Being in different conferences, the Cavaliers and Utah Jazz only play twice per season. Despite their paucity of meetings the teams have a colorful and dramatic history, one filled with back-and-forth games, buzzer-beating shots and moments straight from the theater of the bizarre . Going all the way back to when Price and Daugherty matched pick-n-rolls with Stockton and Malone at the Salt Palace and the Richfield Coliseum, it's been a memorable all-time series between these two teams.

Friday night's latest installment in Salt Lake City, however, will not go into the annals. It was yet another night of punishment out West for the Cavaliers, who dropped their twelfth in a row and twenty-second in twenty-three games, 121-99. Cleveland is now 8-31, losers of seventeen straight on the road- and there's still another game left on this seemingly endless western swing, Saturday night in Denver. Hard as it may be to believe, we haven't hit rock-bottom yet.

The story of Wednesday's humiliation in Los Angeles was bad offense, as Cleveland scored a franchise-low 57 points. The story of Friday's humiliation in Salt Lake was bad defense, particularly in the first half. Utah blistered the twine with a season-best 70 first-half points, shooting over 61 percent from the field in the process. The Jazz poured in 39 points during the second quarter, when they blew the game wide open in turning a six-point lead at the beginning of the period into a twenty-point bulge by its merciful end.

Utah took complete command early in the second and did it in scalding fashion. After a J.J.

Hickson dunk cut Cleveland's deficit to four at 35-31, the Jazz went off for fourteen unanswered points in less than two minutes, doing it in circus fashion with behind-the-back passes, monster throw-downs and heat-check three-pointers that touched nothing but the bottom of the net. Doing most of the damage for Utah was C.J. Miles, who came off the bench and scored eleven points in barely over three minutes. Cleveland lost its composure during this run, turning the ball over and basically quitting on defense while Byron Scott, as usual, stood by with his arms folded and his head in the clouds.

The second half was pretty much academic. The Cavaliers made it mildly interesting, cutting the lead to six at 89-83 late in the third period, but Utah quickly responded with an 8-0 run to "salt" things away early in the fourth. From there the Jazz cruised, becoming the eighth consecutive opponent to hang a hundred or more on what passes for Cleveland's defense these days.

As usual, several opposing players put up nice numbers. Deron Williams led the way for Utah with 26 points on 10-of-15 shooting with nine assists. C.J. Miles hit for twenty points and a whopping +30 off the bench while four other Jazz-men finished with double-figure points. Utah shot 52.8 percent from the field, drilled 10-of-19 from beyond the arc and dished out 32 assists while moving out to an impressive 27-13 on the season.

Cleveland's numbers weren't bad in some areas. The Cavaliers shot 48.8 percent from the field and 9-of-21 from the three-point area, handed out 26 assists and out-rebounded their hosts 43-35. But they also shot just 12-of-21 from the free-throw line and committed 21 turnovers. Antawn Jamison led Cleveland scorers with 26 to go with 11 rebounds while J.J. Hickson chipped in with 21 points and 14 boards. Mo Williams, our valiant floor general, shot 5-of-16 and was abused like the kids in Radio Flyer by his point-guard counterpart Deron Williams.

Next: Saturday at 9:00 PM, when the Cavaliers slink into the Mile High City to take on the Nuggets.