"With the first pick in the 2011 draft, the Cleveland Cavaliers select Kyrie Irving."

That is sounding better than ever. Although some people on forums and sports radio call-in shows thought the Cavs should go in another direction, it is abundantly clear that Chris Grant made the right choice. Kyrie Irving is averaging 18.6 points, 3.5 rebounds and 5.2 assists per game. More importantly, he has already hit three game-winning shots and made clutch free throws to ice another game in his 33 game career. Quite frankly, Kyrie Irving is even impressing me even though I never once thought drafting Derrick Williams was a good idea.

Kyrie Irving has been very impressive. What is happening is that the excitement around having what appears to be a rookie star player is making a lot of people overlook the season that Tristan Thompson is having. The story on Thompson going into the draft is that he has a "high motor," is a very good offensive rebounder and that he can block shots. Conversely, he struggles at the free throw line and does not have a knack for scoring efficiently. Halfway through the season, very little about his performance thus far is changing that perception.

By all accounts, Tristan Thompson is a great person. As was profiled in Vince Grzegorek's Scene Magazine profile on Cavaliers GM Chris Grant, the team is making having high character guys on the team a priority. Tristan Thompson can certainly play. What he has shown thus far is that he is capable of having valuable offensive outings and is active on the boards. He is a bit undersized for a power forward, but his arms are ridiculously long. Having said that, the use of the 4th overall pick on Tristan Thompson is quite possibly more baffling now than it was on June 23, 2011.

The area of concern with Tristan Thompson is that he is playing even worse than expected on offense. Prior to the game on Wednesday against the Nuggets, he was shooting 16.5% from the field in the month of March. After making one of two shots in that game, he managed to improve his field goal percentage to 20%. Overall, Thompson is scoring 6.8 points and pulling down 5.8 rebounds per game. On the surface, these are decent numbers for a raw rookie. Looking at the situation more closely, it is difficult to not be concerned with his field goal percentage. It is one thing for a player to struggle offensively in their rookie campaign if it comes as a surprise. It is a different story when a player's scouting report states that he struggles offensively and he proceeds to shoot 41.9% from the field. This is a number that one would be disappointed with from a perimeter player. The expectations are different when discussing a big man who plays primarily in the paint. Additionally, he is only converting on 46.1% of his free throws.

Most concerning is the different players that were left on the board who could either immediately help the Cavs or do so in the future. In my opinion, the obvious draft strategy was to take Irving first and then select the best center available. Jonas Valanciunas has yet to make his NBA debut, but he had scouts buzzing with his fantastic performance in the EuroBasket 2011 tournament for the Lithuanian national team. The Cavs could have also gone in a completely different direction. Kenneth Faried is playing exactly how Thompson was advertised and the Nuggets did not need to use a high lottery pick to get his services. The Cavs could have explored a trade where they trade down, select Faried and get a player from the Nuggets. The team could have also gone with Bismack Biyombo, who is beginning to play pretty well for the Bobcats. All of these players have flaws. Valanciunas is stuck in Europe, Faried is older and Biyombo had a buyout issue and has questions surrounding his real age. In addition, Faried and Biyombo are also offensively challenged. The point is that they could have drafted somebody who does similar things on the basketball court to what Tristan Thompson does and not used the 4th pick.

The Cleveland Cavaliers were given a fantastic opportunity to turn the franchise's fortunes around quickly. The 2011 draft was advertised as one that would rival the 2000 draft for futility. Regardless, having two top four picks in any draft is enough to help the franchise. The Cavs were given a great opportunity and they got too cute with it and may have made a bad decision. Tristan Thompson may become a fantastic player who can anchor an elite defense in a few years. Until that day comes, he will be an offensively-challenged power forward who could have been countless other players for the Cavs. The Cavs had a terrible season. They lost 26 games in a row and only 19 for the year. The payoff for that was being able to select 4th overall. Hopefully Tristan Thompson becomes as good as advertised so the Cavs can reap the rewards.