Are the wheels coming off the wagon for the Cavaliers? It sure looked like it last night, as LeBron and the boys were absolutely destroyed by the lowly Knicks, who came into last night's contest with a 7-17 mark. Sam Amico has some harsh words for the team after last night's debacle, which saw the Cavs give up 63 first half points to a Knicks team that was only averaging 94 points a contest coming in. The loss dropped the Cavs to 2-7 in the month of December. Ouch.

When you get blown out by the New York Knicks, it's a sure sign the wheels are coming off.

That's the best way to describe the Cavaliers following their 108-90 defeat in Madison Square Garden on Wednesday. Yes, the Cavs were blown out in every way imaginable in an arena that is usually filled with pleas to fire the coach. Instead, Knicks fans may be be willing to reward Isiah Thomas with the key to the city after this one.

How bad were the Cavs? Bad enough that this game was little more than a scrimmage for the Knicks, or perhaps a tune-up for opponents in the Eastern Conference who matter. Right now, the Cavs do not.

The Knicks were coming off an embarrassing home loss to Indiana, a game in which they were outscored by 30 points in a quarter. So they were probably due to play with a little fire, to show that they belong in the NBA. But that's about it when it comes to excuses that can reasonably be made for the Cavs.

As for the rest of the game, it was pretty much 48 minutes of garbage time -- as the Cavs rarely competed and are now looking up in the standings at also-rans like the Pacers, Washington and (gulp) Atlanta. If the playoffs started today ... well, the good news is the playoffs DON'T start for another five months. Otherwise, the Cavs would be eyeing a lottery pick and hoping that LeBron James hasn't grown tired of it all.

James has been back for a week, and the Cavs have won just once, having defeated the Pacers at home on pure emotion. Overall, they have lost nine of 10, and seem to have lost the passion that enabled them to reach the Finals last season. That's especially the case on the defensive end.

Offensively, James is still the King (32 points, eight rebounds, six assists), but the rest of the Cavs are looking like court jesters. Shooting guard Sasha Pavlovic may be most guilty, playing as if he's asleep at the wheel and allowing anyone he guards to do whatever they want, barely putting up a challenge or a hand in anyone's face.

This isn't intended to lay the entire blame on Pavlovic, but when you hold out all of training camp for more money ... and then get more money ... and then play like this ... well, it's just the pits for a franchise that's already severely limited by the salary cap.

And don't even mention forward Anderson Varejao, who one-upped Pavlovic in the stubborn department, returning to the team just last week after a lengthy holdout of his own. Since then, he's appeared as if he's auditioning for a spot in the NBA D-League. But with his ineptitude on offense and lack of understanding

of how to play real defense, it's doubtful even a minor league team would want him.

And note to Varejao: The referees aren't going to reward you with a charge when you constantly flop without being in position this season. So it may be time to learn how to guard someone the NBA way, by bending your knees, shuffling your feet and trying to block a shot once in a while. Anyone who's ever dribbled a basketball should be able to understand that.

As usual, when these type of debacles take place, you have to take a long look at the coach. Fair or not, he is the one held responsible for things like unity and motivation.

"Defensively, this is one of the worst performances that I've ever been a part of," Cavs coach Mike Brown said after the loss. "And it starts with me."

Brown has been accepting a lot of the blame lately, and while that's admirable, the Cavs will have a decision to make if this season continues to be a study in basketball schizophrenia. They probably aren't as good as the team that overachieved on the way to the Finals, but they shouldn't be this bad either.

The players look confused, almost entirely uninterested. The star seems frustrated and the coach may soon find himself on the hot seat. Basically, it's time to get this thing turned around or start thinking about gutting the team and starting over.

The bottom line is it may not be time for the Cavs to panic, but it is time for them to take a long look at themselves and decide if they are serious about silencing all the critics who said their Finals appearance was a fluke. Because right now, it looks like it was.