

Phoenix Suns fall at Sacramento Kings, 107-90; Goran Dragic suffers ankle injury

Written by
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Summing It Up

The [Phoenix Suns](#) dropped their second straight preseason game, losing at Sacramento 107-97. The Suns dominated on the glass (50-39) and shot better from the field (48-43 edge in shooting percentage with four more made field goals), but they doubled up the [Kings](#) in turnovers (28-14) and the free-throw disparity was laughable (the Suns were 7-20 while the Kings were 26-36).

Not only did the Suns lose the game, but they also lost point guard [Goran Dragic](#) to an ankle injury early in the second half.

Telling the Story

The Suns jumped out to a quick 10-3 lead, but Sacramento answered with a 12-2 run of their own to take a 15-12 lead. Phoenix tied the game at 17-17 on an [Eric Bledsoe](#) technical free throw before taking a 19-17 lead on a jumper by [Markieff Morris](#). However, the Kings scored the last eight points to lead 25-19 after one quarter of play.

The Suns scored the first two buckets of the 2nd quarter to trim the lead to two, but the Kings pushed it back to six at 31-25. Phoenix tied it back up at 31-apiece, but then things began to go wrong. Sacramento built a double-digit lead, outscoring the Suns 22-11 to go up 53-42. The Suns scored on each of their last four offensive possessions (a post-up by [P.J. Tucker](#), a 20-foot pull-up by Eric Bledsoe, another post-up by Tucker and a drive and scoop shot by Bledsoe) and got a couple stops to keep themselves in the game heading into the break.

[DeMarcus Cousins](#) was a monster in the first half, destroying everyone he matched up with and getting to the free-throw line at will. He finished with 23 points and seven rebounds at the break. His final stat line reads 29 points, nine rebounds and 13-18 from the stripe in 27 minutes as he didn't need to play much in the second half.

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The Second half got off to a rough start. The Suns badly missed their first three shots (all long jumpers) and turned the ball over once while the Kings scored twice, stretching the lead back to double digits at 61-50. Then things went from bad to worse, as Goran Dragic rolled his ankle on a drive while being fouled by Jimmer Fredette. Dragic was carried off the court and was shortly after taken back to the locker room. The official word was a sprained ankle and he was done for the night.

With Dragic out of the line-up and Bledsoe running the show at the point, the two teams traded buckets over the next three minutes. Then Bledsoe orchestrated a 6-0 run with a bucket and two assists to bring the Suns within four at 67-63.

Following a Kings timeout, the game devolved into Jimmer Time. The Suns left the former college superstar open again and again, and Fredette made them pay like he was still at BYU. Fredette hit three long 3-pointers and scored 11 points in the third, then hit two more and scored 10 in the fourth to give him 21 total points, all coming after halftime.

The Suns were only down seven at the start of the fourth quarter, but things quickly got out of hand and the Kings cruised to an easy 17-point victory.

Standout Performers

- **Kings' Dynamic Duo:** I already mentioned the dominant games by Cousins and Fredette. Those two had nearly half the Kings' points (50 of 107) between them.

- **Markieff Morris:** Markieff Morris was the only Sun to truly have a good game. He went off early, scoring 11 quick points in a variety of ways. He knocked down jumpers, showed off a post move or two and crashed the offensive glass. Toss in a couple nice passes and a few hustle plays and you have Keef's best performance of the preseason. Final line: 15 points, seven rebounds, two assists, 7-8 shooting and 1-1 from deep in 23 minutes. He single-handedly outscored the two Kings power forwards ([Patrick Patterson](#) and [Jason Thompson](#))

15-13.

- **Um... [Shannon Brown](#) :** Shannon actually had a pretty decent game. He finished with 11 points on 5-8 shooting. He made a nice mid-range catch-and-shoot jumper and had a couple nice finishes at the basket. He only showed a glimpse or two of the bad Shannon (I can only remember one really bad play), although the 1-4 shooting from the charity stripe hurts a little bit.

Final Thoughts

- While Dragic and Bledsoe scored fairly efficiently (20 points on 9-14 shooting combined)

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they really struggled to run the team and get the offense flowing tonight. Dragic had six turnovers and only three assists, while Bledsoe finished with four turnovers and five assists. They never found a rhythm when they played together tonight, and when one sat down the other one over-dribbled and struggled to create anything. I am a believer in this backcourt, but tonight definitely wasn't their best outing.

- The officiating tonight was atrocious. The disparity in free throws (36-20) and fouls called (18-30) should speak for itself. At one point, Kings center Hamadi Ndiaye all but hip-checked [Marcus Morris](#)

out of bounds as he slid over late trying to cut off the baseline. They called a charge. The Suns lost this game all by themselves through poor offensive play, but they definitely weren't playing on an even playing field.

- [Alex Len](#) and [Archie Goodwin](#) still have a long way to go. Len was eaten alive by the Kings' bigs. He looked slow and weak out there trying to defend Cousins and Thompson. Both he and Goodwin have yet to adjust to the speed of the NBA game. Suns fans are going to have to have patience with them.

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