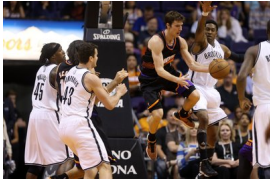


## Game Recap: Phoenix Suns come up short in thriller, lose to Brooklyn Nets 102-100

Written by  
Sunday, 24 March 2013 22:39 -

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The energy among the team was high all night and it eventually fed into the crowd, who hooped and hollered the [Phoenix Suns](#) through a second-half comeback from 12 points down after the second unit struggled once again to find their traction despite playing with high effort.

[Wesley Johnson](#) dropped in 17 points (4 3-pointers) in the THIRD QUARTER ALONE as the Suns outscored the [Nets](#) 33-20 to take a one-point lead.

The fourth quarter was a seesaw affair, with each team hitting big shot after big shot.

[Goran Dragic](#) (31 points, second highest of career, 12 assists and 9 rebounds) was the player of the game for the Suns, just short of a triple double after three quarters alone. He poured in points when the Suns needed them in the fourth as the Nets tried to start flexing their muscle.

Unfortunately, the Suns had a hard time stopping [Deron Williams](#) and the Nets in the fourth quarter. The Nets scored on 5 of 6 possessions after the game was tied 87-87 to take a 99-95 lead with two minutes left.

From there, the Suns could not muster enough offense (a missed layup, a missed three and a missed stepback jumper all on the same possession) to tie it up or take the lead before it became a free throw fest.

[Gerald Wallace](#) missed one of two free throws, giving the Nets a 100-97 lead with 14 seconds left. With the Suns sporting the league's second-worst three-point shooting offense (and worst overall in recent weeks), prospects did not look good to tie it up.

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In fact, they didn't even try a three. Dragic tried to draw a double-team down low for the kick-out but the Nets guarded the line well. Eventually Dragic sank a short jumper to cut the lead to one. After a quick foul, [C.J. Watson](#) made both free throws and the Suns could not get off a three-point attempt before Dragic was fouled inside the arc.

Dragic made the first and missed the second, on purpose, but Haddadi missed the lefty layup on an offensive rebound with mere seconds left.

THIS is the kind of loss that's easier to take than laying down against the Wolves, Suns fans.

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Brooklyn, missing former Sun Joe Johnson tonight, came into the game with a 40-29 overall record, and a better road record (18-15) than the Suns' home record (16-19).

Apparently, these Suns seem only to be able to get up for the good teams while they don't even bother showing up against the bad ones.

This is getting to be a pattern, one that makes little sense until you consider how frustrated these guys are with how the season is going. They have been out of the playoff picture since early January, no chance to salvage the season. Their fans don't want them to win, and even the moves by the front office and coaching staff scream of evaluation for next season.

It appears the only time the players are fully engaged is when they get to prove themselves against a "good" team - one that's currently positioned to make the playoffs. Since Hunter took over (signaling the season to be effectively over), the Suns have beaten the [Clippers](#) , [Lakers](#) (twice),

[Grizzlies](#)

,

[Spurs](#)

,

[Hawks](#)

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and

[Rockets](#)

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If the Suns could put out this same effort against teams like Sacramento, Washington and Minnesota they would have a much better season record.

Wesley Johnson finished with 21 points, his high with the Suns.

Markieff Morris had 15 rebounds, his second-highest board total for the season (though he only had 5 points on 5-18 shooting).

The Nets made 28-31 free throws, just enough to top the Suns on the road.