The regular season is over, and it's about damn time. With the fourth seed and home-court in the first round safely secured, the Cavaliers finished up on an appropriately anti-climactic note, losing to the Pistons 84-74 in a battle of the benches as LeBron and Z looked on in civvies. The Playoffs begin, sometime this weekend. Jesse recaps the Cavs regular season finale.

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Game Recap

I'll keep it short, though not sweet. The Cavaliers started out strong, taking a 21-13 lead at the end of the first quarter while holding the Pistons to just three field goals in the period (in all fairness, Detroit missed a bushel of point-blank opportunities around the rim, so their impotence was more self-inflicted than the result of stellar Cleveland defense.)

Cleveland had taken its early lead against Detroit's regulars, and when Flip Saunders began clearing his bench in the second quarter, the tide gradually turned in favor of the Pistons. Cleveland maintained its lead throughout the second quarter and into the third, but behind the play of former UCLA Bruin Aaron Afflalo (15 points), Jason Maxiell (13 points, six rebounds), Juan Dixon (ten points, nine assists), and the erstwhile Charlotte Bobcat Walter Herrmann (11 points, 3-of-4 from downtown), the Pistons caught up, taking a 56-55 lead on an Afflalo and-one with 1:27 left in the third. Cleveland went on a brief 7-0 spurt to regain a six-point lead early in period number four, but from there Detroit dominated. The Pistons outscored the Cavaliers 28-12 in the last eleven minutes and cruised home with an inartistic, largely meaningless 84-74 victory.

The Cavaliers finish up the 2007-08 season with a 45-37 record. It's the tenth-best regular season record in franchise history, and the fourth season in a row they've finished with a winning record- the longest streak of over .500 finishes since a string of seven straight from 1991-92 through 1997-98. It's also the 32nd consecutive season without a division title, as Cleveland finished fourteen games in arrears of the Pistons in the Central.

Odds and Ends

How the game was lost: Simply put, the bench bunch couldn't throw a beach ball into Lake Erie. The Cavaliers shot a frigid 32.9 percent and took an o-fer from

three-point range, clanking all nine of their attempts from downtown. Detroit didn't do much better, shooting just 38.6 percent, but the Pistons did make five three-pointers, and unlike Cleveland, their shooting improved as the game went on.

LeBron's line: None.

Other heroes: Cleveland only had two players in double-figures: Wally Sczcerbiak, who pumped in 18 on 8-of-18 from the field, and Delonte West, who had eleven along with seven assists in 21 minutes. On a bright note, Lance Allred scored his first field goal as a Cavalier, which warms the hackles of this ex-benchwarmer in every sport. Oh, and nobody turned an ankle. That's got to be considered a good thing, in light of what's happened this season.

Speaking of Wally, it was mentioned early in the telecast that, with Sasha Pavlovic out for at least the first round, Mike Brown was undecided as to who would fill in at the starting two-guard slot in his place. My advice to

Milk-Dud Head: plug in Devin Brown as the starter, with Wally off the bench to replace LeBron when the King takes a blow. It seems like Wally moves around better and creates more offense for himself when LeBron is out of the game, whereas he is basically relegated to a spot-up jump-shooter when the two are on the floor together. Just one man's opinion.

Next: Game One, Eastern Conference first round against the Artists Formerly Known as the Washington Bullets, at the Q, day and time TBA.