It's not how you start, its how you finish. Cleveland's 101-86 victory over the Bucks in Milwaukee on Sunday afternoon- their fourth straight, all by double digits- was a practical application of that homily. The Cavaliers got off to a woeful start, falling behind 11-0 in the first three minutes of play, before exploding to run the Bucks right out of their own arena. The catalysts were suffocating defense, the corresponding offensive ineptitude of the Bucks, the passing game of LeBron James... and a certain volatile, red-haired guard who played by far his best game of the young season.

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Tough Start: For the first time this season the Cavaliers played concurrently with the Browns, and for the opening three minutes it appeared that the sluggishness

and incompetence of Eric Mangini's team had been transferred to the men in Wine & Gold. The Cavaliers missed their first four field-goal attempts and committed two turnovers while the Bucks ripped cord on five of their first six. The result was an 11-0 Milwaukee cushion at the nine-minute mark of the first quarter.

No More Mr. Nice Guy: It was at this point that Cleveland turned the screws. In the following sixteen minutes of play the Cavaliers outscored the Bucks 39-6 to turn that 11-0 deficit into a 39-17 lead late in the second period. After the torrid start Milwaukee went colder than the 32-degree temperatures outside the Bradley Center, hitting 3-of-27 from the field and committing six turnovers during that brutal stretch.

Go West, Young Man: Delonte has had his good nights and his bad nights this young season as he battles with his psyche, his medications, and the stresses caused by his legal issues. Friday was one of those bad nights- he angrily refused to wear the pink shoes for breast cancer awareness and was a non-factor in Cleveland's victory over the Bulls.

Sunday, however, was a good day- indeed, Delonte's best of the season. The unpredictable guard was absolutely brilliant, pouring in 21 points with four rebounds, three assists, two steals and a blocked shot in 24 energy-packed minutes. For the opening portion of the second period Delonte was practically a one-man team, ripping off Cleveland's first 14 points of the stanza and personally outscoring the Bucks 14-0 as the Cavaliers blew the game wide open. Not only did he abuse the defensively deficient Luke Ridenhour, he also did a fairly good job containing Milwaukee's brilliant rookie Brandon Jennings (24 points) who otherwise was pretty much the only Buck to do anything on Sunday.

It's tough to get *too* excited about Delonte's masterful performance, given the stops and starts that have characterized his season thus far. It's easy to get excited about the potential of this team if he gets his mind right. A healthy, happy Delonte is *such* a difference-maker for the Cavaliers. This is just a completely different team when he's out there doing his thing in a positive

way.

Lid on the Basket: Cleveland took its first-half dominance to a new level in an incredible 29-0 run that spanned the first and second periods and transformed a 17-10 deficit into a 39-17 lead. The Bucks missed 18 consecutive shots during the run; went over eleven minutes- nearly a full quarter's worth- without scoring, and didn't score a point in the second period until the 5:11 mark. Jump shots were clanging off the rim, lay-ups were blocked or bounced harmlessly off the glass, three-pointers were barely grazing iron- nothing was falling for the home team. When Carlos Delfino finally ended the agony with a turnaround jumper, the crowd at the Bradley Center roared as if the Bucks had just clinched the seventh game of a playoff series.

LeBron's Line: 14 points on 4-of-10 from the field and 6-of-7 from the foul line with ten assists, five rebounds, a steal and a blocked shot in 32 minutes. It's the second time in three nights and the third time this season LBJ has scored fewer than twenty points; not coincidentally, the Cavaliers have won all three of those games by double digits. Seemingly half of LeBron's assists consisted of alley-oops to either J.J. Hickson (11 points, eight rebounds) or Shaquille O'Neal (ten points.) If you tell me before a game that LeBron will score 14 points, I'll take it in a New York minute, because it means he won't need to score more than that. It isn't as if any team can actually hold him to 14.

The Bench: Strong play off the pine has been a constant in Cleveland's recent hot streak, and the reserves once again came up large on Sunday, even with Jamario O'Neal in civvies thanks to a groin injury. The Cavaliers got 45 points off their bench, with Delonte leading the way and Big Z (eight points), Daniel Gibson (eight points) and Anderson Varejao (five points, 12 rebounds) following.

The Defense: Going into Sunday's game the Bucks were 4th in the NBA in three-point shooting percentage at 38.7 percent. The Cavaliers held them to 4-of-20 from behind the arc, part of a chilly 37.6-percent shooting night for Milwaukee as a team. Cleveland also out-rebounded the Bucks 48-38 and

compiled 21 assists to Milwaukee's 11. It was a dominant performance against a Bucks team that had been 7-2 at the Bradley Center going in and started the game with a great deal of energy and enthusiasm.

Next: Tuesday night at 8:00 PM, the road swing continues in Memphis against the Grizzlies.