

Goran Dragi? has 18 points, 7 assists and a block in a home loss to Brazil

Written by

Saturday, 23 August 2014 09:46 -



The Dragon plays on Slovenian soil again, breathing some defensive fire and making longer 3s.

After almost 11 months [Suns Goran Dragic](#) played in front of Slovenian fans again. It was nice to finally see him lead Slovenia team on court as its rightful captain. His first home game, though statistically not as efficient as usual, was still good: 18points on 7/17 shooting, 7 assists and a chase down block you could see coming immediately after the ball changed possession. When the Dragon doesn't produce well on offence, he goes into defense (make-up) mode, which I really have to commend here. His game also included a 14 point 4th quarter, where he got "GO-GI GO-GI" cheers while taking a free throw - which sadly, he missed.

The atmosphere was great, the crowd was cheering from the start and got louder and louder as the game progressed. You have to give credit to the Brazilians. As hard as the fans were rooting for our own, they were booing the Brazil team just as bad. Some of those [Splitter](#) free throw misses had to be due to the overwhelming noise. Unfortunately, Brazil still managed to win in overtime, despite Slovenia defeating a 19 point deficit and getting an 8 point lead in the 2nd half. Brazil managed to tie it in the last seconds of regulation. After that they outscored us by 4 and won the game 88:84.

Again Jogi wrote a great [recap](#) of the very intense game and for all the number nerds here are the [stats](#) .

The only other thing I'll say is; the Slovenian refs weren't giving us any breaks, at some point in the game, even I was shouting rudely at them and I had a lot of support around me. **Zoran Dragi?** got slapped in the face while getting a rebound and nothing..

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Quotes from Klemen Prepelič (19pt) and coach Jure Zdovc:

Jure Zdovc: First half wasn't so bad, defense was good, we were just turning the ball over too much, we had 8 turnovers, but even that isn't that big of a problem if 6 of those turnovers weren't direct punishments, and that's what really killed us. But I have to emphasize they (Brazil) were really aggressive in the first half, too aggressive. I mean a few of our players were bruised all over. The referees were allowing it. I warned them about it, but they just weren't stopping the aggressiveness in time, we didn't fight back and we paid for it.

Again very bad start to the 3rd quarter, mistakes on defence, turnover at half-court.. I think we simply can't afford that and then we were chasing them for 19 points. I sent young Nikolič in to push the ball more aggressively. We came to life a little bit, made some hard 3s. But this is all the consequence of good defence, which gave us some certainty. Then, after we hit one 3, I always say 3s are contagious; either no one makes it or everybody starts hitting it. So we got a few lucky shots. And again incomprehensibly, stupidly we handed them the win. again a lot of nonsense, that we just can't afford if we want to win, especially against a good team like Brazil.

Klemen Prepelič (when asked if they'd need more time to prepare because of all the flaws): Considering Gogi is limited and that Erazem (Lorbek) is not coming, which was a big shock for us... But we still have a lot of quality players and like Jure said "The team wins, not the individual". Against Lithuania and today against Brazil we showed some solid minutes and if we apply them to all 40 minutes we can play anyone.

We definitely won't be winning with 3s, we need some depth, which we'll mostly get from Gogi's penetration, but someone else has to step up as well. Gogi hasn't played since April and he needs minutes. I think we're on the right track, we have to get that confidence and play bravely.

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It's a shame we lost, but it was still a special game for me, since I somehow luckily got first row tickets for the game, which turned out to really be 2nd row court-side seats. Though the view is better from farther away, it was great seeing the action up close and hearing player "opinions" directed towards the refs. Even heard Gogi sort of curse at one. He had a point and fans were cursing way worse anyway.

Today is the last day of the Telemach tournament and Slovenia will have the chance to repay Lithuania for last week's loss. I fully expect #Junaki to come through and win the cup on home court.

Oh yeah, almost forgot: our poll from last week seems to have some merit :) Here are the results:

Last thing: I made a few kinda bad quality videos with some Dragon highlights. If any are good enough and anyone is interested, I'll post them when I have the time to sort through them. Or maybe KZS will give us some video and I'll post the link. And I could only get a good photo of Gogi from the back, but at least it's completely fresh :)