

## Suns Will Stink In 2010-11... Just Like 2009-10

Written by  
Sunday, 25 July 2010 02:21 -

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The [Suns](#) have faded in the West. Is this the season the flame is extinguished? ... **Prediction:**  
**9th** in the

West (Chad Ford, ESPN.com)

That said, while I think the Suns can top out in the high 40s, the offense just isn't good enough to carry what will be a terrible, terrible defense. ... **Prediction:** 39-43 (Kelly Dwyer for Yahoo Sports)

This team is not deep enough to go far in the playoffs, too talented to be blown up. ... **Prediction:**  
**n: 10th** i

n the West (Chris Sheridan, ESPN.com)

It is now fair to say the sun has set on the window of opportunity for Phoenix. (**Justin Johnson for docsports.com**)

Yeah, the 2009-10 Suns sure did stink.

I hope they carry the same odor into 2010-11.

It is always part infuriating and part amusing to see pre-season prognostication totally dismiss the Suns.

It is true that the Suns have never won an NBA championship. It is also true that they have the 4th best all-time winning percentage in the NBA. Over the last 6 seasons, they have won 67.5% of their regular season games, missing the playoffs only one year (after the tumultuous 2008-09 season which saw 2 coaches, a trade of 2 players, and a season-ending injury to a star, while still posting a 56.1% winning percentage).

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In this case, it is enjoyable to look back and see that not too many people saw the good things in store for the Suns in the 2009-10 season.

To be fair, I cherry-picked the quotations. The collective wisdom of the ESPN writers and commentators were that the Suns would finish as the 8th seed in the West. Marc Stein predicted them to finish as high as 6th.

The gold star goes to [Tim Kempton who predicted the Suns would finish with over 50 wins](#) (as high as possibly 55-58 if they won all their close games).

In all of the early discussions for the 2010-11 season, I have yet to see anyone mention the Suns.

You know, the team that won 54 games in 2009-10, finished 3rd in the West, swept the [San Antonio Spurs](#), and lost to the eventual NBA champs in the Western Conference Finals in 6.

Unbelievable. Or should I say, predictable. Even with the Suns finishing well in the regular season, the big name commentators wrote them off time and again in the playoffs. My favorite was when Kenny Smith was asked to compare the 2009-10 Suns to the early Suns team; he said the 2004-05 Suns had a better bench. I couldn't believe this guy actually gets paid to give his opinion. It was pretty clear that Kenny had not spent much time watching the 2009 Suns. I wonder if the playoff run opened his eyes some.

In any event, [I was thrilled that the Suns refused to blow things up last summer](#) :

My contrarian opinion is that the Suns are still a highly talented team that is only a break or two away from competing for the big prize, and nonetheless continuing a long successful stretch of fun entertaining basketball.

Additionally, some of their young players got some significant experience and seemed to be playing much better toward the end of the year (especially Dudley and Dragic). Standing pat I

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suspect the Suns would have finished above 50 wins and solidly in the playoffs for 2010.

But you say... the Suns did lose their superstar power forward, [Amare Stoudemire](#) .

How can the Suns not take a step backward without him around?

Let me tell how:

- They added 3 solid players ( [Hedo Turkoglu](#) , [Josh Childress](#) , and [Hakim Warrick](#) ) to the team who would start or come off the bench for any team in the NBA.
- One of those players, Hedo Turkoglu, was a prize free agent the year before.
- Anybody remember the 2005-06 season, where we played just about the whole season without Amare and still made the Western Conference Finals? Does anyone doubt that the 2010-11 roster will not be at least as good, if not better than the 2005-06 roster?
- How many players have had career years playing with [Steve Nash](#) ? Look out Turkoglu, Childress, and Warrick.
- The Suns will have the strongest bench in the NBA: 10 players that would start or sub for any team in the NBA.

But... Steve Nash is older. He has lost a step or two.

I say:

- Haven't we heard that before? Cuban didn't want to pay Nash what he was worth back in 2004 because he didn't think he could last playing like he did. We know how well that went, as he went on to win 2 MVP titles, 4 NBA Assist titles, made the Conference Finals 3 out of 6 seasons.
- Last year, he shot over 50% from the field, 42% from 3-pt land, and 93% from the free throw stripe while dishing out a league-leading 11 assists per game. How many other point guards can say that, or anything close to that?
- With such a deep team, Nash should not have to play as many minutes.
- When Nash sits, we will still have an emerging [Goran Dragic](#) , and Hedo (and Hill) to help the offense move the ball.

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There are, of course, no guarantees.

- Yes, I think that Nash, Hill, and possibly Richardson will decline some this year.
- Yes, I think that Lopez, Dudley, Dragic, and Frye will play at least as good as last year, if not better.
- Yes, I think that between Hedo, Childress, and Warrick, we will find 1 or 2 solid, dependable players who will step up.
- Yes, I think that Clark and Lawal have a chance to make an impact and get some playing time.
- Yes, I think the Suns will field another entertaining team that will have a different set of stars step up from game to game.
- Yes, I think the 2010-11 Suns will surprise a lot of people.
- Yes, I think the 2010-11 Suns will stink... just like the 2009-10 Suns... I hope.

### Poll **What will the Suns do in 2010-11?**

- Shock the world (WCF or NBA Finals appearance or title)
- Stay strong (Another successful season and good playoff run)
- Slip some (A good season but short playoff stay)
- Drop dramatically (A bad season with no playoff in the end)

1402 votes | [Results](#)