

Phoenix Suns Trade Deadline: One Crazy Week Ahead

Written by

Wednesday, 13 February 2013 10:01 -



The [Phoenix Suns](#) play only two road games between now and the February 21, 2013 trade deadline, next Tuesday and Wednesday against Portland and Golden State, respectively.

According to reporters citing anonymous sources, the Suns are dangling every single player on the roster to see what offers shake loose. Prevailing assumptions are that offers get better and better closer to the deadline, and the Suns are one team in a position of power.

Yet according to Lance Blanks himself on Monday to KTAR, the Suns may not trade a single player.

The way I read it is: the Suns won't be fleeced without their express written consent, but would certainly jump at a lopsided offer in their favor.

Logic dictates that no one on the roster should be considered untradeable. This Suns team is worst in the West and third-worst in franchise history. Unlike the old days of Nash, Amare and Marion, not one player on this current Suns roster would be considered a starter on all 30 NBA teams. Not one player is even in the top 5 at his position. That makes you tradable for something better.

Yet logic also dictates that the Suns are in a position of power, and don't need to offload anyone just for the sake of doing it.

Suns desires

So far, the Suns have been linked to wanting free-agent-to-be PF Josh Smith (since debunked, at least until summer), free-agent-to-be PF [Al Jefferson](#) (probably for the expiring contract), soon-to-be restricted free agent swingman [Gordon Hayward](#)

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, second-year G Iman Shumpert (Suns love Shump!) and [Rudy Gay](#) (since traded to Toronto).

And that's just the start. Expect to hear a lot more rumors of all kinds - Suns buying, Suns selling, Suns facilitating as third team.

Keep up with all the rumors on the Bright Side home page in sections called: Phoenix Suns trade rumors and NBA Trade Rumors

Suns Cap/Assets Sitch

The Suns have no bad contracts. Their best players - [Goran Dragic](#) , [Marcin Gortat](#) , Jared Dudley - are on great contracts for what they bring to a team: being the 3

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best player on a contender. No need to trade them unless something better, or with a higher ceiling, comes back.

The Suns have lots of draft picks already. Probably a top-5 pick in June, probably another lottery pick ([Lakers](#) have a 68% chance of missing playoffs), a high second-rounder and a middle second rounder. That's about all one team can handle in a single season, even considering trading a pick or stashing players overseas.

And there is a strong theory that if the Suns could add a "very good" player in free agency with their 15 million in cap space ([Josh Smith](#) ?) and the right lottery picks, they could get themselves right back in playoff contention by keeping Dudley, Dragic and Gortat.

So why make any panic trades?

The Suns are one of few teams in the NBA with cap space (> \$6 million) to absorb a contract in a lopsided deal to help a team that needs to get under the luxury tax. In the past, that kind of

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leverage got a smart team an extra #1 pick for their troubles (OKC, Cleveland, etc). Kind of like buying a pick.

Yet, there are some Suns players likely to be gone soon.

Sure to be gone soon

If not by the trade deadline for a second-round draft pick, [Sebastian Telfair](#) has no role on this team anymore. Though I have no inside info, I expect the Suns to trade him or release him before he plays another game.

Probably gone soon

Jermaine O'Neal has helpfully shown his health and worth as a backup center to a contender, certainly making him worth a second-round pick by next week. The Suns have only 29 games left in the season - why not get something for him before he becomes a free agent?

After that, what comes back must exceed what goes out

Marcin Gortat may have worn out his welcome with the team, and it's clear that he and Dragic do not have any kind of on-court chemistry. The Polish Machine is still complaining about his lack of spotlight on offense and even [Lindsey Hunter](#) is often sitting him in favor of Jermaine O'Neal just like Gentry did.

Yet there's no reason to dump Gortat now unless the Suns get something better in return. He will be a good commodity during the draft and will be an \$8 million expiring contract in 2013-14. Given that the luxury taxation starts becoming exceptionally punitive next spring, Gortat will likely be more valuable to a salary-dumping team next year than he is this year.

Don't sell low on the Hammer!

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Goran Dragic is in the top-10 or top-15 point guards in the NBA, has a great team-first attitude and works his butt off. Plus, he's got a great contract (\$7.5 million, 3 years) for that contribution. He provides great bang for his buck, likely the best value among PGs in their prime not still under a rookie contract.

But by definition there are several PGs ahead of him in the NBA, many more near his level and more still that are younger and have higher potential. Fans get frustrated with Gogi, but that's because we put him in a #1 role for which he is ill-suited. Dragic is best as a 3rd or 4th option on a contender.

Goran Dragic would be a great trade piece at the deadline, but the problem in trading him for a better player is that you just traded away a guy that new player really needs to succeed.

Don't see low on the Dragon!

[Jared Dudley's](#) contract goes on for several more years, so he's not likely to have any higher ceiling than in 2013. Yet he would be just as valuable in four months at draft time as he is in the next week.

Dudley is loved throughout the league by players and GMs alike, and appears to be mentally checked-out since he was mentioned in conjunction with [Iman Shumpert](#) last weekend.

Given his contract and skills, Duds would return the most valuable booty in any trade. Yet just like the Hammer and the Dragon, it's just not worth forcing him out the door unless the Suns get something better in return - either now or in the near future (high draft pick).

Don't sell low on JD-for-three!

Anyone else on the roster is just a mechanism of the CBA trade rules. No one likely wants to give good or equal value for the rest of the Suns roster (when combining contract and

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contributions), so the Suns would only use them to make a trade work.

Expect to hear a lot of rumors over the next week, fans. Lots of teams will want Dudley, Gortat and/or Dragic. What they're offering will be the key.

If a rumor sounds too good to be true in favor of the Suns, it probably is.

If a rumor sounds so bad you can't understand why the Suns would do it, they probably won't.

Just wait till Gambo tweets it's a done deal, I guess. Lol.