Random thoughts from the Cavaliers' impressive 108-88 win in Boston on Thursday night:

* Anyone who watched the first half likely never imagined the Cavs would end up winning by 20. Actually, anyone who watched the first half probably never thought the Cavs would win, period. In the first half, the Cavs missed too many easy baskets, committed too many turnovers, and played the type of lethargic defense that screamed for a couple of shots of Mountain Dew.

* Things changed considerably in the final two quarters, when they finally managed to keep Celtics guard Rajon Rondo out of the paint. Rondo is a fine point guard, but the Cavs must have thought they were up against Magic Johnson early in the game.

* Rondo dominated Mo Williams for most of the first three quarters, getting to the hoop at will then making life miserable for Williams at the other end. But things changed quickly after Williams got poked in the eye by Nate Robinson.

* After the accident, Williams made four of his five 3-pointers, scoring 14 of his 19 points in the fourth -- watery eye and all. If this is how it's gonna work, the Cavs should call up rookie Danny Green from the minors and give him the role of Williams' designated eye-poker before every game.

* Of course, it didn't hurt that LeBron James (36 points, 9 assists) gave another performance of a lifetime. Anyone who wrote that James might be slumping knows nothing about basketball. Oh, wait. That was me .

* J.J. Hickson (8 points, 4 rebounds) and Delonte West (7 points, 8 boards) deserve tons of credit for coming off the bench and playing with energy and passion, helping turn things around early in the fourth quarter. The Cavs actually overcame a 74-73 deficit with LeBron on the bench, turning it into an 84-78 advantage at the 8:00 mark. Hickson and West were two huge reasons why.

* The Cavs may have played their best half of basketball of the season in the second half. The numbers are staggering, as the Cavs laid down the hammer and outscored the Celtics 60-32 in the final two quarters. They also held the Celtics to just five field goals in the final 17 ½ minutes. That, folks, is what you call a spanking. And remember, we're not talking about the New Jersey Nets. We're talking about a Celtics team with championship aspirations that had the Cavs looking dazed and confused early.

* Again, the second half was quite a difference from the first -- when it looked as if all the Cavs' blood and sweat would turn to tears. That was especially the case for forward Anderson Varejao, whose hustle single-handedly kept the Cavs in it when all else seemed lost.

* Interestingly, Charles Barkely said on TNT at halftime that the Cavs would come back and win. They trailed 56-48 and looked absolutely overmatched when Barkley said that, and anyone with a sane mind had to look at the television and shake their head in disbelief. For the first time ever, Cavs fans are happy that the Cleveland-bashing Barkely said something about their team that was correct.

* Cavs coach Mike Brown said before the game that he didn't have any minutes for Leon Powe, the former Celtic who's coming off major knee surgery and was activated for the first time earlier this week. Of course, that was before Brown knew Shaquille O'Neal would severely sprain his thumb in the first half. Without Shaq and Zydrunas Ilgauskas (who was bought out by Washington on Thursday), the powerful Powe could suddenly become a meaningful part of the rotation.

* Brown did in fact play Powe in this game, and Powe looked solid in his four minutes, scoring four points. He made a very nice spin move to the basket late in the fourth, but the shot was blocked by Shelden Williams. Still, it's nice to see Powe on the court.

* Meanwhile, Ilgauaskas' agent, Herb Rudoy, said his client plans to keep his options open. Denver and Dallas are two teams expected to make a hard charge at Z, and Rudoy said both will be considered. "He definitely has some options to think about and one will definitely be the Mavs," Herb Rudoy told ESPNDallas.com. Rudoy also said on Wednesday the Nuggets have been calling repeatedly.

* Back to the game. The best news is the Cavs seem to have rediscovered their defense, and they did it against one of the league's elite teams. They also found that if they share the ball and attack the basket (and make their free throws), they can beat anyone, anywhere, anytime. Of course, at a league-best 45-14, they probably already knew that.

* More than anything, this was a team victory in the truest sense. And whoever thought we'd

say that after watching LeBron score 36?

* Last year, the Cavs struggled mightily against the Celtics, Magic and Lakers. This year, they are a combined 5-2 against those teams, with one of the losses coming against the Celtics on opening night.

* Finally, let's not forget newcomer Antawn Jamison (9 points). He was quiet for most of the night, but hit a couple biggies during the Cavs' second-half run and played some solid defense on Celtics big men Kevin Garnett and Glen Davis.

* The Cavs are now in Toronto, where they will try to avenge a loss to the Raptors in the second game of the season. Interestingly, that game also took place one night after their first meeting with the Celtics.

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