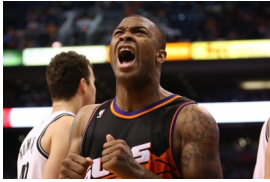


Center of the Sun: Effort is the key for the Phoenix Suns

Written by

Monday, 25 March 2013 13:51 -



As an athlete, or as a person, the one thing you can control is the effort you deliver in your day-to-day function. That is why it is called "effort." It is intangible in nature and unfortunately not something that everyone is just gifted as the [Phoenix Suns](#) (23-48) have learned this season.

Having an elite level of talent, athleticism, and physical traits does not make one a great basketball player on this level.

Game Recaps

vs. [Los Angeles Lakers](#) - W (99-76)

@ [Houston Rockets](#) - L (88-79)

vs. [Minnesota Timberwolves](#) - L (117-86)

vs. [Brooklyn Nets](#) - L (102-100)

So far this season the effort has been spotty at best from some of the key players in this transition year as the old guard left town.

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[Michael Beasley](#) , [Markieff Morris](#) , and [Marcus Morris](#) are all talented enough to be impact players every game for the Suns. Instead they take quarters, games, and entire weeks off leaving the team void of options on the court. You cannot coach effort, which is why those three are quick to the bench and Jermaine O'Neal, [P.J. Tucker](#) , and [Wesley Johnson](#) have ascended to the top of the rotation.

Against the Lakers and Nets the effort and energy were evident. They routed the Kobe-less Lakers and nearly stole one from the playoff bound Nets. Small victories in an otherwise dismal season.

2013 NBA Draft Update

With the NCAA Tournament in full swing it is the time of year where NBA fans and writers start watching college basketball and formulating an opinion on the next wave of prospects based on a game or two. Luckily, I cover the draft year round and can provide analysis rather than reaction.

Over the past four days I have reviewed the tournament from the [perspective of how the prospects](#) are doing.

Right now there is a lull between the first two rounds and the beginning of the Sweet 16 on Thursday. There will be lot's of analysis here on BSotS regarding the prospects to keep an eye on and those declaring for the draft.

How is your bracket doing? How u?

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The Highs

Knocking off the (Kobe Bryant-less) Lakers was a big moment this season for the team as they are 2-0 at home against their rivals. The Suns are no longer in a position to thwart the Lakers playoff rise, that burden has fallen squarely on the shoulders of the Utah Jazz, but this win was more about pride.

The Lows

See: [Timberwolves, Minnesota](#)

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 Wesley Johnson: Another quality week for "Smiling Wes" as he put up 15.0 PPG and 4.8 RPG and even took control as the go-to scorer against the Nets.
- D+ for Marcus Morris: Two DNP-Coaches Decisions and 1-13 shooting from the field in the games he was able to get into. In 28 minutes Marcus grabbed a total of 5 rebounds.
- B+ for Luis Scola: He stepped in as the teams starting center in place of the injured Marcin Gortat and Jermaine O'Neal, the results have been hit or miss for the veteran.

Player of the Week:

Goran Dragic - 18.5 PPG 10.8 APG 5.0 RPG 1.5 SPG 47.1% FG (30.0% 3PT)

Five straight games with a double-double (11 in 18 games overall) while shooting 40% or better

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for "Gogi" as he has been on another level as of late. As our Dave King detailed, this has been a [special run for Dragic](#) . He has always been seen as the teams best player, but is too good of a teammate that he can be passive. This is the player the Suns envisioned for 82 games when they signed him this summer.

Previewing the Week Ahead:

Wednesday, March 27th @ [Utah Jazz](#) (34-36)

Thursday, March 28th vs. [Sacramento Kings](#) (24-46)

Saturday, March 30th vs. [Indiana Pacers](#) (43-27)