

Lucky bounce gives Mavs win over Knicks

Written by Administrator

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NEW YORK (AP) — Dirk Nowitzki called it "probably the ugliest game-winner I ever shot," and this is how he described it.

"Basically it hit the board, every part of the rim, hit Jerry West over there (the logo on the backboard), came back over and it was definitely an ugly, ugly shot," he said.

But when the 19-foot jumper bounced up and then fell in as time expired, the Dallas Mavericks had a 110-108 victory over the New York Knicks on Monday night.

The Mavericks blew an eight-point lead in the final 90 seconds, then pulled out their third straight victory when Nowitzki's jumper that seemed to have missed instead fell through.

"I didn't even feel like celebrating it was so ugly," Nowitzki said.

His teammates and Mavericks owner Mark Cuban did it for him, rushing onto the floor after Dallas moved into seventh place in the Western Conference.

Carmelo Anthony had 44 points and nine rebounds for the Knicks. He played strong defense on the Mavericks' final possession, but was left standing in disbelief long after the buzzer after Nowitzki's shot appeared to hit the backboard first, then the front rim, then bounced up before dropping.

"It was like a needle in a balloon right there," Anthony said. "It sucks all the air out of you. He hit a hell of a shot."

Vince Carter made seven 3-pointers and scored a season-high 23 points. Monta Ellis had 22 for Dallas (35-23), which has won nine of 11 and is a season-best 12 games over .500.

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Jose Calderon finished with 20 points for the Mavericks, who swept a three-game road trip and beat the Knicks for the 20th time in the last 25 meetings. Nowitzki had just 15 points after missing all five 3-point attempts.

"That's one thing about the greatest players. I played with (Larry) Bird for three years. He took more pleasure in hitting a game-winning shot after he missed eight or nine in a row than having a great game at times," Dallas coach Rick Carlisle said.

Tyson Chandler had 12 points and 12 rebounds against his former team, sparking the Knicks' comeback after they trailed 108-100 with 1:37 left. But New York (21-36) lost for the sixth time in seven games and fell a season-worst 15 games below .500.

The Knicks had blown big leads in their last two games, giving away a 14-point advantage at Orlando and a 17-point cushion at Atlanta, collapses that coach Mike Woodson called "mind-boggling."

This one had to hurt worse.

"There were games last year when our backs were against the wall and we just found a way to win," Woodson said. "This year when we've been in the situation where we needed a big stop or two we haven't been able to get it done."

The Mavericks seemed to have put it away when Calderon made a 3-pointer, and Brandan Wright followed with a basket to stretch the late lead to eight points.

But after Raymond Felton's basket, Chandler converted a three-point play, then came up with a steal to start a break that ended with Anthony's 3-pointer that tied it at 108 with 50 seconds remaining.

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The Knicks got the ball back after a Dallas miss but committed a shot-clock violation, giving Dallas the ball for Nowitzki's winner.

"We maybe shouldn't be in the situation at the end, I think six points up," Calderon said. "It was a good lead with 1:20 or something, but it was good at the end."

Amare Stoudemire scored nine points in his first start since the end of the 2011-12 season for the Knicks, who had just 10 available players after waiving Metta World Peace and Beno Udrih earlier Monday following contract buyouts.

The Mavericks shot 55 percent and led 31-21 after one quarter, but the Knicks came right back and made 14 of 19 shots (74 percent) while scoring 38 points in the second, when Anthony scored 17 points. New York erased a 14-point deficit to grab a two-point lead on Anthony's jumper with 11 seconds left, but Ellis made a 3-pointer as time expired to give Dallas a 60-59 edge.

Dallas had the lead back up to eight in the final minute of the third, but Anthony made three free throws, then nailed a 3-pointer with 0.6 seconds remaining as the Knicks trimmed it to 84-82.

NOTES: Woodson said he would talk with team president Steve Mills on Tuesday to discuss filling the team's open roster spots. He said he thought the Knicks needed a big man with Andrea Bargnani and Kenyon Martin still injured, and a guard who could defend on the perimeter. ... The crowd included U.S. Olympian Erin Hamlin, who won a bronze medal in luge, and Super Bowl-winning quarterback Russell Wilson of the Seattle Seahawks.