

Full Coverage: A loss to the Brooklyn Nets, but a win in the effort column

Written by

Monday, 25 March 2013 10:39 -



A loss is a loss, but the effort and energy the team played with was worth of applause and praise. As professionals they should play like this every game, but in a dismal season this loss is a highlight.

The [Phoenix Suns](#) (23-47) have been teetering with franchise history all season, but records that a team never wants to break like the least amount of points in a game, and most losses in a season. They are safe in terms of the worst mark ever (16-66), but if they drop the game tonight to the [Brooklyn Nets](#) (40-29) they will match the seventh worst mark in franchise history.

For the Nets, they are in a position that they would have never thought imaginable three months ago with an opportunity to win the Pacific Division.

Each team is playing for something different, but something that is equally important to each.

As the Nets climb the standings the Suns are descending the same standings into the high end of the lottery. They are two different teams with different trajectories, which does not bode very well for the fate of the Suns. What interim head coach [Lindsey Hunter](#) is looking for is effort and energy from his players, something a few of them are learning the hard way.

(Recent) History Lesson

Lost 99-79

The Suns were able to keep pace with the Nets in the first half last time out, in Brooklyn, and

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they were even up seven at the half. A barrage of two's in the paint and free-throws brought the Nets back and then allowed them to put the game away as a lid was firmly placed on the basket for the Suns offense in the second half.

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

Suns: 106.3 PPG (4 wins)

Netss: 103.3 PPG (2 wins)

The Nets have won the last two games (104.5-to-91) taking control of this series, but over the past 10 years the Suns have dictated the pace and were the victors in this cross-country series. Before the last meeting the Suns had scored 100+ points in nine consecutive games with the exclamation point being a 161 point effort in double-overtime in 2006.

Head-to-Head (career)

[Joe Johnson](#) vs. Suns: 17.5 PPG 5.1 RPG 4.4 APG 1.05 SPG 37.7 FG% (17 games)

[Luis Scola](#) vs. Nets: 15.3 PPG 7.2 RPG 2.5 APG 0.5 BPG 56.3 FG% (10 games)

In his career against the Suns Johnson shoots his second lowest percentage overall, but still puts up his normal stat-line. He gets after his old team when they square off. Scola does not do anything special against the Nets traditionally, in fact he shoots it low for his standards against the other New York team and will be an important factor tonight.

Starting Line-Ups

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PG - [Goran Dragic](#) v. Deron Williams

SG - [Wesley Johnson](#) v. Joe Johnson

SF - [P.J. Tucker](#) v. Gerald Wallace

PF - [Markieff Morris](#) v. Reggie Evans

C - Luis Scola v. [Brook Lopez](#)

Potential Suns Inactives: [Marcin Gortat](#) (Foot), [Jared Dudley](#) (Flu), and Jermaine O'Neal (Strained Left Calf)

Potential Nets Inactives: N/A

Key Match-Up

Markieff Morris vs. Reggie Evans

Over the past few months all Hunter and the Suns have been mentioning and talking about is energy and effort. That is something an individual can control without the help of a coach or his teammates. Some players are giving it and others are not. In this case Evans is pure energy and if Morris does not show up with energy then a role player like Evans could go off and beat the Suns himself, with energy.

Interesting Stat: 0-9

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The Suns are 0-9 on Sunday, but score the third most points on this day of rest.

Meaningless Stat: Sweet Sixteen

During their days in college [Shannon Brown](#) , [Marcus Morris](#) , [Kendall Marshall](#) , Dudley, Markieff, and Johnson have all played in the Sweet 16. As the NCAA Tournament currently sits, Johnson (Syracuse), Brown (Michigan State), Marcus and Markieff (Kansas), Marshall (North Carolina), and [Diante Garrett](#) (Iowa State) all have something to cheer for still.

(Update: Sorry Diante)

There is that.