

## Center of the Sun: Phoenix Suns Are Back In Action With Some New Faces

Written by  
Monday, 25 February 2013 10:59 -

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For the most part fans of the [Phoenix Suns](#) (18-39) want them to lose to get higher in the lottery, so technically the past two weeks have been a win for somebody on some level. Right?

### Game Recaps

@ [Los Angeles Lakers](#) - L (91-85)

@ [Portland Trail Blazers](#) - W (102-98)

@ [Golden State Warriors](#) - L (108-98)

vs. [Boston Celtics](#) - L (113-88)

vs. [San Antonio Spurs](#) - L (97-87)

Most of the NBA Trade Deadline chatter revolved around the Suns as they were at the center of the basketball universe for the first time in years. They were rumored to be going after the likes of [Josh Smith](#) , [Al Jefferson](#) , Gordon Haywood, [Iman Shumpert](#) , [Jeremy Lamb](#) , [Kendrick Perkins](#) and others to continue the rebuild.

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Instead they made two quiet moves shipping [Sebastian Telfair](#) to the [Toronto Raptors](#) for [Hammed Haddadi](#)

and a conditional second round pick that freed Bassy from the depths of the Suns bench. Then they turned their 2013 second round pick into Marcus Morris, who now joins his twin brother on the same team just a year and a half after being together in college.

Those two moves had no relative impact on the teams performance on the court as Bassy was not playing regardless and it brought in two more players for the team to evaluate.

The final three games were eye-opening. especially the ones against the Celtics and the Spurs. Those two teams have franchises to model after with leadership, structure, and the ability to plug guys in that fit their system. They have so many retread players performing at a high level it begs the question; How come the Suns cannot find a few of them?

### Key Stats

#### *15 Games Under 90 Points Scored*

Through 57 games the team has scored under 90 points a total of 15 times, including three times the past two weeks. To put that in perspective that happened 13 times in 66 games last year and 29 times total in the other seven years [Steve Nash](#) was here.

With 25 games to go it is entirely possible the Suns finish with the most under 90 point games in over 12 years.

The offense has hit a wall and has proven to be inept, seemingly incapable of scoring with any consistency, but the team is focusing on defense as of late so the offense is bound to be the casualty.

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### The Highs

The addition of Marcus Morris is not earth shattering or mind blowing, but it is the shrewd type of business move that eventually turns a floundering team into a contender. In Houston Marcus was buried on the bench, but has played well this season. That should continue here.

Furthermore they basically traded Bassy for Marcus and Haddadi as the second round picks cancel each other out. They will receive either Sacramento or Toronto's pick in the second round. Turning Bassy into a former lottery pick and a serviceable 7-footer is good business.

### The Lows

To put a bow on the poor offense here are a few numbers from the past five games that put a finer point on the struggles on that side of the ball.

In five games the team turned the ball over 83 times (16.6 per game) giving the opposing team more opportunities to score and subtracting from their own opportunities. If they continued that per game trend with the turnovers it would easily be the most in the league.

Those turnovers are compounded by the poor three point shooting. In those same five games the team shot 22-71 (30.9%) from deep. Overall they shot 43.5% from the field, or 46% from inside the three-point line. This is not a three-point shooting team. That has been established through 57 games of evidence and proof. Shooting threes is a borderline waste of a possession at this point and leads to the opponent gaining another high percentage possession.

### Practice Report

The team was off for the All-Star Break, but we did talk to [Jared Dudley](#) [on the podcast here](#).

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### Grades

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

- A- for [Marcin Gortat](#) : Despite the team going 1-4 for the week there were a few bright spots, Gortat was one of them putting up 11 PPG 6.8 RPG and shooting 54.1% from the field.
- F+ for [Michael Beasley](#) : The Oscars were Sunday, for the past two weeks Beasley has been the "Crash" of the awards show, and to an extent, to the Suns season.
- C+ for [Marcus Morris](#) : He is the new guy in town, despite looking exactly like the another guy that has been here for two years. In two games Morris netted 14 points and provided a spark off the bench.

### Player of the Week:

[Goran Dragic](#) - 13.75 PPG 3.75 RPG 12.25 APG 3.0 SPG 40.3% FG

He didn't set the world on fire, but he did send the Goran Dragic Record Book back to the printers for some new career-highs. Against the Blazers Dragic was in a rhythm dishing out assists left and right to a tune of 18 total, a new single game career-high and the most by a Suns player in 134 games. Over the next three games Dragic dished out 10+ assists to give him the longest stretch in his career with 10+ assists.

### Previewing the Week Ahead:

Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup> vs. Los Angeles Lakers (28-29)

Wednesday, February 27<sup>th</sup> @ San Antonio Spurs (45-13)

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Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup> vs. [Atlanta Hawks](#) (31-23)