By now, you've probably heard enough of "glass-half-full" Byron Scott's optimism to last you for the next 10 years.

Not me.

Watching his Cleveland Cavaliers, it's easy to see what's wrong with the team and difficult to see what's good. Even though they've lost about 143 games in a row, I contend that some balance still exists in the universe. Nothing is all good, and nothing -- not even this version of the Cavs -- is all bad.

Although they are near last in the league in just about every team statistic, there are indeed some good things to embrace.

#1 - Athletic ability. The young Cavs have as many tremendous all-around athletes as any other team in the league. That's right. You heard it here first (and you're not likely to hear it anywhere else). When it comes to pure athleticism, not many players can compare to J.J. Hickson, Christian Eyenga and Jamario Moon. The problem is that pure athleticism does not win ballgames.

#2 - Room to grow. The Cavs are the youngest team in the NBA. I haven't checked the rosters of every other team, but it would be difficult to fathom a less experienced team, too. Which means that a wealth of untapped potential exists. If Hickson and Eyenga could ever figure out how to properly compete in the NBA, and if they could add a consistent jump shot to their

games, they might become perennial all-stars. Depending on how much they can improve before they reach the age of 25, it is not difficult to imagine Hickson being the starting power forward and Eyenga the small forward on (dare I say it?) a title contender. The problem here is that Hickson appears to be a defiant learner and that Eyenga is still an uncut diamond in the rough. Manny Harris, Samardo Samuels and Alonzo Gee also seem to possess a certain amount of untapped potential.

#3 - Antawn Jamison. He is still Antawn Jamison: a liability at the defensive end of the court, but a pure scorer at the offensive end. Age and bad knees don't seem to have slowed him at all. He's basically been the same player for all 12 of his years in the league, and he's the one dependable scorer that the woeful Cavaliers have. Right now, he's the glue holding the team together -- very precariously, I might add.

#4 - A veteran coach. Byron Scott has been to the top of the mountain, and he's also been to the bottom of the well. Although he hasn't been able to figure out this team yet, he deserves a couple more years to try. Scott's history shows that he has a difficult time during his first year coaching a new team, but that his teams improve rapidly during his second and third years at the helm.

#5 - Fun to watch. If you can dismiss the concept of winning (yeah, I know it's hard when it costs a king's ransom to attend a game in person), this is a very entertaining team. One minute, you laugh your ass off at the stupid fundamental errors they make, like dribbling downcourt and forgetting the ball, throwing a pass that has no chance, or leaving three-point shooters wide open on the perimeter. But the next minute, they run a picture-perfect fast break ending with an assist or two and a slam-dunk. Even though the bad plays outnumber the good plays by a factor of about five to one, this is the NBA, so true basketball aficionados can still appreciate the level of the competition and the joy of superbly conditioned athletes running up and down the hardwood like the gazelles they are.

Where to next?

Injuries have taken their toll. This is no excuse, but on a roster that was put together at the 11th hour last September and October, there simply isn't enough depth to be able to withstand a rash of injuries. Andy Varejao, we all know, is out for the count. Mo Williams has been injured, repaired and injured again. Ditto Leon Powe. These are three of the more experienced players on the roster who were counted upon to provide some leadership. If they return to the lineup in their full glory this fall, the Cavs will be much more competitive than they've been (which still might not be saying much).

However, when I look at the current version of the Cavaliers, the first thing I see is what a difference a talented point guard would make. If general manager Chris Grant can somehow come up with a playmaker and a bona fide center (either through the draft and/or free agency) before October, you will see good things happening as early as next season. You got your new playmaker. You got your new center to patrol the paint. You got Varejao and Hickson battling it out for the starting power forward spot. You got Jamison at the other forward, and Williams and Booby Gibson duking it out to start at two-guard. You got young studs -- like Eyenga, Harris and Samuels -- coming off the bench with a year's experience under their belts. From my perspective, that's a pretty good 10-deep roster. Not a perfect roster by any means, but a pretty good one.

You may say I'm dreaming. Maybe I am. But with all the pessimism surrounding this team since last July, I choose to believe that Grant and Dan Gilbert, given time, will make good things happen. I choose to harken back to the words that Robert Kennedy once uttered:

"There are those who look at things the way they are and ask, Why? I dream things that never were and ask, Why not?"