

Postgame Notes & Quotes

Phoenix Mercury 97, Chicago Sky 84
US Airways Center, Phoenix, AZ
July 1, 2011

NOTES

- The Sky has lost five of the last six games including three in a row, and is now 4-6 overall.
- The Sky led by 15 in the second quarter before Phoenix closed the gap to 1 at the end of the half.
- Epiphanny Prince scored 19 points to lead the Sky in scoring.
- The Sky outshot the Mercury 46 to 41%.
- Lindsay Wisdom-Hylton led the Sky in rebounds for the first time this season with 8.
- Both teams had five players with double digit points.
- The Mercury outscored the Sky 42-18 from the free throw line, setting a Mercury franchise record for the most free throws made in a game and the most ever for a Sky opponent.
- Phoenix was paced by Diana Taurasi's 11-of-12 shooting from the charity stripe.
- The Mercury used a 17-2 run bridging the second and third quarters to overcome a 15-point first half deficit, its largest of the season, and take a 58-51 lead with 7:27 remaining in the third quarter. Phoenix did not trail for the rest of the game.
- Phoenix has won five of its last six games after starting the season 0-3.
- The Mercury recorded its sixth consecutive win against Chicago at US Airways Center, matching the longest home winning streak against one opponent in franchise history (Detroit, July 15, 1998-June 13, 2002). Chicago has never won in Phoenix (0-6).
- The Mercury swept the season series with Chicago for the fifth time in the six-year history of the series. Phoenix is now 11-1 (.917) all-time against the Sky.
- With tonight's win, the Mercury improved to 5-4 on the season moving to within two games of league-leading San Antonio (7-2 after tonight's loss in New York), equaling Seattle's (4-3) distance from first place in the West.
- Diana Taurasi paced the Mercury with a game-high 24 points, including 15 in the first half, keeping the Phoenix within one point at the break. She also recorded a game-high-tying six assists. In two games against the Sky this season, Taurasi averaged 23.5 points on 14-of-23 (.609) shooting, 3.4 rebounds and 4.5 assists.
- Penny Taylor finished with 14 points and seven rebounds averaging averaged 16.5 points and 8.0 rebounds in two games against the Sky this season.

- Nakia Sanford posted her best performance in a Mercury uniform with nine points, and six rebounds all coming in the second half.

POSTGAME QUOTES

SKY HEAD COACH POKEY CHATMAN.....

On strong start: “It really is a simple game. A little bit of transition baskets. We thought we could get some good looks on the pick-and-role, we did that. Also, got some looks down low. The few minutes that Sylvia (Fowles) was able to play because of the 30 or so fouls called on us and the 45 free-throws shot, she managed to get 12 points in that short amount of time, she just wasn’t on the court enough.”

On the Mercury comeback: “I give credit to the opposition, they played their game. They got out in transition, they got to the line. They attacked us; they shot 45 free-throws. I told the team, ‘I don’t have a scheme for free-throws.’ We need to do a better job of not committing so many fouls and its magnified because Phoenix is a jump shot shooting team, so we must be really bad to put them on the line 45 times.”

SKY GUARD COURTNEY VANDERSLOOT 14 POINTS, 3 ASSISTS

On the fast start in first quarter: “We really came out fresh, prepared, and we really wanted to attack them from the get-go. Then they got their transition game going and that is when they’re at their best. We had some lapses defensively and they’re tough to stop.”

SKY GUARD EPIPHANNY PRINCE..... 19 POINTS, 6 ASSISTS

On her effective play: “We just wanted to attack and be aggressive. We felt like we could attack off the screen-and-role a little bit, either we would create for others or we would find our own shot. So we just wanted to come in being aggressive.”

On the fast start: “Coach (Pokey Chatman) put in a good game-plan, we stuck to the scheme that she (Pokey Chatman) drew up and it was working for us early.”

On the Mercury comeback: “We started settling for jump shots more. What got us in the game was attacking the basket and getting to the free-throw line. We started settling for jumpers. They’re a great team and we let them get a lot of points in transition. Also, we put them on the line 45 times.”

On adjustments for upcoming game: “We have to be able to play defense and move our feet. When you score 84 points you should be able to beat a team. We shot 86% percent from the free-throw line but to put another team on the line 45 times, there is no way we are going to be able to win.”

MERCURY HEAD COACH COREY GAINES.....

On the win in tonight’s game:

“We weren’t shooting great at the beginning of the game, and I looked at my assistant coaches and said I know we can shoot better than that. I knew that it would all come eventually. I am not blaming the road trip, it was a long grueling road trip, it was a good one for us but it kind of overlapped and we didn’t have enough time to recuperate. We came back and we practiced the next day hard and we went hard.”

On the intensity of tonight's game:

"We dug ourselves a 15 point deficit, and I knew that we would come back, the energy level picked up and it was all good in the end."

MERCURY GUARD DIANA TAURASI.....24 POINTS, 6 ASSISTIS

On returning home to play tonight's game:

"You know it's always the hardest game coming off a road trip, you come back home and think that the game is going to be easy and the crowd is going to get you through it, and the other team is going to come in here and just go through the motions, but Chicago came in and played really well and really hard."

On the energy level in tonight's game:

"We struggled for a bit in the game, but we showed a little resilience getting back into it. A game is strange, energy and momentum; it goes from team to team. You just hope that you can hold on to that momentum just a little bit longer than everyone else, and fortunately today we did that."

MERCURY CENTER KARA BRAXTON.....15 POINTS, 5 REBOUNDS

On returning home to play the game tonight:

"I mean we have been on a long road trip and were really tired coming in here, and it was a hard game, but they came out smoking and we had to just get into the groove of things and settle down. Luckily we came out on top tonight."

On her personal performance tonight:

"I'm glad they had confidence in me today, you know it's not always my day. When I do get the opportunity to get the ball, and it's going good they are going to keep feeding me and feeding me, and like I said it was a good day for me. I just am glad that my teammates have a lot more confidence in me now."