

Mavericks beat Clippers 113-107

Written by Administrator
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LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Mavericks built a 12-point lead with 2:50 to play, gave away all but two points of it, and still managed to hang on.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 26 points and Jose Calderon added 19 in the 113-107 win over the Clippers on Thursday night, the Mavericks' first against Los Angeles this season.

Blake Griffin had 25 points, 10 rebounds and 11 assists in his first triple-double of the season for the Clippers, who had won 17 of their previous 19, including four straight. They beat the Mavs in their first three meetings of the season, coming from behind each time.

A night earlier, the Clippers came back from a 17-point deficit to beat Phoenix on the road, clinching their second straight Pacific Division title and third consecutive playoff berth.

They nearly pulled it off again.

Trailing by 12 points, Los Angeles scored 10 in a row, including six by Darren Collison, to trail 109-107 with 1:26 left. The Mavericks missed four straight shots and had a turnover before Griffin fouled Nowitzki near mid-court.

"The win was nice; not so much the last couple of minutes," Nowitzki said. "We started giving the ball away again. (J.J.) Redick made some shots to actually give them the lead, which is unbelievable after we just had a 10-point lead. But I'm glad we survived."

Nowitzki made both of his free throws for a 111-107 lead with 17 seconds left. Collison fouled Shawn Marion and he made both to keep the Clippers down by six.

"We ran out of miracles," Clippers coach Doc Rivers said.

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Samuel Dalembert and Monta Ellis added 12 points each, and Vince Carter had 16 for the Mavs, who won their third straight on a road while battling Memphis for the eighth and last Western Conference playoff spot.

"It was a big win for us against a very good team, a team we hadn't beaten yet this year and a team that hasn't lost much on their home floor," Nowitzki said. "We're going to keep fighting. There's six games left and there's plenty of challenges for us down the road."

Dallas had the Clippers trailing for much of their last matchup of the season against each other. Los Angeles rallied to tie it 89-all early in the fourth on two free throws by Redick, who finished with 12 points in his first game since Feb. 3. He missed 25 games with a bulging disk in his back.

"I felt limited by my rustiness," said Redick, usually a starter. "I felt like I could've given us a bigger boost and didn't do that. I haven't moved at that speed in two months. Definitely my brain wasn't reacting well."

Nowitzki led a 10-0 run, sandwiching 3-pointers around a basket by Carter, to put Dallas back in front 99-89.

A 3-pointer by Carter extended the Mavs' lead to 104-93. Dallas clamped down on Chris Paul and Griffin for a stretch before the Clippers got hot. Paul finished with 17 points and nine assists.

"We needed every single point of it," Nowitzki said. "The way we give away leads is sometimes mindboggling."

DeAndre Jordan added 21 points and 15 rebounds, and Collison had 22 points for the Clippers.

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"We just ran out of time," Paul said. "We waited too long. It's a tough loss because we could have found a way to win."

The Clippers rallied to start the third, using a 13-7 run to take a 69-65 lead. Jordan scored six points and four others scored. But their lead was short-lived.

Dallas outscored the Clippers 21-12 to end the third leading 86-81. Calderon scored 10 in a row, Dalembert and Ellis had four each, and Carter and Devin Harris hit 3-pointers to keep the Clippers from regaining the lead.

The Mavericks led by 11 twice in the first half, and were up 58-56 at halftime.

NOTES: Clippers backup G Jamal Crawford missed his third straight game with a sore left Achilles' tendon. F Danny Granger sat out with a strained left hamstring. Coach Doc Rivers said he'd be surprised if either of them return before the playoffs begin in two weeks. ... The Mavs avoided getting swept by the Clippers for the first time since 1993-94. ... It was Griffin's fourth triple-double of his career.