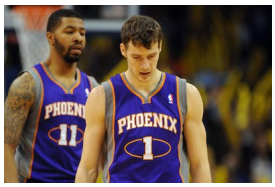

The win over the Grizzlies was nice while it lasted, but immediately after the Phoenix Suns dropped three straight in convincing fashion to fall to 17-34 on the year.

Records are meant to be broken and making history is normally a good thing, unless you are 17 games under .500 and teetering on the brink of breaking apart as they float around the bottom five of the NBA standings all season with no signs of change to come.

Game Recaps

@ Memphis Grizzlies - W (96-90)

@ New Orleans Hornets - L (93-84)

@ Oklahoma City Thunder - L (127-96)

vs. Oklahoma City Thunder - L (97-69)

Can it get worse?

Offensively the Suns managed 86.25 points per game, which was the lowest for a four game stretch all season. Even worse than the forgettable seven game losing streak earlier in the season. They shot 43.3% from the field, 28% from three, and turned the ball over 75 times.

On the defensive end they fared well outside of running into the buzz-saw that are the Thunder.

As a unit the Suns defense gave up 91.5 points per game up to the Grizzlies and Hornets (PELICANS), but 112 per game to the Thunder. Those games count into the running total meaning that the defense, once again, was the primary issue allowing 101.75 PPG through four games.

Now it is time for a break.

After the Lakers game the team will likely disperse out to their homes and enjoy the week off. Time to get their minds right, rest up, and get themselves ready for the final stretch of 29 games to close the season.

The Suns are one of three teams without a representative in general at All-Star weekend.

Key Stats

32.69%

The worst winning percentage in team history before the All-Star Break was 20% back in the teams inaugural season of 1968-1969. That was teams worst year ever in terms of wins and losses. Right now they are at 32.69%, the third worst in franchise history and are the worst Suns team in 25 years. Or since I was born.

A loss to the Lakers on Tuesday would bump the overall percentage to 32.07%, still good for third worst in the teams history.

The Highs

Two points from Wesley Johnson . You heard me right, two points from Johnson were the unfortunate highlight of a week of basketball. In the waning moments of the the home version of the home and away split between the Thunder Johnson scored with seven seconds on the clock to avoid a franchise low (68) in points for a game.

The Lows

In that same game the Suns scored a total of 50 points through 40 minutes of action. That is .8 points per minute and has to be in the running for the worst 40 minutes of basketball in team history.

The 50 points were on 22-76 shooting and were accompanied by 18 team turnovers. Break that down further and the team scored .53 points per possession

Lows that nobody wants to repeat or acknowledge, but the offensive ineptitude and futility was at an all-time low for the sport of basketball. The starters were a combined -19.3 in the controversial +/- statistic. It can only get better from here, right?

Practice Report

Analysis from practice can be found here

Grades

A look at three different players on the Suns for the week forming a good, bad, and a surprise either way each week.

- B- for Goran Dragic : One amazing first quarter and then 15 average quarters made up the week for Dragic as he struggled against three of the leagues better point guards.
- D+ for Jared Dudley : With trade rumors swirling Dudley had arguabley his worst four game stretch as a member of the Suns. He shot 7-22 (31.8%) from the field and mustered a meager 17 points in four games.
- C+ for Marcin Gortat : He shot the ball with precision (mostly all dunks) at 63.3% in four games, but made little to no impact on the games outcome and scored at a very low rate. Three blocks, 26 rebounds, and almost no impact from the center position.

Player of the Week:

Jermaine O'Neal - 10.0 PPG 5.3 RPG 1.3 APG 1.3 BLKS 75.0 FG%

Easily the most consistent player on the Suns roster this past week was the returning big man Jermaine O'Neal. He was a consistent scorer off of the bench as well as the anchor in the paint defensively. Coming into the season the addition of O'Neal was not earth-shattering, but he has shown game in and game out that he is one of the two or three most important players on the team.

This past week he reminded the team of his value off of the bench as a stabilizer.

Either O'Neal boosted his trade value this week for a contender looking for a veteran big man off of the bench, or, he solidified his value. If only the team could bottle what O'Neal does and serve it the the 22-27 year old talent that gets the lions share of the minutes.

Previewing the Week Ahead:

Tuesday, February 12th @ Los Angeles Lakers (24-27)

ALL-STAR BREAK