



(28-21) Colorado 14ers at (22-27) Albuquerque Thunderbirds
 D-League Game # 347 / HOME GAME # 25
 TINGLEY COLISEUM - Albuquerque, NM
 Saturday, April 12, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. (MDT)



ALBUQUERQUE THUNDERBIRDS PROBABLE STARTERS

<u>Position</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Player</u>	<u>Ht.</u>	<u>Wt.</u>	<u>Comments:</u>
Guard	10	Will Conroy	6-2	195	Conroy joins the Thunderbird after playing for Armani Jeans Milano (Italy.) Will has been a part of the Tulsa 66ers roster for the past two seasons earning All-D-League Honorable Mention Honors for 2005-06, when he ranked second in the league with 6.7 assists per game. He also was also selected to the D-League All-Star Game in 2007 as well as being named to the All-D-League 2nd Team in 2007. Acquired: Acquired by the Thunderbirds through a trade with the Iowa Energy sending Josh Gross to Iowa on 03/11/08.
Guard	17	Julius Hodge	6-7	210	Julius returns to the Thunderbirds after playing with the Adelaide 36ers (Australia) and the Legea Scafati Basket (Italy). In the summer of 2007 Julius played on the Seattle Supersonics Summer League team in Las Vegas. Was on the Inactive List for 16 games while on assignment with the Austin Toros of the D-League. Acquired: Acquired by the Thunderbirds on 02/28/08.
Forward	22	Ramon Dyer	6-6	205	Named Second Team All-Conference USA as a senior. Started 69 of 100 career games. As a Senior he averaged 12.1 points, a team-high 6.1 rebounds, 1.1 blocked shots, and 1.8 steals. Started 27 of 31 games. Posted five double-doubles. Acquired: Acquired by the Thunderbirds through the D-League Draft on 11/01/07(9 th Round – 115 th Pick Overall).
Guard	24	Abdul Mills	6-3	190	Started the 2007-08 season in Syria with InterCollege Etha Engomis before deciding to return home. He had a strong season at Milford Academy where he averaged 17.0 points, 7.0 rebounds and 7.5 assists per game....Averaged 22.0 points per game in his final season at Martin Luther King High School. Acquired: Acquired by the Thunderbirds through Local Player Tryouts.
Forward / Center	44	Kevin Pittsnogle	6-11	255	To the surprise of many West Virginia basketball fans and draft enthusiasts, neither Pittsnogle nor his teammate shooting guard Mike Gansey were chosen by any of the teams in the 2006 NBA Draft. Although Pittsnogle was predicted in most mock drafts as being chosen in the early-to-mid second round, he went undrafted and thus became a free agent. On July 25, 2006, Pittsnogle signed a two-year contract with the Boston Celtics. On October 20, 2006 the Celtics waived Pittsnogle. On November 8, 2006, Pittsnogle signed with the CBA's Pittsburgh Xplosion. Acquired: Through the draft pool 01/12/08.

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THUNDERBIRDS PLAYER MOVEMENT

Transactions

04/07/08 Recalled (F) Alando Tucker from Phoenix Suns
 04/04/08 Traded (F) Darvin Ham to the Austin Toros for (C) Anthony Fuqua
 03/19/08 Traded (C) Yemi Nicholson to the Austin Toros for (G) Cheyne Gadson
 03/18/08 Released (G) Dwight Brewington, Signed (C) Yemi Nicholson
 03/13/08 Re-Assigned (F) Alando Tucker from Phoenix Suns
 03/11/08 Traded (F) Josh Gross to the Iowa Energy for (G) Will Conroy
 02/28/08 Signed (G) Julius Hodge
 02/28/08 Released (G) Daniel Horton
 01/28/08 Released (G) Ali Berdiel, (G) Daniel Horton, (G) Elijah Ingram and Signed (G) Dwight Brewington and (G) Daryl Dorsey
 01/28/08 Released (F) Serge Angounou and Signed (F) Jamaal Thomas
 01/21/08 Recalled (F) Alando Tucker from Phoenix Suns
 01/12/08 Released (F/C) Ejike Ugboaja, Signed (F/C) Kevin Pittsnogle
 01/11/08 Assigned (F) Alando Tucker from Phoenix Suns
 01/10/08 Recalled (G) D.J. Strawberry from Phoenix Suns
 01/07/08 Released (C) James Smith, Signed (F/C) Cory Underwood
 12/18/07 Recalled (F) Alando Tucker from Phoenix Suns, Assigned (G) D.J. Strawberry from Phoenix Suns
 11/29/07 Assigned (F) Alando Tucker from Phoenix Suns
 11/20/07 Released (C) Michael Adams and (G) Tim Smith
 11/14/07 Released (G) Steven Barber, (G) Kris Collins, (F) Harry Good, (G/F) Tiras Wade and (C) Jackson Marlow



RECORDS:

	<u>Record:</u>	<u>Home:</u>	<u>Road:</u>	<u>Overtime:</u>	<u>2 Overtimes:</u>
Overall:	22-27 (44.8)	14-10 (58.3)	8-17 (32.0)	1-0 (100.0)	0-0 (0.00)



D-LEAGUE STANDINGS

(as of 04/11/08)

Central Division

	<u>W-L</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>GB</u>
Dakota Wizards	28-21	0.571	0.0
x-Sioux Falls Skyforce	28-22	0.560	0.5
Iowa Energy	22-27	0.448	6.0
Fort Wayne Mad Ants	17-32	0.346	11.0

Southwest Division

	<u>W-L</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>GB</u>
x-Austin Toros	30-19	0.612	0.0
Colorado 14ers	28-21	0.571	2.0
Tulsa 66ers	25-24	0.510	5.0
Albuquerque Thunderbirds	22-27	0.448	8.0
Rio Grande Valley Vipers	21-29	0.420	9.5

West Division

	<u>W-L</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>GB</u>
x-Idaho Stampede	35-14	0.714	0.0
x-Los Angeles D-Fenders	32-17	0.653	3.0
Utah Flash	23-26	0.469	12.0
Anaheim Arsenal	22-27	0.448	13.0
Bakersfield Jam	11-38	0.224	24.0

x - Clinched Playoff Spot



UPCOMING D-LEAGUE GAMES

Friday, April 11 (All Times Eastern)

Anaheim	@ Los Angeles	6:30pm
Dakota	@ Fort Wayne	7:30pm
Albuquerque	@ Austin	8:00pm
Tulsa	@ Rio Grande Valley	8:00pm
Sioux Falls	@ Colorado	9:00pm
Bakersfield	@ Idaho	9:00pm
Iowa	@ Utah	9:00pm

Saturday, April 12 (All Times Eastern)

Dakota	@ Fort Wayne	7:30pm
Tulsa	@ Austin	8:00pm
Colorado	@ Albuquerque	9:00pm
Iowa	@ Idaho	9:00pm
Los Angeles	@ Utah	9:00pm
Anaheim	@ Bakersfield	10:00pm

2007 - 08 D-LEAGUE PLAY OFFS

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Thunderbirds 2007-08 Results / Score

Date	Opponent	Result / Score
11/23	Idaho	W / 94 -92
11/25	@ Fort Wayne	W / 98-79
11/26	@ Iowa	L / 98-101
12/1	@ Idaho	L / 84 - 92
12/7	Colorado	L / 70 -105
12/8	Colorado	L / 102 - 85
12/14	@ Bakersfield	W / 109 - 102
12/15	Anaheim	W / 100 - 97
12/23	@ Colorado	L / 94- 109
12/28	Utah	W / 112 - 104
12/29	@ Utah	L / 96 - 113
1/4	@ Anaheim	L / 103 - 105
1/5	Fort Wayne	W / 89 - 87
1/10	@ Austin	L / 105 - 117
1/12	@ Austin	W / 123 - 117
1/13	@ RGV	W / 92 - 89
1/15	@ Colorado	L / 81 - 98 *
1/16	Tulsa	L / 79 - 94 *
1/18	@ Sioux Falls	L / 95 - 104
1/19	@ Dakota	L / 84 - 104
1/23	RGV	W / 95 - 93 +
1/25	RGV	W / 99 - 76
1/26	Sioux Falls	L / 102 - 103
2/1	Dakota	L / 115 - 97
2/5	Bakersfield	W / 98 - 84+
2/8	@ Tulsa	W / 124 - 108
2/9	@ Tulsa	L / 104 - 113
2/11	@ Colorado	L / 94 - 111
2/13	@ Colorado	W / 98 - 101
2/22	RGV	W / 106 - 98
2/23	RGV	L / 85 - 99
2/28	Tulsa	L / 103 - 112
2/29	Colorado	L / 109 - 122
3/2	Iowa	L / 108 - 115
3/2	@ Tulsa	W / 110 - 98
3/8	Austin	L / 114 - 119
3/11	Austin	W / 137 - 134 OT
3/13	Austin	W / 120 - 112
3/14	Austin	W / 127 - 108
3/16	Los Angeles	W / 116 - 100
3/20	Tulsa	W / 119 - 104
3/21	Tulsa	W / 114 - 108
3/23	@ Los Angeles	L / 107 - 112
3/28	@ RGV	L / 137 - 138
3/29	@ RGV	L / 115 - 119
3/31	@ RGV	L / 113 - 120
4/2	@ Austin	W / 110 - 104
4/5	@ Tulsa	W / 118 - 112
4/11	@ Austin	L / 126 - 114
4/12	Colorado	7:00pm

* Indicates Showcase Games in Boise, ID
+ Indicates School Day Game



ALBUQUERQUE THUNDERBIRDS



Top Performances in the D-LEAGUE

(Through 04/11/08)

Points: Top 5

53, Almond, Morris (Utah) at Bakersfield, 01/30/08
51, Almond, Morris (Utah) vs Austin, 12/21/07
49, Farmer, Desmon (Rio Grande Valley) vs Albuquerque, 03/28/08

Rebounds:

46, Powell, Kasib (Sioux Falls) at Fort Wayne, 03/06/08

Assists:

28, Benson, Rod (Dakota) at Sioux Falls, 12/09/07
22, Livingston, Randy (Idaho) vs Bakersfield, 12/26/07

Field Goals Made:

19, Almond, Morris (Utah) at Bakersfield, 01/30/08

Free Throws Made:

18, Mitchell, Dwayne (Iowa) vs Tulsa, 12/23/07

3PT Field Goals:

10, Kruger, Kevin (Utah) at Idaho, 03/29/08

Blocked Shots:

10, Powell, Kasib (Sioux Falls) at Fort Wayne, 03/06/08

Steals:

11, Samb, Cheikh (Fort Wayne) at Sioux Falls, 02/02/08
8, Horner, Jeff (Iowa) at Austin, 02/22/08

Minutes:

8, Watson, CJ (Rio Grande Valley) vs Sioux Falls, 12/01/07

Field Goals Att:

55, Osmundson, Eric (Colorado) vs Tulsa, 03/01/08

Free Throws Att:

37, Almond, Morris (Utah) vs Los Angeles, 12/15/07

3PT Field Goals Att:

21, Mitchell, Dwayne (Iowa) vs Tulsa, 12/23/07

14, Osmundson, Eric (Colorado) vs Tulsa, 03/01/08

14, Nesbitt, Elton (Sioux Falls) at Iowa, 02/24/08

Personal Fouls:

6, Osmundson, Eric (Colorado) vs Tulsa, 03/01/08

6, Simmons, Cedric (Rio Grande Valley) at Austin, 01/05/08

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D-LEAGUE Statistical Leaders
(through 04/11/08)

SCORING AVERAGE			SCORING AVERAGE				
	G	PTS	Avg		G	PTS	Avg
1. Morris Almond, Utah	33	827	25.1	9. Eddie Gill, Colorado	35	646	18.5
2. Desmon Farmer, Rio Grande Valley	33	814	24.7	10. Andre Barrett, Austin	43	790	18.4
3. Carlos Powell, Dakota	47	1049	22.3	11. DerMarr Johnson, Austin	44	755	17.2
4. Sean Banks, Los Angeles	48	1049	21.9	12. Justin Reed, Bakersfield	29	493	17.0
5. Elton Brown, Colorado	36	736	20.4	12. Dontell Jefferson, Dakota	33	561	17.0
6. Dwayne Mitchell, Iowa	32	629	19.7	14. Ian Mahinmi, Austin	46	771	16.8
7. Kaniel Dickens, Colorado	37	725	19.6	15. Brian Chase, Los Angeles	36	595	16.5
8. Earl Calloway, Fort Wayne	49	915	18.7	16. Randy Livingston, Idaho	42	692	16.5

REBOUNDS PER GAME			MINUTES PER GAME				
	G	REB	Avg		G	MIN	Avg
1. Rod Benson, Dakota	48	582	12.1	1. Randy Livingston, Idaho	42	1698	40.4
2. Elton Brown, Colorado	36	427	11.9	2. Carlos Powell, Dakota	47	1859	39.6
3. Chris Alexander, Sioux Falls	40	449	11.2	3. Jeff Horner, Iowa	49	1921	39.2
4. Marcus Campbell, Anaheim	42	369	8.8	4. Eddie Gill, Colorado	35	1371	39.2
5. Ian Mahinmi, Austin	46	367	8.0	5. Dontell Jefferson, Dakota	33	1284	38.9
6. Jelani McCoy, Los Angeles	35	276	7.9	6. Kevin Kruger, Utah	48	1828	38.1
7. Kevin Lyde, Dakota	43	333	7.7	7. Desmon Farmer, Rio Grande Valley	33	1254	38.0
8. Mike Hall, Tulsa	47	348	7.4	8. Andre Barrett, Austin	43	1625	37.8

ASSISTS PER GAME			STEALS PER GAME				
	G	AST	Avg		G	ST	Avg
1. Randy Livingston, Idaho	42	435	10.4	1. Brian Hamilton, Utah	48	111	2.3
2. Andre Barrett, Austin	43	372	8.7	2. Eddie Gill, Colorado	35	78	2.2
3. Eddie Gill, Colorado	35	297	8.5	3. Billy Thomas, Colorado	37	82	2.2
4. Kevin Kruger, Utah	48	338	7.0	4. Earl Calloway, Fort Wayne	49	100	2.0
5. Jeff Horner, Iowa	49	304	6.2	5. Dontell Jefferson, Dakota	33	66	2.0
6. Earl Calloway, Fort Wayne	49	284	5.8	6. Carl Elliott, Sioux Falls	50	98	2.0
7. David Bailey, Sioux Falls	47	262	5.6	7. Jeff Horner, Iowa	49	95	1.9
8. Will Blalock, Anaheim	40	211	5.3	8. Elton Nesbitt, Sioux Falls	49	84	1.7

FIELD GOAL PERCENTAGE			FREE THROW PERCENTAGE				
	FGM	FGA	Pct		FTM	FTA	Pct
1. Jelani McCoy, Los Angeles	168	245	0.686	1. Brian Chase, Los Angeles	112	124	0.903
2. Ian Mahinmi, Austin	276	449	0.615	2. Andre Barrett, Austin	144	161	0.894
3. Justin Cage, Colorado	173	287	0.603	3. Randy Livingston, Idaho	161	181	0.890
3. Keith Closs, Tulsa	120	199	0.603	4. Earl Calloway, Fort Wayne	233	263	0.886
5. Abdoulaye N'Diaye, Los Angeles	85	142	0.599	5. Kevin Kruger, Utah	157	179	0.877
6. James Lang, Utah	244	430	0.567	6. Kevin Pittsnogle, Albuquerque	74	85	0.871
7. Stanley Asumnu, Rio Grande Valley	145	262	0.553	7. Scooter McFadgon, Bakersfield	160	185	0.865
8. Brent Petway, Idaho	133	245	0.543	8. Eddie Gill, Colorado	233	271	0.860

3 POINT FIELD GOAL PERCENTAGE			BLOCKED SHOTS PER GAME				
	3PM	3PA	Pct		G	BS	Avg
1. Justin Cage, Colorado	11	23	0.478	1. Keith Closs, Tulsa	48	133	2.8
2. Daniel Horton, Albuquerque	50	106	0.472	2. Brandon Wallace, Los Angeles	30	63	2.1
3. Jason Fontenet, Tulsa	32	70	0.457	3. Jelani McCoy, Los Angeles	35	72	2.1
4. Andre Ingram, Utah	45	101	0.446	4. Chris Alexander, Sioux Falls	40	80	2.0
4. Ricky Sanchez, Idaho	41	92	0.446	5. Kevin Lyde, Dakota	43	80	1.9
6. Fabrico Vay, Iowa	24	54	0.444	6. Ian Mahinmi, Austin	46	78	1.7
7. Andre Barrett, Austin	54	123	0.439	7. Brent Petway, Idaho	44	65	1.5
8. Adam Harrington, Tulsa	80	186	0.430	8. Rod Benson, Dakota	48	66	1.4

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2007-08 Game-by-Game Recap

Date	Opponent	W/L	Rec	Score	High Scorer	High Rebounder	Assist Leader	Att.
Nov 23	IDAHO	W	1-0	94-92	Daniel Horton 24	Josh Gross 8	Ali Berdiel 6	3994
Nov 25	Fort Wayne	W	2-0	98-79	Josh Gross 31	Serge Angounou 11	Ali Berdiel 4	4992
Nov 26	Iowa	L	2-1	98-101	Josh Gross 27	Josh Gross 7	Ali Berdiel 6	8842
Dec 1	Idaho	L	2-2	84-92	Alando Tucker 25	Alando Tucker 12	Daniel Horton 4	3362
Dec 7	COLORADO	L	2-3	70-105	Josh Gross 17	Josh Gross 9	Abdul Mills 7	1769
Dec 8	COLORADO	L	2-4	85-102	Alando Tucker 17			
Dec 14	Bakersfield	W	3-4	109-102	Alando Tucker 27	Ramon Dyer 7	Ali Berdiel 4	1693
Dec 15	ANAHEIM	W	4-4	100-97	Alando Tucker 40	Ramon Dyer 10	Ali Berdiel 14	1055
Dec 23	Colorado	L	4-5	94-109	Alando Tucker 32	Darvin Ham 11	Daniel Horton 6	1671
Dec 28	UTAH	W	5-5	112-104	Daniel Horton 32			
Dec 29	Utah	L	5-6	96-113	Abdul Mills 26	Ramon Dyer 10	Ali Berdiel 9	1512
Jan 4	Anaheim	L	5-7	103-105	D.J. Strawberry 26			
Jan 5	FORT WAYNE	W	6-7	89-87	D.J. Strawberry 41	Ramon Dyer 9	Elijah Ingram 5	3384
Jan 10	Austin	L	6-8	105-117	D.J. Strawberry 23	Serge Angounou 5	Abdul Mills 6	3185
Jan 12	Austin	W	7-8	123-117	Darvin Ham 5			
Jan 13	Rio Grande Valley	W	8-8	92-89	Darvin Ham 5			
Jan 15	Colorado	L	8-9	81-98	Darvin Ham 5			
Jan 16	TULSA	L	8-10	79-94	Darvin Ham 5			
Jan 18	Sioux Falls	L	8-11	95-104	Kevin Pittsnogle 21	Cory Underwood 9	Daniel Horton 11	N/A
Jan 19	Dakota	L	8-12	84-104	Alando Tucker 19	Elijah Ingram 7	Daniel Horton 4	3928
Jan 23	RIO GRANDE VALLEY	W	9-12	95-93	Alando Tucker 29	Darvin Ham 8	Elijah Ingram 6	3047
Jan 25	RIO GRANDE VALLEY	W	10-12	99-76	Alando Tucker 8	Serge Angounou 8	Elijah Ingram 6	1709
Jan 26	SIOUX FALLS	L	10-13	102-103	Josh Gross 20	Ramon Dyer 10	Ali Berdiel 9	1480
Feb 1	DAKOTA	L	10-14	97-115	Josh Gross 23	Darvin Ham 11	Ali Berdiel 7	2277
Feb 5	BAKERSFIELD	W	11-14	98-84	Daniel Horton 26	Josh Gross 8	Daniel Horton 9	1655
Feb 8	Tulsa	W	12-14	124-108	Daniel Horton 24	Kevin Pittsnogle 10	Ali Berdiel 6	4916
Feb 9	Tulsa	L	12-15	104-113	Kevin Pittsnogle 28	Josh Gross 10		
Feb 11	Colorado	L	12-16	94-111	Josh Gross 25	Darvin Ham 8	Daniel Horton 12	1359
Feb 13	Colorado	L	12-17	98-101	Daniel Horton 28	Jamaal Thomas 7	Daniel Horton 7	
Feb 22	RIO GRANDE VALLEY	W	13-17	106-98	Daniel Horton 18	Kevin Pittsnogle 9	Ali Berdiel 4	1097
Feb 23	RIO GRANDE VALLEY	L	13-18	85-99	Kevin Pittsnogle 25	Kevin Pittsnogle 8	Abdul Mills 10	2754
Feb 28	TULSA	L	13-19	103-112	Josh Gross 22	Darvin Ham 8		
Feb 29	COLORADO	L	13-20	109-122	Josh Gross 22	Kevin Pittsnogle 8	Jamaal Thomas 5	2952
Mar 2	IOWA	L	13-21	108-115	Kevin Pittsnogle 25	Jamaal Thomas 7	Jamaal Thomas 8	1920
Mar 7	Tulsa	W	14-21	110-98	Josh Gross 28	Josh Gross 7	Daryl Dorsey 6	2101
Mar 8	AUSTIN	L	14-22	114-119	Kevin Pittsnogle 27	Jamaal Thomas 9	Abdul Mills 8	2174
Mar 11	AUSTIN	W	15-22	*137-134	Julius Hodge 34	Julius Hodge 7	Julius Hodge 6	1521
Mar 13	AUSTIN	W	16-22	120-112	Josh Gross 37	Daryl Dorsey 7		
Mar 14	AUSTIN	W	17-22	127-108	Josh Gross 10	Julius Hodge 10	Julius Hodge 7	3045
Mar 16	LOS ANGELES	W	18-22	116-100	Julius Hodge 12	Julius Hodge 12	Will Conroy 11	868
Mar 20	TULSA	W	19-22	119-104	Julius Hodge 27	Ramon Dyer 12	Will Conroy 13	1226
Mar 21	TULSA	W	20-22	114-108	Alando Tucker 26	Ramon Dyer 8	Will Conroy 14	2473
Mar 23	Los Angeles	L	20-23	107-112	Alando Tucker 42	Kevin Pittsnogle 8		
Mar 28	Rio Grande Valley	L	20-24	137-138	Alando Tucker 38	Julius Hodge 11	Will Conroy 13	2717
Mar 29	Rio Grande Valley	L	20-25	115-121	Alando Tucker 30	Kevin Pittsnogle 11	Julius Hodge 11	1317
Mar 31	Rio Grande Valley	L	20-26	113-120	Will Conroy 16	Will Conroy 9	Will Conroy 11	
Apr 2	Austin	W	21-26	110-104	Julius Hodge 6	Kevin Pittsnogle 12	Julius Hodge 6	3311
Apr 5	Tulsa	W	22-26	118-112	Julius Hodge 12	Julius Hodge 12	Julius Hodge 9	N/A
Apr 11	Austin	L	22-27	114-126	Alando Tucker 30	Julius Hodge 8	Will Conroy 12	3515
					Alando Tucker 38	Julius Hodge 10	Julius Hodge 6	3035
					Will Conroy 16	Cory Underwood 6	Majic Dorsey 7	2091
					Julius Hodge 16			
					Cheyne Gadson 27			
						Cheyne Gadson 7	Will Conroy 7	2783
						Will Conroy 7		
						Darvin Ham 7		
						Julius Hodge 10	Cheyne Gadson 6	2613
						Julius Hodge 15	Julius Hodge 6	2729

CAPS indicate home game
*indicates overtime

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D-LEAGUE TRIPLE-DOUBLES

(through 04/11/08)

LAST	FIRST	DATE	TEAM	OPPN	HR	WL	PTS	REB	AST	BLK	STL
Washington	Darius	12/08/07	AUS	TUL	H	W	26	10	10	--	--
Akindele	Ayudeji	12/14/07	IOW	SFL	H	W	12	10	--	10	--
Gill	Eddie	12/18/07	COL	AUS	H	W	19	11	12	--	--
Sessions	Ramon	01/26/08	TUL	AUS	H	W	26	10	14	--	--
Horner	Jeff	01/26/08	IOW	FRT	H	W	14	10	13	--	--
Gill	Eddie	02/01/08	COL	IOW	H	L	25	12	15	--	--
Samb	Cheikh	02/02/08	FRT	SFL	R	L	12	12	--	11	--
Powell	Carlos	02/20/08	DAK	IOW	R	W	25	14	11	--	--
Jefferson	Dontell	02/27/08	DAK	SFL	H	W	13	10	11	--	--
Horner	Jeff	03/07/08	IOW	LOS	R	L	12	10	12	--	--
Calloway	Earl	04/07/08	FRT	IOW	R	L	24	11	11	--	--

TOP TEN D-LEAGUE DOUBLE-DOUBLE LEADERS

(through 04/11/08)

PLAYER	TEAM	#
Elton Brown	COL	26
Rod Benson	DAK	24
Randy Livingston	IDA	19
Chris Alexander	SFL	18
Lance Allred	IDA	18
Ian Mahinmi	AUS	16
Andre Barrett	AUS	15
Marcus Campbell	ANA	15
Kevin Lyde	DAK	13
Mike Hall	TUL	13

Team vs. Team Records

(through 04/11/08)

Opponent

	ABQ	ANA	AUS	BAK	COL	DAK	FRT	IDA	IOW	LOS	RIO	SFL	TUL	UTA
ABQ	_____	1-1	5-3	2-0	0-7	0-2	2-0	1-1	0-2	1-1	4-4	0-2	5-3	1-1
ANA	1-1	_____	1-1	5-2	1-1	2-0	2-0	3-5	1-1	2-6	1-1	1-1	0-2	2-6
AUS	3-5	1-1	_____	2-0	3-5	2-0	2-0	2-0	1-1	1-1	6-2	2-0	4-3	1-1
BAK	0-2	2-5	0-2	_____	1-1	1-1	0-2	0-8	1-1	4-4	1-1	0-2	0-2	1-7
COL	7-0	1-1	5-3	1-1	_____	0-2	0-2	0-2	1-1	0-2	7-1	1-1	4-4	1-1
DAK	2-0	0-2	0-2	1-1	2-0	_____	8-1	1-1	6-4	1-1	1-1	3-7	1-1	2-0
FRT	0-2	0-2	0-2	2-0	2-0	1-8	_____	0-2	5-5	1-1	0-2	4-6	0-2	2-0
IDA	1-1	5-3	0-2	8-0	2-0	1-1	2-0	_____	1-0	5-3	1-1	1-1	2-0	6-2
IOW	2-0	1-1	1-1	1-1	1-1	4-6	5-5	0-1	_____	0-2	0-2	5-5	1-1	1-1
LOS	1-1	6-2	1-1	4-4	2-0	1-1	1-1	3-5	2-0	_____	1-1	2-0	2-0	6-1
RIO	4-4	1-1	2-6	1-1	1-7	1-1	2-0	1-1	2-0	1-1	_____	1-1	4-4	0-2
SFL	2-0	1-1	0-2	2-0	1-1	7-3	6-4	1-1	5-5	0-2	1-1	_____	0-2	2-0
TUL	3-5	2-0	3-4	2-0	4-4	1-1	2-0	0-2	1-1	0-2	4-4	2-0	_____	1-1
UTA	1-1	6-2	1-1	7-1	1-1	0-2	0-2	2-6	1-1	1-6	2-0	0-2	1-1	_____

League-wide home court record: 217 - 127 (0.631)

FEEL THE THUNDER!

Top Team Performances

(through 04/11/08)

Points:	42, Alando Tucker	vs	LOS, 03/16/08
	41, D.J. Strawberry	vs	UTA, 12/28/07
Rebounds:	15, Julius Hodge	at	AUS, 04/11/08
	12, Kevin Pittsnogle	at	LOS, 03/23/08
	12, Julius Hodge	at	LOS, 03/23/08
	12, Ramon Dyer	vs	AUS, 03/13/08
	12, Julius Hodge	vs	AUS, 03/11/08
	12, Darvin Ham	at	TUL, 02/09/08
	12, Alando Tucker	at	IDA, 12/01/07
Assists:	14, Will Conroy	vs	AUS, 03/14/08
	14, Ali Berdiel	at	BAK, 12/14/07
Field Goals Made:	16, Alando Tucker	at	RIO, 01/13/08
	15, Alando Tucker	at	RIO, 03/29/08
	15, Julius Hodge	at	RIO, 03/29/08
	15, Alando Tucker	vs	LOS, 03/16/08
	15, Josh Gross	vs	AUS, 03/08/08
	15, D.J. Strawberry	vs	UTA, 12/28/07
	15, Alando Tucker	at	BAK, 12/14/07
Field Goals Att:	28, Alando Tucker	at	DAK, 01/19/08
	27, Alando Tucker	vs	ANA, 12/15/07
Foul Shots Made:	11, Julius Hodge	vs	AUS, 03/13/08
	11, Josh Gross	at	FRT, 11/25/07
Foul Shots Att:	14, Julius Hodge	vs	AUS, 03/13/08
	12, Alando Tucker	at	TUL, 04/05/08
	12, Abdul Mills	vs	COL, 12/08/07
3PT Field Goals Made:	7, Daniel Horton	vs	UTA, 12/28/07
	6, Kevin Pittsnogle	vs	TUL, 02/28/08
	6, Daniel Horton	vs	BAK, 02/05/08
	6, Abdul Mills	at	COL, 12/23/07
3PT Field Goals Att:	13, Abdul Mills	at	COL, 12/23/07
	12, Kevin Pittsnogle	at	LOS, 03/23/08
Blocked Shots:	4, Cory Underwood	vs	TUL, 01/16/08
	3, Ramon Dyer	at	RIO, 03/29/08
	3, Ramon Dyer	at	RIO, 03/31/08
	3, Daniel Horton	at	COL, 02/13/08
	3, Jamaal Thomas	vs	BAK, 02/05/08
	3, Darvin Ham	vs	SFL, 01/26/08
	3, Ramon Dyer	vs	RIO, 01/25/08
	3, Josh Gross	vs	FRT, 01/05/08
	3, Ramon Dyer	at	UTA, 12/29/07
	3, Ramon Dyer	vs	UTA, 12/28/07
Steals:	6, Josh Gross	vs	IDA, 11/23/07
	5, Ramon Dyer	vs	RIO, 01/25/08
	5, Ali Berdiel	vs	RIO, 01/25/08
	5, Alando Tucker	at	DAK, 01/19/08
	5, Abdul Mills	at	IDA, 12/01/07
Turnovers:	9, Julius Hodge	vs	AUS, 03/13/08
	8, D.J. Strawberry	vs	UTA, 12/28/07
Personal Fouls:	6, Kevin Pittsnogle	at	RIO, 03/29/08
	6, Darvin Ham	at	RIO, 03/29/08
	6, Darvin Ham	vs	TUL, 03/21/08
	6, Kevin Pittsnogle	vs	AUS, 03/13/08
	6, Darvin Ham	vs	AUS, 03/11/08
	6, Josh Gross	vs	IOW, 03/02/08
	6, Cory Underwood	at	TUL, 02/09/08
	6, Daniel Horton	at	TUL, 02/08/08
	6, Josh Gross	vs	DAK, 02/01/08
	6, Kevin Pittsnogle	at	DAK, 01/19/08
	6, Darvin Ham	vs	TUL, 01/16/08
	6, James Smith	at	UTA, 12/29/07
	6, Darvin Ham	vs	UTA, 12/28/07
	6, James Smith	at	COL, 12/23/07
	6, Darvin Ham	vs	ANA, 12/15/07
	6, Abdul Mills	at	IOW, 11/26/07
	6, James Smith	vs	IDA, 11/23/07
Minutes:	46, Alando Tucker	vs	LOS, 03/16/08
	46, Julius Hodge	vs	AUS, 03/11/08
	46, Jamaal Thomas	vs	COL, 02/29/08
	46, Abdul Mills	at	COL, 12/23/07

FEEL THE THUNDER!

IN THE NEWS

TOROS CLINCH DIVISION CHAMPIONSHIP WITH WIN OVER ALBUQUERQUE

Andre Barrett scored 29 points and Ian Mahinmi added 28 and the Austin Toros clinched the Southwest Division title and a first round bye in the NBA D-League Playoffs with a 126-114 victory over the Albuquerque Thunderbirds.

The Toros had four players scored 20-plus points and every starter scored in double figures. Kenton Paulino scored a season-high 21 points on 7-of-15 shooting from the floor. Josh Gross and Darvin Ham, who both played with the Albuquerque Thunderbirds earlier this season, scored 10 and 24 points respectively.

Albuquerque cut a 25-point deficit to 108-103 following Daryl Dorsey's free throw with 3:48 left to play in the fourth quarter. The Toros went on a 13-3 run to build the lead back to 121-106 after a slam-dunk by Ian Mahinmi.

Mahinmi, who is on assignment from the San Antonio Spurs, added 10 rebounds and five assists in 41 minutes of play. All-NBA D-League Second Team member Andre Barrett dished out 13 assists as the Toros improved to 30-19 on the season. Austin also won its 19 home game this season – setting a new franchise record.

Julius Hodge scored a team-high 30 points for Albuquerque, who fell to 22-27. Will Conroy added 25 points and two assists.

SUNS RECALL ALANDO TUCKER

The Phoenix Suns recalled rookie swingman Alando Tucker from the Albuquerque Thunderbirds of the NBA Development League, it was announced today by Suns President of Basketball Operations and General Manager Steve Kerr.

In his third and final stint with the Thunderbirds after being assigned on March 14, Tucker averaged 28.9 points, 5.0 rebounds, 1.9 assists and 37.4 minutes in 10 games. Tucker shot 57.7 percent from the field, including 44.2 percent from three-point range, in his most recent stretch with Albuquerque, helping to lead the team to a 6-4 record. In 21 total games (19 starts) in Albuquerque this season, the Wisconsin product owns averages of 27.7 points, 6.0 rebounds and 1.6 assists.

Tucker was selected by Phoenix with the 29th overall pick in the first round of the 2007 NBA Draft and has appeared in five games with the Suns, averaging 2.4 points and 0.6 rebound in 4.6 minutes.

The Phoenix Suns have clinched their fourth-straight playoff berth and the franchise's 29th all-time, including 18 in the last 20 seasons. Winners of 11 of their last 15 games, the sixth-seeded Suns (51-26) begin their final regular season road trip at 5 p.m. Phoenix time on Tuesday, April 8 visiting the Memphis Grizzlies (21-56). The game can be seen locally on My 45 and heard on Sports 620 KTAR.

TULSA PUTS UP A FIGHT IN LOSS TO ALBUQUERQUE

Tulsa's second game in three days resulted in a second loss, as they were defeated by the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 118-112 Saturday night at Expo Square Pavilion.

Rejuvenated by Tuesday night's win, which ended a four game losing streak, Albuquerque showed tremendous teamwork as 6-6 guard Alando Tucker was key in the domination, scoring 34 points on 12-of-19 shooting. The Thunderbirds also received 23 points from forward Julius Hodge. Kevin Pittsnogle chipped in with 19 points and nine rebounds and Cheyne Gadsen came off the bench to add 10 points and 6 assists.

The Thunderbirds led by 10 points in the first half and 108-105 with 2:43 to play after a lay-up from Hall and a free-throw from Closs. Despite the 66ers efforts, they were unable to achieve any momentum to gain the lead.

Tulsa was paced by Mike Hall's 27 points, giving him 60 points in the last two games and a total of 19 rebounds and 13 assists. Scott Merritt (22 points and 5 rebounds), Jason Fontenet (14 points and 6 assists), Derrick Dial (10 points and 5 assists), Keith Closs (11 points and 5 rebounds), and Jeremy Kelly (10 points and 5 assists) also scored in double-figures.

THUNDERBIRDS AND TOROS FINALIZE SECOND TRADE OF THE SEASON

Thunderbirds Receive Anthony Fuqua, Send Darvin Ham to Austin

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds acquired 6-11, center Anthony Fuqua in a trade with the Austin Toros. The trade sends forward and first round pick of the 2007 D-League Draft, forward Darvin Ham to the Austin Toros.

Fuqua has spent time in the NBA summer league with the New York Knicks. A graduate of the University of Texas – San Antonio, Fuqua played in 39 games with the Toros this season, averaging 3.1 points per game and 3.0 rebounds.

"In Anthony Fuqua we are getting a long, tall, athletic player that can rebound and run the floor," Albuquerque Head Coach Jeff Ruland said. "His energy and abilities will help us finish off the season the season strong."

Ham, who was selected in the first round as the first pick by Albuquerque in the 2007 D-League Draft was averaging 10.1 points in 43 games, heads to Austin.

"Darvin Ham is family man, and the opportunity for him to be closer to his home and family came up, so we helped him by making the trade," Ruland said. "He was a leader on the team and will be missed the remainder of the season. Austin is in a great position to make the playoffs and will benefit immensely from having a leader like Darvin on the floor for them."

Fuqua is expected to be in uniform Saturday night, wearing jersey number 41, when Albuquerque takes on the Tulsa 66ers; 7:00pm at Expo Square Pavilion, in Tulsa.

THUNDERBIRDS RALLY TO UPEND THE TOROS

Cheyne Gadson scored 27 points, Kevin Pittsnogle added 22 and the Albuquerque Thunderbirds rallied from a 15-point deficit in the first half to defeat the Austin Toros 110-104 on Wednesday at the Austin Convention Center.

With the Toros leading 104-100 with 1:19 left in the game, the Albuquerque Thunderbirds scored the final 10 points of the game. The Thunderbirds bench scored 91 points to help carry the team to the come-from-behind victory.

Albuquerque used a combination of steals and turnovers in the closing seconds of the game to improve to 21-26. Abdul Mills had two steals in the final minute including one with 24.8 remaining to put the game out of reach for Austin.

Ian Mahinmi, on assignment from the San Antonio Spurs, scored 27 points and grabbed 12 rebounds as Austin falls to 29-17 on the season. DerMarr Johnson added 22 points and Justin Bowen had 24.

Gadson and Pittsnogle combined for 49 points, who both played on the Toros earlier this season, prevented the Toros from clinching their first playoff birth in team history. Darvin Ham scored 16 points and Will Conroy had 15.

ASUMNU, COLLINS LEAD RGV TO THIRD STRAIGHT WIN

Despite returning from an injury, Vipers Forward Trent Strickland encouraged Head Coach Brian Walsh to start Stanley Asumnu after his career performance on Saturday night. The selfless act by Strickland led to Asumnu's second straight double-double in the Vipers 120-113 victory over the Albuquerque Thunderbirds on Monday night at Dodge Arena. The Vipers win is their fourth straight over the T-birds and their third in a row overall.

The Vipers were surprised by a different starting line-up for Albuquerque as Jeff Ruland started four players who had seen little-to-no action in the three-game series. The move proved to work initially as the normal starters exploded in the second quarter with 37 points as the T-Birds took a 59-51 halftime lead. The Vipers trailed by as many as 12 in the second half, but a furious offensive fourth quarter led by Kris Collins allowed the Vipers to regain the lead and haul in the victory. The Vipers outscored the T-Birds 39-27 in the final frame to seal the win.

Asumnu tallied 20 points and hauled in 11 rebounds in his second straight start. Collins was a pair of rebounds and three assists shy of a triple-double on Monday. Collins tied his career high with 31 points as he chalked up his fifth straight 20-plus point game. Strickland scored 17 and added six boards off the bench, while Ivan Johnson scored 17 of his own despite being in foul trouble for most of the game. The D-League's leading scorer Desmon Farmer added to his all-time D-League scoring record with 24 points.

Will Conroy and Julius Hodge led the way for the T-birds with 16 points, with both players coming off the bench. Conroy also dished out six assists in the loss. Phoenix assignee Alando Tucker scored 13 points and hauled in five rebounds also coming off the bench.

VIPERS SLITHER PAST T-BIRDS

The Brian Walsh regime is off to an undefeated start in Hidalgo. In another back and forth offensive barnburner, the Rio Grande Valley Vipers won their second straight game over the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 119-115 Saturday night at Dodge Arena. Walsh is now 2-0 as the Vipers Head Coach. The Vipers have now won three of their last four games versus Southwest Division opponents Tulsa and Albuquerque. The Thunderbirds loss is their third straight after having won their previous six.

The game Saturday was almost a mirror image of Friday's win as both teams traded the lead several times throughout. The Vipers scored 30 points or more in three of the four quarters and outscored the T-Birds in both the first and third quarters. The Vipers attacked the basket throughout the game and drew 20 more free throw attempts than the T-Birds.

Desmon Farmer followed up his career night on Friday with 35 points to lead the Vipers in scoring. RGV point guard Kris Collins scored 19 and dished out seven assists. Stanley Asumnu scored a career high, 21 points as he started for the injured Trent Strickland. Asumnu also added a career high, 12 rebounds as he tallied his first career double-double.

The Thunderbirds were led by Phoenix assignee, Alando Tucker's 38 points. Julius Hodge struggled in the second half as he scored 27 of his 33 points in the first half. Hodge added 10 rebounds and a team high six assists, while Cheyne Gadson scored 21 off the bench to round out the double-digit scores for the T-Birds.

VIPERS BREAK RECORDS IN WALSH'S DEBUT

The Rio Grande Valley Vipers did their best Houston Rockets impression on Affiliate Night Presented by adidas as they set a new franchise record for points in a game with their 138-137 win over the Albuquerque Thunderbirds Friday night at Dodge Arena. Desmon Farmer set a new career high and broke his own franchise record for points in a game with 49.

The Vipers fought hard all night in their first game under acting Head Coach Brian Walsh. The Vipers scored 30+ points in each quarter and shot over 57% from the field. The Thunderbirds meanwhile shot over 57% from both field and from three-point range

Farmer's 49 led all scorers and all four Vipers who tallied double figures. Kris Collins chipped in with a double-double with 28 points and 10 assists. Ivan Johnson scored 27 points and hauled in six rebounds off the bench and had two blocked shots. Stanley Asumnu was perfect from the field and finished with 15 points

Phoenix assignee Alando Tucker scored 30 points to lead the way for Albuquerque. Will Conroy also helped pace the offense for the T-Birds as scored 13 and dished out a game high 12 assists. Julius Hodge was two rebounds shy of a double-double with 29 points and eight rebounds.

D-FENDERS STOP STREAKING THUNDERBIRDS

The Los Angeles D-Fenders used a strong performance from Jelani McCoy on their way to defeating the visiting Albuquerque Thunderbirds, 112-107, Sunday at STAPLES Center.

The two teams entered the final quarter knotted up at 82; after exchanging baskets and the score tied at 95 apiece with 6:26 remaining, Los Angeles went 10-10 from the free throw line, sealing the victory. Los Angeles (29-13) was able to get back in the win column after dropping two in a row, including a 16-point loss in Albuquerque the previous Sunday.

"I thought that we had a great team effort tonight," said D-Fenders Head Coach Dan Panaggio. "After losing two straight games and losing some of our players, our guys were able to rally around each other and get the win. Jelani was huge tonight. He's on top of his game right now and he's really playing like an NBA player."

Albuquerque started the game strong, jumping out to an 18-6 lead midway through the first quarter. The D-Fenders countered with a three minute spurt in the second quarter where they outscored the Thunderbirds, 15-0. Los Angeles went into the locker room at halftime with a 56-53 advantage.

After missing Friday's game with a groin injury, McCoy poured in a season-high 22 points and grabbed 14 rebounds. Sean Banks chipped in with a double-double of his own with a game-high 27 points and 10 boards. Off the bench, Wendell White chipped in with 19.

"I'm the veteran of the team so I knew that I had to step up," McCoy added. "They cut into our lead a few times but when we set up our offense, we are hard to stop because so many people can score."

Albuquerque had its six-game winning streak snapped, sending them to 20-23 on the season. Alando Tucker, on assignment from the Phoenix Suns, led six Thunderbirds players in double-figures with 26. Julius Hodge just missed out on a triple-double, notching 12 points, 12 rebounds and 9 assists and Kevin Pittsnogle chipped in with 22 and 12 boards in the loss.

"They played very well;" said Thunderbirds Head Coach Jeff Ruland. "We didn't play well enough on the defensive end to get a win and every game is very precious for us, so it is very disappointing."

THUNDERBIRDS HOLD OFF TULSA 114-108 FOR SIXTH STRAIGHT VICTORY

Tucker Explodes for Game High 33 Points; 14 in the Fourth Quarter

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds held off a late surge by the Tulsa 66ers for their sixth straight victory 114-108. Alando Tucker led all scorers in the game with 33 points for the Thunderbirds.

"This was a good win for us against a team that played well tonight," Thunderbirds Head Coach Jeff Ruland said. "We just need to keep taking things one game at a time and see what happens."

Albuquerque had six players score double figures including Julius Hodge who had 20 points and Darvin Ham who added another 15 points. Cheyne Gadson pitched in 11 points off the bench in his first game with the Thunderbirds. Gadson was recently traded to Albuquerque from the Austin Toros.

Tulsa was led by Ronald DuPree who scored 27 points. Mike Hall contributed a double-double with 18 points and 13 assists. Chris Ellis added 14 points for Tulsa off the bench.

Tucker exploded in the fourth quarter scoring 14 of Albuquerque's 36 points. Albuquerque held off a late Tulsa rally by hitting on four of six free-throws down the stretch to secure the win.

Both teams struggled to gain an advantage in the third quarter and struggled even harder to score points. Tulsa outscored Albuquerque 19-14 in the third quarter cutting the Thunderbird lead to 78-75 through three.

Fontenet had 9 points for Tulsa in the second quarter helping keep the game close. Albuquerque maintained an eight point lead at the half, 64-56, thanks to 56.3% shooting for the first half. Albuquerque opened the game with a 12-4 run helping them grab the early lead. The Thunderbirds led 30-23 after the first quarter.

THUNDERBIRDS SOAR TO SEASON HIGH 5th STRAIGHT WIN

Tucker Leads All Scorers with 38 for Thunderbirds

Alando Tucker scored 38 points in his second game back with the Albuquerque Thunderbirds helping them to their fifth straight win. The Thunderbirds cruised past the Tulsa 66ers, 119-104 Thursday night.

Aside from Tucker, Albuquerque had four other players score in double figures, three of whom also registered double-doubles. Will Conroy had 21 points and 11 assists; Julius Hodge had 28 points and 11 assists; Kevin Pittsnogle pitched in 18 points and 10 rebounds.

Tulsa was led by Mike Hall who scored 28 points and grabbed 7 rebounds. Dwight Jones added 21 points for Tulsa on 8 of 10 shooting.

The Thunderbirds let off the gas somewhat in the fourth quarter, only scoring 21 in the final period but still coasting to the victory. Jason Fontenet scored 11 of Tulsa's 33 points in the quarter.

Tucker scored 15 points in the third quarter, helping Albuquerque build an insurmountable lead at 98-71. Albuquerque outscored Tulsa 36-21 in the decisive period.

Tucker's 21 first half points helped Albuquerque take a 62-50 Halftime lead. Albuquerque went on a 22-5 run mid way through the first quarter lifting them to a 40-25 lead after one quarter.

Both teams get back to action tomorrow night, Friday, March 21st at Tingley Coliseum. Game time is set for 7:00 pm. Friday's game will be "Take Over Tingley Night," \$2 dollar tickets will be available for fans at the door to celebrate the Thunderbirds final home game before embarking on a seven game road trip.

THUNDERBIRDS AND TOROS FINALIZE TRADE

Thunderbirds Receive Cheyenne Gadson, Send Yemi Nicholson to Austin

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds acquired guard Cheyenne Gadson in a trade with the Austin Toros. The trade sends newly acquired center Yemi Nicholson who the Thunderbirds acquired within the past 14 hours to the Austin Toros.

Gadson has spent time in the NBA summer league with the Denver Nuggets and New York Knicks. A graduate of Oklahoma State, Gadson has played in 34 games with the Toros this season, averaging 10.8 points per game and 5.6 assists.

"Cheyenne is a terrific combo guard and we feel very fortunate to be getting him," Albuquerque Head Coach Jeff Ruland said. "He will really help our depth and should be a great performer."

Nicholson, who was picked up yesterday by the Thunderbirds was sent to Austin. Nicholson is a 6'10 center from Denver University. Nicholson led the Denver Pioneers his senior season with 19.9 points per game.

Gadson is expected to be in uniform Thursday night, wearing jersey number 18, when Albuquerque takes on the Tulsa 66ers; 7:00pm at Tingley Coliseum.

In order to create a roster spot for Gadson the Thunderbirds waived guard Dwight Brewington on Wednesday. Brewington played in 8 games for the Thunderbirds averaging 17.1 minutes and 9.4 points.

THUNDERBIRDS PLAYERS AND COACHES HAVE SECOND MEET THE TEAM PARTY

The Downs at Albuquerque Racetrack & Casino Hosts Post Game Party

The Downs at Albuquerque Racetrack & Casino will host its second meet the team post game party, this Friday, March 21st. The party will be held in the Jockey Club on the 3rd floor of The Downs immediately following Friday night's game against the Tulsa 66ers.

Players and Coaches will be at The Downs immediately following the game to socialize with fans, friends and family. Food and drinks will be available for season ticket holders and guests, a buffet will be provided for anyone else in attendance.

"The party is our way of giving back to our season ticket holders who have demonstrated unwavering support for our three years in Albuquerque," Team C.O.O Chris Holland said. "The coaches and players have been so generous in offering their time within the community this is just another chance for everyone to get up close and meet in a relaxing fun atmosphere".

The Downs at Albuquerque Racetrack & Casino is located on the New Mexico State Fair Grounds at 201 California St. NE. and has catered live horse racing and entertainment to Albuquerque for over 70 years.

THUNDERBIRDS FLY OVER TOROS FOR THIRD STRAIGHT VICTORY

Seven Thunderbirds Score Double Digits in Victory

Alando Tucker led a balanced Albuquerque Thunderbirds attack with 26 points as the Thunderbirds defeated the Austin Toros for the third straight game 127-108 Friday night at Tingley Coliseum

Seven Thunderbirds players scored ten plus points including Will Conroy's double-double; 16 points, 14 assists. Kevin Pittsnogle added 22 points and Julius Hodge contributed 18 points.

"Everyone is really contributing right now," Albuquerque Head Coach Jeff Ruland said. "We have gone from a team that averaged 99 points a game to a team that can score over 70 in a half. Now we just have to continue to make a run."

Justin Bowen came off the bench to lead the Toros in scoring with a double-double; 27 points, 15 assists. Marcus Williams had 25 points and Andre Barrett pitched in 24 points for the Toros who dropped their third straight to Albuquerque.

Bowen led all scorers in the second half registering 18 for the Toros. The first half deficit proved to be too much for Austin to overcome. Albuquerque had the hot hand all night shooting a stellar 52.4% from the field in the second half.

Conroy had 11 first half assists helping Albuquerque shoot 58.7% and put up their highest first half point total of the season, 72 points. Williams led the Toros in first half scoring with 17 of Austin's 55 first half points. Albuquerque led 38-33 after the first quarter.

The Thunderbirds get back to action Sunday, March 16th at home against the Los Angeles D-Fenders; game time is set for 3:00 pm from Tingley Coliseum. Following Sunday's game will be the finals of the McDonald's NBA Amateur Slam Dunk Competition.



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

THUNDERBIRDS SOAR FROM 18 DOWN TO DEFEAT TOROS

Austin Head Coach Quin Snyder Ejected in Loss

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds overcame an eighteen point halftime deficit for their second straight win against the Austin Toros 120-112. Marcus Williams led all scorers in the loss for the Toros with 36 points.

"We are really starting to come together," Thunderbirds Head Coach Jeff Ruland said. "I knew we had them tonight when we fell behind by 18 points."

The Thunderbirds had all five starters score in double digits including Will Conroy who posted a double-double in his second game with the Thunderbirds; 13 assists and 22 points. Julius Hodge led the Thunderbirds in scoring with 27 points. Kevin Pittsnogle added 23 points for Albuquerque and Ramon Dyer had a game high 12 rebounds.

Aside from Williams no Toro scored over 20 points. DerMarr Johnson had 19 points for Austin and Cheyne Gadson pitched in 18 points, 6 assists.

Both teams struggled to gain a clear advantage until Darvin Ham broke the tie for the final time with a thunderous dunk. The jam gave Thunderbirds a 109-107 lead with 4:07 minutes remaining.

Toros Head Coach Quin Snyder was ejected from the game late in the third quarter after earning a double-technical foul for arguing with the officials. The Thunderbirds led 89-88 after three.

Hodge and Conroy had 9 points each for the Thunderbirds in the third quarter. Albuquerque used a 15-4 run in the middle of the third quarter to grab the lead away from Austin.

Williams led all players in the first half with 24 points for the Toros, who shot 59.5% in the opening half. Albuquerque turned the ball over 19 times in the half and was outscored 39-21 in the second quarter; Austin led at the half 68-50.

Albuquerque opened the game on an 11-2 run. Williams led all scorers in the first quarter with 13 points for the Toros. The game was deadlocked 29-29 after the first quarter.

In attendance but not dressed for the game was Phoenix Suns player Alando Tucker who was recently assigned to the Thunderbirds for the third time this season. Tucker is expected to play Friday against the Toros wearing jersey number 42.

"We are really happy to be getting Tuck back," Ruland said. "He will give us that extra threat that should help us make a good run."

THUNDERBIRDS & MCDONALD'S RECOGNIZE 2008 MCDONALDS ALL-AMERICANS

McDonald's and the Albuquerque Thunderbirds are proud to welcome New Mexico's 2008 McDonald's All-American Nominees to a special recognition ceremony during the Thunderbirds game against the Los Angeles D-Fenders on Sunday, March 16th.

Thirty-one talented boys and girls were nominated from New Mexico for games this year. A special halftime ceremony will honor the hard work, skill and teamwork of 31 boys and girls who were nominated from New Mexico this year. Sunday's game is set to tip off at 3:00pm from Tingley Coliseum.

"McDonald's is a valued partner for us and the surrounding community," Thunderbirds Chief Operating Officer Chris Holland said. "We are honored that McDonald's has allowed us to help them recognize these fantastic athletes."

This year marks the seventh year of the Girls Game and the 31st anniversary of the Boys Game. Proceeds from the McDonald's All American Basketball Game will go directly to Ronald McDonald House Charities®.

Since its inception, the McDonald's All American Game has developed quite a reputation and elite alumni, including current and former NBA and WNBA superstars such as Michael Jordan (retired), Magic Johnson (retired) Kobe Bryant (Los Angeles Lakers), LeBron James (Cleveland Cavaliers), Crockett Willnett (Los Angeles Sparks), and WNBA 2007 All-Star Seimone Augustus (Minnesota Lynx). It is truly an honor to be nominated.

THUNDERBIRDS TAKE DOWN TOROS IN OVERTIME THRILLER

Conroy Registers Double-Double in Thunderbirds Debut; 25 points, 11 assists

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds overcame a ten point deficit late in regulation then outlasted the Austin Toros in overtime for a 137-134 victory. DerMarr Johnson led all scorers in a losing effort for Austin with 43 points.

Julius Hodge led Albuquerque with a near triple-double; a team high 34 points, 12 rebounds and 9 assists. Kevin Pittsnogle added a double-double for Albuquerque with 28 points and 10 rebounds, Jamaal Thomas contributed 16 points for the Thunderbirds.

The victory was Albuquerque's first overtime game of the season and marked the arrival of the newest Thunderbird, point guard Will Conroy who landed a double-double with 25 points and 11 assists.

"That game was exactly the way I drew it up," Albuquerque Head Coach Jeff Ruland said. "Having Conroy here was just what I expected; I saw some really good stuff out of him tonight."

Aside from Johnson's game high 43 the Toros were hard pressed to find a scorer outside of Marcus Williams double-double, 30 points and 11 rebounds. Justin Bowen added 19 points for the Toros off the bench.

Pittsnogle had 9 of Albuquerque's 18 points in the overtime including a crowd raising dunk with just 27 seconds left putting the Thunderbirds in front for good 133–132.

Just like on Saturday night Albuquerque rallied from a double-digit deficit in the fourth quarter the difference Tuesday was Daryl Dorsey's three-pointer with 4.5 seconds left in regulation that tied the game at 119–119.

The Thunderbirds were led by Conroy's 13 points in the fourth quarter, none bigger than the three-pointer he hit with 1:48 left in regulation, giving Albuquerque their first since the second quarter, 119–119.

Johnson and Williams hit back to back three-pointers for the Toros late in the third quarter, vaulting Austin into the lead. The Toros ended the quarter on a 12–4 run; Austin led 89–83 after three quarters.

Conroy found his rhythm early with the Thunderbirds contributing 12 first half points on a perfect 5 of 5 shooting. Johnson led the Toros and all scorers in the first half with 17 points; Albuquerque led a tight contest at halftime 57 – 55. The Thunderbirds ended the first quarter on 13 – 3 run helping them to a 29 – 21 lead after one quarter.

Both teams get back to action against one another Thursday, March 13th at Tingley Coliseum; game time is set for 7:00 pm. Thursday's game will be the final qualifying night for the McDonalds Amateur NBA Slam Dunk Competition. The Semifinals will follow Friday night's game and the finals will take place following the Thunderbirds game on Sunday, March 16th; the winner will take home a \$1,000 prize.

THUNDERBIRDS AND ENERGY FINALIZE TRADE

Thunderbirds get Will Conroy, Send Gross to Iowa

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds acquired guard Will Conroy in a trade with the Iowa Energy. The trade sees forward Josh Gross go to Iowa.

"Conroy will be one of the top three point-guards in our league," Thunderbirds Head Coach Jeff Ruland said. "He will be a direct extension of me on the court and make our team better."

Conroy spent the 2005–06 and 2006–07 seasons with the D-League's Tulsa 66ers. Last season, Conroy averaged 10.6 assists and 15.0 points in 42 games with Tulsa. Conroy also earned three GATORADE Call-Ups during the 2006-07 season; twice by the Los Angeles Clippers and once by the Memphis Grizzlies. Conroy participated in the NBA Summer league with the Clippers in 2007.

Conroy's rights were picked up by the Iowa Energy in the 2007– 2008 NBA Development League Expansion Draft.

Gross, who led Albuquerque in scoring this season, averaging 16.5 points in 33 games, heads to Iowa to round out their back court. Iowa will be the fourth team Gross has spent time with in the D-League, including stints with the Florida Flame during the 2005–06 season and the Los Angeles D-Fenders in 2006–07. Gross was selected by Albuquerque in the seventh round of the 2007–08 draft with the 87th overall pick.

Conroy is expected to be in uniform Tuesday night, wearing jersey number 10, when Albuquerque takes on the Austin Toros; 7:00pm at Tingley Coliseum.

TOROS HOLD OFF THUNDERBIRDS 4th QUARTER RALLY

Gross leads all Scorers with 37 points and 10 rebounds

The Austin Toros held off the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 119 – 114 in a thriller. Marcus Williams led the Toros with 33 points including the final four points of the game. Josh Gross led all scorers in the loss for the Thunderbirds with 37 points on 15 of 18 shooting.

Williams registered a double – double for the Toros adding a game high 11 rebounds to go along with his 33 points. Cheyne Gadson added 27 points for the Toros to go along with 8 assists; Justin Bowen pitched in 18 for Austin off the bench.

Gross registered a double – double for the Thunderbirds with 10 rebounds to go along with his 37 points. Julius Hodge also recorded a double – double for Albuquerque; 26 points and 10 rebounds. Abdul Mills added 17 points for the Thunderbirds off the bench and played the entire second half with 5 fouls.

Gadson led all scorers in the first quarter with 12 points on 5 of 6 shooting. Austin used a 10 – 0 run in the middle of the first quarter to grab the lead. After one the Toros led by six, 30 – 24.

Hodge had 12 points for Albuquerque in the second quarter, helping them start the quarter with a 6 – 0 run to tie the game. Austin regained control of the game by shooting 55 percent from the field in the quarter, helping them to a 61 – 55 halftime lead.

Austin outscored Albuquerque 35 – 25 in the third quarter helping them to a 15 point lead after three, 96 – 81. Cardell Johnson led all scorers in the quarter with 10 points for the Toros.

Gross had 15 points to lead all scorers in the fourth quarter as Albuquerque rallied to tie the game at 104 with just fewer than four minutes to play. Austin shot 57 percent in the quarter though helping them hang on to their lead.

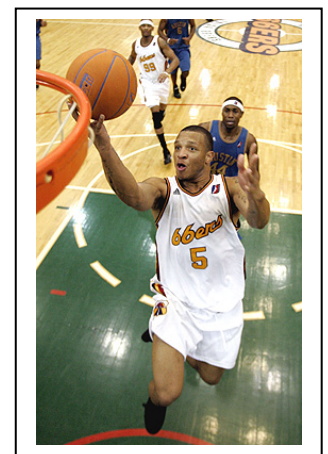


Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

ENERGY HAND THUNDERBIRDS FOURTH STRAIGHT LOSS

Julius Hodge Scores 19 in First Game Back with Thunderbirds

The Iowa Energy handed the Albuquerque Thunderbirds their fourth straight loss defeating them 115 – 108. Kevin Pittsnogle led all scorers with 27 points in a losing effort for the Thunderbirds.

Iowa had six players score double digits including Daequan Cook who led the Energy with 26 points on 10 of 23 shooting. Doug Thomas and Jeff Horner each had double-doubles for the Energy; Thomas; 16 points and 14 rebounds, Horner; 13 points and 10 assists.

Albuquerque had six players score over 10 points including Julius Hodge who scored 19 points in his first game back with the Thunderbirds. Jamaal Thomas added 12 points to go along with a team high 9 rebounds; Dwight Brewington had 16 points off the bench.

Iowa opened the game with a 9 – 4 run before cooling off the remainder of the first quarter. Albuquerque shot 57 percent from the field in the first quarter helping them to a 29 – 28 lead after one.

Pittsnogle led all scorers in the second quarter with 9 points including 5 for 5 on free throws. Thomas and Cook had 8 and 7 points respectively for the Energy in the second quarter. The Thunderbirds took a 57 – 53 lead into the half.

Iowa took the lead out of the break with a 14 – 2 run early in the third quarter. Albuquerque answered with a late 9 – 1 run to regain the lead after three quarters, 81 – 79.

14ERS TOPPLE THUNDERBIRDS FOR SEVENTH STRAIGHT VICTORY

Thunderbirds Drop Third Straight, Eighth in a Row to 14ers

The Colorado 14ers extended their winning streak to seven, by defeating the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 122 – 109. Eddie Gill led all scorers with 31 points to go along with a game high 7 assists for Colorado.

The loss is the third straight for the Thunderbirds and eighth straight against the 14ers dating back to last season. Josh Gross led four Albuquerque players in double digits with 28 points and 7 rebounds. Daryl Dorsey added 22 points to go along with Kevin Pittsnogle's 16 points; Dwight Brewington pitched in 23 points off the bench.

Four 14ers scored in double figures including Roderick Riley's double – double 18 points and a game high 14 rebounds. Colorado's size advantage was obvious throughout, outrebounding Albuquerque 66 to 35 in route to the victory.

Albuquerque started the game on a 10 – 4 run led by Pittsnogle's 11 points in the first quarter. Colorado closed the first quarter on a 6 – 0 run helping them to a 30 – 25 lead after one.

Riley had 11 points and 6 rebounds for Colorado in an even paced second quarter. Gross had 11 points for the Thunderbirds in the quarter, helping to keep Albuquerque close at the half, 54 – 60.

Colorado outscored Albuquerque 31 – 22 in the third quarter pushing their lead to 91 – 76 after three quarters. The story of the quarter was the ejection of Albuquerque's Pittsnogle and Colorado's Elton Brown; both players were ejected after receiving double technical fouls.

Colorado returns home to take on the Tulsa 66ers, Saturday, March 1st from the Broomfield events center in Broomfield, CO; game time is set for 7:00 pm.

The Thunderbirds get back to action Sunday, March 2nd, at home against the Iowa Energy. Game time is set for 7:00 pm from Tingley Coliseum. Newly acquired guard Julius Hodge, a member of the 2006-07 Thunderbirds was in attendance but did not suit up. He is expected to play Sunday against the Iowa Energy wearing jersey number 17.

66ERS OUTLAST THUNDERBIRDS

Hall Leads Tulsa in Victory with Double – Double, 36 points, 14 rebounds

Mike Hall scorched the Albuquerque Thunderbirds for a game high 36 points and 14 rebounds helping the Tulsa 66ers to a 112 – 103 victory over the Thunderbirds. Kevin Pittsnogle led Albuquerque in the loss with 25 points including six three pointers.

Tulsa had four players in double figures including David Noel's 23 points, and Adam Harrington's 19 points. As a team Tulsa shot 52% from the field and a 54% from 3-point distance.

Albuquerque had seven scorers put up double figures including Josh Gross and Jamaal Thomas who scored 16 apiece. Cory Underwood, Daryl Dorsey and Dwight Brewington scored 11, 10 and 11 off the bench respectively.

Hall had 11 first quarter points for Tulsa to lead all scorers in the quarter. Albuquerque used a 13 – 5 run over a five minute span in the middle of the quarter to take the lead. The Thunderbirds lead was 25 – 20 after one.

Pittsnogle had 8 points and Dyer had 7 for the Thunderbirds as they matched the 66ers 27 in the quarter. Albuquerque maintained their five point lead at the half 52 – 47.

Tulsa grabbed the lead early in the third quarter with a 14 – 4 run out of the break, fueled by 9 straight points from Hall who led all scorers in the quarter with 19 points. Pittsnogle kept Albuquerque close with 12 points in the quarter making the score 84 – 82 Tulsa after three.

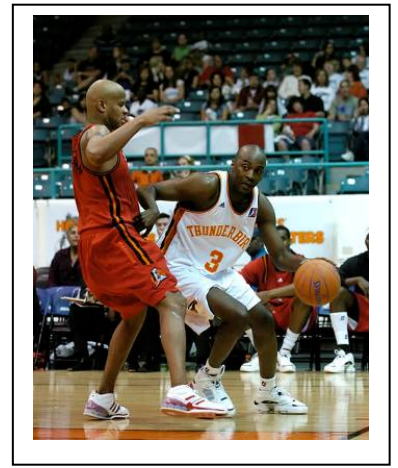


Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

Tulsa continues their road trip Saturday, March 1st against the Colorado 14ers in Broomfield, CO. game time is set for 7:00 pm from the Broomfield events center.

Albuquerque continues their home stand tomorrow, Friday, February 29th against the 14ers at Tingley Coliseum; game time is set for 7:00 pm. Friday's game is sponsored by Isleta Casino & Resort, the first 1,000 fans through the doors will be given a free Thunderbirds hat compliments of Isleta Casino & Resort.

VIPERS EARN FIRST WIN AGAINST THE THUNDERBIRDS

Farmers 19 Second Half Points Propel Vipers to Victory

The Rio Grande Valley Vipers defeated the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 99 – 85 earning their first win in five tries against the Thunderbirds. Trent Strickland led all scorers with 25 points and a game high 9 assists for the Vipers.

Josh Gross led the Thunderbirds in scoring with 22 points before leaving early in the fourth quarter with an injury. Four other Thunderbirds scored in double-digits including 15 for Dwight Brewington in his second game in an Albuquerque uniform.

Strickland was one of four Vipers in double-digits. Desmon Farmer pitched in 22 points 19 of which came in the second half. Craig Winder added an additional 21 points off the bench for the Vipers in the win.

Albuquerque opened the game on an 11–5 run over the first three minutes. Winder's dunk with 4:15 remaining in the first quarter gave the Vipers their first lead of the game, 18–17. Albuquerque battled back shooting 45% from the floor and taking a 24–22 lead after one.

Strickland led all scorers in the second quarter with 14 points for the Vipers, helping Rio Grande Valley to a 44–41 halftime lead. The Thunderbirds were plagued with turnovers in the quarter racking up eight.

Farmer and Strickland each kicked in 8 points for the Vipers in the third quarter. Rio Grande Valley outscored Albuquerque 27–20 in the quarter helping push their lead to 71–61.

Rio Grande Valley blew the game wide open early in the fourth quarter when they converted on five straight 3-point attempts, three of which came from the hot second half hand of Farmer, who led all scorers with 11 fourth quarter points.

THUNDERBIRDS STING VIPERS

Vipers Desmon Farmer Ejected Late in First half

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds defeated the Rio Grande Valley Vipers 106 – 98 Friday night. Kevin Pittsnogle led all scorers with 25 points for the Thunderbirds to go along with 8 rebounds.

Trent Strickland led four Vipers with 21 points in the loss, Desmon Farmer pitched in 18 points and Craig Winder added an additional 13 points off the bench.

Pittsnogle led five Thunderbirds in double digits, including Jamaal Thomas's 24 points. Darvin Ham and Josh Gross each added 14 points for Albuquerque and Cory Underwood threw in 10 points off the bench. Abdul Mills had a strong start at point guard for the Thunderbirds registering a game high 100 assists.

The win also ushered in the debut of the two newest Thunderbirds; Daryl Dorsey who registered 2 points, 2 assists and 3 points and Dwight Brewington who had 1 point and 2 assists in his first Thunderbirds game.

The Thunderbirds opened the game on a 7 – 0 run and closed the first quarter with a 9 – 0 run, helping them to a 29 – 21 lead after the first quarter. Desmon Farmer led all scorers in the quarter with 12 points for the Vipers.

Rio Grande Valley kept the game close in the second quarter shooting over 50% from the floor. Albuquerque maintained their eight point lead into the half 55 – 47.

The story of the quarter was the ejection of Farmer, the Vipers leading scorer, with just under one minute remaining in the half. Farmer was ejected for a double-flagrant technical foul when he knocked Albuquerque's Thomas to the ground while Thomas attempted a dunk.

Quannas White had 7 points for the Vipers in the third quarter; Pittsnogle matched that with 7 points of his own for the Thunderbirds. After three quarter Albuquerque maintained the lead, 82 – 72.

14ERS SUBDUE T-BIRDS, EXTEND WIN STREAK TO THREE GAMES

The Colorado 14ers extended their winning streak to three games with a 101-98 win over the Albuquerque Thunderbirds on Wednesday night.

With the victory, Colorado improves to 18-13 on the season, while the loss dropped Albuquerque to 12-17.

D-League All-Stars Elton Brown, Billy Thomas and Eddie Gill led the Colorado attack in the 14ers' final game before the All-Star break. Brown posted his league leading 22nd double-double, as he notched 24 points and 16 rebounds. Thomas knocked down seven of 11 3-pointers and finished with 23 points, while Gill added 15 points and 10 assists.

Daniel Horton led the way for Albuquerque with 18 points. Darvin Ham and Jamaal Thomas added 14 apiece for the Thunderbirds.

"The main thing that we focused on was that we did get on a roll before the break," said 14ers Head Coach Joe Wolf. "Now that we're on that roll, hopefully we can continue it through the All-Star break and come back and win some more home games."

The win was Colorado's sixth against no losses over against Albuquerque. The 14ers also moved to within two games of the Austin Toros in the Southwest Division.

BALANCED ATTACK LEADS COLORADO PAST ALBUQUERQUE

Seven Colorado players scored in double figures as the 14ers beat the Albuquerque Thunderbirds for the fifth straight time this season, 111-94 on Monday night. With the victory Colorado improves to 17-13 on the season, while Albuquerque falls to 12-16 on the year with the loss.

Colorado leading scorer Kaniel Dickens sat out with a thigh contusion, but the 14ers used a team effort to pick up the slack. Roderick Riley came off the bench to score a team-high 18 points and pull down seven rebounds. Brian Greene started in place of Dickens and put up 17 points and 10 boards in the win.

"These are separator games. These are the games that either put you in the playoffs or don't put you in the playoffs" said 14ers Head Coach Joe Wolf. "We've got to make sure we do our due diligence and approach every game with that in mind."

Colorado slowly wore down Albuquerque by winning every quarter. After taking a five point lead to the locker room at the half, the 14ers outscored the Thunderbirds 49-27 after the break to pull away for the win. The victory puts Colorado in a tie with Tulsa in the Southwest Division, 2.5 games behind the Austin Toros.

In addition to Riley and Greene's big nights, Elton Brown posted his D-League leading 21st double-double of the season with 14 points and 11 rebounds. Justin Cage, Billy Thomas, Eddie Gill, and Davin White, also all put up double figures in points to help make up for the loss of Dickens.

Daniel Horton led the way for Albuquerque with 28 points and nine assists. Kevin Pittsnogle knocked down four of six 3-point attempts and finished with 18 points for the T-Birds in the loss.

66ERS REGAIN MOMENTUM WITH WIN AGAINST THUNDERBIRDS

A focused, powerful Tulsa 66ers finally got their mojo back to beat the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 113-104 Saturday night at Expo Square Pavilion.

Undaunted by last night's defeat, which ended a six game win streak, Tulsa lived up to the expectations and showed tremendous teamwork to overcome the deficit and reclaim the throne of home court victor.

Milwaukee Bucks assignee David Noel contributed 27 points and six rebounds for the 66ers. Jason Fontenet poured in 19 points, 11 assists, and five rebounds while Nick Fazekas, on assignment from the Dallas Mavericks, netted 18 points and pulled down 10 boards. Mike Hall and Scott Merritt gave 15 points each.

The 66ers were up 33-27 after 12 minutes of play, but were down by one point at the break at 52-53.

The Thunderbirds were in the lead for the beginning of the third quarter, until Noel drained a three from the top-left corner of the arc and followed that up with a lay-up. The mini-run gave the 66ers a 59-53 cushion with 9:48 on the clock. But Albuquerque never got over the hump, in fact the 66ers led by 24 points at about the five and a half minute mark. Tulsa inevitably sealed the win.

Josh Gross led the Thunderbirds in scoring with 25 points. Daniel Horton chipped in 22 points, Ali Berdiel dropped 13 points, and Abdul Mills finished with 10 points.

TULSA FALLS TO ALBUQUERQUE

Albuquerque ended Tulsa's six game slide, beating the 66ers 124-108 at Expo Square Pavilion Friday night.

The red hot Tulsa 66ers, who came into the game winning 11 out of their last 12 and the last six straight, surely benefited from seeing clearly during their winning stretch. The 20/20 they dealt with on Friday, however, was not the kind they wanted to see.

The 66ers could not overcome 20 turnovers and 20% shooting from beyond the arc, and fell to the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 124-108. Tulsa only managed to hit four of their 20 3-point attempts. The 66ers were led by Dallas Mavericks assignee and recent All-Star inductee Nick Fazekas with 27 points and 16 rebounds. The Thunderbirds were paced by West Virginia grad Kevin Pittsnogle, who finished with 28 points.

"They came out really ready, I guess you just sometimes have to tip your cap to the opposition" said 66ers coach Joey Meyer. "They shot the ball well, they played well, they outworked us, they out played us tonight. They were the better team."

Albuquerque, now with a record of 12-14, feels good about the direction the team has taken as of late.

"The last two games we've played together on both ends of the court," said Thunderbirds coach Jeff Ruland. "When we play like that we are tough to beat. On the opposite end, when we don't come out focused, we are easy to beat. But I am real happy with the way we played tonight."

Despite early hot 3-point shooting from the Albuquerque Thunderbirds, who hit 7 of their first 12, the 66ers entered the locker room at halftime with a 57-56 advantage. The Thunderbirds finished with a total of 13 three pointers made in 26 attempts.

THUNDERBIRDS JOSH GROSS TO PARTICIPATE IN D-LEAGUE ALL-STAR ACTIVITIES

D-League All-Star Festivities to Include Inaugural Dream Factory Friday Night

Albuquerque Thunderbirds forward Josh Gross has been selected to participate in the Three-Point Shootout during the inaugural Dream Factory Friday Night which will take place on Friday, Feb. 15 on Center Court at NBA All-Star Jam Session presented by adidas.

"I'm happy that Josh will get the opportunity to participate in the D-League All-Star events," Head Coach Jeff Ruland said, "He is a tireless worker on and off the court, I'm really happy for him and the organization."

Dream Factory Friday Night, an exciting event modeled after the popular NBA All-Star Saturday Night will include perennial NBA fan favorite events, such as a Three-Point Shootout and Slam Dunk competition, while introducing H.O.R.S.E. and an interactive game of Hot-Shot with fans. Twelve D-League players, including an NBA assigned player and five others with NBA experience, will take to Center Court to showcase their skills throughout the evening's competitions.

Gross was selected in the seventh round of the 2007 D-League Draft by the Thunderbirds (87th overall). He played with the Los Angeles D-Fenders in 2006 – 07, averaging 5.8 points and 1.4 rebounds in 14 games, after being selected by the D-Fenders as the fifth pick in the 2006 D-League Expansion Draft.

D-League action in New Orleans continues on Saturday, Feb. 16, when the second-annual D-League All-Star Game presented by Spalding tips off on Center Court at NBA All-Star Jam Session. The game, which begins at 3 pm EST, will be broadcast live on NBA TV and features 20 of the D-League's finest as selected by fans and D-League coaches. NBA legends Rick Barry and Lenny Wilkens will serve as honorary team captains, while the squads will be coached by Idaho's Bryan Gates and Los Angeles' Dan Panaggio, along with their respective assistant coaches, Ray Lopes and Chucky Brown.

THUNDERBIRDS SLAM JAM 98 – 84 IN WEEKDAY MATINEE

Thunderbirds Set New Franchise Single Game Attendance Record with 4,916

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds defeated the Bakersfield Jam 98 - 84 Tuesday morning in front of a record crowd of 4,916 setting a new franchise single game attendance record. Daniel Horton led all scorers with 24 points for the Thunderbirds in the win.

James Peters and Andre Barrett led the Jam with 20 and 19 points respectively. Bakersfield's Nick Lewis led all rebounders with 16 boards and Trey Johnson pitched in 17 points off the bench.

The Thunderbirds had three other players pitch in double – digit point totals, besides Horton, Ali Berdiel had 13 points to go along with a game high 6 assists. Jamaal Thomas had 21 points off the bench for the Thunderbirds and Josh Gross pitched in an additional 17 points.

"This was a good win, we played great defense." Thunderbirds Head Coach Jeff Ruland Said. "That is the kind of defense we have played in our eleven victories this season. Having such an energetic crowd was great too, we need more of that!"

Both teams struggled to gain an advantage throughout the first half. Horton led all scorers with 17 points on 6 of 8 shooting for Albuquerque in the first half. Barrett led the Jam with 15 first half points, helping to keep Bakersfield close. At the half the Thunderbirds led a tight contest 55 – 52.

Thomas led all scorers in the third quarter with 10 points for the Thunderbirds. Albuquerque outscored Bakersfield 23 to 10 in the quarter, including an 18 – 4 run to close the quarter, helping them extend their lead, 78 – 62 after three quarters.

THUNDERBIRDS SWEETEN PARTNERSHIP WITH SWEET TOMATOES

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds today announced their partnership with Albuquerque's Sweet Tomatoes Restaurant. As part of the partnership, the Thunderbirds coaches and players will make an appearance at Sweet Tomatoes on San Mateo, Wednesday, February 6th.

Thunderbirds players and coaches will be on site from 5 – 7 pm, starting with an autograph that session will be held for the public from 5 – 5:30 pm. Following the autograph session, the players will enjoy Sweet Tomatoes wonderful selection of fresh soups and salads.

"It's exciting to be serving NBA players fresh, healthy meals." Sweet Tomatoes General Manager Ilene Valtierra said. "Our hope is that this event will become an annual event for the Thunderbirds at Sweet Tomatoes."

Sweet Tomatoes specializes in soups and salads featuring all natural ingredients. With 100 company-owned restaurants in 15 states, 265 million guests since 1978. Sweet Tomatoes specializes in soups and salads featuring all natural ingredients.

The menu is built around freshly made, great-tasting recipes showcased on a 55-foot salad bar full of fresh, seasonal vegetables and tossed salads prepared exhibition-style every 20 minutes. The unlimited selection also features made-from-scratch soups, hot pastas, handcrafted muffins, Focaccia, breads, and desserts that provide guests with a wide variety of both wholesome foods and delicious indulgences.

Albuquerque is home to two Sweet Tomato locations; 4901 San Mateo Blvd. NE and on the west side at 10126 Coors Blvd. NW.



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

WIZARDS DAZZLE THUNDERBIRDS

Carlos Powell Registers a Near Triple – Double for Wizards

The Dakota Wizards defeated the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 115 – 97. Blake Ahearn led all scorers with 27 points for the Wizards on 9 of 15 shooting.

Four other players scored double digits for Dakota including Carlos Powell who nearly registered a triple – double, 26 points, 9 rebounds and 8 assists. Dontell Jefferson added 21 points for the Wizards including hitting on 3 out of 4 three point shots.

Daniel Horton led the Thunderbirds in a losing effort with 26 points to go along with 9 assists. Four other Thunderbirds scored in double digits including Kevin Pittsnogle and Jamaal Thomas who pitched in 13 and 18 points off the bench.

Ahearn led all scorers in the first quarter with 7 points for the Wizards who hit all three 3 – point shots they attempted in the quarter. Helping them to a 24 – 19 lead over the Thunderbirds after one quarter.

Jefferson and Powell each scored 9 second quarter points for the Wizards. Dakota outscored Albuquerque 33 – 24 in the second quarter helping them to a 57 – 43 halftime lead.

Dakota out rebounded Albuquerque 11 – 6 in the third quarter helping them to outscore the Thunderbirds 18 – 10 in the paint in the quarter. After three quarters Dakota had narrowly extended their lead to 88 – 74.

THOMAS RETURNS TO THE THUNDERBIRDS

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds have acquired forward Jamaal Thomas, who was recently released by the Anaheim Arsenal. Thomas, 6'8", 220 lbs, from Angelo State, was drafted in 2007 by the Thunderbirds in the 2nd round 2nd pick 13th overall pick.

During his time with the Thunderbirds, Thomas averaged 10 plus points a game, through 20 games. He was traded to Anaheim in January of '07 for much needed center, Greg Clausen. This season, Thomas has averaged 8.4 points per game through 22 games with the Arsenal.

Meanwhile, the Thunderbirds waived forward Serge Angounou. He had played in 21 games for Albuquerque, averaging 16.6 minutes, 4.8 points and 4 rebounds.

"Jamaal brings a lot of energy on both ends of the floor, especially the defense." Thunderbirds Head Coach Jeff Ruland said about his newest player. "He's a great defender and excellent at rebounding, which is exactly what we need."

Thomas is expected to be in uniform Friday wearing No. 15 when Albuquerque (10-13) play the 2007 D-League Champions Dakota Wizards (17-9) at Tingley Coliseum, 7 pm (MST) start. The game will be themed "Public Safety Night" and feature a basketball game between firefighters and police officers following the Thunderbirds game.



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Gettv Images

THUNDERBIRDS NIPPED BY SKYFORCE

Alexander Records Double – Double, Hits Winning Shot for Skyforce

The Sioux Falls Skyforce got a tip basket from Chris Alexander with 3.2 seconds remaining giving them a 103 – 102 victory over the Albuquerque Thunderbirds. Josh Gross had a game high 23 points and teammate Daniel Horton scored 19 for Albuquerque.

The tip by Alexander, who had an impressive outing with 17 points and 17 rebounds, saved the Skyforce from an amazing comeback by the Thunderbirds, who managed to outscore Sioux Falls 10 – 2 in the final two minutes of the game. A three point make by Horton with just 24 seconds remaining in the game gave Albuquerque their first lead, 103 – 102, since the opening basket of the game.

The Thunderbirds played the entire game from behind; overcoming double digit deficits only to have them balloon back up again. At one point in the fourth quarter, the Skyforce led by 13 points.

It was a physical game from the opening tip for both teams—Albuquerque committed 27 fouls compared to 21 by Sioux Falls. Two missed free throws by Darvin Ham with 9.7 seconds left in the game left the door open for the Skyforce

Six different Thunderbirds players reached double figures in scoring compared to five Skyforce players. Kasib Powell led Sioux Falls with 18 points and three players including Alexander added 17 apiece.

The Skyforce held their largest lead of the game, 14 points, midway through the second quarter. Albuquerque managed to keep it within striking distance and stole momentum going into halftime with a 3 pointer by Elijah Ingram and buzzer beating bucket by Ham which cut the Sky Force lead to 57 – 52.

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds get back to action against the Dakota Wizards on Friday, February 1st at Tingley Coliseum; game time is set for 7:00 pm. The game will be themed "Public Safety Night" and feature a basketball game between firefighters and police officers following the Thunderbirds game.

THUNDERBIRDS CRUISE PAST VIPERS

Five Albuquerque Players Score Double Figures

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds dominated the Rio Grande Valley Vipers 97 - 74. Josh Gross led all scorers with 20 points for Albuquerque followed by teammate Daniel Horton with 18. Ali Berdiel picked up where he left off last game for the Thunderbirds, posting solid all around statistics with 16 points, 9 assists, and 7 rebounds.

Trent Strickland was the lone bright spot for the Vipers, scoring 21 points on 6 for 9 shooting and hitting on 9 of 12 free throws. Kris Collins chipped in 14 for Rio Grande Valley off the bench for the struggling Vipers who dropped their fifth straight game.

The game was a low scoring affair for Rio Grande Valley, they managed only 36 points in the first half, shooting a dismal 28.6% from the floor. Nearly half the Vipers points came from the free throw line as they made 16 out of 22 attempts.

After starting the game cold, the Vipers turned a 10 – 0 deficit into a 22 – 21 lead by the end of the first quarter. Rio Grande Valley capitalized on 8 Thunderbirds turnovers in the quarter. The Thunderbirds answered in the second quarter with timely shooting and tough defensive rebounding, helping them to a 63 – 36 halftime lead.

Things only got worse for Rio Grande Valley in the second half as the Thunderbirds opened up their biggest lead at 27 points despite committing 22 turnovers. Albuquerque won the battle of the boards, grabbing 47 to just 34 by the Vipers. They trailed only once in the game, at the end of the first quarter.

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds will face the Sioux Falls Skyforce on Saturday, January 26th at Tingley Coliseum; game time is set for 7:00 pm. Saturday will be "Spirit Night" featuring the Cheerleading 101 Camp presented by Team Athletic Supply.

CHEER 101 CAMP SATURDAY

The Storm Chasers and Team Athletic Supply Host Cheer Camp for Youth

Albuquerque Thunderbirds dance team, the Storm Chasers, and Team Athletic Supply have joined forces to host a cheer camp for Albuquerque's youth on Saturday, January 26th from 12:30pm. – 5:30pm.

Members of the 2007 – 08 Storm Chasers and choreographer Leslie Chant will spend the afternoon teaching the camp participants new cheers and routines. The camp members will then be invited to perform during halftime at the Thunderbirds home game on Saturday night against the Sioux Falls Sky Force.

"This is our first cheer camp and we are excited and thrilled to offer this camp for all children interested in cheerleading." Storm Chasers Choreographer Leslie Chant said, "It will be a great opportunity for the participants to perform at the Thunderbirds half-time to show their friends and family what they learned at the camp."

Team Athletic Supply is the official camp sponsor and will be on hand to donate prize packs to every camp participant. Team Athletic Supply has an assortment of athletic equipment and clothing at team pricing, not retail! They have extensive choices in gear for cheerleading, softball, baseball, volleyball, football and basketball and are located at 2430 Washington St. NE, less than one block south of Menaul.

THUNDERBIRDS STUN VIPERS

Farmer leads Vipers with 30 in Loss

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds defeated the Rio Grande Valley Vipers 95 – 93 rallying from 15 points down late in the third quarter. The win snaps the Thunderbirds four game losing streak and extends the Vipers losing streak to four straight.

Desmon Farmer led all scorers in a losing effort with 30 on 8 of 21 shooting. Quin Humphrey was one of five Vipers who scored double digits, pitching in a double – double 15 points and 10 rebounds. Former UNM Lobo Kris Collins added 14 points off the bench for the Vipers.

Ali Berdiel led the Thunderbirds in his first game back from injuries with 26 points to go along with 6 rebounds and 5 assists. Four other Thunderbirds scored in double digits including Elijah Ingram who scored 18 points, 6 rebounds and 6 assists.

Farmer led all scorers in the first quarter pitching in 10 of the Vipers 23 first quarter points. Josh Gross added 9 points for the Thunderbirds on 4 of 6 shooting in the quarter. After one quarter of play both teams were deadlocked at 23 – 23.

Rio Grande Valley opened the second quarter with a 9 – 4 run vaulting them into the lead. The Vipers went 7 for 7 from the free throw line in the quarter and used a late 12 – 2 run to help them to a 54 – 43 half time lead.

The Vipers jumped out to a 15 point lead in the third quarter. The Thunderbirds rallied after the ejection of Head Coach Jeff Ruland with just three minutes remaining in the quarter. Albuquerque closed the quarter on an 11 – 2 run to close to 71 – 75 after three.

Both teams struggled to gain an advantage in the fourth quarter until Daniel Horton hit a jumper in the lane with 18.5 seconds remaining, giving the Thunderbirds the lead for good.

Both teams get back to action against one another Friday, January 25th at Tingley Coliseum; game time is set for 7:00 pm. Friday will be "Faith and Family Night" group tickets are available for any interested congregations and their families. **SUNS RECALL ALANDO TUCKER**

The Phoenix Suns recalled rookie swingman Alando Tucker from the Albuquerque Thunderbirds of the NBA Development League, it was announced today by Suns President of Basketball Operations and General Manager Steve Kerr.

In his second stint with the Thunderbirds after being assigned on Jan. 10, Tucker averaged 25.3 points, 6.7 rebounds and 1.5 assists in 40.0 minutes in six games. In 11 total games in Albuquerque this season, the Wisconsin product owns averages of 26.6 points, 6.8 rebounds and 1.4 assists.

THUNDERBIRDS FALL IN DAKOTA

Wizards forward Carlos Powell scored 27 points to help Dakota move to 15-8 on the season with a win over the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 104 – 84 tonight at the Bismarck Civic Center.

"I'm really proud of our guys", said Wizards head coach Duane Ticknor. "Playing our seventh game in eleven days isn't easy, and our guys are showing what kind of players they really are".

Wizards guard Dontell Jefferson followed up his 18 point performance last night with 21 points and six assists in the victory. The D-League leading rebounder forward Rod Benson pulled down a game high 17 boards to go with his nine points on the night.

Albuquerque, now 8-12 on the season were led in scoring by NBA assigned forward from the Phoenix Suns Alando Tucker who finished the match up with a game high 29 points along with his 8 rebounds and five steals. Three other Thunderbird players finished with 12 points in the battle, center Cory Underwood, guard Elijah Ingram and guard Daniel Horton.

BIG SECOND HALF PROPELS SKYFORCE PAST THUNDERBIRDS

The Sioux Falls Skyforce used a dominating second-half performance to extend their home winning streak to five games with a 104-95 win over the Albuquerque Thunderbirds Friday night. Carl Elliot led the way for the Skyforce as he posted a season-high 27 points.

"I just went out and played with confidence," said Elliot. "The atmosphere of our home crowd really helps us."

"(Elliot) has been a good player for us when he stays aggressive," said Skyforce head coach Nate Tibbetts. "He's been playing a lot better since we moved him to (point guard)."

After a hard fought back-and-forth first half of play, the Skyforce (9-14) came out of the locker room energized and didn't look back. Sioux Falls outscored the Thunderbirds 32-18 in the third quarter, and held on to a large lead throughout the fourth.

Kasib Powell also played well offensively for Sioux Falls as he had 24 points on 9-of-16 shooting. However, his defensive effort was probably more impressive. Powell held Phoenix Suns assignee Alando Tucker to 19 points on 5-of-17 shooting. Tucker is the D-League's second leading scorer averaging 27 points per game.

"We told Kasib to go out there and not let (Tucker) score points, and that's what he did," said Elliot.

Tucker still, however, led the Thunderbirds (8-11) in scoring while Cory Underwood added 18 points and five rebounds for Albuquerque.

THUNDERBIRDS HOST THIRD ANNUAL SCHOOL HOUSE JAM"S"

Thunderbirds Will Host Two School House Jam Games

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds will host their third annual "School House Jam(s)" on January 23 at 10:30 am and February 5 at 10:30 am. The Thunderbirds will play host to the Rio Grande Valley Vipers and Bakersfield Jam respectively at Tingley Coliseum.

This year's "School House Jam(s)" will include mascots that will be incorporated into the game and timeouts for everyone to enjoy. Newspapers in Education will continue to provide an educational workbook for each student in attendance. The game itself is a way for schools to reward students who achieve reading goals or maintain exemplary attendance.

This season, the Thunderbirds organization has expanded its "School House Jam" program to two mornings to provide more access for schools to come to a Thunderbirds game. The Thunderbirds have increased the overall sponsorship of the games as well as participation from schools for the two games. The presenting partners for the "School House Jam" games include Isleta Casino and Resort, the Albuquerque Journal and Newspapers in Education.

"As part of the Thunderbirds community outreach, we look forward to providing a fun and educational day for kids who otherwise might not be able to attend a game," said Chief Operating Officer Chris Holland. "Because of the overwhelming response from corporate partners, we've been able to bring an even larger number of kids than we have in the past two seasons."

Some of last year's educational events included everything from geography to science games, as well as lessons from the Albuquerque Police Department about underage drinking, followed by appearances by local mascots. This year the event only looks to grow in size and popularity.

The Thunderbirds finalize their 12 day road trip with a pair of games Friday versus Sioux Falls and Saturday versus Dakota, before returning home to take on the Rio Grande Valley Vipers, Wednesday, January 23 for a 10:30 am "School House Jam" game. The game on January 23 will be the first of two "School House Jam" games for the Thunderbirds this season.



66ERS EXTEND WINNING STREAK WITH VICTORY OVER THUNDERBIRDS

The Tulsa 66ers defeated the Albuquerque Thunderbirds, 94-79, in game nine of the 14-game D-League Showcase on Wednesday at Qwest Arena in Boise. This marks the fifth straight win for the 66ers, improving their record to 9-10.

The 66ers had five players score in double-digits, with forwards Mike Hall and Glen McGowan leading the way with 20 a piece. Forward Nick Fazekas chipped in 17, while guards Adam Harrington and Ramon Sessions tallied 15 each.

"We were really over anxious in the first half and we came out and played better in the second half," said Joey Meyer, 66ers head coach. "We played with a lot of intensity. I thought Glen McGowan off the bench and Jerry Kelly came out with energy, and really turned around the game for us."

The first half of play showcased the defensive skills of both teams, with Albuquerque's Cory Underwood recording three blocked shots, holding Tulsa to shoot just 29.7 percent (11-37) from the floor. While the teams were tied at the end of the first quarter, the Thunderbirds pulled ahead, 39-35, going into the half.

Entering the second half of play, the two exchanged the lead before the 66ers McGowan scored on a reverse lay-up with four minutes remaining in the third quarter, never allowing the Thunderbirds to regain the lead.

Overall, Tulsa shot 45 percent (34-of-75) from the field, 74 percent (23-of-31) from the line, while Albuquerque shot 37 percent (30-of-82) from the floor and 80 percent (8-of-10) from the charity stripe.

Leading the way for Albuquerque was center Kevin Pittsnogle with a game-high 21 points, adding five rebounds and four steals. Equally as impressive for the Thunderbirds was Alando Tucker, a guard on assignment from the Phoenix Suns, as he added six points, four boards, three assists, three steals.

"He's [Tucker] been terrific for us, both him and DJ Strawberry," said Jeff Ruland, Albuquerque's head coach. "Obviously we rely on him a lot. We've had two above par games from him. Last week he had 36 and 39 so teams are going to try to take that away. I think he's a little tired right now. We've been on a twelve day road trip. Hopefully we can regroup here and get one or two more."

Albuquerque finishes the 2008 Showcase with a record of 0-2, having fallen to the Colorado 14ers on Tuesday. The 66ers will return to the floor to take on the Colorado 14ers tomorrow.

14ERS BEAT THUNDERBIRDS TO STOP FIVE-GAME SLIDE

The Colorado 14ers snapped a five-game skid with a 98-81 win over the Albuquerque Thunderbirds in the second of four games today at the fourth annual D-League Showcase on Tuesday at Qwest Arena in downtown Boise.

The 14ers offense was led by forward Kaniel Dickens who finished the contest with 25 points while center Elton Brown chipped in a 19-point, 18-rebound double-double performance.

Colorado started the game with energy, jumping out to an 18-point lead at the close of the first period before the Thunderbirds worked their way back to finish the first stanza down by three. In the second half, the 14ers lead swelled to 19 on the back of Dickens' 13-point third period effort.

Overall, Colorado shot 46 percent (32-of-70) from the floor and 81 percent (25-of-31) from behind the free throw line while Albuquerque shot 31-of-70 (44 percent) from the floor and 13-of-23 (56 percent) from the charity stripe.

"We were on a five game slide and I thought Albuquerque came out and did a nice job understanding who we are and they took a few things away from us and scored easily against our defense but I think we did a good job just maintaining our offense and working to get the shots that we wanted," said 14ers head coach Joe Wolf following the game.

Alando Tucker, a guard on assignment from the Phoenix Suns, netted a game-high 26 points for Albuquerque, on 11-of-19 shooting, adding eight rebounds, in the Thunderbirds loss.

"It was a great opportunity, I just wish we had played better," said Jeff Ruland, Thunderbirds head coach. "We had over 20 turnovers and we missed open shots. That's not us. We will regroup and hopefully play a lot better tomorrow."

Colorado and Albuquerque will both be back in action this week with the Thunderbirds matching up against the Tulsa 66ers on Wednesday. The 14ers taking will face the 66ers on Thursday.



THUNDERBIRDS GO 2-1 OVER WEEKEND

Thunderbirds Acquire 6-11 Big East Academic All-Star - Pittsnogle

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds hit the road last week for a 12 day road trip in which the first two games were against the D-League Southwest Divisional leader Austin Toros and the third game against the Rio Grande Valley Vipers. The Thunderbirds walked away from the weekend 2-1 overall and on the upswing headed to the D-League Showcase in Boise, ID.

Meanwhile, the Albuquerque Thunderbirds acquired forward / center Kevin Pittsnogle and waived center Ejike Ugboaja.

Pittsnogle, 6-11, 255, was in training camp with the Cleveland Cavaliers earlier this season. He was then drafted by the Austin Toros in the 2007 D-League Draft in the first round with the 12th overall pick. The Big East Academic All-Star from West Virginia was signed just in time for tip off this past Saturday when Albuquerque played the second game against Austin.

"Picking up Pittsnogle was a move that needed to be made, especially since we had some interest in him in the 2007 D-League Draft," said Head Coach Jeff Ruland. "The move has obviously worked out really well for us in the past two wins."

Ejike Ugboaja had played in 14 games for Albuquerque, averaging 19 minutes, 3.1 points and 2.8 rebounds.

Pittsnogle will be in uniform once again, wearing jersey #44, when the Thunderbirds (8-8) take on the Colorado 14ers (9-9) on Tuesday at the D-League Showcase at Qwest Arena in Boise, Idaho.

The Thunderbirds continue on the road for their next four games starting Tuesday, January 15th against the Colorado 14ers, before returning home to take on the Rio Grande Valley Vipers, Wednesday, January 23rd for a 10:30 am "School House Jam" game. The game on January 23rd will be the first of two "School House Jam" games for the Thunderbirds this season.

TUCKER HELPS T-BIRDS END TOROS HOME WIN STREAK

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds held off a late surge by the Austin Toros in the fourth quarter to hold onto the 123-117 victory on Saturday night at the Austin Convention Center. The Toros were unable to overcome an 18-point deficit and saw their franchise record 11 game home winning streak come to an end.

The Toros had no answer the entire night for newly assigned Phoenix Suns forward Alando Tucker, who scored a team-high 33 points and grabbed 10 rebounds. Tucker was red hot in the first half, scoring 20 of his points before halftime on 8-of-12 shooting. Albuquerque used a 14-0 run to begin the third quarter and pushed the lead 78-60 following a pair of free throws by Alando Tucker with 9:16 remaining in the quarter.

Austin would get the lead down one point twice early into the fourth quarter but could not get any closer to the Thunderbirds, who improved their record to 7-8 on the season. With the loss to Albuquerque, Austin fell to 13-5 and had their six game winning streak snapped.

Keith Langford scored a season-high 36 points along with six rebounds and three assists. San Antonio Spurs assignee Ian Mahinmi was plagued with foul trouble throughout the game and was held to four points and five rebounds. Cheyne Gadson added 22 points and nine assists and Justin Reed pitched in a season-high 13 points.

The Thunderbirds finished the game with five players scoring in double figures including 19 points from Daniel Horton and Kevin Pittsnogle. Josh Gross added 12 and Ali Berdiel had 11 points along with four rebounds. Albuquerque travels to the Rio Grande Valley to take on the Vipers tomorrow night at 7 p.m.

SUNS RE-ASSIGN TUCKER TO THUNDERBIRDS

Strawberry Returns to Phoenix

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds and the Phoenix Suns announced today that the Suns have re-assigned their first round draft choice, forward Alando Tucker to the Albuquerque Thunderbirds, President of Basketball Operations and General Manager Steve Kerr announced today. Tucker was previously assigned on Nov. 28 and recalled on Dec. 24. Tucker's second assignment is the 30th of the season for the D-League.

"We are glad to have two great NBA parent clubs in the Philadelphia 76ers and the Phoenix Suns," said Head Coach Jeff Ruland. "It's hard to see D.J. go back to Phoenix, but it is great to see Alando back in the rotation."

During his first assignment, Tucker played five games for the Thunderbirds, averaging 28.2 points, 7.0 rebounds and 1.2 assists. The 29th overall selection in the 2007 NBA Draft, Tucker has made appearances in five games for Phoenix this season, averaging 2.4 points in 4.5 minutes. He earned D-League.com Performer of the Week honors for the week of Dec. 17, 2007.

A product of the University of Wisconsin, Tucker finished his college career as the all-time leading scorer with 2,217 points, averaging 16.5 points, to go along with 5.7 rebounds and 1.7 assists in 134 games. During his senior season he earned Big Ten Player of the Year and was named First-Team All-America by the Associated Press.

Phoenix recalled Strawberry Thursday following his D-League.com Performer of the Week nod after averaging 34.0 points, 6.5 rebounds and 5.5 assists while shooting 24-of-41 (.585) from the field and 8-of-14(.571) from behind the three-point arc.

Tucker is expected to be in uniform Saturday wearing No. 42 when Albuquerque (6-8) plays game two of a two game set in Austin (13-4) at Austin Convention Center, 6 pm (MST) start.

TOROS OVERPOWER THUNDERBIRDS FOR 11th STRAIGHT HOME WIN

Ian Mahinmi scored 29 points and grabbed seven rebounds to help lead the Austin Toros over the Albuquerque Thunderbirds on Thursday night 117-105 at the Austin Convention Center. The Toros improved to 13-4 on the season and a franchise record 11 straight wins at home.

Mahinmi, who is on assignment from the San Antonio Spurs, was one of four Toros who scored over 20 points in the victory. Marcus Williams scored 22 points and dished out five assists in 35 minutes of play and Justin Reed led the team in rebounding with eight on the night.

Keith Langford and DerMarr Johnson each scored 25 points for the Toros.

Langford and Johnson were re-assigned to the team yesterday following GATORADE call-ups by the San Antonio Spurs.

The Toros opened up the game in the third quarter after leading 60-55 at halftime and led by as many as 14 points following a fast break slam dunk by Anthony Fuqua to push the Toros lead to 90-76. Albuquerque would cut the deficit to nine in the fourth quarter but would never get any closer for the rest of the game.

Albuquerque was led in scoring by 23 points from Josh Gross, who also had four rebounds and three rebounds. The Thunderbirds featured six players scoring in double figures including 18 points from Daniel Horton. Darvin Ham chipped in 14 and Abdul Mills added 13 for Albuquerque.

The Thunderbirds fell to 6-8 on the season with the loss on Thursday night. The two teams meet again on Saturday at the Austin Convention Center at 7 p.m.

D.J. STRAWBERRY RECEIVES D-LEAGUE.COM PERFORMER OF THE WEEK

Thunderbirds Pick Up Forward / Center Cory Underwood

D.J. Strawberry, of the Albuquerque Thunderbirds, on assignment from the Phoenix Suns, was today named D-League.com Performer of the Week for games played during the week of Dec. 31. In two games, Strawberry averaged 34.0 points, 6.5 rebounds and 5.5 assists, while shooting 24-of-41 (.585) from the field and 8-of-14 (.571) from three-point range.

Strawberry finished the week with a 39-point, seven-rebound, six-assist, and two-steal performance in an 89-87 win over the Fort Wayne Mad Ants on Saturday, Jan. 5. The night before, Strawberry netted a game-high 29 points in a two-point loss to the Anaheim Arsenal.

This is the second time this season that a Albuquerque Thunderbirds player had been honored as a D-League.com Performer of the week. Alando Tucker, on assignment from the Phoenix Suns, was named with the honor the week of December 17, when Tucker for the week, averaged 36.0 points and 6.5 rebounds while leading the Thunderbirds to two victories. He shot .519 (27-52) from the field, including 6-10 from three-point range.

Meanwhile, the Albuquerque Thunderbirds have acquired forward / center Cory Underwood and waived center James Smith.

"Cory is a long and athletic player who we are looking at to incorporate into the rotation and give him some minutes," Head Coach Ruland said.

Underwood, 6-10, 230, played collegiately at Southern University and averaged 17.7 points and 8.3 rebounds while earning NAIA All-American Honorable Mention in 2003. He most recently played for the Pittsburgh Explosion of the CBA, averaging 6.2 points and 4.2 rebounds.

Smith played in 11 games for the Thunderbirds, averaging 16.7 minutes, 3.7 points and 2.9 rebounds.

Underwood is expected to be in uniform wearing No. 33 when Albuquerque (6-7) travels to Austin (12-4) on Thursday at Austin Convention Center.

ARSENAL SOAR OVER THUNDERBIRDS

All-around team effort brings another dramatic victory to Anaheim

The last time the Anaheim Arsenal played at home they won, 133 - 130, in a dramatic overtime game with only 4 eligible Arsenal players left on the court, due to fouls, injuries, and an ejection. Although Friday's game against the Albuquerque Thunderbirds did not go into overtime, it was just as dramatic as its predecessor.

Former Orange County High School phenom and current Thunderbird, DJ Strawberry, helped Albuquerque jump out to a 29 - 27 lead at the end of the first quarter. Strawberry, who is currently on assignment from the Phoenix Suns, had 11 points on 5-of-7 shooting in the first 12 minutes of play.

DJ Strawberry and the Thunderbirds continued their strong play in the second quarter. Thunderbird big men; Darvin Ham, Serge Angounou, and Ejike Ugboaja controlled the boards and helped Albuquerque out rebound Anaheim 23 - 17. The Arsenal looked to counter by being more aggressive on the offensive end with several strong drives to the basket by Guillermo Diaz and Will Blalock, who ended up with 13 and 15 points, respectively, by the end of the first half.

Diaz and Blalock's aggressiveness sparked the Arsenal defense, tallying 7 steals by the end of the second quarter. With under a minute to go, the Arsenal finished the half with 2 steals, including a Diaz steal with 10.3 seconds left that led to a fast break dunk by Jamaal Thomas. The dunk helped the Arsenal go up 4 points, 53 - 49, which would ultimately be the score at the sound of the halftime horn.

The Arsenal offensive remained consistent in the third quarter with an alley-oop dunk by Kedrick Brown from Will Blalock, and a buzzer beating 3-pointer by Diaz with 6:20 left in the quarter that made the score 69 - 62, advantage Arsenal. The Thunderbird offense also played well in the quarter and kept the game close through ball distribution and offensive rebounding. Josh Gross of the Thunderbirds pulled down 2 offensive rebounds, including one that resulted in a 2-point put back. The Arsenal



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

however, closed the third quarter strong with another Thomas high-flying dunk, and another buzzer beating 3-pointer, this time by Marquis Webb, that put the Arsenal up 10 points 79-69 to start the fourth quarter.

In the fourth, Albuquerque looked to cut down its 10-point deficit by slowing down the tempo with better ball movement and spacing. Thunderbird point guard Elijah Ingram controlled his team's offensive rhythm by looking for the open man, accounting for 5 Thunderbird assists in the game. However, the Arsenal remained undaunted by the slower tempo and continued to score on fast break points off Blalock and Diaz assists.

With 5:16 left to play, DJ Strawberry looked to take over the game by scoring 7 points on consecutive Thunderbird possessions. The Thunderbirds also tightened up their defense and got within 3 points of the Arsenal, 103 – 100, with less than 30.0 seconds remaining. With 6.1 seconds left, Strawberry continued his clutch offense with a 3-pointer that tied the game 103 - 103.

Anaheim looked to forward Steven Smith on its final offensive possession, and he did not disappoint. Backing down his opponent 18-feet away from the basket, Smith turned around and matched Strawberry's heroics with a field goal that recaptured the lead for the Arsenal with 2.3 seconds left, 105 - 103.

After a Blalock deflection with 0.9 seconds left on the game clock, Albuquerque had one final chance to win or send the game into overtime. On the inbound, Albuquerque forward Ramon Dyer put up a 3-point attempt that nearly went in, but bounced off the rim and gave the Arsenal another dramatic victory at home.

Anaheim Arsenal Head Coach Reggie Geary said after the game, "Being in the lead for most of the game, we shouldn't have had to hit a game winning shot, but Steven hit a great shot."

Geary went on to add, "[It was] nice to see 5 guys in double figures, but more importantly we had 20 assists. If the team buys into the philosophy of sharing the ball we'll be a good team."

Guillermo Diaz led the balanced Arsenal attack with 18 points, while DJ Strawberry led all players with 29 points, but it was not enough to pull off a come from behind victory.

FLASH RALLY BACK TO DEFEAT THUNDERBIRDS

The Utah Flash put together a 44-4 run from midway through the third quarter to midway through the fourth to come back from a 20-point deficit to defeat the Albuquerque Thunderbirds, 113-96, in NBA Development League action Saturday night at the McKay Events Center.

"I was pretty disappointed with our guys at halftime, but the way they came out in the second half and battled back was something to be proud of." Flash coach Brad Jones said. The Flash trailed by 12 at the break.

The Thunderbirds (5-6), who won the first game of the home-and-home weekend series with Utah in Albuquerque on Friday, travel to Anaheim for a matchup with the Arsenal Friday. Utah (8-6) continues its five game homestand Friday against the Bakersfield Jam and Saturday against the Tulsa 66ers.

The Flash shot 88-percent (38-43) from the free throw line, including a perfect 11-of-11 by Morris Almond, who finished with 26 points and converted 7-of-10 from the floor.

Kevin Kruger chipped in 22 points for the Flash. Lamar Rice recorded a career high 16 points off the Flash bench. Michael Cuffee and Andre Ingram contributed 14 and 12 points off the bench, respectively.

"Without our bench tonight we would probably have gotten blown out." Jones said. "Our bench is pretty deep for a D-League team; guys like Lamar Rice, Michael Cuffee and Andre Ingram came in and gave us a huge spark of energy."

D.J. Strawberry followed up his 41 point night Friday against Utah with 23 points in the loss Saturday. Darvin Ham and Daniel Horton each contributed 17 for the Thunderbirds, while Ramon Dyer added 10 points off the Albuquerque bench.

THUNDERBIRDS BLITZ FLASH

Strawberry Nets 41 in Home Debut

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds defeated the Utah Flash 112 – 104 Friday night, holding off a late fourth quarter rally by the flash. D.J. Strawberry led all scorers in the game with 41 points on 15 of 25 shooting.

The Flash had five players score double digit points in a losing effort and were led by Morris Almond's 21 points and James Lang's 12 points and 9 rebounds. Brian Jackson and Brian Hamilton pitched in 11 and 16 points respectively for the Flash, and Andre Ingram had 18 points off the bench.

Daniel Horton added 27 points for the Thunderbirds in the win including hitting on 7 out of 7 three point attempts. Ramon Dyer added a team high 9 rebounds to go along with 7 points off the bench.

"It was a good win for us, everyone contributed," Albuquerque Head Coach Jeff Ruland said. "We just need to go out there and do it again tomorrow."

Horton led all scorers in the third quarter with 15 points, all of which came by the way of the three - ball. Strawberry chipped in another 11 in the quarter helping the Thunderbirds stretch their lead to 86 – 69.

Andre Ingram scored 10 points on 4 of 4 shooting for the Flash in the second quarter, including a streak of 7 straight, helping to keep Utah close at the half. Albuquerque shot 83 % from three point range in the second quarter though helping to push their halftime lead to 58 – 51.

Strawberry led all scorers in the first quarter scoring 13 of Albuquerque's 23 points, including 11 of their first 13 points. Utah shot 50% from the field in the quarter keeping the score close after one quarter of play; Thunderbirds 23, Flash 21.

Both teams get back to action tomorrow night, against one another, in Orem, Utah at 7:00 pm. The Thunderbirds return home Saturday, January 5th to take on the Fort Wayne, Indiana, Mad Ants; game time is set for 7:00 pm.

COLORADO'S SECOND HALF RALLY TOPS THE T-BIRDS

The Colorado 14ers completed a big second half comeback to beat the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 109-94 at the Broomfield Event Center on Sunday night. After trailing by 20 points in the second quarter, Colorado completed a 40 point turnaround early in the fourth period, and cruised to the 15 point victory. The 14ers improve to 9-4 on the season with the win, while the Thunderbirds fall to 4-5 with the loss.

Brian Greene returned to the Colorado line-up after missing seven games due to injury and led the way with 18 points and four steals. Kaniel Dickens added 17 points, and Lou White came off the bench to add 14 points, four rebounds, and three assists in the win.

"Brian did a nice job defensively inside returning from his injury," said 14ers Head Coach Joe Wolf. "And Lou White came off the bench to run the show playing good, solid defense and leading his team which we needed from the back-up point guard tonight."

Albuquerque ran out to a double-digit lead after starting the game on a 24-5 run. The Thunderbirds led by as many as 20 points in the first half before Colorado began its comeback. The 14ers outscored Albuquerque 34-15 in the third quarter led by nine points from Kaniel Dickens and eight from Mo Charlo in the period. Colorado expanded the lead to 20 points in the fourth quarter to complete a 40 point turnaround from the first half.

D.J. Strawberry made his debut for Albuquerque on assignment from the Phoenix Suns. Strawberry finished with 26 points, four rebounds, and three assists in the loss. Abdul Mills scored 18 of his 26 points in the first half to match Strawberry for game-high honors.

STRAWBERRY SECOND ASSIGNED PLAYER TO THE THUNDERBIRDS IN 2007-08 SEASON

Suns Recall Tucker Assign 59th Pick of the 2007 NBA Draft to Albuquerque

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds and the Phoenix Suns announce today that the Suns have recalled Alando Tucker and assigned rookie guard D.J. Strawberry to the Albuquerque Thunderbirds. The official announcement was made by Suns President of Basketball Operations and General Manager Steve Kerr.

The 59th selection in the 2007 NBA Draft, the Maryland product has made appearances in six games for Phoenix this season, averaging 2.0 points and 0.7 rebounds and 0.5 assists in 37 minutes of action.

A product of Maryland, Strawberry as a junior earned ACC All-Defensive Team Honorable Mention honors. As a senior, Strawberry was named to the All-ACC Second Team and ACC All-Defensive Team. He scored in double figures in all 25 Maryland victories that season.



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

Phoenix recalled Tucker Monday on the same day he was named the D-League's Performer of the Week after leading the Thunderbirds to two victories while averaging 36.0 points and 6.5 rebounds and shooting 51.9 percent (27-of-52) from the field, including 6-of-10 from three-point range. Tucker scored a D-League season-high 40 points in an Albuquerque victory over the Bakersfield Jam on Friday. The Wisconsin product was originally assigned to the Thunderbirds on Nov. 28 and averaged 28.2 points and 7.0 rebounds in five games with Albuquerque.

Strawberry joins an Albuquerque squad with a 4-4 record on the season, coached by 1984 NBA All-Star Jeff Ruland and features 2004 NBA champion Darvin Ham.

Strawberry is the 19 NBA player assigned to a D-League affiliate this season. Twenty-seven (27) NBA teams have designated 72 players to D-League affiliates since the start of the 2005-06 season.

Strawberry is expected to be in uniform for Sunday's game when the Thunderbirds (4-4) visit the Colorado 14ers (6-3) wearing No. 8.

THUNDERBIRDS SQUEAK PAST ARSENAL FOR SECOND STRAIGHT WIN

Horton and Tucker Each Score 32 in Thunderbirds Victory

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds defeated the Anaheim Arsenal 100 – 97 improving their record to 4 and 4 on the season, the loss drops the Arsenal to 3 and 8. Alando Tucker and Daniel Horton led the Thunderbirds with 32 points each on a collective 24 of 49 shooting.

Steven Smith led the Arsenal with 25 points in a losing effort and Ivan Johnson registered a double – double with 19 points and 15 rebounds. Davin White pitched in 21 points to go along with Guillermo Diaz's 17 points.

Josh Gross was the only other Thunderbird to score double digits with 11 points. Ramon Dyer and Darvin Ham each pitched in on the boards registering a combined 21 rebounds for Albuquerque.

Despite jumping out to an early lead in the first quarter, Albuquerque managed to shoot only 28% from the field. Anaheim was led by Davin White's 8 points in the quarter helping them to a 28 – 19 lead after one.

Three different players for Anaheim scored double digits in the second quarter alone; Smith led the effort scorers with 15 points. Tucker and Horton had 12 and 13 points each for the Thunderbirds helping to keep the game close at half, 60 – 54.

The Thunderbirds went 3 for 3 on three pointers in the third quarter helping them cut into the Arsenal lead. Tucker led all scorers in the quarter with 9 helping to bring Albuquerque within one at the end of the quarter, 77 – 76.

The Thunderbirds get back to action December 23rd on the road against the Colorado 14ers before returning home on Friday, December 28th to take on the Utah Flash. Friday will be “Home for the Holidays” night, show an out of state I.D. and get one free general admission ticket, game time is set for 7:00 pm.

Anaheim heads home to take on Colorado, Saturday, December 21st before heading to Idaho on Friday the 28th to take on the Stampede.

JAM LOSE FIRST HOME GAME OF SEASON

Thunderbirds Tucker Pours in Season-High 40 Points in Win

The Bakersfield Jam returned home following a two-game road trip and dropped their first home contest of the season to the Albuquerque Thunderbirds, 109-102 at Rabobank Arena.

The night belonged to Albuquerque’s Alando Tucker, on assignment from the Phoenix Suns, who scored 15 points in the first quarter and 21 points in the first half as the score was tied 58-58 going into intermission. Tucker finished with a season-high 40 points while Ramon Dyer added 20 points and Ali Berdiel dished out 14 assists for the Thunderbirds.

Brandon Bowman started off fast for the Jam, scoring 10 points in the first quarter on 4 of 4 shooting. Bowman led six Jam players in double figures, finishing with 18 points, and Andre Barrett scored 10 points and 11 assists. James Peters had 17 points and Anthony Wilkins contributed with 13 points off the bench.

“We missed a lot of shots we usually make.” said Jam Head Coach Jim Harrick. “I felt like we were in a great position to win this ballgame but you have to give credit to their guys who made the shots when they needed to.”

The win snaps a four-game skid for Albuquerque, raising their record to 3-4. Bakersfield dropped to 2-9 on the season. The Jam will have a day off before heading to Los Angeles on Sunday while the Thunderbirds visit Anaheim tomorrow.

The Jam return back to Rabobank Arena for a pair of games against the Idaho Stampede next Wednesday and Friday.

ISOTOPES MARKETING EXECUTIVE JOINS THUNDERBIRDS

Team President Billy Widner to Become COO of Austin Toros

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds announced today that Chris Holland formerly of the Albuquerque Isotopes has joined the NBA Development League’s Albuquerque Thunderbirds as Chief Operating Officer. Billy Widner, the first team president in Thunderbirds history, is leaving to become the COO of the Toros, the D-League team in Austin, Texas.

“I have truly enjoyed my time with the Thunderbirds,” said Widner, who attended the University of New Mexico and returned to Albuquerque from the Dallas Mavericks. “Bringing NBA basketball to my home town and watching young players chase their dreams while inspiring young people in the community has been amazing.”

“I am excited about the future of the franchise and I have complete faith that Chris Holland will bring new experiences and a new energy that will take the team to a new level,” said Widner.

“Billy Widner has done a phenomenal job for the Thunderbirds and has been a major part in two great seasons,” said Sam Bregman, local owner of the Thunderbirds. “We wish him luck in Austin, except when they play the Thunderbirds.”



Holland brings years of experience and success in sports from the baseball world as the Corporate Sales & Promotions Manager for the Class Triple-A Isotopes. A graduate of Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado, Holland earned his B.A. in Communications/Journalism.

“I’m just thrilled at the opportunity.” said Holland. “I look forward to building on the early success of the staff as we continue to strengthen our position within the community.”

“We are also excited about adding Chris Holland to the Thunderbirds front office,” said Bregman. “His experience and capabilities are a perfect fit.”

“We’re grateful we had somebody as talented as Billy for as long as we did,” said David Kahn of Southwest Basketball, LLC, which owns the Thunderbirds in conjunction with Bregman and Michael Cooper. “I also think it speaks volumes about the D League and the NBA that Billy has chosen to remain in the league, in a location where his family has roots.”

“In the meantime, we’re pleased to have somebody of Chris’ caliber joining us. The Isotopes have set the standard for minor league sports in New Mexico and I am certain Chris will help us immensely.”

14ERS DROP THUNDERBIRDS FOR THE SECOND NIGHT IN A ROW

Thunderbirds Head Coach Ejected in Loss

The Colorado 14ers defeated the Albuquerque Thunderbirds for the second night in a row 102 to 85 pushing their record on the season to 5-2 and dropping the Thunderbirds to 2-4 on the season. Kaniel Dickens led all scorers in the game with 28 points on 10 of 16 shooting.

Colorado had five scorers in double figures including Elton Brown's double-double, 14 points and 12 rebounds. Julian Sensley and Brandon Dean pitched in 11 points each for the 14ers.

Albuquerque was led by Alando Tucker's 27 points on 11 of 20 shooting. Josh Gross and Daniel Horton were the only other Thunderbirds to score in double digits, pitching in 14 and 16 points apiece.

Dickens had 11 points for the 14ers in the first quarter to lead all scorers and Albuquerque only shot 28 percent from the floor as a team, helping Colorado to a 29-19 lead after the first quarter.

Colorado hit all 11 of their free throws in the second quarter helping to extend their lead at half to 57-41. Tucker helped keep the Thunderbirds within striking distance by leading all scorers in the quarter with 12 points on 6 of 8 shooting.

Albuquerque's head coach Jeff Ruland was ejected early in the third quarter for his second technical foul of the game. The Thunderbirds rallied for the remainder of the quarter holding Colorado to 17 points in the quarter to cut the 14ers lead to 74-67 after three.

Albuquerque rallied in the fourth quarter several times but was never able to cut the 14ers lead to less than six points. Colorado pulled away in the fourth quarter by hitting three straight from three point range and never looked back as they cruised to a 102-85 victory.

The Thunderbirds get back to action, on the road, Friday, December 14th against the Bakersfield Jam before returning home Saturday the 15th to take on the Anaheim Arsenal. Saturday will be Toys for Tots night, bring a toy and get in free, game time is set for 7:00 pm at Tingley Coliseum.

Colorado continues their road trip in Texas next week, taking on the Austin Toros on Friday the 14th and the Rio Grande Valley Vipers on Saturday the 15th before returning home to take on Austin on Tuesday the 18th.

14ERS DOWN THUNDERBIRDS 105-70 IN PLAYOFF REMATCH

Sensley records double-double as 14ers win easily

The Colorado 14ers downed the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 105-70 in a rematch of last year's Eastern Conference Semifinals. Elton Brown was one of six 14ers to score in double digits, leading all scorers with 18 points.

Colorado outpaced Albuquerque all night long, led by a strong performance from their bench as well as Julian Sensley's double-double, 15 points and 13 rebounds. Kaniel Dickens pitched in 13 points for the 14ers, Brandon Dean and Mo Charlo combined for 23 of Colorado's 41 bench points.

The Thunderbirds were led by Alando Tucker and Josh Gross who pitched in 17 points each in a losing effort. For Tucker the loss spoiled his first home game since being assigned to the Thunderbirds from the Phoenix Suns a week ago. Abdul Mills had a game high 7 assists for the Thunderbirds to go along with 5 rebounds and 8 points.

Albuquerque jumped out to an early 7-1 first quarter lead. Colorado climbed back into the lead though thanks to 9 points in the quarter from Brown as well as 10 Albuquerque turnovers. At the end of the first quarter the 14ers had a scant 21-18 lead.

Sensley led all second quarter scorers pitching in 10 of Colorado's 35 second quarter points. Colorado outpaced Albuquerque throughout the quarter, as their bench outscored Albuquerque's 13 to 3, stretching their lead at half time to 56-39.

Colorado shot just under 70 percent from the field in the third quarter helping their lead grow to 28 points after three quarters, 85-57. Albuquerque was able to cut the 14ers lead to 11 early in the quarter before Colorado went on a four minute 10-0 run to secure their lead.

Both teams get back to action tomorrow night, Saturday, December 8th at Tingley Coliseum. Saturday will be Press Pass night, show your Albuquerque Journal Press Pass and get a free general admission ticket with the purchase of any ticket, game time is set for 7:00 pm.

IDAHO TOPS THUNDERBIRDS FOR FOURTH STRAIGHT WIN

Roberto Bergersen scores season-high 30 points in victory

The Idaho Stampede utilized a strong defensive performance in the fourth quarter to defeat the Albuquerque Thunderbirds 92-84 for their fourth straight win. Idaho improves to 4-1 on the season, as they held the Thunderbirds to 16 points on 5-of-20 shooting in the final period, and avenges a 92-94 loss in Albuquerque on November 23.

Albuquerque committed two key turnovers and Stampede forward Ernest Scott blocked an Alando Tucker shot in the final minute to seal the win.

The Thunderbirds shot 38.6% from the field for the game, though a controlled style of play as they committed only 9 turnovers the entire contest. Idaho finished with a 54-37 rebounding edge.



Photo by: Layne Murdoch / NBA E Photo / Getty Images

Roberto Bergersen scored 12 of his game and season-high 30 points for the Stampede in the fourth quarter, who also had three others score in double figures. Randy Livingston finished with 16 points and eight assists, Scott had 12 points and a season-high 13 rebounds, and Cory Violette added 14 points, eight rebounds and a season-high six assists.

The game started out as a sluggish defensive affair, as each team shot under 40% in the first quarter. The Stampede took control early in the contest, utilizing an advantage in the middle to build a nine-point lead with two minutes remaining in the first quarter. Idaho continued to build upon that advantage as they built an 11-point lead with 9:36 remaining in the first half on a Bergersen jumper from the paint.

The Thunderbirds roared back with an 18-2 run midway through the second quarter to take a 35-32 lead with 3:27 remaining in the half. The Stampede answered back in the final minutes with an 8-2 run for a 40-37 advantage heading into halftime.

Neither team led by more than six points in the second half until the final minute of the game.

Tucker, on NBA assignment from the Phoenix Suns, finished with 25 points and 12 rebounds for Albuquerque. Josh Gross added 20 points, while Darvin Ham contributed 11 points in a losing effort.

Albuquerque returns home for a back-to-back series against the Colorado 14ers on Friday, December 7 and Saturday, December 8. Idaho hosts the Sioux Falls Skyforce on Tuesday, December 4 before heading on a six-game road trip.

TUCKER ASSIGNED TO THE THUNDERBIRDS

Suns Assign 29th Pick of the 2007 NBA Draft to Albuquerque

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds and the Phoenix Suns announce today that the Suns have assigned rookie forward Alando Tucker to the Albuquerque Thunderbirds. The official announcement was made by Suns President of Basketball Operations and General Manager Steve Kerr.

The 29th selection in the 2007 NBA Draft, Tucker has made appearances in two games for Phoenix this season, averaging 6.0 points and 1.0 rebounds in 8.0 minutes of action. This is the first time in the Thunderbirds team history a first round NBA Draft pick has been assigned to the organization.

A product of the University of Wisconsin, Tucker finished his college career as the all-time leading scorer with 2,217 points, averaging 16.5 points, 5.7 rebounds and 1.7 assists in 134 games. During his senior season he earned Big Ten Player of the Year honors and was named First-Team All-American by the Associated Press.



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

Tucker is the record-setting 12th NBA player assigned to the D-League this season. On this date last year there had been a total of three players assigned to the D-League. In 2005-06 there were eight players assigned to the NBA Development League at this point.

Tucker joins an Albuquerque squad with a 2-1 record on the season, coached by 1984 NBA All-Star Jeff Ruland and features 2004 NBA champion Darvin Ham.

Tucker is the 12th NBA player assigned to a D-League affiliate this season. Twenty-seven (27) NBA teams have designated 65 players to D-League affiliates since the start of the 2005-06 season.

Tucker is expected to be in uniform for Saturday's game when the Thunderbirds (2-1) visit the Idaho Stampede (2-1) wearing No. 42.

ENERGY SURGE OVER THUNDERBIRDS KEEPS IOWA UNBEATEN

Dwayne Mitchell led the Iowa Energy to a come-from-behind victory in front of a D-League record crowd to beat the Albuquerque Thunderbirds, 101-98.

Mitchell led all Energy players with 27 points and 14 rebounds as the team outscored the Thunderbirds 37-29 in the fourth quarter to capture their third straight win this season.

"There are a million ways to win a game and we found a new one tonight," said Energy head coach Nick Nurse.

James OnCurry finished with 21 points, three rebounds and two assists. Swingman Josh Gross led the Thunderbirds with 27 points and seven rebounds.



Photo by: Larry W. Smith/NBA E Photo/Getty Images

THUNDERBIRDS STOMP MAD ANTS IN FIRST ROAD VICTORY OF THE SEASON

Gross Lead All Scorers with 31 Points

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds came out hot and stayed hot all night as they defeated the Fort Wayne Mad Ants 98-79 on Sunday afternoon at the Memorial Coliseum. The Thunderbirds' Josh Gross was more than the Mad Ants could handle with an outstanding 31 points, shooting 63% from the floor.

The Thunderbirds dominated the first half, heading into the locker room with a comfortable 23 point lead. The second half did not get much better for the Mad Ants; they would cut the lead to 14 at the end of the third quarter with back to back layups from Earl Calloway and Rod Wilmont but would not get any closer.

Along with Gross's 31 point showcase, Albuquerque had three others in double figures: Serge Angounou (17), Ali Berdiel (16), Ramon Dyer (12). Jeremy Richardson led the Mad Ants in scoring and rebounds with 22 and 10 respectively. Eric Smith also had a big night for the Ants with 18 points.

With the loss, the Mad Ants fall to 0-2 while the Thunderbirds advance to 2-0.

THUNDERBIRDS DEFEAT STAMPEDE 94 - 92 IN HOME OPENER

Thunderbirds Win in Jeff Ruland's Debut as Head Coach

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds defeated the Idaho Stampede 94 - 92 in their first game of the 2007 - 2008 season. The win also ushered in the Jeff Ruland era as the Thunderbirds new head coach. Lance Allred led all scorers in a losing effort for the Stampede with 30 points and 9 rebounds.

The Thunderbirds were led in scoring by Daniel Horton who had 24 points, with 16 in the 4th quarter. Albuquerque had three other scorers in double digits, Josh Gross with 20 to go along with 8 rebounds, Darvin Ham had 14 points and Ali Berdiel pitched in 10 points off the bench.

"It was a great way for us to open the season with a win like this," Coach Ruland said, "but we still have a lot of work to do, I'm just glad to have this win."

The game also marked the beginning of the Thunderbirds career for two New Mexico locals, Serge Angounou and Elijah Ingram. Serge, a graduate of Rio Grande High School, had 7 points and former Aggie Ingram pitched in 5 points for the Thunderbirds.

Abdul Mills took the opening tip off and laid it in for the Thunderbirds first points of the 2007 - 2008 season. Albuquerque built off its early two point advantage by shooting over 50 % from the floor in the first quarter, including 3 for 3 from three point range. Idaho managed to keep it close by hitting all seven first quarter free throws. The score after one was Thunderbirds 26, Stampede 19.

Allred led all scorers in the second quarter scoring 10 of Idaho 26 second quarter points. The Stampede held the Thunderbirds to 33 percent shooting in the quarter while they shot 50 percent from the floor to take a 45 - 40 halftime lead.

Despite Idaho's 60 percent shooting average in the third quarter Albuquerque still managed to outscore them 26 - 23, bringing the score after 3 quarters to: Idaho 68, Albuquerque 66. The real story of the quarter though was the ejection of Idaho's Marcus Campbell, with just over 4 minutes left in the quarter Campbell elbowed the Thunderbirds James Smith in the back of the head drawing an immediate ejection.

The Thunderbirds hit the road for their next three games at Indiana, Iowa and Idaho before returning home to take on the Colorado 14ers on December 7th and 8th. Both game times are set for 7:00pm at Tingley Coliseum. All Thunderbirds games can be heard on KBZU 96.3 "The Buzz" FM. Idaho continues their three game road trip at Colorado on Saturday, November 24th.

THUNDERBIRDS PRESENT NBA, (N)O (B)OYS (A)LLOWED

Event to Familiarize Women with the Game of Basketball While Having Fun

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds will host NBA, (N)o (B)Oys (A)llowed on Thursday, November 15, at Tingley Coliseum, from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. The event, which is aimed at educating women about the rules of basketball features the chance to win two round-trip tickets on American Airlines and refreshment, is free to the public.

Thunderbirds players, along with members of the coaching staff will be on hand to interact with participants during on-court demonstrations of team defensive and offensive philosophies, while answering questions from the participants. Attendees will also tour the locker rooms and seating areas for a look "behind the scenes" at Tingley Coliseum. Women can also expect to learn basic rules of the NBA, referee signals and about the work the Thunderbirds do in the community.



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Gettv Images

"This is a great opportunity for ladies of all ages to learn a little more about the game and hopefully, a few of them will knock out some holiday shopping while they are there", said Thunderbirds Team President Billy Widner. "My wife attended a similar event with the Dallas Mavericks and loved it."

Thunderbirds training camp continues through November 22nd. Sessions are considered open practices for members of the media. Please contact Sean McLaughlin in advance to confirm location and time of practice sessions.

THUNDERBIRDS TRAINING CAMP OPENS NOVEMBER 11

Seventeen Players will compete for 10 Roster Spots

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds will begin the first season under Coach Jeff Ruland by making some tough decisions. A total of seventeen players will report to the first practice on Sunday, November 11th at Isleta Recreation Center at 9:00am and the team must be reduced to twelve players by Thursday, November 15th.

Training camp sessions are considered open practices for members of the media. Please contact Sean McLaughlin in advance to confirm location and time of practice sessions. All season ticket holders and media members are invited to meet the team at Carrabba's Restaurant on Wednesday, November 14th from 5:30 to 7:00pm. Details about media day (November 14th from 1 to 3) will be sent in an additional release.

The Thunderbirds and the Tulsa 66ers will play a preseason contest in Bartlesville, Oklahoma on the evening of November 17th. The roster will be reduced to ten players on Wednesday, November 21st before the season opens at Tingley Coliseum on November 23rd at 7:00 pm. NBA D-League rosters can expand to twelve with the assignment of NBA first or second-year players. The Thunderbirds are affiliated with the Phoenix Suns and Philadelphia 76ers this season and both have expressed interest in sending young players to Albuquerque this year.

2007-08 ALBUQUERQUE THUNDERBIRDS TRAINING CAMP ROSTER

<u>Player</u>	<u>Pos</u>	<u>Ht</u>	<u>Wt</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>Year</u>
Darvin Ham	SF	6-7	230	Texas Tech	1996
Daniel Horton	PG	6-3	200	Michigan	2006
James Smith	C	7-0	250	Marist	2007
Tiras Wade	G/F	6-5	205	Louisiana-Lafayette	2005
Ejike Ugboaja	PF/C	6-9	225	Nigeria	
Ali Berdiel	PG	6-5	200	Valparaiso	2006
Josh Gross	SF	6-6	205	UNC-Greensboro	2006
Michael Adams	C	6-11		Youngstown St.	2007
Ramon Dyer	SF	6-7	200	Houston	2006
Tim Smith	PG	5-9	170	E. Tennessee St.	2006
Steven Barber	G	5-10	160	University of Texas – Arlington	2002
Abdul Mills	G	6-3	190	University of Nebraska – Omaha	2003
Serge Angounou	F	6-8	236	Arizona State	2007
Kris Collins	G	6-3	190	University of New Mexico	2006
Jackson Marlow	C	7-0	315	Fresno State	
Harry Good	F	6-10	255	Rutgers University	2005
Elijah Ingram	G	5-11	166	New Mexico State University	

THUNDERBIRDS PICK 3rd, CHOOSE HAM AS NUMBER ONE PICK

Thunderbirds Select Ten New Faces to Join Training Camp

The Albuquerque Thunderbirds selected ten players in Thursday's D-League Draft who will join others when training camp begins on November 11th. Joining training camp from the Thunderbirds Open Try Outs will be Abdul Mills (University of Nebraska - Omaha), Serge Angounou (Arizona State), Kris Collins (University of New Mexico), Jackson Marlow (Fresno State), Harry Good IV (Rutgers University), Steve Barber (UT-Arlington), and Elijah Ingram (St. Johns University).

The Thunderbirds used their first pick, 3rd overall, to select Darvin Ham, a 6'7, 240 pound forward-guard from Texas Tech University. Ham was a member of the Philippine Basketball Association in 1997. Ham was also a member of the 2004 NBA Champion Detroit Pistons and spent time with the Denver Nuggets and Milwaukee Bucks.

Ham has earned himself the nickname "Dunkin' Darvin" for his powerful dunks. Most notably in the 1996 NCAA Tournament when he shattered the backboard in a second round game against North Carolina, propelling Texas Tech to their first sweet 16 appearance.

With the twelfth pick in the second round, 26th pick overall, the Thunderbirds selected Daniel Horton; a 6'3, 205 pound guard from the University of Michigan. Horton was signed by the Miami Heat in 2006. At Michigan he was named the 2004 NIT MVP; he averaged 14.7 points per game to go along with 4.4 assists in his four year college career.

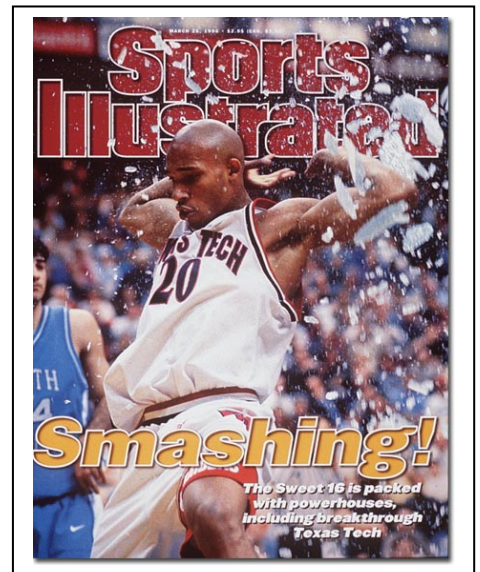


Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

Additional 2007 Thunderbirds Draft Picks include: James Smith (Colorado State), Tiras Wade (Louisiana – Lafayette), Ejike Ugboaja (Nigeria), Ali Berdiel (Valparaiso), Josh Gross (UNC - Greensboro), Michael Adams (Youngstown State), Ramon Dyer (Houston), and Tim Smith (East Tennessee State).

Prior to the draft, Head Coach Jeff Ruland said that it would be interesting to see if the Thunderbirds could get the players they wanted since they were only returning one player from last year. Both coaches are very pleased with the 10 new faces they selected.

"I think we did pretty well" Worthen said, "we got shooters, big men, and a balanced roster. It should make for a pretty competitive training camp!" Coach Ruland seemed to agree:

"We addressed all of our needs tonight. We are athletic, long, and have a very good basketball I.Q., now its up to the coaches to make it work. I can't wait to get started!" Ruland said.



FEEL THE THUNDER!

NBA PLAYERS ASSIGNED DURING THE 2007 - 08 THUNDERBIRDS SEASON

#8 D.J. STRAWBERRY GUARD 6'5" 201 Maryland '07



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

Selected by the Suns in the second round of the 2007 NBA Draft, the guard tested as the best athlete at the Orlando Pre-Draft camp. Strawberry was named to the All-ACC Second Team and ACC All-Defensive Team. He scored in double figures in all 25 Maryland victories. Earned ACC All-Defensive Team Honorable Mention honors as a Junior.

Strawberry is son of Lisa Watkins and former Major League Baseball player Darryl Strawberry and has two brothers and four sisters. He served as a bat boy for the New York Yankees, while his father was on the roster. He matched up against the Cavaliers' LeBron James in high school, limiting the future All-Star to 33-percent shooting (0-8 from the outside) and forcing seven turnovers on the night. He was a communications major at Maryland.

#42 ALANDO TUCKER FORWARD 6'6" 205 Wisconsin '07



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

Tucker, the 2007 Big Ten Player of the Year and a First Team All-American by The Associated Press, averaged 19.9 points, 5.4 rebounds and 2.0 assists in 36 games in his senior season with the Badgers. He was also one of four finalists for the Naismith Trophy given to the national player of the year, along with eventual winner Texas forward Kevin Durant (2nd overall to Seattle), Texas A&M guard Acie Law IV (11th overall to Atlanta) and North Carolina forward Tyler Hansbrough.

The 6-6, 205-pound forward finished as Wisconsin's all-time leading scorer (2,217 points), surpassing former Suns draft pick Michael Finley (21st overall in the 1995 NBA Draft). Tucker, 23, also holds seven other school records, including games played (134), games started (126), minutes played (4,297), field goals (798), free throws (520), free throw attempts (817) and offensive rebounds (314).

As a senior, Tucker led Wisconsin to heights unparalleled in school history. The Badgers won 17 consecutive games, the longest single-season streak in school history, earned a No. 1 ranking in The Associated Press poll for the first time, and garnered their highest seed ever in the 2007 NCAA Tournament (No. 2).

NBA PLAYERS ASSIGNED DURING THE 2006 - 07 THUNDERBIRDS SEASON

#27 DWAYNE JONES FORWARD/CENTER 6'11" 251 ST. JOSEPH'S (PA) '05



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

Cleveland acquired Dwayne's rights from the Boston Celtics during the 2006 -07 season. Dwayne was signed as an undrafted free agent in August 2005 by the Minnesota Timberwolves to a two-year contract. In November of 2005 he was placed on the inactive list. He was assigned twice to the Florida Flame of the D-League during the 2005 - 06 season. In February of 2005 the Boston Celtics acquired his rights. n early entry candidate for the draft after spending three seasons at St. Joseph's University (2002-03 - 2004-05) Along with senior Jameer Nelson, junior guard Delonte West, junior guard Pat Carroll, Dwayne Jones was an integral part of the undefeated regular season of 2004.... Averaged 7.1 ppg (.522 FG%), 8.5 rpg, 2.1 apg, and 2.37 bpg in 98 games (started 69)... Atlantic 10 Conference Defensive Player of the Year and Second Team All Conference selection in 2004-05... Twice named to Atlantic 10 All-Defensive Team

#6 SHANNON BROWN GUARD 6'4" 205 MICHIGAN STATE '06

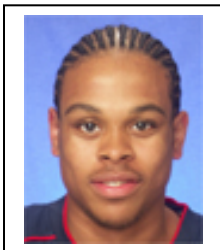


Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

Played three seasons at Michigan State and was named All-Big Ten Second Team by media and coaches and Big Ten All-Defensive Team by league's coaches as a junior...also named to NABC All-District First Team and USBWA All-District honoree after his junior season...scored his 1,000th career-point with a 22-point game versus Northwestern...scored a career-high 31 points against Wisconsin...scored 15 or more points in 21 of 34 games as a junior...dished out a career-high eight assists to go with 26 points versus UW-Green Bay, including a career-best six three-pointers...was named All-Big Ten Honorable Mention by league's coaches as a sophomore...selected as Most Outstanding Player of the Austin Regional, averaging 13.5 points and 3.3 rebounds in first four games of 2005 NCAA Tournament...scored a season-high 24 points in NCAA Elite Eight versus Kentucky, including 5-6 from behind the arc...shot a team-best .500 from three-point range (10-20) in five NCAA Tournament games...ranked second in the Big Ten in free throw percentage (.848)...finished second on the team in steals (41)...was named to the Big Ten All-Freshman Team.

NBA PLAYERS ASSIGNED DURING THE 2005 - 06 THUNDERBIRDS SEASON

#34 CJ MILES

GUARD

6'6"

220

SKYLINE HS (DALLAS, TX)

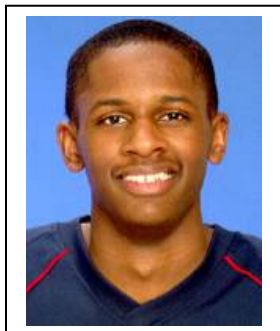


Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

Appeared in 23 games during his rookie season, averaging 3.4 points and 1.7 rebounds in 8.8 minutes ... Registered 27 DNP-CDs this season ... Missed three games (3/5-3/8) with right foot inflammation ... Posted career-highs in points (23), field goals made and attempted (8-13), assists (4) and blocks (2), and tied career-high in rebounds (6) in a career-high 33 minutes in season finale vs. Golden State on 4/19 ... Only double-digit scoring performance of season ... Inactive for 14 games while on assignment with the Albuquerque Thunderbirds of the NBA Developmental League (1/4-2/3) ... Appeared in 11 games for Albuquerque, starting nine ... Averaged 12.7 points, 3/5 rebounds, 1.6 assists and 1.00 steals in 27.0 minutes per game in D-League ... Scored in double-figures seven times for Albuquerque, hitting for a high of 19 on three occasions (1/31 vs. Arkansas, 1/21 vs. Austin and 1/15 vs. Tulsa) ... Inactive seven straight games for Jazz prior to D-League assignment (12/21-1/3) ... Scored nine points vs. Indiana, 11/29 ... Grabbed a career-high six rebounds at Sacramento on 11/15 ... Inactive first six games of season ... Scored two points in 13 minutes in NBA debut vs. New York on 11/14 ... The 18-year-old became the youngest player in Jazz history (19, DeShawn Stevenson).

#12 DIJON THOMPSON

GUARD/FORWARD

6'6"

195

UCLA '04

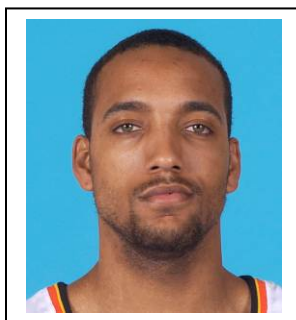


Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

Assigned to the Albuquerque Thunderbirds for the 2005-06 D-League season... Selected with the 54th pick overall in the second round of the 2005 NBA Draft by the New York Knicks, but his draft rights were traded to the Phoenix Suns along with forward/center Kurt Thomas in exchange for guard/forward Quentin Richardson and the draft rights to guard Nate Robinson (21st pick) on June 28, 2005... Averaged 7.3 points, 2.3 rebounds and shot .372 (16-43 FG) from the floor in 27.8 minutes in six games at the 2005 Reebok Vegas Summer League.

Averaged 12.5 points, 4.7 rebounds and 1.1 steals in 117 career games (72 starts) in four seasons with UCLA. Thompson originally declared for the 2004 NBA Draft and participated in the 2004 NBA Pre-Draft Camp in Chicago, but withdrew his name from consideration prior to the draft. Earned First team All-PAC 10 honors as a senior, averaging 18.4 points (4th in the Pac-10) and 7.9 rebounds in 28 games. Finished as the 19th all-time leading scorer in UCLA history (1,458 points) and tied for fifth for 3-point field goals made (133). Thompson's 18.4 scoring average as a senior was the highest by a Bruin since 1998 and was awarded the Coach John Wooden Award as UCLA's Most Valuable Player for the 2004-05 season after sharing the honor with TJ Cummings in 2003-04.

THUNDERBIRDS IN THE NBA

#44 CHUCK HAYES

FORWARD

6'6"

238

KENTUCKY '05



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

In his first season with the Rockets, averaged 3.7 points and 4.5 rebounds in 40 games ... finished third among all rookies in rebounds per 48 minutes played (15.8) and tied for eighth in boards per game (4.5) ... had five double-digit rebounding performances ... led or tied for the team lead in rebounding in six games ... signed as a rookie free agent with Houston on Oct. 3 ... waived by Houston on Oct. 25 ... selected sixth overall in the 2005 NBA D-League Draft by the Albuquerque Thunderbirds ... averaged 11.6 points and a league-leading 12.2 rebounds in 14 games (13 starts) with Albuquerque ... re-signed by the Rockets to a 10-day contract on Jan. 18 ... played in his first NBA game vs. Dallas (1/18/06) ... in his second NBA game, registered the first double-double of his career with 12 points (4-5 FG, 4-4 FT) and a career-high 13 rebounds at Chicago (1/20/06), adding a career-best two blocks, one assist and one steal in a career-most 32:55 off the bench.

FEEL THE THUNDER!

THE COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH: JEFF RULAND

Ruland becomes the Thunderbirds second overall Head Coach in the team's third season, taking the reins from former Head Coach and current Head Coach of the Los Angeles Sparks (WNBA) Michael Cooper.

Ruland was an All-American honoree during his three-year career, helping lead the Iona Gaels to a 69-21 record, including back-to-back appearances in the NCAA Tournament. Iona was ranked #6 in the country according to Sports Illustrated and defeated eventual national champion Louisville, 77-60, at Madison Square Garden on February 21, 1980.

As a student-athlete, Ruland had an immediate impact during his first season playing for the Gaels. He led all Division I freshmen in scoring and rebounding, averaging 22.3 points and 12.8 rebounds per game. During the following two seasons, Ruland continued to impress, twice leading the Gaels to the NCAA Tournament and twice receiving All-American accolades. He ended his collegiate career as the college's third all-time leading scorer (1,855 points/20.8 ppg) and second leading rebounder (1,067 rebounds/12.0 rpg). In addition, he is Iona's career leader in field goal percentage (63.5%). Ruland passed up his final year of college eligibility to turn pro.

Ruland was drafted by the Golden State Warriors as an undergraduate in the second round (25th overall) of the 1980 NBA draft, which included such names as Kevin McHale, Kiki Vandeweghe, Rick Mahorn, Larry Smith and Kurt Rambis. Ruland opted to play one season of professional basketball in Barcelona, Spain, where he averaged 21 points and 11 rebounds per game. His draft rights were traded by Golden State to Washington in 1981 for a second round draft pick.

Ruland spent five seasons in Washington and led the Bullets in rebounding and field goal percentage each of those five years. He was selected to the 1984 and 1985 Eastern Conference All-Star teams and named to the 1982 NBA All-Rookie squad. His best season in Washington, and as a professional, came during the 1983-84 campaign when he averaged 22.2 points and 12.3 rebounds while shooting 57.9% from the floor. Following the 1983-84 season, Ruland suffered a left knee injury. Prior to the 1986-87 campaign, he was traded to the Philadelphia 76ers for Moses Malone, Terry Catledge and two future first round draft picks. He played in just five games for the Sixers before his knee injury forced him to retire. Following a five-year layoff, Ruland came out of retirement in 1991 and signed with the 76ers. He played in just 13 games before a tear to his Achilles tendon forced him to miss the remainder of the season. His last stint in the NBA came during the 1992-93 season when the Detroit Pistons signed him to a free agent contract. He played in 11 games before being waived in January of 1993.

During his 332-game NBA career, that spanned eight seasons, Ruland averaged 17.4 points and 10.2 rebounds per game while shooting 56.4% from the field.

For the past eight years Ruland had been Head Coach at his Alma Mater (Iona College), in which he compiled 137 wins, an average of more than 17 wins per season and guided the Gaels to three 20-win seasons, three MAAC Championships and three NCAA Tournament appearances.

ASSISTANT COACH: JOHN COFFINO

Coffino joins the Thunderbirds staff as an Assistant Coach in the team's third season. Most recently Coffino was with St. Peter's College as an Admissions Counselor.

He served as an assistant coach at St. Peter's for the past four years. Coffino started his coaching career at Westchester Community College in Valhalla, NY where he served as an assistant and associate head coach for six seasons. There, Coffino assisted Ralph Arietta, the all-time winningest coach in junior college history.

After his stint at Westchester, Coach Coffino spent time at the Division I level as an administrative assistant at Iona College. In his two years at Iona, Coffino was on the staff when the Gaels advanced to the 1998 NCAA Division I Tournament. Before coaching his four years at St. Peter's he spent three seasons at Niagara. John Coffino is a native of the Bronx, where he graduated from Mt. St. Michael Academy.



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images



Photo by: NBA E Photo/Getty Images

FEEL THE THUNDER!

PLAYER BIOS



Selected by: Tulsa 66ers
 Round: 6 – 2005 Draft
 Pick (Overall): 7 (47)



#10 WILL CONROY - GUARD

HEIGHT	WEIGHT	COLLEGE/YEAR	LAST PLAYED
6-2	195	Washington '05	Armani Jeans Milano (Italy)

Pro Career Highlights: Conroy joins the Thunderbird after playing for Armani Jeans Milano (Italy.) Will has been a part of the Tulsa 66ers roster for the past two seasons earning All-D-League Honorable Mention Honors for 2005-06, when he ranked second in the league with 6.7 assists per game. He also was also selected to the D-League All-Star Game in 2007 as well as being named to the All-D-League 2nd Team in 2007. Conroy's accomplishments are all the more impressive when you consider that he played the final two months of the 2006-07 season with a stress fracture in his shin. He has participated in training camp with the Charlotte Bobcats as well as called up to the Los Angeles Clippers and Memphis Grizzlies for short stints.

	G	GS	MIN	FGM	FGA	Pct.	3PM	3PA	Pct.	FTM	FTA	Pct.	OR	DR	REB	Avg.	AST	PF	TO	BS	ST	PTS	Avg.
ABQ THUNDERBIRDS	13	10	498	75	155	0.484	25	62	0.403	36	47	0.766	19	42	61	4.7	109	32	44	0	18	211	16.2



Selected by: Albuquerque Thunderbirds
 Round: 2 – 2006 Draft
 Pick (Overall): 2 (13)



#15 JAAMAL THOMAS - FORWARD

HEIGHT	WEIGHT	COLLEGE/YEAR	LAST PLAYED
6-8	200	Angelo State	Anaheim Arsenal (D-League)

Pro Career Highlights: Jaamal returns to the Thunderbirds after playing with the Anaheim Arsenal. He was traded in January of '07 to Anaheim for Greg Clausen (C). Jaamal has mainly played in Mexico the past few seasons. In 2006, averaged 18.0 points in ten games for Trigueros Ciudad Obregon. In 2005 in the Mexican LNBP for Fuerza Regia Monterey, averaged 21.9 points, 5.0 rebounds, and 4.0 assists in 29 games. In the 2004-05 season, started the year with the Denver Truckers in the NABL before moving on to play for AZS Zagaz Koszalin in Poland, averaging 11.7 points and 4.3 rebounds in 11 games. Played for Santos de San Luis Potosi in the Mexican LNBP in 2003 and 2004. In the summer of 2002, played with the St. Louis Skyhawks in the USBL, averaging 2.4 points and 1.0 rebounds.

College Highlights: Named Honorable Mention All-Lone Star Conference as a senior. Ranks as the second all-time leader in blocked shots (63) in Angelo State history, in only one season. Finished collegiate career at Angelo State after playing first two seasons at Lamar Community College in Colorado and one season at Portland State.

	G	GS	MIN	FGM	FGA	Pct.	3PM	3PA	Pct.	FTM	FTA	Pct.	OR	DR	REB	Avg.	AST	PF	TO	BS	ST	PTS	Avg.
ANAHEIM ARSENAL	22	0	424	63	145	0.434	18	64	0.281	40	57	0.702	18	29	47	2.1	31	26	23	6	28	184	8.4
ABQ THUNDERBIRDS	23	12	600	89	194	0.459	15	57	0.263	44	61	0.721	25	74	99	4.3	43	36	33	10	20	237	10.3



Selected by: Denver Nuggets
 Round: 1 – 2005 Draft
 Pick (Overall): 20 (20)



#17 JULIUS HODGE - GUARD

HEIGHT	WEIGHT	COLLEGE/YEAR	LAST PLAYED
6-7	210	North Carolina State '05	Adelaide 36ers– (Australia)

Pro Career Highlights: Julius returns to the Thunderbirds after playing with the Adelaide 36ers (Australia) and the Legea Scafati Basket (Italy). In the summer of 2007 Julius played on the Seattle Supersonics Summer League team in Las Vegas. Was on the Inactive List for 16 games while on assignment with the Austin Toros of the D-League. Missed the last five games due to muscular skeletal injuries to his left leg ... Recalled from Austin of the NBA Development League on 3/16/06 ... Averaged 17.7 ppg, 5.6 rpg and 2.7 apg in 11 games for the Toros ... Scored in double figures 11 times with Austin, including two games of 20+ and one of 30+ ... Had one points/rebounds double-double ... Scored 33 points (10-16FG, 13-15FT) to go along with seven rebounds and two assists at Fayetteville on 3/12 ... Had 16 points and four boards in 35 minutes at Albuquerque on 3/10 ... Re-assigned to the Austin Toros of the NBA Development League on 2/25 ... Recalled from Austin of the NBA Development League on 2/24 ... Scored 22 points (7-14FG) and had five rebounds in 25 minutes in his first game with Austin at Tulsa on 2/10 ... Assigned to the Austin Toros on 2/7. Made his NBA debut playing one minute vs. Minnesota on 11/13/06.

	G	GS	MIN	FGM	FGA	Pct.	3PM	3PA	Pct.	FTM	FTA	Pct.	OR	DR	REB	Avg.	AST	PF	TO	BS	ST	PTS	Avg.
ABQ THUNDERBIRDS	15	14	573	147	242	0.607	0	2	0.000	77	110	0.700	65	64	129	8.6	87	47	49	6	14	371	24.7

FEEL THE THUNDER!



#18 CHEYNE GADSON - GUARD

HEIGHT	WEIGHT	COLLEGE/YEAR	LAST PLAYED
6-3	190	Oklahoma State '03	Austin Toros (<i>D-League</i>)

Career Highlights: Spent the 2006-07 NBA D-League season with the Austin Toros... Re- Acquired by the Toros on 12/6/07... Acquired by the Toros originally in 2006-07 via trade from the Tulsa 66ers in exchange for forward Scott Merritt on 1/22/07... Gadson scored a career-high 30 points against the Fort Worth Flyers on 3/23/07... Gadson scored 27 points on 3/21/07 vs. Dakota... Gadson scored 21 points on 3/20 vs. Arkansas... Scored 21 points (7-of-13) on 2/8/07 @ Colorado... Scored 16 points and six assists on 1/31/07 vs. Idaho... Gadson had game-high six assists along with eight points in his first game with the Toros on 1/24/07... Played for Yakama (Washington) and was instrumental in leading the Sun Kings to the 2006 CBA Championship... Finished collegiate career at Oklahoma State after sitting out at Kilgore College in Texas and routing through Westchester Community College in New York... Started 15 of 62 career games with the Cowboys, averaging 6.1 points, 2.5 rebounds and 2.8 assists... Tied career-high with 17 points vs. Texas A&M in 2003... Dished out career-high 8 assists vs. Texas that same year. Named to the Big 12 All-Reserve team by the media.

	G	GS	MIN	FGM	FGA	Pct.	3PM	3PA	Pct.	FTM	FTA	Pct.	OR	DR	REB	Avg.	AST	PF	TO	BS	ST	PTS	Avg.
AUSTIN TOROS	34	18	1016	139	297	0.468	15	43	0.349	75	87	0.862	15	74	89	2.6	192	83	83	2	25	368	10.8
ABQ THUNDERBIRDS	8	0	221	50	89	0.562	6	15	0.400	21	26	0.808	3	19	22	2.8	29	13	15	0	11	127	15.9



Selected by: Austin Toros
 Round: 7 - 2007 Draft
 Pick (Overall): 12 (96)



#19 DARYL DORSEY - GUARD

HEIGHT	WEIGHT	COLLEGE/YEAR	LAST PLAYED
6-1	185	Brevard Community College (Fla.)	Austin Toros (<i>D-League</i>)

Pro Career Highlights: Played with Mayas-USA in the WBA in the summer of 2007 (statistics unavailable). Spent the 2006-07 season with the Anaheim Arsenal in the NBA Developmental League, averaging 11.7 points and 4.2 assists in 50 games. Selected by the Arsenal in the sixth round (72nd pick overall) of the 2006 NBA Developmental League Draft. Played with the Marietta Storm in the WBA and Mayas de Yucatan in the Mexican League in 2006 (statistics unavailable). Appeared in seven games with the Fort Worth Flyers in the NBA Developmental League in 2005-06, averaging 5.9 points. Averaged 20.8 points and 6.9 assists in 12 games with the Las Vegas Rattlers in the ABA in 2004-05, earning ABA Rookie of the Year honors. Moved on to play with the Rome Gladiators in the WBA, averaging 23.1 points (ranking third) and a league-leading 10.1 assists. Helped Rome capture the 2005 WBA title and was named league MVP.

College Career Highlights: Spent two seasons at Brevard Community College in Florida. Tried to enroll at Southern Indiana in September of 2004, and was practicing with the team, before deciding to sign a professional contract with the Las Vegas Rattlers of the American Basketball Association.

	G	GS	MIN	FGM	FGA	Pct.	3PM	3PA	Pct.	FTM	FTA	Pct.	OR	DR	REB	Avg.	AST	PF	TO	BS	ST	PTS	Avg.
AUSTIN TOROS	2	0	17	0	2	0.000	0	0	0.000	1	2	0.500	1	0	1	0.5	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
ABQ THUNDERBIRDS	15	8	338	46	103	0.447	2	11	0.182	21	30	0.700	12	20	32	2.1	47	33	32	0	7	115	7.7



Selected by: Albuquerque Thunderbirds
 Round: 9 - 2007 Draft
 Pick (Overall): 3 (115)



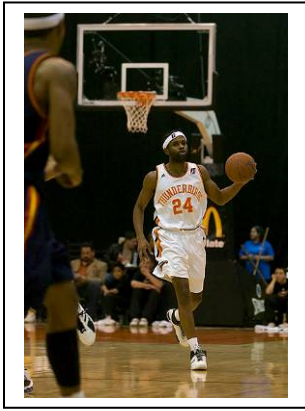
#22 RAMON DYER - FORWARD

HEIGHT	WEIGHT	COLLEGE/YEAR	LAST PLAYED
6-7	200	HOUSTON '06	University of Houston (<i>NCCA</i>)

College Highlights: Named Second Team All-Conference USA as a senior. Started 69 of 100 career games. As a Senior he averaged 12.1 points, a team-high 6.1 rebounds, 1.1 blocked shots, and 1.8 steals. Started 27 of 31 games. Posted five double-doubles. Posted 12 points, 12 rebounds, and a career-high six blocked shots vs. Marshall. Recorded 16 points and five rebounds vs. Missouri State in the second round of the post-season NIT.

	G	GS	MIN	FGM	FGA	Pct.	3PM	3PA	Pct.	FTM	FTA	Pct.	OR	DR	REB	Avg.	AST	PF	TO	BS	ST	PTS	Avg.
ABQ THUNDERBIRDS	49	16	1006	131	308	0.425	23	84	0.274	30	56	0.536	81	154	235	4.8	24	111	31	41	40	315	6.4

FEEL THE THUNDER!



#24 ABDUL MILLS - GUARD

HEIGHT	WEIGHT	COLLEGE/YEAR	LAST PLAYED
6-3	190	University of Nebraska - Omaha	InterCollege Etha Engomis (<i>Syria</i>)

Pro Career Highlights: Started the 2007-08 season in Syria with InterCollege Etha Engomis before deciding to return home. He had a strong season at Milford Academy where he averaged 17.0 points, 7.0 rebounds and 7.5 assists per game....Averaged 22.0 points per game in his final season at Martin Luther King High School.

General: Majored in Social Science. Son of Charles Allen and Rozena Mills; has three brothers, Abdul Tawaub Mills, Kimu Ziths and Deshaun Ziths and two sisters, Ceida Allen and Casheda Allen.

ABQ THUNDERBIRDS

G	GS	MIN	FGM	FGA	Pct.	3PM	3PA	Pct.	FTM	FTA	Pct.	OR	DR	REB	Avg.	AST	PF	TO	BS	ST	PTS	Avg.
38	15	971	108	262	0.412	28	89	0.315	45	67	0.672	23	65	88	2.3	141	79	61	1	48	289	7.6



#33 COREY UNDERWOOD – FORWARD / CENTER

HEIGHT	WEIGHT	COLLEGE/YEAR	LAST PLAYED
6-10	230	Southern University	Pittsburgh Xplosion (<i>CBA</i>)

Career Highlights: Cory is an athletic left-handed player, is very mobile and athletic who can play the forward n or center position. He was part of the 2nd team All Conference Mid-Hudson -00 and NAIA All-American Honorable Mention -03.

2003-04: Trenton Jersey Squires (ABA) 2004: (June) Brevard Blue Ducks (USBL): 7 games: 3.3ppg, 2.9rpg, 2004 Sept: New York Knicks (NBA) camp, 2005: Gainesville Knights (WBA): 1 game: 2pts, 5reb, 1ast Westchester Wildfire (USBL), 17 games: 8.1ppg, 4.9rpg, FGP: 44.8%, FT: 65.8%, 2005: Ulbra Torres/ Mogi (BRA-NLB Southern Div.) 15ppg 6rpg 3bpg , 2005-06: AZS Gaz Ziemny Koszalin (POL-DBL): 1 game: 4pts, 6reb, 4steals, 1block, Dec.2005, played also at Strong Island Sound (ABA,1T): 22ppg: 8rpbg and Yakama Sun Kings (CBA), 2006: Northeastern Pennsylvania Breakers (USBL,1Y): 5 games: 8.0ppg, 8.0rpg, Dodge City Legend (USBL), USA League: 9 games: 3.0ppg, 3.0rpg; 2006-07: Arkansas RiverCatz (ABA) 11gp 13ppg 11rpg,

ABQ THUNDERBIRDS

G	GS	MIN	FGM	FGA	Pct.	3PM	3PA	Pct.	FTM	FTA	Pct.	OR	DR	REB	Avg.	AST	PF	TO	BS	ST	PTS	Avg.
35	10	554	85	203	0.419	1	3	0.333	39	58	0.672	27	73	100	2.9	19	89	28	20	17	210	6.0



#41 ANTHONY FUQUA - CENTER

HEIGHT	WEIGHT	COLLEGE/YEAR	LAST PLAYED
6-11	225	University of Texas – San Antonio '05	Austin Toros (<i>D-League</i>)

Professional Highlights: Spent the 2005-06 and 2006-07 NBA D-League seasons with the Austin Toros. Fuqua has participated with the NBA summer league teams including; 2005 New York Knicks (Las Vegas & Minnesota Summer League) and 2007 Orlando Magic (Pepsi Pro Summer League).

College Highlights: Finished collegiate career at Texas - San Antonio after playing his first two seasons at Northern Oklahoma College in Tonkawa, Okla. Started 35 of 60 career games. Posted five career double-doubles.

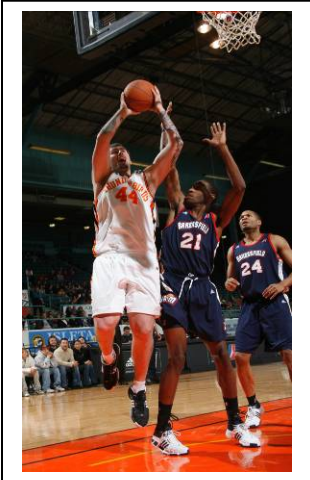
AUSTIN TOROS

G	GS	MIN	FGM	FGA	Pct.	3PM	3PA	Pct.	FTM	FTA	Pct.	OR	DR	REB	Avg.	AST	PF	TO	BS	ST	PTS	Avg.
39	4	523	46	75	0.613	0	1	0.000	30	44	0.682	57	61	118	3.0	17	86	34	23	7	122	3.1

FEEL THE THUNDER!



Selected by: Austin Toros
 Round: 1 – 2007 Draft
 Pick (Overall): 12 (12)



#44 KEVIN PITTSNOGLE - FORWARD / CENTER

HEIGHT 6-11 **WEIGHT** 255 **COLLEGE/YEAR** West Virginia University ' 06 **LAST PLAYED** Austin Toros (*D-League*)

Career Highlights: To the surprise of many West Virginia basketball fans and draft enthusiasts, neither Pittsnogle nor his teammate shooting guard Mike Gansey were chosen by any of the teams in the 2006 NBA Draft. Although Pittsnogle was predicted in most mock drafts as being chosen in the early-to-mid second round, he went undrafted and thus became a free agent. On July 25, 2006, Pittsnogle signed a two-year contract with the Boston Celtics. On October 20, 2006 the Celtics waived Pittsnogle. On November 8, 2006, Pittsnogle signed with the CBA's Pittsburgh Xplosion.

Pittsnogle was then announced to the CBA All-Star game on February 6th after posting 23.5 points per game. Pittsnogle currently holds the CBA single-game record for points scored with 44, which he accomplished earlier in his rookie season. On March 9, 2007 the Xplosion placed him on the team's Inactive Reserve List due to tendinitis in his non-shooting elbow. Even with the injury, Pittsnogle was considered to be a leading candidate for the CBA's Rookie of the Year (award) as he was averaging 19.4 points per game and 6.2 rebounds per game while shooting 86.8% from the free throw line.

Pittsnogle played for the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers on their 2007 Summer League team in early July of 2007. On July 23, 2007 Pittsnogle signed with French Pro A league team Cholet Basket, but he was cut 1 week before the start of the season.

Pittsnogle was selected 12th overall by the NBA Development League's Austin Toros in the 2007 D-League draft

AUSTIN TOROS
 ABQ THUNDERBIRDS

G	GS	MIN	FGM	FGA	Pct.	3PM	3PA	Pct.	FTM	FTA	Pct.	OR	DR	REB	Avg.	AST	PF	TO	BS	ST	PTS	Avg.
16	9	305	38	103	0.369	24	70	0.343	14	18	0.778	8	35	43	2.7	13	46	28	2	6	114	7.1
32	22	978	180	402	0.448	86	216	0.398	60	67	0.896	27	172	199	6.2	54	128	67	14	20	506	15.8



FEEL THE THUNDER!