

## **Toronto Raptors 112 Utah Jazz 115**

It wasn't an exquisite musical performance by the Utah Jazz (30-11) that dazzled the Toronto Raptors (17-24) by any means, instead it was a gritty basketball performance that got the job done at the Amalie arena to extend their lead at the top of the Western conference.

The tide in this game swung from side to side like a pendulum clock with a three-point attempt from Pascal Siakam right at the final buzzer somehow staying out to extend the Raptors losing streak to seven games with the 2018 NBA champions now looking a shadow of their former selves.

Donavon Mitchell was once again at his barnstorming best for the Jazz with the all-star guard claiming a game high 31 points that included 15 from the free throw line - more than the entire Raptors team combined.

Rudy Gobert or "stifle tower" as his Jazz team mates refer to him, proved his nickname is more than just a title producing a double-double which included a game high 15 rebounds.

An encouraging note for the Raptors was the return and outstanding performance by Siakam. Although missing the final shot, the six foot nine Cameroonian born forward looked back to his best with team high totals of 27 points and nine assists.

The Raptors started the game brightly as Fred VanVleet scored seven points to give the Canadian side a four-point lead at the end of the first quarter.

Mitchell and Gobert started to influence proceedings a bit more for the Jazz in the second quarter with some well taken shots which meant that at half time this game still hung in the balance with the Jazz leading by 55-54.

This game always seemed like it would be decided in the late stages and the third quarter only cemented this fact. Siakam scored 12 points to keep his side in touch with the Jazz still holding onto their narrow lead, leading by 79-77 points.

The fourth quarter was as close as the three previous with the lead changing hands-on numerous occasions.

When Kyle Lowry sank a three pointer with just two minutes left on the clock to give the Raptors the lead it looked like they would finally snap their losing streak in the process.

Mitchell averaging 25.1 points a game this year however had other ideas and stayed ice cool, sinking back-to-back baskets to restore the Jazz lead.

There was still time for one final play however, the Raptors needing three points to force overtime fed the ball out to Siakam who shot from behind the arc however his shot did everything but go in to ensure their agonizing winless run continues.

The complexion in the Jazz camp is much different and the win extends their lead over the 2020 NBA champions the LA Lakers at the summit of the Western conference.

## **Toronto Raptors Scores**

### **Starting Lineup**

G- Fred Van Vleet 17, G- Kyle Lowry 14, F- Pascal Siakam 27, G- PF Anunoby 15, F-Norman Powell 17

**Substitutes**

G- Chris Boucher 16, G-Greg Wild, G- Paul Watson 1, F- Malachi Flynn 3, PF- Aron Baynes 2.

**Utah Jazz Scores****Starting lineup**

G- Donavon Mitchell 31, C-Rudy Gobert 15, F- Bojan Bogdanovic 10, PF- Royce O'Neale 8, G- Mike Conley Jr 15.

**Substitutes**

F- Joe Ingles 19, G- Jordan Clarkson 11, PF- Georges Niang 0, PF- Derrick Favors 6

*G- Guard, C- Centre, F- Power Forward*