We're about one month through the Cavaliers season. And what have we learned so far? LeBron might leave for the Knicks in 2010. Or he might not. Or he might leave for the Nets. Or the Lakers. Or the Pistons. Or the Heat. Or the Mavericks. Or Greece. Or none of the above. Erik says it's time to focus on the stories that deserve attention in 2008, and in his latest column, talks about some of the biggest non-LeBron storylines of the 2008-09 season so far.

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LeBron is the Cavs' most important player by far. That's obvious. Without him, there is no championship run possible. But that doesn't mean we can't be sick of hearing about what he does, what he says and what he thinks between games. And for my money, we've gotten way too much of that over the past few weeks.

ESPN isn't the lone national media offender, but as of Friday afternoon, a full 72 hours after the Cavs played the Knicks at Madison Square Garden, a full week after the Knicks made their highly-publicized trades with the Warriors and Clippers to clear salary cap space for the summer of 2010, ESPN was still running new stories on the subject.

I can't decide whether it's more comical or pathetic that, despite the fact that the Cetlics, Cavs and Lakers are all on pace to win more than 60 games, despite the fact that the NBA might have one of its best groupings of elite teams in years, the only basketball story on which the national media can focus is the summer of 2010 and what the sorry-ass Knicks are going to do with their newfound cap space.

So in that vein, I'm going to cut the LeBron talk right here and now. It's time to focus on the stories that deserve attention in 2008. The Cavs, it might shock some of you, have other players. And for the rest of this article, we're going to shed light on some of the biggest non-LeBron storylines of the 2008-09 season so far.

1. So THAT'S what a point guard looks like

It's no secret that Mo Williams is the biggest difference between the Cavs of last year and the Cavs of this year. He was acquired by Danny Ferry in August to be a difference maker.

But even Ferry might not have envisioned Williams fitting in as well as he has.

After some initial bouts with sloppy ball-handling, Williams has become everything the Cavs could have asked and more. His stats are slightly down across the board, but that's largely because he's averaging 33.2 minutes per game, a career low since he became a full time starter in 2006.

The percentage-based stats that aren't affected by minutes played remain steady. He's making 43.7 percent of his field goals, slightly below his career average of 44 percent. He's shooting 35.8 percent from beyond the three-point arc and his free throws have been nearly perfect -- 95 percent. However, it would be nice to see his free throw attempts increase from the current 2.2 per game.

Williams has been as advertised: He's a scoring point guard with speed and quickness who can consistently hit jumpers, but he's unselfish enough to make the pass to an open teammate. The veteran leadership he's brought to the table has been a bonus, and has helped the Cavs roster jell sooner than it might have otherwise.

His man defense isn't stellar, but Mike Brown's team defense concept is designed to minimize players' individual defensive deficiencies, so it's not a cause for

extensive worry at the moment.

2. So THAT'S what a shooting guard looks like

Perhaps the biggest beneficiary of Williams' arrival has been Delonte West. Moved to shooting guard after Williams was acquired, it looked like West might become a mismatched piece in Cleveland. West was an excellent two-guard during his college career at St. Joseph's, when he was paired with Jameer Nelson. But at 6'-3" he became more of a 'tweener guard when the Celtics took him 24th overall in the 2004 draft.

For three years in Boston, half a year in Seattle and half a year in Cleveland, West was more or less operating as a shooting guard playing point guard. His handle is good enough to play the point adequately, but as with most shooting guards who aren't Michael Jordan or Kobe Bryant, West is at his best when he doesn't have to ignite the offense.

Transferred to shooting guard this year, West has thrived. None of his main stats (11.4 PPG, 3.6 RPG, 3.1 APG) are career highs, but his field goal percentage (.514) and his three-point percentage (.437) are by far his career bests. And it's not due to fewer field goal attempts. He's attempting a career-high 4.2 threes per game, and his 8.2 field goal attempts per game is slightly below his 8.4 career average.

West is still undersized for a shooting guard, and while he's widely regarded as the Cavs' best defensive backcourt player, having a 6'-3" shooting guard can still create some matchup problems when facing teams with bigger backcourts. As it is, with West, 6'-1" Williams and 6'-2" Daniel Gibson, other teams are making an effort post the Cavs' guards up. But it hasn't prevented the Cavs from streaking to a hot start, largely because Williams and West have been shooting so well.

3. Don't order the rocking chairs just yet

There was no bigger reason to fret over the Cavs heading into this year than the backs of Zydrunas Ilgauskas and Ben Wallace. Both ended last season with balky spinal columns. Z ruptured a disk. Wallace looked like the carcass of the player who won four NBA Defensive Player of the Year awards between 2002 and 2006.

If Z and Big Ben couldn't retain some of their all-star form from years past, the Cavs would be in deep trouble, with little depth at the big man positions.

But so far this year, the Cavs' two 30-something bigs look like wily veterans. Neither is as spry or mobile as once upon a time, but both are contributing.

More than at any other point in his career, Z is using his deft shooting touch to stretch defenses. For the most part, Z's role on the pick-and-fade has been to set a screen, slide over to someplace on the wing and set up shop to take a 15-to-18 foot shot. He's been money from there for most of his career.

Now, he's fading back to the 20-foot range. Sometimes, he's playing the role of a 7'-3" shooting guard, camped out as far as the three-point line waiting for a kickout pass. The chances of you seeing Z shoot a three in a game, let alone make one, are still kind of rare, but they're more common this year. If Z continues to make his threes, he might actually start forcing his man to come out and contest the shot, opening up rebounding opportunities for his teammates. It's not quite a weapon in Z's arsenal yet, but it's at least something the other team has to consider when compiling a scouting report.

Z is part of the talented frontcourt unit making life a lot easier on Wallace. Big Ben can't jump like he did during his Pistons heyday, so the days of him averaging double-digit rebounds for a season are over. But what Wallace does still possess are quick feet and a great deal of intelligence and mechanical know-how about defensive basketball.

In other words, he's a man after Mike Brown's basketball heart.

What Wallace can still do is play exceptional help-and-recover defense. The Spurs' well-oiled help defense is what vexed the Cavs during the 2007 Finals, playing no small role in San Antonio's lopsided sweep.

A healthy Wallace should do wonders to bridge that gap should the Cavs find themselves playing the Spurs, or any other great defensive team, this season. Wallace has the quickness to get out and help pressure smaller players on the wings, even the perimeter at times, then slide back into the paint to contest a shot. Players with his size and physical bulk don't commonly cover that kind of ground.

Though he doesn't stuff the stat sheet anymore, a healthy Wallace is still a

dynamic defensive player, and we've seen that on display in the season's first month.

4. Disciplined Thing, you make my heart sing

For his first four years in the league, Anderson Varejao gained a reputation as a player who is high on energy but low on skill, basketball smarts, discipline and anything else that might further his basketball career.

But to his credit, he's worked on his game, and now it's starting to show. This year, we've seen the next step in the Andy Evolution: Wild Thing version 2.0, The Disciplined Thing.

The player who I once thought had without a doubt the worst hands in the league can now cut to the basket, take a quick pass and perform a reverse layup -- though only right-handed. We can't get too carried away, here.

Varejao still spots up for jumpers a bit too often, but when he lets a 17-footer fly, it's no longer a "What the F&@# are you thinking?!!" proposition. Perhaps most surprising, he's making free throws at more than 69 percent so far this year. That will make his career 58-percent mark rise in a hurry.

It's still too early to pass judgment, but it's encouraging to know that Varejao is willing to work at the skill portion of his game. He's transitioning from a dime-a-dozen energy guy to someone the Cavs might try to re-sign this coming offseason and attempt to build around.

5. Rookie watch

The Cavs' two rookie draft picks, J.J. Hickson and Darnell Jackson, really arrived on the scene this past week against the Knicks and Thunder. Of course, since it was against the Knicks and Thunder, you'd be within your right to scoff. But sometimes all it takes is a rookie gaining a little bit of confidence that he can play the game at the NBA level.

Hickson has certainly had his rookie mistakes, most of them on defense. His offensive game is predictably evolving at a faster rate than his defense, but he still tries to ball fake too much and tries too hard to force shots in the low post. But if you saw some of his post moves against Oklahoma City and his quicks in the

open floor, it shouldn't take long to see this kid has some serious potential.

If his performances against New York and Oklahoma City are any indication, Jackson was worth the wait while he recovered from a broken wrist. In his first couple of NBA games, he's been a rugged bumper-grinder who looks fairly polished from four years at Kansas.

I still think the Cavs will need to add another veteran big man for the stretch run and the playoffs, but it's good to get Hickson and Jackson minutes early in the season. It will help their development, which is critical, since one or both of these guys might be starting in several years.

6. Bad Boobie

It's not all peaches and cream for the Cavs. Despite the franchise-best start and all of the positives on the team, there are still a few areas for improvement -- none more glaring than Daniel Gibson.

Maybe it's because he's taking the focus off his shooting in an effort to develop his ball-handling skills and become a total-package point guard. Maybe it's just a plain old slump. Whatever the reason, Boobie's numbers have been way off so far this year.

In 24 minutes, he's averaging 8.4 points per game. That's not too bad, except when you consider that he's making field goals to the tune of just 36.4 percent and his three-pointers are falling at a eye-covering 26 percent. He's taking more shots per game than he ever has in his career (8.9), but making fewer field goals.

Even though it's admirable that Gibson has expressed a desire to become a better all-around player, his primary value to the Cavs will always rest with his ability to knock down three-balls. So if anything is taking Gibson's focus off his shooting, he needs to back-burner it as soon as possible. The offseason is the time for skill development. Now is the time for doing what you do best and helping your team win games.