**The game in 300 words or less**

Admittedly, I was nervous about this game, which couldn't have been more of a trap game if Admiral Ackbar had said it himself. Back to back games for the Cavaliers and their fourth game in six nights; the scheduling essentially turned this into the eighth game of the road trip.

Injuries played a factor for both teams, as Stephen Curry and Anthony Parker were both late scratches. The Cavs caught a major break by dodging Curry, who was been nursing a bum ankle. As for Anthony Parker, you really only miss him when he's gone.

Parker is ideally suited to a bench role and he doesn't stuff the stat sheet. That said, he brings stability to a position where the Cavs are woefully thin, provides a three-point threat, and plays decent defense.

The Warriors are playing four road games in five days (this is number three) and the mileage was clearly starting to accumulate. Neither team really made a move to grab this game, as a second quarter lead for the Warriors became a slim lead for the Cavs in the third quarter. It

really wasn't until David Lee stepped up for 13 in the fourth quarter that one team came out and made a run at winning this game, and by that point the Cavs just didn't have enough offense to fight back.

This game would have been difficult for any team, but for a young Cavs team threatening to overachieve it was a sobering reminder of just how much room for improvement remains.

**Irving Watch**

Kyrie Irving single-handedly makes the Cavs watchable, even on rough nights like this one. Consider that Irving had a little bit of an "off night," and he still scored 18 points on just 13 shots. Irving had just five assists against six rebounds, and as good as he's been there will be games like this when he struggles to take care of the basketball.

Overall, it's tough to be too upset with him. The knock on Irving coming out of Duke was that he wasn't a true "franchise player" at the point guard position in the mold of a Chris Paul or a Derrick Rose. Those comparisons are unfair and ludicrous at this point in Irving's career, but I will go so far as to say that he's much closer to those big name point guards than I thought he would be.

Ultimately, if Kyrie is only what we've seen so far, then he's still a very useful player. But it Kyrie continues improves like most young players do, well, then it's going to be a fun decade.

**Stat of the game**

*Turnovers: Cavaliers 25, Warriors 12*

That's the story of the game right there. Both teams have similar shooting numbers and the Cavs actually did some nice work on the offensive glass, but that kind of turnover disparity is difficult to overcome. The Cavs aren't good enough to beat many teams when they turn the ball over 25 times, and we can safely add the Warriors to that list.

**No bell cow**

I really hate typing the words "this is a night when the Cavs really could have used LeBron James," because well, that's true of almost every team every night. However, this was a night when the Cavs needed a guy who could carry the scoring burden and simply will his teammates to victory, especially in the fourth quarter.

Kyrie Irving might develop into the type of player who can score the tough points late in games with consistency, but we can expect this issue to rear its ugly head more than a few times this season. As much as I love the ball movement of Byron Scott's offense and believe this team has some significant building blocks in place, there will be nights when they simply can't score enough to win, and for all their flaws the Warriors are a team that can score, and you need to crack 100 to have a good chance to beat them.

**Thompson getting sloppy**

As excited as we all were about Tristan Thompson a few weeks ago, he's been a little overshadowed by Kyrie Irving's development, and rightfully so. However, our other lottery pick has quietly been a pretty consistent contributor and shows serious flashes of athletic ability in

almost every game.

For Thompson, this wasn't one of his better efforts. Thompsons displayed some classic "I've come this far, I might as well throw one up" on offense, and his game isn't nearly polished enough for that mindset to work. At least for the time being, Thompson's role is to clean the glass on both ends and pick up garbage points when they present themselves.

**Erden getting comfortable?**

Look who decided to have his best game as a Cavalier? That's right, it's Lurch, everyone's favorite Turk!

I wasn't a huge Semih Erden fan thus far (I mean honestly, who was?), but he showed more tonight that we had seen so far this season. Erden provided some bench scoring, pouring in 14 points in just over 15 minutes, on only 8 shots.

Just like that, it became clear why the Cavs are giving him every opportunity to play his way into a role. Erden clearly has some talent and moves pretty well for a seven-footer, which the Cavs don't exactly have coming out their ears. Tonight Erden managed to provide some scoring and an inside defensive presence. Ultimately, that's all the Cavs are looking for; 15 -20 decent minutes off the bench with some rebounding, defense, and 5-10 points. If Erden can become the second center, filling the role that Ryan Hollins never could, he'll prove to be a steal. Remember, he and Luke Harangody were acquired from the Boston Celtics for just a 2013 second round pick.

## Up Next: Friday January 20th, Chicago Bulls, 7:30 pm