

Phoenix Suns guard Archie Goodwin ready to show NBA he's the 'best player on the court'

Written by

Thursday, 22 August 2013 08:49 -



[Archie Goodwin's](#) own vision for his NBA future with the [Phoenix Suns](#) is brighter than any of us have opined since watching him excel in Summer League. When we spoke at the Suns' recent jersey-reveal Fashion Show, Goodwin appeared more at ease with the media than the kid I interviewed just two months ago before Summer League started.

"It wasn't a surprise to me how well I played. It was a surprise to everybody else." -Archie Goodwin

"It wasn't a surprise to me how well I played," Goodwin said of Summer League. "It was a surprise to everybody else. I just feel like I got the opportunity to do the things I was able to do and I showcased it."

Goodwin doesn't pound his chest or squint his eyes at you when he speaks. He is quiet and respectful, though his answers clearly suggest he has a lot of self-confidence.

Some of his bravado can be discounted as coming from an 18 year old who doesn't know what he doesn't know yet. Every rookie thinks they know it all, until they realize how wrong they were. He doesn't know how much better the league is than anything he ever saw in college. He doesn't know how easily opposing defenses will take away his favorite moves, leaving him to adjust or rot on the bench.

For his part, new coach Jeff Hornacek isn't worried.

"Archie's going to pick up on things," Hornacek said before SL even began. "He's got that ability to get to the basket. But when he really attacks the basket, not just think shot. He's got to think 'is it open for the shot?' If not, do something else."

"And those are things that are a little different in the NBA. Things collapse a little bit quicker

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than in college. In college, once you make the turn those guys can pretty much get to the basket with no problem. In this league, they get around that turn and all of sudden, in their heads they're thinking "I'm gonna get to the basket" and all of a sudden it's closed off.

"They'll adjust to that."

Goodwin was able to attack the basket easily in Summer League. He often drew the foul when he wanted. Goodwin amassed 48 free throw attempts in just 7 SL games (6.8 per game), accounting for nearly 1/3 of his 13.1 points. He led the team in attempts, besting teammate [Marcus Morris](#) by 14, but only got to the line 7 times in the last two games combined as teams began to play for the drive.

He also passed the ball a bit, but his assist numbers were lower than they might have been because guys weren't making the shots after Goodwin's dump off. Goodwin finished SL with less than 1 assist per game.

Still, Goodwin was pretty happy about his Summer League coming-out party.

"It wasn't what I learned about myself," Goodwin said of SL. "It was more so what I showed everybody else. I was showing everybody else I could do more things than they thought I could."

Like, hitting 57% of his three point attempts after making less than 30% of them in college? When he commented that he likes the sleeved jerseys they wore in SL, I quipped that the sleeves might have helped his shooting range. He didn't take the bait.

"Nah, that's just me working."

I asked Goodwin what drills he's working on since Summer League, hoping to hear some

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insights into a summer program designed to add new skills to his repertoire. We often hear that players improve their games during the summer, that it's too late once the season starts to learn a brand new skill.

But Goodwin gave an answer similar to Bledsoe's answers on the same question.

"It's not one aspect," he said of his summer work. "I'm not a one dimensional guy. I just want to get better in every aspect that I can."

When asked if Hornacek had left him with a task list or workout schedule, he replied in the negative.

"Not specifically," Goodwin said. "He knows I'm a gymaholic. He's knows I'm going to get in and work on the right things. Once he gets here I'm sure he'll have his set things, but he's not here right now so I'm just working on things that I know personally I need to get better at."

Asked about his expectation for a rookie season in which he will be the youngest player in the NBA, Goodwin was quiet but confident.

"We'll see," he said. "I always feel like I'm the best player on the court no matter who's on the court. It's just a matter of me taking care of opportunities."

[Goodwin capturing imaginations of a fan-base and a city looking for hope](#)

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