In their first overtime game of the season, the Cavs ran out of gas, dropping a 102-93 contest to the Bulls last night at the United Center. As if losing to the Bulls (the Bulls!) were not bad enough, the Cavs had injury added to insult, losing Delonte "Brother Red" West to a fractured wrist. Not a good night Cavs fans. John Hnat gives us The good, The Bad, & The Summary for the loss to the Bulls.

THE SUMMARY:

We have finally found the way to beat the Cavs. Just get them into overtime.

In their first overtime game of the season, the Cavs ran out of gas, dropping a 102-93 contest to the Bulls last night at the United Center. The loss dropped the Cavs to 30-7 on the season. They still hold an eight game advantage over Detroit in the Central Division race, and still technically lead the Eastern Conference, although both Boston and Orlando are right on their tails.

As if losing to the Bulls (*the Bulls!*) were not bad enough, the Cavs had injury added to insult. Attempting to block a Derrick Rose layup attempt in the first quarter, Cavs guard Delonte West fell hard to the floor, taking the brunt of the impact on his right wrist and his head. He ended up with what had to be an Excedrin Ten Million headache, a cut over his

eye ... and most significantly, a broken right wrist. No word yet on how long Delonte will be out, but I wouldn't count on seeing him before next month's All-Star Break.

LeBron led everybody with his 28 points, 14 rebounds, and seven assists. (His eight turnovers were a game high as well.) Mo Williams added 26 points, including five treys. The Bulls had six players in double figures in scoring, led by Luol Deng's 22.

It's the NBA. Where adversity happens.

WHAT I LIKED ABOUT THE GAME:

That Was The Only Way To Stop Him: Before he got hurt, West was having one hell of a game. Abusing the Bulls' Ben Gordon time and again, West made five of seven shots for 11 points.

That Was The Only Way To Stop The Team: Thanks to Delonte's hot streak, the Cavs built a double-digit lead in the first quarter, continuing their season-long trend of quick getaways. They ended the first quarter with an eight point lead (28-20), and shot a robust 60% (12 of 20) for the quarter.

Thanks For The Effort: After the whistle sounded to end the first quarter, LeBron flung a 65-footer towards the basket. *Swish*
. It didn't count, but it was still impressive.

Somebody Tell Ron Artest That *This* Is What A "Tru Warier" Looks Like:
He had a broken wrist. He had cuts on his face. Nobody would have raised an eyebrow if West had chosen to stay in the locker room for the rest of the night.

Instead, Delonte took the floor with the rest of the team before the third quarter, even taking a couple of shots during warm-ups. That is a trooper.

LeBron is obviously the face of the Cavaliers. Delonte is the heart.

Baby Steps: We are continuing to see small signs of development in rookie J.J. Hickson's game. One of those signs came in the second quarter, when Hickson had the ball at the top of the key, with no defender within a few feet of him. He thought about taking the jumper ... then saw Anderson Varejao under the hoop, and passed it to Andy for the easy layup.

Not Bad For The Twelfth Man: For the second consecutive game, Lorenzen Wright started at power forward, as the Cavs' big men were decimated by injury (Zydrunas Ilgauskas) and illness (Ben Wallace, who missed another game with the flu). Wright had a respectable seven points and six rebounds in just under 22 minutes of run.

As much as anything, Wright brings alertness to the team. In the second quarter, Daniel Gibson launched an air ball from long distance (to be fair to Boobie, the shot may have been partially blocked). Wright, under the hoop, caught the ball and was fouled, earning a pair of free throw attempts. At the end of the half, he collared a loose ball and laid it in the hoop, sending the Cavs to the locker room with a lead.

Month: We have a new nickname for Williams - "Month". No, it is not technically a nickname (how can it be, when it is longer than the actual name?), but it is accurate. The reason: many e-mail programs' auto-complete features will turn "Mo" into "Month". So it is not at all unusual to get a message like "Month Williams has been huge for this team."

Month had himself a nice game last night, scoring 26 points on 9 of 16 shooting from the field. He made five three pointers, including three during a stretch of the third quarter when the

Cavs were struggling to maintain their lead. He also played some strong defense on Rose, holding the talented rookie to 6 of 20 shooting from the field and six assists. (At least, he held Rose in check until the overtime, when Rose abused him.)

They've Been Reading The Column!: The Fox Sports Ohio text message poll of the night? Austin Carr's best saying. They may as well have called him
Uncle Austin
while they were at it. (For the record, "get that weak stuff out of here!" won. I wish they would have had a "nine times out of ten" option; such is life.)

WHAT I DIDN'T LIKE ABOUT THE GAME:

You Knew This Would Be First: Yes, I am a Delonte West pimp. He has been so important to the Cavs this season. His heady play, his accurate shooting (out to three-point range), his scrappy defense ... and his interviews ... it's a treat to see him in a Cavaliers uniform.

As mentioned before, we won't be getting any treats for several weeks. Get well soon, Brother Red.

It's 2007 Again!: One of the notable developments this season has been how the Cavs can maintain and even extend leads when LeBron gets a rest.

Not last night.

With LeBron sitting to start the second quarter, the Cavs' 28-20 lead (which momentarily reached 11 thanks to a Williams three-ball) quickly became the first Chicago lead of the game. The Cavs surrendered 12 consecutive points, and 20 out of 22, as the 11 point lead morphed into a seven point deficit.

No, He's Not A Point Guard: A major reason why the Cavs continued to slide, even after James returned to the game, was the return of the LeBron And Four Guys Waiting For A Bus offense. If Martians landed today (*yes, I know that Mars is technically not populated; work*

with me here
) and watched Cavs games, they would say, "glurg ugg ixnay bloong?" Loosely translated, that means "why are they letting that #23 guy dribble the ball all the time?" And they would be right. When LeBron is initiating the offense, the offense is not as good: little passing, nonexistent off-the-ball movement, and way too many deep jumpers with the shot clock expiring. (It did not help that James had a tough shooting night, making only eight of his 28 attempts from the floor.)

Bad Night For An Off Night: Memo to Varejao: It wasn't a day off for the team. You were supposed to be playing.

A sequence early in the third quarter illustrated it best. Varejao put up a lazy shot in the lane, which was blocked by Tyrus Thomas. At the other end, Andy let Thomas get wide open under the hoop, and only a late foul prevented an easy dunk. Moments later, Varejao posted up Thomas, but Thomas stripped the ball as Varejao went up for a shot. The ball went out of bounds off Andy's leg.

With both of the Cavs' starting big men out, they needed Varejao to step up, not sleepwalk.

(For what it's worth, many of the Cavs' rebounding problems started when Ilgauskas went down with his foot injury and Varejao moved into the starting lineup.)

And This Was With Ben Wallace *Out*: The Cavs made just 17 of their 25 free throw attempts.

No, They Didn't Lose The Game, But...: If you read this column often, you know that I rarely mention mistakes by the referees. When I do, it's not in the "refs lost the game for Cleveland" vein. There are enough other opportunities in the game to make the difference; it should not be pinned on the crew with the whistles.

That said, the refs had a terrible sequence with just over a minute remaining in regulation. With the Cavs nursing an 87-85 lead, James attempted a jumper. The ball

caromed off the rim, high above the hoop. Chicago's Thomas jumped high and grabbed the rebound. Problem was, the ball was clearly in the cylinder when Thomas grabbed it.

On Chicago's subsequent possession, Rose drove hard into the hoop, and barreled right into James. LeBron was set, and was well outside the "restricted zone" under the hoop; yet he was whistled for the block. (In the spirit of Ball Don't Lie, Rose missed both freebies.) No, that sequence was not why the Cavs lost, but it sure did not speak well of the referees' competence.

The Boobie Meter: When this feature appears on the "Bad" side of this column, that can mean only one thing. Okay, two things. One, the Cavs' Daniel "Boobie" Gibson did not have a good game. (Which he did not - 4 of 11 shooting from the field, 1 of 6 from three-point range, and a critical turnover with just over a minute remaining in regulation.) And two, the male and alternatively-lifestyled female readers of this column will be disappointed, at least to the extent they are boob men (women), because the link will be to a flat-chested female celebrity such as

Keira Knightley

.

Incoming Cheap Shot!: What did I *most* not like about the game? That Larry Hughes didn't get off the bench for Chicago. It would have been nice to have him help the Cavs win, no?

NOT THAT YOU ASKED, BUT...

So Read This Now, Because We Can't Show This All Day: I have a confession to make. I've failed you, the loyal and longtime readers of this column. Almost two years ago, I wrote about Dual-Action Cleanse, the "detoxifying" product (read: glorified laxative) that is hawked on any number of late-night infomercials. But I have never really followed up on the latest developments in the always-changing world of infomercials and "as seen on TV"-type products.

And boy, do I need to write about them. While Dual-Action Cleanse's Klee Irwin remains one of the top figures in this particular world, there's a new challenger on the block.

For some time, I've wanted to write about the ShamWow, a chamois-type cloth with apparently magical cleaning properties. You've probably seen the ads, and if so, then you probably can guess why we need to talk about them. Our interest has nothing to do with the ShamWow itself, which looks like a cheesy, glorified paper towel that would fall apart within moments of taking it out of the package. No, we're here because of ShamWow Vince, the enthusiastic pitchman for the ShamWow. (His real name is Vince Offer, but "ShamWow Vince" seems much more descriptive.) If you haven't seen the spot, watch it now. Really. I'll wait here until you're done.

Is that not two of the best minutes in television history? With five little words - *you followin' me, camera guy?* - Vince won me over. I would buy a ShamWow from him. I would buy many ShamWows from him. And just imagine if I let him watch my kids for the weekend! He'd

probably run off with them to another country! So I don't want to go overboard here. But with this spot, Vince announced that he is Going To Be A Player in the commercial/infomercial world.

If the ShamWow spot was Vince's rookie season, he has now upped the ante in his sophomore campaign. That's right - Vince is back! In an ad that started appearing on a television near you a few weeks ago, Vince is hawking the Slap Chop.

The Slap Chop is a very cheap-looking contraption that lets you quickly chop any kind of food. Vince demonstrates its wares by combining any number of foods and chopping them into oblivion. First, he chops a potato ... then for no apparent reason, adds a mushroom to the mix, and chops it up too! (Perfect for those of you who have been waiting for potato-mushroom flavored dust.) Next is a combination of carrots, celery, and a radish. It may make a nice salad, but Vince keeps slamming the Slap Chop until he has ground the veggies into Salad Powder.

But Vince isn't done! Oh no! Next up is an egg, a pickle, a green onion, and some ham! Then it's a mango and a strawberry! So if you've been waiting for the chance to grind together some apple slices, garbanzo beans, and green peppers - and assuming that you have been living in a cave and have never heard of a *food processor* - this is your lucky day!

As with the ShamWow, the commercial is not about the product (which looks beyond cheap; I am guessing they went through at least five of them while filming the commercial); it's about Vince. He tells us right away that we'll be "slapping our troubles away with the Slap Chop." (*Nice to know that our deepest existential troubles can disappear thanks to a kitchen gadget.*
) And then the lines come fast and furious:

- "Stop having a boring tuna ... stop having a boring life";
- "You don't have time to make breakfast; you're going to have an exciting life now" (notice a theme here?);
- (*while chopping an onion*) "Life's hard enough as it is; you don't want to cry any more";
- "We're gonna make America skinny again, one

slap at a time!"

Klee, you've got some competition. If Vince ever finds his way to the nutritional supplements neck of the woods, that may be checkmate. (But Klee will always have his spot in the Bad Facial Hair Hall of Fame.)

Wait a minute. This column's supposed to be about last night's Cavs-Bulls game, right?

WHAT LIES AHEAD:

Now it gets fun. The Cavs stop home tonight to face the New Orleans Hornets at Quicken Loans Arena, and then it's time to pack the big suitcase, as five of the next six games are on the road. Because that itself isn't challenging enough for the Cavs, two of those games will be against the league's elite (the Lakers next Monday and Orlando in two weeks), and two more will be against teams playing better than .600 ball (Portland on Wednesday and Utah a week from Saturday). That's a

total of five games against tough competition (four of them on the road) in the next two weeks.

With the possible exception of a four-road-games-in-five-nights stretch at the end of February, this will be the toughest portion of the regular season, especially without West and Ilgauskas. "The Cavs still have a long way to go to prove themselves" brigade, start your engines.