There's no truth to the rumor, as best anyone can tell, that the Knicks petitioned the NBA at halftime of Monday's blowout loss to the Cavaliers to keep a running clock in the second half.

But they really should have.

All you really need to know is that when it was all said and done at 'The Q' Monday evening the Knicks were able to turn a 49-point fourth quarter deficit into a 'respectable' 31-point loss, 124-93.

How ridiculous was it? Well, the Cavs ran out the final 17 seconds while Knicks players filtered off the court. And that may have been the best defensive sequence of the night for New York given that the Cavs chose not to score.

Every available Cavalier played. Every Cavalier that played scored. Danny Green, who was playing in Erie just a couple nights ago, played the final nine minutes of the game as the point guard. He was surrounded by Leon Powe, Darnell Jackson, Jamario Moon and Jawad Williams

and they all got nearly a full quarter of run.

LeBron James led a balanced and lethal Cavalier offensive attack with 22 points in 31 minutes. James also added 7 rebounds and 7 assists. Antawn Jamison and J.J. Hickson added 17 points apiece and Delonte West and Anderson Varejao came off the bench to score 15 and 14 points respectively.

The Cavs led by 12 points after the first quarter and by 26 points at the half. That big second quarter was keyed by West and Varejao. AV had a double-double by the intermission and kept multiple possessions alive with offensive rebounds. And when West wasn't setting up James with huge dunks he was taking the ball to the rim himself, including a spectacular dunk over a couple NY defenders that brought the crowd and the bench to their feet.

Bill Walker led the Knicks with 21 points off the bench. Al Harrington, Danilo Gallinari and David Lee added 18, 17 and 10 points each for New York.

Takeaways

- The biggest takeaway from Monday night is that the Knicks suck. It can't be overstated how bad that team is and how undisciplined they are. Their answer to not shooting the ball well is to fire up more shots. They apparently believe that hitting 20% of 80 shots is better than 30% of 50 shots. The next defensive stand they make will be their first under Head Coach Mike D'Antoni. They are expansion-bad and Washington Generals-bad.

It got to the point in the fourth quarter where David Lee just sat on the bench and tried to make himself invisible with a towel over his head. Lee's a talented kid who would be an asset to a decent team but you could almost see his will to ever play again melting as the night went on.

- With Bill Walker, Leon Powe and Jonathan Bender on the court at one time Monday night I was convinced some cruel marketing director had planned out a three-legged race for the halftime show. Those three guys have spent more time in rehab than Dr. Drew Pinsky, each of them having dealt with chronic and severe knee injuries at various times.

- Bender was a highly regarded player who was drafted 5th overall in 1999 by the Toronto Raptors. He came straight out of Picayune Memorial High School in Picayune, MS and seemed to be destined for stardom before chronic issues with his right knee derailed a promising career.

He was actually out of basketball for the better part of three seasons before giving it another shot with the Knicks this season.

It's easy to forget after all the water under the bridge, but Bender, at 7' tall and about 240lbs or so, was the precursor to big, athletic guys like Kevin Durant. It never worked out for Bender due to the injuries but you have to give the guy credit for giving it another go. To do so with the Knicks though, well, that makes me wonder if the man just enjoys pain.

- Night number one of 'Life Without Shaq' couldn't have gone better for the Cavaliers. J.J. Hickson got some time at center and Powe got a lot of time on the court to knock some rust off. The Cavs can out-run and out-quick teams that don't have a post presence and the Knicks certainly qualify there.

A truer test will come Wednesday night in New Jersey against the Nets and their improving big man Brook Lopez. Lopez has worked hard and has established himself as very good post presence and scorer. He averages nearly 20 points, 9 rebounds and 2 blocked shots per night. While he's not 'Shaq-sized' he is 7'0 and 270lbs and he'll be a much more difficult guard than anyone the Knicks can throw at you.

It'll be interesting to see how Cavs Head Coach Mike Brown approaches this one. The assumption is Hickson will get the start because he seems to respond better to starting than he does coming off the bench. Varejao and Powe will also see plenty of Lopez too which is why getting Powe back into game shape is critical while O'Neal is down for the next two months.

They Got Next

The game against the Knicks kicked off a four games in five nights set for the Cavaliers. After Wednesday's 730pm game against New Jersey (FSN Ohio) the Cavs will host Detroit Friday at 7pm (ESPN) and then immediately head to Milwaukee afterward for Saturday's 830pm game with the Bucks (FSN Ohio).