



PUBLICATION: MyAJC

DATE: 1/31/16

Budenholzer says offense has been issue during Hawks' slump

By Chris Vivlamore

The Hawks are reeling.

The team has lost two straight and four of their last five games. The Hawks (27-21) play at the Heat (26-21) Sunday and face a team on a three-game win streak in which they lead by just a half-game in the standings. The Hawks have slipped to fourth in the Eastern Conference, in a tie with the Celtics, behind the Cavaliers (eight games), Raptors (5-1/2 games) and Bulls (1/2 game).

The Hawks watched film in another intense session and held a light walk-through Saturday before departing for Miami.

Hawks coach Mike Budenholzer reiterated Saturday that the defense has not been the issue. It has been the offense.

"We've got some things that are going in a good direction," Budenholzer said. "Defensively we are playing a lot better. We are doing a lot of things well defensively. I think offensively, I don't think any of us feel great about how we are playing. It's a lot of little things. It's not any one big, glaring thing. Each of collectively have to be a little bit better, individually we all have to be a little bit better. I think we all feel like we are capable of that."

The Hawks have dropped close games at the Kings and at home against the Clippers. They suffered a bad defeat at the Suns and melted down the stretch in a loss at the Pacers. A solid win at the Nuggets has been the lone bright spot in the past five games.

Budenholzer's message was that there is a fine line between a good team and a championship caliber team.

"It's kind of coach cliché, you make one or two better plays, one or two more good decisions," Budenholzer said. "Maybe it's one each quarter. It makes a huge difference in the outcome, how you feel, all those things."