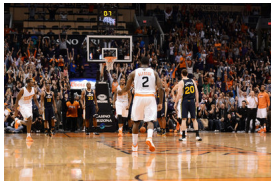


Written by

Monday, 04 November 2013 10:16 -



For those that thought the [Phoenix Suns](#) (2-1) would finish with 16 wins and be historically bad from a franchise perspective, they now need to go 14-65 to close the season. That would take more effort than it would to win more games. Is my math right, Jim?

Game Recaps

vs. [Portland Trail Blazers](#) --- [W \(104-91\) Full Recap](#)

vs. [Utah Jazz](#) --- [W \(87-84\) Full Recap](#)

@ [Oklahoma City Thunder](#) --- [L \(103-96\) Full Recap](#)

This first week of the NBA season was all about introductions. For the Suns, it was a "Hello and welcome to the city," for [Eric Bledsoe](#) , [Miles Plumlee](#) , and [Dionte Christmas](#) .

All three had quality debuts and continue to prove that they deserve, and might have always deserved, a bigger role than they were ever given. Those three have played great while rookies

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[Alex Len](#)

and

[Archie Goodwin](#)

have been playing as expected for 19 and 20 year old first year players.

Around the NBA there have been other introductions from the likes of [Michael Carter-Williams](#) and

[Victor Oladipo](#)

, and reminders from

[Chris Paul](#)

and

[Kevin Durant](#)

as to why they are some of the best players in the league.

For the Suns this has been a team effort. [P.J. Tucker](#) (13.0 points per game), [Gerald Green](#) (11.0), and

[Channing Frye](#)

(10.0) have filled in the gaps.

[Goran Dragic](#)

and Bledsoe are the team engine(s) with the way that they push the ball and control tempo. In the pre-season they were turnover prone, but so far in the season that matters they have been more controlled.

The trade of [Marcin Gortat](#) for [Emeka Okafor](#) has opened up more playing time for little used point guard [Ish Smith](#) and others.

Third year forwards [Marcus Morris](#) and [Markieff Morris](#) have bounced around the rotation, each starting one game and coming off the bench the rest of the games. They are a work in progress like the rest of the team as they try to work their way into a comfort zone in the rotation. This whole roster is a work in progress, but one heck of a fun one so far, that is for certain.

Key Stat: 5th and 22nd

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For some reason, early in the season, the Suns are fifth in the NBA in three-point attempts despite being 22nd in shooting percentage from deep. The team is not loaded with shooters this season and in fact the team leader in attempts is Bledsoe, a slashing, athletic point guard who has shot 30.8% from three for his career.

Sometimes less is more and, for the 2013-2014 Suns, less three-point shooting might be more for their offense.

Quote of the Week

"It was reversed now it is even," Coach Hornacek after the Jazz game. "I thought Gordon gave P.J. a little shove to back up and make the three. That was a great shot by him. We had our guy do the same thing. Two great plays by two great players."

(A smile and a wink as Hornacek was clearly joking about the push-off in reference to another famous push-off in Utah Jazz history)

The High: Bledsoe Game Winner

In person, this was fantastic. On the possession where [Gordon Hayward](#) hit the game tying three I told my cohorts in the media section that if he caught the ball it was going in. He had been playing well all game and his confidence was growing. After he made the move to create separation (or the push, according to Coach Hornacek) it was over. That was until Bledsoe stepped up.

For the Suns, Bledsoe caught the ball confidently, dribbled to center court, and rocked Hayward to sleep before pulling up in his face... ONIONS! Great shot, great crowd reaction, and great

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moment for a fan base that is starved of those.

The Low: An Undefeated Season, No More

The Suns were predicted to be one of the worst teams in the league this year record wise, but after a 2-0 start it was clear that they were not going to go into the night quietly. They can still finish at the bottom of the standings, but with the way they play with energy, effort, and excitement makes for a team that can surprise anybody on any given night.

A loss to the Thunder means that there will not be an undefeated Suns team this year. Time to go back to the "tanking" talk.

Full Staff Predictions

Kris Habbas	Jim Coughenour	Sean Sullivan	Jacob Padilla
MVP	P.J. Tucker	Goran Dragic	Eric Bledsoe
LVP	Marcus Morris	Emeka Okafor	Emeka Okafor
DPOY	P.J. Tucker	Eric Bledsoe	Eric Bledsoe
6th Man	Gerald Green	P.J. Tucker	P.J. Tucker
Rookie	Alex Len	Archie Goodwin	Archie Goodwin
All-Suns	Goran Dragic	Goran Dragic	Goran Dragic
All-Suns	Eric Bledsoe	Eric Bledsoe	Eric Bledsoe
All-Suns	Gerald Green	P.J. Tucker	P.J. Tucker
All-Suns	P.J. Tucker	Channing Frye	Channing Frye
All-Suns	Channing Frye	Miles Plumlee	Miles Plumlee
Most Improved	Goran Dragic	Miles Plumlee	Miles Plumlee
Biggest Surprise	Alex Len	Win Lotto	Gerald Green
Biggest Disappointment			
Markieff Morris	Markieff Morris	Alex Len	The Morris Twins
Most Likely to Achieve Wins	Miles Plumlee 22.7	P.J. Tucker 16	Eric Bledsoe 27

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Player of the Week:

Eric Bledsoe - 22.0 PPG 8.6 APG 6.3 RPG 2.0 SPG 40.1% FG (22.2% 3PT)

With all do respect to the great play of Plumlee in the first game of the season, the week belonged to Bledsoe with a game-winner and a career-high under his belt. In just three games with the Suns Bledsoe has three of his Top 10 scoring performances and his career-high in both assists and turnovers. This is rapidly becoming Bledsoe's team. As Jalen Rose and Bill Simmons joked about in their preview series, "there are 30 teams in the NBA and [DeMarcus Cousins](#) owns one of them."

Well, there are 30 teams in the NBA and one of them is owned by Eric Bledsoe.

Previewing the Week Ahead:

Tuesday, November 5th @ [New Orleans Pelicans \(1-2\)](#)

Wednesday, November 6th @ [San Antonio Spurs \(2-1\)](#)

Friday, November 8th vs. [Denver Nuggets \(0-2\)](#)

Sunday, November 10th vs. [New Orleans Pelicans \(1-2\)](#)

Oh, And The Gorilla Tho...

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More from Bright Side Of The Sun:

- [Phoenix Suns fall in Oklahoma City, 103-95; Thunder's superstar duo too much](#)
- [The Great Philly Debate Part Two: How is the Michael Carter-Williams Era being embraced and some differing opinions on P.J. Tucker](#)
- [Phoenix Suns Capology Update: Lots of recent activity still adds up to lots of cap space](#)
- [The Great Philly Debate Part One: Who deserves the No. 1 Overall Pick? Liberty Ballers Michael Levin and I debate just that](#)
- [Phoenix Suns situation with Eric Bledsoe has shades of Joe Johnson all over it](#)