Earlier this calendar year, Mike Brown was named NBA Coach of the Year for directing the Cavaliers to a league-best record of 66-16. After a disappointing postseason, GM Danny Ferry added to the winningest Cavaliers team in history by adding Shaquille O'Neal, Jamario Moon, and Anthony Parker. However, one quarter of the way into the season, this Cavaliers team is not meeting a lot of hoopdom's high-falutin' pre-season expectations. Is it chemistry? Effort? Or is it Mike Brown? Jerry Roche gives us his thoughts.

Guy One wins the super-mega lottery. He immediately purchases Sonny and Cher's former mansion in the Hollywood hills. He invests in Enron, GM and Chrysler. In five years, he's standing at Ninth and Euclid, in the rain and snow, holding a tin cup.

Guy Two spends his life saving judiciously. Eventually, he donates to Jerry Lewis, Marlo Thomas and many local charities. He even has some loose change to invest in Google and Apple Computer. Five years later, he's named Father of the Year, Husband of the Year and Person of the Year.

With the Cavaliers now one-fourth of the way into Mike Brown's fourth NBA season as head coach and not meeting a lot of hoopdom's high-falutin' pre-season expectations, maybe it's time to start asking if Brown is a Guy One (who turns riches into rags) or a Guy Two (who makes lemonade from lemons).

Brown certainly hit the super-mega lottery when he won the job of directing a team whose roster included the greatest player in the universe. It helped that he would be working for an old friend (general manager Danny Ferry, from their days with the San Antonio Spurs). And with Dan Gilbert as owner, Brown and Ferry had access to the deepest pockets in the league.

Earlier this calendar year, Brown was named NBA Coach of the Year for directing the Cavaliers to a league-best record of 66-16, even though superstar LeBron James often seemed to be more in control of the team at crunch time. And then Brown was badly out-coached by Orlando's Stan Van Gundy in the Eastern Conference playoffs -- sort of a repeat of the job that his old mentor Gregg Popovich did on him in the 2007 NBA Finals when the Spurs swept the Cavs.

This season, Brown has been given all the tools that he might need to be a championship contender. The Cavs can play big or they can play small. They can run or play the half-court game. They have bangers and leapers inside; they've got long-distance shooters, speed and length outside. They've got the reigning NBA Player of the Year, a former NBA Player of the Year and two NBA All-Stars on the roster. Indeed, many knowledgeable basketball followers are saying that the roster as it's currently composed is 10 to 11 players deep -- even without Leon Powe, who's due to come off the injured list in a month or two.

Yet the Cavs have gotten off to a much slower start than most fans expected, especially after seeing that *Sports Illustrated* cover with LeBron and Shaquille O'Neal that proclaimed, "Watch Out! Stars Align in Cleveland..." As we face the brunt of the holiday season, the Cavaliers are woefully underachieving.

Some of the problems they are facing this year are things that a head coach cannot control. Like Shaq being 37 years old and Zydrunas Ilgauskas being 34. Like Delonte West's unpredictable frame of mind (and play).

But most of their problems are of the imminently coachable variety. For instance,

they averaged more than 100 points per game on offense last year for the first time in 15 seasons. With last year's offensive guru John Kuester now head coach in Detroit, the Cavs are averaging just 99.4 ppg, 16th out of 30 teams. LeBron doing his "one-on-five" thing -- which was so common a sight during Brown's first three years in the league -- is again too common a sight.

Some other disturbing trends have emerged during Brown's regime, as pointed out by TCF's Sam Amico on Thursday. To wit: the Cavs' offensive and defensive strategies are painfully predictable, while the rotations are just the opposite, in that they often lack predictability or even consistency. Not to mention the fact that the team has a tendency to come out of the half-time locker room flat as a pancake, game after game after game.

Brown claims that he's still feeling his way through the off-season roster changes that afforded him an opportunity to upgrade 60 percent of his starting lineup. But too many times we've seen other, veteran head coaches (Doc Rivers at Boston in 2007-8, Van Gundy at Orlando this season) similarly revamp their starting lineups without a corresponding decrease in winning percentage.

These are the observations that might prompt a Cavs fan to start asking if Mike Brown is a Guy One or Guy Two. We don't want to ask, because he's a super-nice guy, judging by his appearances before the media. We want him to be a Guy Two; we want LeBron to have enough faith in the coaching staff that he chooses to stay in Cleveland forever; and -- most of all -- we desperately want the Cavaliers to win an NBA championship.

Mike Brown cannot finish the season holding a tin cup at the corner of Ninth and Euclid. He just can't.