

CHICAGO SKY vs. LOS ANGELES SPARKS

POST-GAME NOTES

June 3, 2008

Team	Score (OT)	Record	High Points	High Rebounds	High Assists	Other Notable
Sky	77	1-4	Dupree, 22	Dupree, 11	Canty, 8	Perkins, 16 points
Los Angeles	81	4-1	Milton-Jones, 24	Leslie, 12	Milton-Jones, 5	Leslie, 18 points

- For the third consecutive game, the Sky suffered a tough loss that went down to the wire. The Sky overcame a 13-point fourth-quarter deficit to force overtime, but the Sparks were too much in the extra session and slowly began to pull away. The visiting team won for the third straight meeting between the two squads. This is the second consecutive Sky-Sparks game to go into overtime. The Sparks improve to 4-1 while the Sky drops to 1-4. Chicago is now 1-4 all time against Los Angeles.
- Sky rookie center **Sylvia Fowles** left the game with 7:13 remaining in the third quarter, after suffering a left knee injury. The injury occurred after Fowles landed awkwardly attempting to block DeLisha Milton-Jones' fast break lay-up. She was helped to the locker room and taken for an MRI. Initial diagnosis is a knee strain.
- It was a bayou bash tonight with four former LSU Tigers in action. Representing the alma mater were the Sparks' **Marie Ferdinand-Harris** and **Temeka Johnson** and the Sky's rookie duo of **Quianna Chaney** and **Sylvia Fowles**.
- NBA players Dwyane Wade, Antoine Walker and Shelden Williams (who is Candace Parker's fiancé) were at the game.
- Singer/actress Michelle Williams of Destiny's Child and a minority owner of the Sky was at the game and previewed her new music video for "We Break the Dawn," the first single off her solo pop album, due in stores in August.

KEY STATS OF THE NIGHT

- 6,304: The attendance for tonight's game was a sell-out and the largest crowd in franchise history. The previous high was 5,443 against the New York Liberty on August 14, 2007.
- The Sky struggled in the third quarter, scoring only 10 points to the Sparks' 22, shooting only 16.7%. The team did not score for 4 minutes after Fowles left the game with a knee strain.
- The Sky missed three free throws in overtime (2-5), while the Sparks hit 8 of 9.
- The Sky has a season-low 10 turnovers, giving up only 8 points, while the Sparks gave up 26 points on 17 turnovers.

KEY RUN OF THE NIGHT

- The Sky used a 21-4 fourth quarter run to turn what looked to be a potential Sparks blowout into a nail-biter. With the Sky down 58-44, **Jia Perkins** hit a jump shot to spark the stretch, during which she scored twelve points and a made crucial steal. When the run ended the Sky was up 65-62, but could not hold on to the lead down the stretch.

SKY-LIGHTS

- Guard **Jia Perkins**, coming off a season-high 21 points against Connecticut, continued her hot play, finishing with 16 points, 13 in the fourth quarter.
- Perkins hit her first 3-pointer of the season tonight. She was 2-3 from behind the arc.
- The Sparks have no answer for two-time All-Star **Candice Dupree**. Coming off a 24-point performance in the teams' last meeting in 2007, Dupree went for 22 points, tying her season high, and 11 rebounds, her second consecutive double-double of the season and 12th of her career. Her eight offensive rebounds were good for a new career high.
- Dupree's first free throw tonight was the 300th of her career.
- **Dominique Canty** had a great all-around performance for the Sky. The veteran added 13 points, one shy of her season high, and eight assists, one short of her career high. Canty hit two clutch free throws with only 6.6 seconds remaining to tie the game and send it into overtime.
- **Brooke Wyckoff's** 3-pointer was the 99th of her career.
- The Sky's 77 points were its highest point total ever against the Sparks, and the highest output of the season since its win against Sacramento on May 22.

SPARKS NOTES

- **Lisa Leslie** showed no rust in just her fifth regular-season game since returning from last season's maternity leave. The three-time WNBA MVP scored 18 points and grabbed a game-high 12 rebounds for her third double-double of the season.
- **DeLisha Milton-Jones** scored a season-high 24 points, two shy of her career high. She also had eight rebounds and a season-high five assists. She scored 20 of her points in the second half.
- Rookie **Candace Parker** struggled in her first game in front of her hometown crowd. The WNBA's sixth-leading scorer and leading rebounder tied her season low in both points and rebounds with only 12 and 7, and it was her first game without an offensive rebound. She fouled out for the first time in her career with 6.6 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter. The foul led to two made free throws by Canty that tied the game and eventually forced overtime.
- Prior to Parker's missed free throw in the fourth quarter, the Sparks had hit 24 consecutive free throws vs. the Sky – they were 9-9 on 7/1/07 in LA and hit their first 15 free throws tonight.

SKY QUOTES

Head Coach Steven Key

On Fowles' injury:

"I did get an update. Mike (Mitchell, Sky assistant coach) walked her up and said that by the time she got to the tunnel she has walking on her own. I think she was more scared or nervous than it was severe."

On comeback:

"I am pleased that we came back, but like I said last week when we lost, I don't want these moral victories. We looked good but I want to win like everybody else. I want to enjoy the win and say 'I found something wrong, but we won.' We'll find some positives in it for sure, but we also have to go back and figure out why we can't get over the hump."

On breakdown in overtime:

“They have an inside presence, and when you command that kind of attention and get foul calls it sets off the overtime a little bit different. So they started with free throws and we started with jump shots, so if we don’t make the shot and they make theirs, we’re down two points already.”

On the last few practices:

“We acknowledged and said out loud ‘These are mistakes we’re making.’ I can’t hold them always accountable. I have to always be critical which means they have to come together as a team and say to themselves, ‘Hey look, you made a mistake but I’ll help you next time.’ So I think that was the main difference, to at least give ourselves a chance to win.”

On team’s mindset after Sylvia’s injury:

“I think they were a little bit rattled. When we got a chance to call a time out, I let them know that I got a report and that Syl’s going to be okay and not to worry.”

On team’s come-back after Fowles’ injury:

“We can’t wait to turn it on and off. We have to know from the start that we’re good enough to play with anybody. We have to stay positive and know even when we make mistakes or don’t make shots we still have a chance to win the game.”

#4 Candice Dupree

On just missing a comeback win:

“I think we have a lot of mental breakdowns, but we didn’t have as many tonight. We were able to come back, but you know we have to play a little bit more consistently; get points on the board and get some stops.”

On the team’s strategy for game:

“I think the biggest thing for us was on defense, because we’re definitely undersized against them. When somebody was being taken one-on-one on the block, we’d send somebody down to help, especially on Leslie and Parker.”

On contributors to the loss:

“They got some easy ‘and one’s.’ There was one off a back screen on me. We should have switched up on that and I didn’t box out, so Milton-Jones got an easy ‘and one’ off of that. We tried to attack them as much as possible by penetrating to the basket and trying to get them into foul trouble, but they’re big.”

#11 Jia Perkins

On the loss:

“I feel bad. It hurts because it’s another loss, but I’m pleased with the way that we came out and stayed with the game. At one point, we were down 14 points and we fought back. We were patient and knew that we were going to start to hit shots. Our defense played very well. We fought hard and played hard and I am just really proud of this team. We just got to keep our heads up and get a win.”

On difference between first and second half:

“I got those two quick fouls and that took me out of my game. So it was tough to sit back and watch my team play, but I have to be a cheerleader when I am on the bench. During the second half, I am really not a shooter, I am a scorer. So once I finally got a couple of shots, my confidence was sky high.”

On overtime:

“We wanted to take it and we felt like the momentum was in our favor. We have to give credit to LA. We missed a couple of rotations and they got a couple of easy shots and the win. You have to be aggressive in overtime in order to get a win. They came out more aggressive, but we will learn from this loss and move on.”

On next game:

“We have a chip on our shoulder, and we should have a chip on our shoulder. We need to win. If we play our next game the way we played this game, then we will get a win.”

SPARKS QUOTES

Head Coach Michael Cooper

On the Sky:

“Obviously their team record doesn’t indicate how good they are; they are a very good basketball team. We had to work like heck to get this win. Not having played a home game and playing on the road, this is a good win for us.”

On their 4-1 record:

“I think we are on our way. Ask me in about a week or two and I can tell you better. But again for us not having played a home game and every other team has played at least three home games, I think we have done pretty well on the road and separated ourselves. We don’t have the luxury of getting every team’s nonchalant attitude every night. Take, for example, Connecticut comes here the other night. This team, had they played like this against Connecticut, they would have beaten them, but I’m pretty sure they were thinking about us and that’s what we see. We are getting teams’ 1, 2, and 3-fist punch every night, and for us to pull this one out with Candace (Parker) fouling out is a good win for our team and a testimonial to how good we can be.”

On the Lakers in the NBA Finals:

“I think the Lakers are going to sweep Boston’s ass in 5 and I dislike Boston. I’m not going to say I hate them, but I dislike them very, very much and I am glad the Lakers get a chance to close the championship organization thing even more.”

3 Candace Parker

On the Sky’s comeback:

“We have a habit of doing that: letting teams come back and not putting teams away. We’ve done that a few times this year. We have to figure out what’s the problem.”

On Fowles’ injury:

“Obviously I think that was a big loss for them with her going down. They were capitalizing on going inside and then they had to kick it out more. Is she alright? (Yes.) She made a real athletic play. It’s really hard to stop that momentum. You really don’t want to see anyone get hurt, so I’m glad she’s alright.”

On playing in her hometown:

“I was really excited to play in front of my family and friends. It’s great to come home to Chicago. I probably know half of the people here [in the arena].”