

THE BIG APPLE:

Deadline rumors swirl as Knicks keep rolling

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Trade deadline season means constant glances to your phone, nonstop refreshing your timeline and buying into every rumor you hear.

The New York Knicks are typically active around this time of year, adding the finishing pieces to their roster as they prepare for the playoffs.

However, this season I don't see New York making any major moves. The Knicks are 32-18, sitting in second place in the Eastern Conference as of print.

Why blow it up when you are 14 games above .500 after one of the worst stretches in recent memory?

Yes, I understand that Giannis Antetokounmpo, a generational talent, is a target for the Knicks. It isn't the first time that New York has been the center of attention when it comes to rumors of stars making their way to the Big Apple.

With the 2019 offseason in mind, Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving chose New York but signed with Brooklyn instead of the Knicks.

Other than Antetokounmpo, the biggest news from the Knicks is Frenchman Guerschon Yabusele potentially making his way to play for a team in Israel. Yabusele, a 2025 free agent signing, has been in and out of the Knicks' rotation, struggling to make his mark.

"I (am not) closing any door on (anything). I don't know what's going to happen. I don't know what tomorrow's going to be," Yabusele said. "So right now, I can tell you nothing has been discussed or signed or anything like that. I'm a Knicks player at the end of the day."

The 30-year-old made his way back into the NBA after his dominance in the 2024 Olympics for Team France. In his first season back after spending the last five playing in France, he averaged 11 points in 27 minutes per game. This season, he is averaging under three points in nine minutes per contest.

New York is on a seven-game win streak going into Wednesday night at home vs Denver. The Knicks have a big stretch ahead of them, as they head to Detroit on Friday and then ship up to Boston on Super Bowl Sunday. After that, they will take on Indi-

ana and Philadelphia before a rematch with the Pistons on Feb. 19.

These games come at a great time for New York.

Ever since the players' only meeting held by captain Jalen Brunson, the offense has been clicking and the defense has been even better. They held opponents to 101 points or fewer in six of their last seven games, including a 54-point win over Brooklyn, the largest margin in franchise history.

What does this mean for the Knicks?

They found their identity, score at will, and have a strong presence on defense.

In their 2-9 streak in January, opponents were two steps faster, beating the Knicks back door, getting to the rim at ease.

It was a wake-up call.

Once the win streak began, you noticed the hustle plays, bench guys stepping up, and nobody being selfish on the offensive end. Players like Tyler Kolek and Mohamed Diawara, guys who don't know when their name will be called, were ready for the moment once it came to them.

After the deadline, don't be surprised if the Knicks catch Detroit for the top seed in the East.



Landry Shamet of the New York Knicks is seen with two of his teammates, Oguogua "OG" Anunoby Jr. and Mohamed Diawara, during a game. The Knicks are currently second place in the Eastern Conference. PHOTO COURTESY OF @MSGNETWORKS ON INSTAGRAM.

SPORTS SPECTRUM:

Clippers got a shaky outlook

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The Clippers have performed well, securing 17 wins in their last 22 games. They rank second in offensive rating (120) and fourth in net rating (7.7). While this achievement is notable, particularly with star Kawhi Leonard playing alongside James Harden, certain issues have cast a shadow over the team this year. Apart from the early-season challenges, the Clippers as an organization have been somewhat disorganized.

Before the season started, NBA veteran Chris Paul talked about how this season might be his last in the league. After this was confirmed, many paid tribute to his career, highlighting his roles on several teams such as the Charlotte Hornets, Oklahoma City Thunder, Phoenix Suns and most notably the Clippers. Considered the greatest trio in franchise history, next to Blake Griffin and DeAndre Jordan, the trio was the core of the Lob City era of Clippers basketball.

So, it was a shock to wake up on Dec. 3 to find that a little before 3 a.m., Paul posted that he had been sent home by the team.

At first glance, it seemed weird. Why send him home when he wanted to go on his retirement tour?

Despite Clippers President of Basketball Operations Lawrence Frank's statement that, "No one is blaming Chris for our underperformance," it's

reasonable to assume that something happened to prompt Frank to fly from Los Angeles to Atlanta to tell Paul he was essentially being sent home.

In further reports, it was revealed that weeks prior to the decision, he had wanted to meet with Clippers head coach Tyron Lue about allegations of being a bad teammate, but Lue refused to meet with him. The two were not on speaking terms, and the team had felt that his leadership style had become disruptive, as sources told Shams Charania of ESPN. In essence, he was sent home for wanting to hold the people on his team accountable.

An ESPN article by Ramona Shelbourne corroborates this point. When he provided suggestions, challenged players on or off the court or told them how to run a play, he was "warned not to undermine the staff" alongside "complaints from players and coaches that he was abrasive."

This eventually culminated in tense moments with the assistant coaching staff, particularly after their game on Nov. 29 against the Mavericks, when Paul suggested defensive coverage switches to better assist players. Jeff Van Gundy, an assistant coach, said to Paul, via Chris Hanes: "Listen, you might have had leeway in other places to be able to change up defensive coverages, but you don't have that leeway here."

That was seemingly the conversation that broke the camel's back.

Paul is not the first player Los Angeles has done this to. The same

thing happened when Griffin was traded to Detroit six months after signing a new contract with them. They've got a track record that has led many fans to take the situation in bad faith.

Recently, Harden was traded to the Cavaliers in exchange for Darius Garland and a second-round pick. In terms of immediate impact, this move benefits the Cavaliers more than the Clippers, as Harden now serves as a secondary scoring option behind Donovan Mitchell.

It happened unexpectedly and was a surprise at the recent trade deadline. After the Clippers firmly declined to offer Harden a contract beyond the 2026-27 season, he quickly requested a trade. Consistent with their stance, only starting center Ivica Zubac remains under contract for 2026-27.

This is a sign that they are ready to move on from the struggling Leonard era of Clippers basketball, which has often been a source of memes and frustration instead of consistent victories.

As for now, the Clippers need to keep hoping they can stay solid and not keep sliding further into the draft lottery. To remind you of the trade that ironically won the Thunder a championship, their pick for this year goes straight to the Thunder. If they don't keep up this hot streak, they risk giving the Thunder a lottery pick — a nightmare for a team as strong as they are, especially with a talented draft class led by AJ Dybansta of BYU and Darryn Peterson of Kansas.

Brayden's Breakdown:

RELIVING THE SUPER BOWL 49 MATCHUP BETWEEN THE PATRIOTS AND SEAHAWKS



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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It has been 11 years since the opponents of Super Bowl 60 last faced off on the grandest stage of them all. With a whole new cast of characters leading the way for both teams this year, it makes the previous bitterness of Seattle and the celebrations of New England virtually meaningless to the players, but the game is still etched deep in hearts and minds of both fanbases.

Here is a recap of what happened the last time these two teams clashed in the Super Bowl.

Both teams had a quick punt before the ball returned to Tom Brady's hand. The veteran was slinging the ball around, accompanied by a steady rushing attack from LeGarrette Blount. New England found themselves in the red zone with the first quarter nearing an end.

On 3rd and 6, Brady danced in the pocket before firing a pass into the end zone. There was not a white Patriot jersey in sight and the pass was picked off by Jeremy Lane. The first interception of Lane's career came with a cost. The sixth-round pick exited the game with a cast on his wrist, but not before he made his impact for the Legion of Boom.

A Julian Edelman 23-yard scamper put the Pats back in the red zone. Two plays later, Brady faked a handoff to Blount and zipped an 11-yard touchdown pass to Brandon LaFell, putting the Patriots up 7-0 early in the second quarter.

Russell Wilson and the Seahawks would not go quietly into the night. Seattle got inside the 20 with a Wilson bomb to Chris Matthews, who the world was introduced to in the biggest game of the season. Moments later, Wilson handed it off to Marshawn Lynch and Beastmode did the rest.

The game was tied and the fireworks were just beginning as Brady and company got the ball back.

Brady orchestrated a beautiful eight play 80-yard drive capped off by a 22-yard touchdown pass to Rob Gronkowski, putting the Patriots up 14-7 with just 31 seconds remaining in the first half.

What followed was one of the greatest drives in the history of football.

Expecting Seattle to run the clock down, the Patriots let their guard down as backup running back Robert Turpin broke off a 19-yard run, leading the Seahawks to call their first timeout. Wilson then broke a tackle on a run-pass option and the Seahawks were already past midfield. On the next play, Wilson hit Ricardo Lockette for a big gain which was even bigger when the referees tacked on extra yardage with a facemask call.

With only six seconds left in the half, head coach Pete Carroll made one of his many controversial decisions in the Super Bowl. Wilson took the snap with the time ticking and found Matthews in the corner of the endzone with two seconds remaining in the half.

Both teams had their ups and downs, but the score was tied after 30 minutes.

After Katy Perry rode an

animatronic lion at halftime, it was back to football for the two squads.

Another bomb from Wilson to Matthews put the undrafted receiver at 100 yards on the day and immediately set up Seattle to start the third quarter. In a decision you would never see today, Carroll decided to kick a field goal on 4th and 1 from inside the 10-yard line. The Seahawks went up three early in the second half.

Trying to respond, Brady fired one over the middle looking for Gronkowski. The pass was intercepted by Bobby Wagner and Seattle got the ball back.

Capitalizing off the turnover, Wilson found a wide-open Doug Baldwin in the endzone to make the lead double-digits for Seattle.

It was do or die for New England, who had lost their past two Super Bowls in heartbreaking fashion.

Despite a few quick punts, the Patriots' defense made some big stops and the Pats were inside the 5-yard line once again. On second and goal, Brady hit Danny Amendola in the back of the endzone to cut the deficit to a field goal halfway through the final quarter.

A quick three and out for Seattle and it was Brady time once again. The quarterback picked apart the defense in a 10 play 64-yard drive culminating in an Edelman touchdown on a beautiful route that the quarterback and wide receiver could not connect on the previous drive.

Wilson trotted out onto the field with 2:02 remaining. Little did he know, it would be a drive that would live in infamy.

Sitting around midfield, Wilson dropped back and floated a pass intended for Jermaine Kearse. The pass was initially batted in the air by rookie cornerback Malcolm Butler, however it miraculously ended up in the hands of Kearse. Butler shoved him out of bounds, but the Seahawks were inside the 5-yard line with less than a minute to play.

The ghosts of the Patriots' past seemed to be rearing their ugly heads as their Super Bowl hopes were dwindling.

The play was obvious, right? Just hand the ball to Lynch who went over 100 rushing yards on 1st and goal. On that very play, Beastmode was tripped up by Dont'a Hightower at the 1-yard line in one of the most underrated plays in Super Bowl history.

The next play is something that has been and will be talked about forever. In a defensive masterclass, the Patriots staff sent in Butler on a play they had been scouting for all week. Wilson took the snap with 25 seconds left and fired a pass toward Lockette. Butler jumped in front of the pass, and the rest was history.

The Patriots claimed their fourth Super Bowl Championship while the Seahawks core crumbled following injuries and the controversial play call. New England would win two more Super Bowls in the 2010s, while Seattle finds themselves in the big game for the first time since the ball left Wilson's hand.

Will the Patriots find the same magic that they did 11 years ago? Or will the Seahawks slay their past demons en route to their second Super Bowl ever?