

The Phoenix Suns Are Not Going To Back Down, Sick Of Being Beat

Written by

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Losing is one thing, but after back-to-back losses to the [Celtics](#) and [Spurs](#) the [Phoenix Suns](#) were frustrated and to be frank angry that teams felt they could come in here and just "disrespect" them on the court.

"I told you at (Training) Camp," Jermaine O'Neal told [Markieff Morris](#) after the loss to San Antonio. "Teams change the way they play you depending on your record."

That is the truth as told by a veteran who has played on good, great, and bad teams throughout his 17 year NBA career. O'Neal knows how teams operate through an 82 game season. This season in particular has been a poor one for the Suns so teams are coming here expecting a win, resting stars, and showing no respect for a team that is 20 games under .500.

"I think after a while you reach a point in the season where you get tired of being pushed around." -Jared Dudley

"I think after a while you reach a point in the season where you get tired of being pushed around," [Jared Dudley](#) told me after the game. "Losing close games, guys take that as a pride issue and we are trying to take it to the next level."

In a losing season the only way to get better is to lose games, but what about having some pride?

Having that pride sometimes results in a technical foul (or two) as evident by last night where O'Neal and Markieff Morris did not back down from situations against the Atlanta Hawks. On the season O'Neal has not been one to back down from a challenge, the same could be said throughout his entire career, and he has added a toughness to the bench that is sorely lacking that edge as a whole.

"At times, things happen like that," Interim Head Coach [Lindsey Hunter](#) commented on the

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chippiness. "Our guys didn't back down and as a team you have to protect one another out there. We cannot allow people to provoke us to stop playing the game. We are basketball players and we have to be that first."

The team as a whole did not back down from situations on the court with their opponent or in the huddles with each other.

More: [Full Coverage: Suns vs. Hawks](#)

As Dudley was trying to get [Luis Scola](#) to understand in the heat of the moment, they need to play more unselfish on offense. In that particular sequence Scola had a few shots at the basket, but they came off of offensive rebounds and he was trying to mute a loud Hawks run. Those are the moments where leaders step up verbally for their team, they get in teammates ears and, at times, in their faces when they see something on the court that needs to be rectified.

The skirmish was described as "only basketball related" by Dudley after the game.

There is a line between dirty, rough basketball and not backing down when challenged. With the way this season has progressed the Suns have every right to be frustrated and play unnecessarily rough basketball to express that, but that does not win games.

All good defensive teams have that balance.

As Dudley said, they are trying to make defense their "staple" while holding teams to around "80-85 points and then getting out in transition." With the current roster and the lack of a go-to scorer on the offensive end, playing tough defense is their only option to play competitive, winning basketball and score points with consistency.

Not backing down with a technical foul here and there is one way to not back down while keeping their composure enough to win a game. That is Phoenix Suns Basketball.