

## Suns Final Score: Suns Fight Hard, but Thunder drop Suns 102-90

Written by

Monday, 14 January 2013 22:26 -

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For much of the game, the Oklahoma City Thunder appeared to just be toying with the Phoenix Suns and waiting for the double-digit win to happen.

But it didn't happen until Russell Westbrook and Kevin Durant hit back-to-back threes and Durant scored 19 points in the 4th quarter alone (41 for the game).

Click the .gif to watch Durant put down the dunk of the year.



via [dailythunder.com](http://dailythunder.com)

Gortat on the dunk: "We first of all, I was looking for my car keys under the basket. (chuckling). I mean, it happens. The funny thing is that when Perkins was standing under the basket he looked at me and said 'I know how it feels.' "

Funny guy.

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By the end of his run, Durant was bent over and tugging his shorts like a weekend warrior after a good stretch in a YMCA game.

Westbrook (36 points) and Durant finished with 77 points combined - way too much for the Suns to handle.

Marcin Gortat had a good game (19 and 15), Shannon Brown had 21.

But Michael Beasley had his second good game in a row, this time a double-double - 14 points, 11 rebounds, 2 blocked shots.

### **The Phoenix Suns would not go quietly**

The fans might have (the arena was dead for most of the game), but the Suns fought hard against a superior team in terms of talent and execution.

The Suns entered the fourth quarter down only 4 points. After seeing meltdown after meltdown in recent games, could they play a full four quarters?

Kevin Durant barely played nearly the whole game, and started the fourth with 7 quick points to stretch the Thunder lead to 7 with 8:43 left (29 points at that point). Then Russell Westbrook returned (27 points through 3 quarters already) to help the Thunder put the game away.

But the Suns kept fighting. The Thunder's lead ranged between 4-7 points for half the quarter while the Suns scrapped for loose balls, blocked shots and got offensive rebounds to keep possessions alive.

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Michael Beasley was part of the charge, with 8 points, 9 rebounds and 2 blocks by mid-4th. Markieff Morris played tough as well with 6 rebounds, 3 assists and a block. Marcin Gortat scored on a number of pick-and-rolls and lobs to the basket (easier with Nick Collison and Hasheem Thabeet replacing an injured Serge Ibaka).

### **Durant and Westbrook hit back-breaking threes**

The Thunder got their needed separation with back-to-back threes by none other than Westbrook and Durant, building the lead to 11 with only 4 minutes left.

Durant walked slowly back to his team's huddle when the Suns called a timeout, a combination of strutting and exhaustion. He'd played all but 4 minutes in this game.

### **Game close after three**

After three quarters, the Suns had cut the Thunder lead to only 4 points despite Kevin Durant playing 32 of the game's first 36 minutes (22 points on 7-17 shooting). Russell Westbrook scored with ease on midrange jumpers and an array of moves near the basket. He had 27 points after three quarters on 12-21 shooting.

The two Thunder stars dominated their team's offense as usual, scoring 49 of OKC's first 72 points. The Suns answered with Shannon Brown's 19 points and Marcin Gortat's 17 and 12. Goran Dragic also had 11.

Oh, the Thunder didn't sleepwalk through the game by any means. Rather they played just good enough to win cleanly.

Russell Westbrook could not be stopped on an array of drives, scoops and midrange jumpers. Kevin Durant could not be stopped with his own array of those same shots. Both Westbrook and Durant played 30 of the first 36 minutes to try to put the Suns away early. They finished the first thr

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In the first half the Thunder had their offense when they wanted it, but the Suns could too-easily be stopped. To be more accurate, they could too easily stop themselves.

Three airballs in the first quarter that somehow ended with a 24-21 Suns lead. Four straight turnovers (three by Beasley) during a tough stretch in the second where the Thunder took a strong lead with a 15-2 run. Missing 7 of their first 11 free throws. And that was just the first half.

Yet the Suns only trailed 51-45 at halftime, thanks to a quiet double-double by Marcin Gortat (11 and 10 to that point) and the Suns making 4 of 9 threes (better than their free-throw percentage).