

Preview: Phoenix Suns (23-45) vs. Washington Wizards (23-43) with lottery balls on the line

Written by

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Every win by the [Phoenix Suns](#) (23-45) is detrimental in their mission of getting the best possible pick in this years draft. That is the carrot that has been dangled all season in-front of the fans with the poor play on the court and accelerated drop in the standings.

Hosting the [Washington Wizards](#) (23-43) gives the Suns a peek at a team a few steps further along in the rebuilding process and a chance to move a little higher in the lottery standings.

(Recent) History Lesson

Lost 127-105

In their first meeting either the Wizards coaching staff did an exemplary job scouting the Suns porous three-point defense, or they just didn't guard [Martell Webster](#) . His seven made threes tied a career-high and was the fourth time this season he has hit 5+ threes in a game. The game was over early in the second half as the Wizards came out on fire and the Suns didn't.

Head-to-Head (past four seasons including Playoffs)

Suns: 111 PPG (5 wins)

Wizards: 99.8 PPG (1 wins)

Make no mistake, before this season's blowout in Washington the Suns owned the Wizards. As

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of late they were able to get over 100+ points in every game torching the defense. Those were Nash-led offenses, hence the dramatic change this season.

Head-to-Head (career)

[John Wall](#) vs. Suns: 12.5 PPG 4.3 RPG 10.8 APG 2.45 SPG 42.8 FG% (4 games)

Jermaine O'Neal vs. Wizards: 15.4 PPG 8.4 RPG 1.6 APG 2.0 BPG 42.6 FG% (36 games)

Wall averages 10+ assists per game against five teams and the Suns are No. 2 on that personal list for the potential star point guard. He picks apart the Suns, but does not score at a high rate despite the clear athletic advantage for him against the previous regime. O'Neal has a lot of experience against the Wizards in his career from his days in Indiana, Miami, and Boston.

Starting Line-Ups

PG - [Goran Dragic](#) v. John Wall

SG - [Wesley Johnson](#) v. Garrett Temple

SF - [Marcus Morris](#) v. Martell Webster

PF - [Markieff Morris](#) v. Nene Hilario

C - Jermaine O'Neal v. Emeka Okafor

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Potential Suns Inactives: [Marcin Gortat](#) (Foot)

Potential Wizards Inactives: [A.J. Price](#) (Groin) and [Chris Singleton](#) (Personal)

Key Match-Up

Markieff Morris vs. Nene

If Markieff is engaged on the offensive end his defense has struggled this year. Taking Nene out of the game is important in beating this team as he is their only offensive threat in the paint. This season Markieff has not been able to put together strings of good games, but off the heels of his solid offensive performance against the [Lakers](#) this is a chance to build on one good game. Last time out Markieff got the better of Nene in points, rebounds, and shooting.

Interesting Stat: 0-4

This season the Suns have lost by 20+ a total of 11 times overall. Seven of those occurrences have come on the road, giving the team some level of motivation in the return match-up, but that has not manifested into one win this year. When the team gets leveled on the road they are 0-4 with the chance at some level of redemption losing by an average of 13.7 in those return games.

Meaningless Stat: 10+

Before the loss earlier this season the Suns typically have taken out the whipping sticks on the Wizards to a tune of 10 straight wins, the last seven by 10+ points per game. There is that.