The Suns look to build on their momentum as the team finally appears to be playing up to the level of their talent under the new management. Despite the brio and vim from the new look Suns, dubiety still abounds that this may just be a "jolt" instead of a perdurable change. Tonight may evince whether this is truly the birth of a renascent Suns team rising back to prominence or simply the effects of the proverbial dead coach bounce.

I know I'm intrigued.

When: Saturday, January 26, 2013, 6:30 PM local time (8:30 EST)

Where: AT&T Center, San Antonio, Texas

Watch/Listen: TV: FSAZ, Radio: 620 KTAR

Last Meeting:

This is the first meeting between the two teams this season. The teams last met at US Airways Center on April 25th in the last regular season game of the 2011-12 season. The Spurs reserves dispatched the Suns 110-106 as Gregg Popovich rested his star triumvirate.

It was somewhat fitting that Steve Nash's last game as a Sun was against the Spurs, who took great satisfaction in thwarting Phoenix's championship aspirations on multiple occasions during the Nash era.

Team Bios:

San Antonio Spurs: 35-11

Points per game: 104.1 (3rd) Points allowed: 96.0 (9th)

Injuries: Tim Duncan (knee) and Gregg Popovich (flu) did not travel with the team to Dallas yesterday... which means they will both be rested for tonight.

The Spurs are coming off of a 113-107 win over Dallas in a game that wasn't as close as the score indicates. Tony Parker led the way with 23 points and 10 assists.

The Spurs continue to steamroll at a familiar clip for a team that has won at least 50 games in 13 consecutive seasons (beginning after they won the NBA Championship in the lockout shortened 1998-99 season). The regular season has turned into a perfunctory process that exists only as an annual obstacle in the way of San Antonio's quest to reconcile recent postseason mishaps.

The Spurs have won seven straight and are pacing for 62 wins on the season, which would tie for the second most in franchise history. Tim Duncan and Tony Parker, who were both named as reserves to the Western Conference All-Star team, still do most of the heavy lifting, but the roster is deep and talented.

Phoenix Suns: 15-28

Points per game: 95.6 (18th) Points allowed: 99.4 (T-21st)

Injuries: Jermaine O'Neal (irregular heartbeat)

After a 2-13 stretch the Suns are now winners of two straight. A rare road victory (the Suns are now 4-17 on the road) over the Kings was followed up by a nationally televised triumph at home against the wounded Clippers. Even more bizarre, the Suns have won consecutive road games after losing 12 straight prior to that.

Lindsey Hunter gets to try his beginner's luck in a more difficult venue as the Suns encounter an adversary that has an uncanny knack for breaking the Suns spirit.

Goran Dragic returns to the scene of the crime and can hopefully relive some of the heroics that endeared him to Suns fans during the 2010 playoff run.

What To Watch For:

Lindsey Hunter: All eyes are still on the new guy. Until the novelty wears off Lindsey is going to be under a great deal of scrutiny.

Tim Duncan: Will Pop give his big man another night off figuring he can recruit an elderly couple from the stands capable of vanquishing the Suns? We've seen him rest players against the Suns (and other teams) for precautionary reasons (sometimes combined with the ulterior motive of insulting his opposition).

Notes/Stats:

With a win, new Suns head coach Lindsey Hunter can tie Butch van Breda Kolff for 14th place in all-time Suns coaching victories with three. Next on the list would be Dick Van Arsdale with 14.

The Spurs have only one loss to a sub .500 team this year. They lost 95-88 at New Orleans on January 7th.

The Spurs 8.5 differential between ORtg (109.1) and DRtg (100.6) is the best since their last title in 2006-07 when they put up eerily similar numbers - 9.3 differential between ORtg (109.2) and DRtg (99.9).

2013 Lottery Watch

The Suns are currently in 6th place in the race for the #1 seed in the lottery. The two consecutive wins have put the Suns in risk of slipping all the way to 11th in the coming week.

Last night's big wins:

Cavaliers (12-32) beat Bucks 113-108 - Cavs have won 3 of 4.

Wizards (10-31) beat Timberwolves 114-101 - Wizards are 5-3 since John Wall's return.

!!!Congratulations!!! The Charlotte Bobcats (10-32) have taken over worst place!

Tonight's slate:

Cavaliers (12-32) at Raptors (16-27)

Bulls (26-16) at Wizards (10-31)

Timberwolves (17-23) at Bobcats (10-32)

Kings (16-27) at Nuggets (26-18)

The Final Word(s):

Although most Suns fans relish every victory against the Spurs, I will attest with certitude that most Spurs fans don't reciprocate this feeling... mostly because they've owned our ass and beat

us in damn near every meaningful game over the last decade. Tonight we take our revenge! Or not.

I have actually grown to respect the Spurs. From organization, to coach, to players they are what the Suns should be trying to emulate as they reconstruct this franchise from its current shambles. If both teams were still good I'd be emotionally invested in the outcome, like I was for so many of the games in this series in recent years, but it really just doesn't feel the same anymore. It's actually kind of awkward. Like when you and your girlfriend break up and your life falls apart and then you run into her and she's happier than you've ever seen her and you go home and crawl into the closet with the lights off and cry yourself to sleep (speaking purely metaphorically, not from personal experience). That kind of awkward.

I'll leave you with this from general Phil Sheridan, who was posted in Texas after the Civil War: "If I owned hell and Texas, I'd rent out Texas and live in hell."

At least general Sheridan would rather live here than Texas. Take that Spurs!