



## IT IS DIFFICULT

Nothing went well in our first Play-off game. In spite of everything, we have to have a positive outlook on the situation. We did not do anything well and they practically did not make a single mistake during the game. Starting the game scoring nine out of eleven three pointers in the first quarter is a tremendous advantage. It is hard to digest and overcome such a punishment.



In addition, when everything was not going well... Before the game I had a pulled neck muscle and I could not even be in the warm-ups with the rest of my teammates. Before and after the game I had to get rehab with the trainer and now I can't turn my head to the right side. It is not fair that after 82 games fighting to be here, we have to be in this difficult situation before we even start to play.

They killed us with three pointers (11-18 at half-time, a new "playoff" record) and Dwight Howard had an enormous performance, demonstrating that he is the best player in the league in his position – 25 points, 22 rebounds and 5 blocks -. Two very significant factors. Also, today Sam Mitchell tried to force an advantage by including Andrea Bargnani in the starting five rather than Jamarion Moon; however, it did not go well. They made practically every single shot and we missed a lot of good shots.

Of course, it is not the same to come off of the bench with a 20-point advantage than with the same 20-points against you. Bogans and Dooling entered with a tailwind which gives a boost of confidence, and removes some pressure from you.

Personally I think that we have given the image that we can take a victory from Florida and that the qualifying round is not on their side because, against all the odds, we have managed to put ourselves at a five point game difference at the beginning of the last quarter. If Bosh did not commit his fourth personal foul just when we were playing our best, who knows what could have happened. Therefore, as I told you, the outlook must, of necessity, be positive.

In any case, we know that we did not play our best game and on Monday, as much in practice as in the video sessions, we will see what mistakes we made and where we can improve for Tuesday's game because in the playoffs we have to stay positive and motivated.

I didn't want to end without taking the opportunity to talk about the game between Phoenix and San Antonio. It is incredible. And in the first game! I do not know how the series will finish. Without a doubt it is the most evenly matched of all of the "playoffs", although when you have a match practically won two times and you end up losing in this way.... That hurts and with the Spurs ahead...



And what is equally incredible is how Pau played. How is he? Huge. While I am writing, the Lakers have won their first game against the Nuggets and Gasol scored 36 points, 16 rebounds, and 8 assists. Denver is a team that he plays very well against because they do not have a powerful center, still they are a strong team, in that they all play and all are capable of scoring in a way that you never quite know what to expect. They have good scorers if they're having a good day...

*José Manuel Calderón*

<http://www.josemanuelcalderon.com>