all, *" In my experience, there's no such thing as luck."*

I can't stress enough how relieved I am that the Cavaliers have made this leap in seeding. Had the Cavs retained the five seed (now held by the aforementioned Bulls), they would be pitted against the Miami Heat, who are the proud owners of a rejuvinated Shaq O'Neal and a gutsy Dwyane Wade. Although Wade is far from 100 percent, I'd love to avoid him if at all possible.

Instead, the Cavs are dealt the reeling Washington Wizards. The Wizards are riddled with injuries, as their best two players, Gilbert Arenas (ballhog/chucker) and Caron Butler (complete jerk/convict) are out for the remainder of the season. How have these injuries affected the Wizards? They've lost eight of their last nine, their only win being a three-point victory over a less than stellar Indiana Pacers team last night. Barring some unforseen cataclysmic event (e.g. large-scale meteor shower, the Cavs' entire starting five contracting malaria), the Cavaliers should take care of the Wizards with relative ease (four games, five at the most).

So round one finds the Cavs dodging the Heat for the Wizards. Round two is nearly as sweet. Had the Cavs stayed in the five-hole and managed to defeat Miami, guess who would be in their path in the second round? The Detroit Pistons, the mongoose to their snake, if you will. Instead of going toe-to-toe with the loathsome Pistons, the Cavs will face the winner of the Toronto

Raptors/New Jersey Nets series, a virtual cakewalk when compared to Detroit.

And the icing on the cake? The winner of the projected Detroit/Miami series (assuming the Bulls don't knock off the Heat, and the Pistons don't lay an egg against the Magic) will face the Cavs in the Eastern Conference Finals, following what should prove to be a very grueling, physical, and ultimately entertaining series. In other words, the Pistons/Heat series will almost certainly go six or seven games, and whichever team survives will have suffered significant attrition, leaving them in a weakened state when playing the Cavs. Sound crazy? It's not. After all, one of the big reasons that Detroit fell to the Heat in six games during last year's Eastern Finals was that Cleveland gave them all they could handle for seven games during the previous round.

Here's the bottom line. I don't want to look past any team in the playoffs, but the Cavaliers **should** make it to the Eastern Finals because any of the teams they will face up to that point are teams that they **should** beat. And if the Cavaliers beat the teams that they should beat, which has been far easier said than done in this '06-'07 campaign, they will face a tired Miami or Detroit, whatever the case may be. This is a golden opportunity to go out and take the Eastern crown, but the Cavs must to capitalize. Let's hope LeBron and friends take care of business.