

Practice Report: Preparing for Milwaukee with a "Mini Training Camp"

Written by

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Another loss and another practice to try and get better. Before the [Phoenix Suns](#) (13-27) lost to the [Oklahoma City Thunder](#) (30-8) last night, their head coach [Scott Brooks](#) had an interesting observation about the state of the Suns and his respect for fellow head coach [Alvin Gentry](#).

"It is almost impossible," stated Brooks about assimilating nine new players to a team. "I give coach Gentry a lot of respect, because when you have continuity like I have had and like our organization has had it makes it a lot smoother. It takes a lot of the stress of not knowing what to do. Our players know what to do. It makes it easier, I am not saying it is easy, but it makes it easier. This is a tough job."

That is one thing that feels appropriate to mention here as the Suns had a major overhaul with nine total new players including three current starters. Not many teams had that process happen, even the dregs of the league behind the Suns in the standings had some form of uniformity between last season and this current season.

What Did The Team Do?

Near the end of practice the team scrimmaged and then ran through sets that they will see Thursday night against the [Milwaukee Bucks](#). They ran through a lot of ISO offense using [Sebastian Telfair](#) and [Shannon Brown](#) as their scout team quarterbacks of [Brandon Jennings](#) and

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[Monta Ellis](#)

. The concept of an ISO offense is tough to guard especially if the team has good shooters and finishers with spacing. The Bucks beat the Suns late in their first meeting of the season, here there is a chance at redemption.

Expect to see a lot of smaller line-ups from the Suns and for [P.J. Tucker](#) to get his share of minutes on Ellis.

It was good to see Tucker actively talking throughout practice. Since the start of the season to today the former Euro League star has become one of the leaders on the team. He and Telfair were the most vocal out there directing traffic.

[Channing Frye](#) came in to see the team and get some shots up and as Gentry stated is living it up, "playing golf everyday." He wasn't on the course today, instead he was at practice talking with coaches, helping the younger players, and adding a positive force that, in a tough season, is desperately needed.

Injury Update

Jermaine O'Neal sat most of practice due to continuing back spasms. He missed the teams last game with the same issue, which is part of the grind of an 82-game season heightened by being in the league for going on 17 years.

[Jared Dudley](#) was a light participant in practice as he continues to nurse his strained right wrist. In the scrimmages and the walk through he was active and should be ready to go on Thursday.

[Goran Dragic](#) has been hampered by a nagging right ankle injury that occurred on the road against the [Boston Celtics](#) a few nights ago. He stated he is feeling better, but was limited in practice and should be ready to play in the next game. This was part of the reason he has been less aggressive over the past handful of games, "every game is different, maybe it is because we are losing, I don't know if it is because of that," said Dragic about his

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ankle limiting his aggressiveness. "I didn't feel so quick, but I just have to push myself even harder to practice more."

Coach Gentry's Take on having more practice time over the next two weeks:

"We are looking at that big gap and maybe trying to do something practice wise. I wouldn't call it a mini-camp, but to do things along those lines. It gives you really quality practice days. It is like we are in a bowl game, but we are 35 days short (in terms of practice time). We are not in a very good bowl, we are in the Spam Treat Bowl."

On the team taking short cuts in practice:

"No, I don't, but what I think is over practice you have to make sure that you are stopping and correcting. I have been in the league over 25 years. It is just human nature without the fans in the stands guys have the tendency to short-cut it a little bit. That is true with every team I have been on and I have been associated with some great teams, some average teams, and some bad teams."

The 2013 NBA Draft Update

As of today the team is slotted in the 5th, 12th, and the 27th spots in the draft if it were to happen today. The 12th pick comes via the [Los Angeles Lakers](#) who are playing sub-playoff quality basketball hence the swap of the pick.

The Suns would also receive the [Memphis Grizzlies](#) pick (No. 27) today.

Here are the players they are taking in the current [Mock Draft](#) (The Mock does not reflect current standings):

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At No. 5 - [Shabazz Muhammad](#)

At No. 12 - [Dario Saric](#)

At No. 27 - [Willie Cauley-Stein](#)