

Game Preview: Phoenix Suns (really bad) vs. Houston Rockets (pretty good) - What's in it for the Suns?

Written by

Monday, 15 April 2013 14:00 -



The [Phoenix Suns](#) play their final home game of the season tonight, putting an end to this season's misery for Suns tickets holders - the lifeblood of a franchise that's bleeding out by the day.

Guaranteed their second worst season in history, is there anything to play for tonight? Is there any intrigue for a viewer, any reason to even check the scoreboard let alone watch the game?

Why yes there is!

Here are a few of those reasons...

Lottery Positioning - Suns

The Suns can finish no worse than fourth in lotto ball standings but are currently "fighting" with Cleveland for that third spot. Both team are playing as bad as possible in the final weeks. It's a (bleeding) neck-and-neck race with both teams sporting the same 24-56 record. If each lose their last two games, then a coin flip will decide their draft order UNLESS one of them moves up in the lottery.

It's worth noting that the #4 seed in the lottery has never won the #1 pick with the ping-pong balls.

Yet, that's what makes tonight's game a conundrum. With the [Rockets](#) fighting for playoff positioning, it's almost better for the Suns to WIN tonight. Why? Because then the Rockets will REALLY have to beat the

[Lakers](#)

on Wednesday. If Rockets lose out and the Lakers win that game, the Rockets would be dropped to 8th and would have to face OKC in the opening round.

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If the Rockets win Wednesday night (regardless of tonight) they will keep the 6th or 7th spot AND (if Utah wins out) possibly bump the Lakers out of the playoffs and send their #14 pick over to the Suns this spring. Otherwise, the Suns get the [Heat's](#) #30 pick. Quite a difference.

Check out the [Lottery Watch story by Sean on Sunday](#), which discusses all the possibilities.

Playoff Positioning - Rockets

As mentioned already, the Rockets are in a heated battle with Golden State for the #6 seed in the playoffs. But they are also in danger of ending up #8, behind the Lakers, if they lose both games this week.

Both the Rockets and [Warriors](#) have a 45-35 record heading into their final two games, just one win ahead of the Lakers (44-37). The #8 seed will most likely face OKC, with the #7 seed most likely playing San Antonio while the #6 seed gets Denver.

If the Rockets lose tonight, they HAVE to beat LA on Wednesday to avoid the #8 seed and a likely drubbing by OKC. Why not turn up the heat on them, you know?

Assuming the Rockets want the #6 seed, they need to win out to be assured of it.

A perfect scenario for the Suns and the Rockets, is to have **the Rockets lose tonight and win Wednesday in LA**. That would put the Rockets at #7 (assuming GS and Utah win at least 1 game) to face a hobbled San Antonio team in round one while the Suns get a second lotto pick and the Lakers go on summer vacation. Winner, winner, chicken dinner!

The Rockets winning tonight and losing Wednesday also assures them of the 7th, but that scenario puts LA in the playoffs. Let's ignore that scenario for the moment.

Addiction - Suns fans

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After tonight, we won't see the Suns in their home uniforms again for more than 5 months. As bad as the team has been playing, it's better than nothing at all. You know what I mean?

Sure, you're reading this and itching to pop down to the comment section to say "no it's not better than nothing at all! I'd rather watch paint dry!". But no matter how bad the team is, it's still the Suns and there's still a loyalty to the team. Sure, maybe we're watching to see how bad it will get - like watching a car wreck - but we're still, for the most part, watching.

Those of you no longer watching games are still coming to BSotS most days to check on the latest news and comment threads about the team.

We are diehards. We are Suns fans. Five months without games will be torture.

The Last Matchup

The Rockets won last week's game in real cheesy fashion - badly missing but getting credit for a game-winning three-pointer by applying a hex to Jermaine O'Neal's body and making him jump into the net while the ball was still in the cylinder.

Any chance the Suns want payback tonight?

Not likely, but it's sure worth at least a moment's consideration.

The Last Word

I went to a silent auction fundraiser on Saturday night. There were about 60 items to bid on, ranging from a value of \$30 to \$500 and only about 80 attendees.

One of the items up for bid was an autographed portrait of Luis Scola in Suns home uni. The minimum bid was \$40. NO ONE BID ON IT (including me). It was one of only two items in the

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entire auction without a single bid. Poor Luis.

Frankly, I can see why no one bid on it. Not only are the Suns bad, but Scola has only been in town for a year and is not likely to spend many years on the Suns. He's not good looking and isn't doing any local promos.

If the portrait had been of Goran Dragic or Jared Dudley, I could see bids being placed. Even I might have bid on it. Those guys are cemented in Suns fans hearts from the 2010 playoff run and years in Suns unis.

As it is, Luis Scola only represents the worst Suns team in most of our lifetimes. As I said, even I couldn't make myself bid on it. (Instead I bid on a Whiskey basket and Starbucks basket).

That right there is an indication of what's wrong with the Suns - their best chance of selling an autographed pic is Goran Dragic and Jared Dudley, neither of whom is an All-Star.

That's all I got, folks.

Check out [The Dream Shake](#) for more on the Rockets and their fans' intentions for this game.