Game 2, Friday night. It really is a must-win situation for the Cavs -- perhaps the first real must-win they've faced all year. They can't head to Florida down 0-2 and expect to have a realistic chance to take this series. As it is, they're now going to need to win one game in Orlando in this series. With all of that in mind, here are some lessons the Cavs should have learned from Game 1, and how they can use them to win Game 2 on Friday.

We are 48 minutes into the Eastern Conference Finals, and so far, the Orlando Magic are as advertised.

In storming back to steal a 107-106 Game 1 win, Orlando lived up to its billing as a team capable of scoring in lethal waves, both inside and outside. In Game 1, the Magic looked every bit like the team that has given the Cavs matchup fits for several years running.

The good news from the Cleveland perspective is that they solidly outplayed Orlando for a entire half, and only once they got away from closing on Orlando's perimeter shooters did Orlando start to creep back into the game. In other words, the potential to beat Orlando is there. But the Cavs have to bring high defensive intensity for 48 minutes, every game, otherwise Orlando might binge-score them into submission.

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Despite the fact that the Cavs have only won once in Orlando in three years, it's not outlandish to ask the Cavs to win once on the Magic's home floor. But to lose both games at home to start the series, forcing the need for two road wins just to tie the series, is really getting up close and personal with the 8-ball. It can be done, but in this matchup, I wouldn't count on it.

With all of that in mind, here are some lessons the Cavs should have learned from Game 1, and how they can use them to win Game 2 on Friday.

1. One nine-day layoff = good. Two nine-day layoffs in 25 days = bad.

It's a shame the Cavs were penalized for their efficient dismantling of the Hawks in the previous round. But that's exactly what happened on Wednesday, mostly notably to LeBron James, who was severely cramping due to dehydration after the game. Hopefully that's the only time you'll see LeBron that spent after a 48-minute regulation game.

It's apparent that the Cavs' conditioning lapsed a bit during this most recent layoff. The Magic, being about 20 times better than the Hawks, were able to exploit Cleveland's fatigue factor in the second half by making them work hard at both ends of the floor.

This is the rust factor that was probably unavoidable. Unfortunately, it was a contributing factor in why the Cavs now find themselves in a 1-0 hole. The Cavs ran some full-speed practices during their nine-day sabbatical, but for a veteran team that has been playing since October, rest was likely the priority over conditioning maintenance.

Now that the Cavs are back on a regular playing schedule, they should be able to shake off the rust and close the conditioning gap. But, man, the price they paid for that second nine-day layoff sure looks steep at the moment.

2. Dwight Howard can singlehandedly turn games into a jump-shooting contest.

Dwight Howard is the kind of player who makes you think. Especially if you're a perimeter player looking to put the ball on the floor.

For the Cavs, a team that relies on dribble-penetration as a key offensive element, Howard's penchant for stuffing ballhandlers at the rim is more than a little problematic. Already, it seems like Mo Williams and Delonte West would just as soon stop and pop, or even camp out on the wings for catch-and-shoot threes, than drive down low and risk Howard's wrath. When the Cavs' speedy guard duo settles for lower-percentage shots and not getting to the free-throw line, it decreases the Cavs' offensive effectiveness exponentially.

LeBron bucked that trend. He took it inside numerous times en route to his career playoff high 49 points, and predictably was met with stiff resistance when Howard was in the game. But it needed to be done. The Cavs need to take the ball at Howard. Sometimes he'll win, sometimes the Cavs will win. But to stay out of the paint is counterproductive.

Certainly, it's going to be embarrassing when Howard swats your shot away. It's going to be painful when you come into contact with his airplane wing of an arm, or crash into his 6'-11" body. But that's the only way to get Howard into foul trouble, and foul trouble is the only way the Cavs, with their not-all-that-athletic frontcourt, can really neutralize Howard.

3. Save something for the encore, LeBron.

Everyone in Cleveland loves a LeBron midair swat-job. He had one of those Wednesday night. Everyone loves one of his elbow-above-the-rim dunks. He had one of those, too. But in this meat grinder called the NBA playoffs, it might be time for LeBron to rein in the showmanship and concentrate on more basic blocking and tackling. He'll burn up enough energy chasing Hedo Turkoglu and Rashard Lewis around the perimeter. He'll encounter enough resistance trying to plow through Howard on his drives to the hoop.

Not even King James has a bottomless reservoir of energy, and it helps no one but the Magic if he is bouncing around like a pogo stick in the first half, only to be left limping and cramping in the fourth quarter.

Pace yourself, LeBron.

4. Do NOT let Orlando beat you three points at a time.

Mike Brown and his staff game-planned things right in the first half. This Orlando team is one of the best three-point shooting teams of all time. They are so good, they can use the three-point shot as a substantial part of their offensive attack because they can literally use it to shoot their way back into games.

The only antidote is to close out their shooters when they have the ball, and stay in their shirts when they don't have the ball. That requires energy and quick defensive rotations, something the Cavs mastered in the first half, when they built a 14-point lead going into halftime.

But then came the second half, and the Cavs inexplicably got away from the solid perimeter D that had build the first-half cushion. Part of it might have been fatigue, but part of it was a sudden urge to start double-teaming Howard in the post. Howard had a monster first half by most accounts, and it still didn't prevent Orlando from heading to the locker room down by double digits.

It was only when Turkoglu, Lewis, Mickael Pietrus and Rafer Alston got going from the perimeter that Orlando started to chip away at Cleveland's lead.

The moral of the story? If forced to make a choice, let Howard get his points, and stop the mad bombers from shooting the Magic to a win.

Orlando takes common basketball logic and turns it on its ear. Most of the time, a defense wants to take away the other team's highest-percentage shots, nearest to the basket. But Orlando is such a great three-point shooting team, it's usually better to let Howard and the bigs do their thing down low, since they can only hurt you two points at a time, and save the majority of your defensive scheming to stop the guys who can hurt you three points at a time.