Thunder hold off Rockets come-back to win nail-biter

The beginning of the Thunder vs Rockets game was dominated by the Thunder in the opening quarter. The Thunder started the game on an 8-0 run, as Anthony Battaglia (18 points, 2 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 block, 3 steals) scored 3 quick baskets, using his teammates screens to create separation. In addition, Steven Pienta (2 points, 2 rebounds, 1 steal) scored a deep two pointer. After a line-change by the Rockets, they began to find life. Johnathan Touma (14 points, 4 rebounds, 1 steal) came off the bench and took the ball right to the basket, scoring 4 quick points to cut his teams deficit. In addition, Arden Kruger added a rebound, and Presten Manzare (4 rebounds, 2 steals, 2 blocks) and Taydan Williams (6 rebounds, 1 assist, 5 steals) were each tenacious on defense, recording a couple rebounds of their own. Near the end of the quarter, Jacob Smith (4 points, 2 rebounds, 2 blocks) of the Thunder began to shine, as he made 2 baskets after scooping up the offensive rebounds. At the end of the first quarter, the Thunder had a 12-4 lead.

In the second quarter, Anthony Battaglia continued to put on a lights-out shooting display, as he made another 3 baskets. Brady Rogers (2 points, 1 assist) of the Thunder made a nifty lay-up during the quarter as well. However, the Rockets continued to claw their way back into the game. Nolann Haffey scored a 15-foot jump-shot, and Ethan Harris scored a lay-up as well. Johathan Touma continued to put on an offensive display of his own, as he scored 5 points in the quarter, including a deep 3-pointer. The score was 20-13 in favor of the Thunder at half-time.

Each team settled into a more defensive approach in the 3rd quarter, as Nathanial Patterson (2 points, 3 rebounds, 1 assist, 4 steals) of the Thunder played tenacious defense, getting in many shooters faces. Lucas Johnson (2 points, 3 rebounds, 1 assist, 2 steals) also established himself as a threat in the paint of the defensive end, protecting the basket at all costs for the Thunder. On the flip-side of things, the Rockets also dialed up the pressure. This was primarily lead by Maximus Townsend (9 points, 3 rebounds, 3 steals, 3 blocks), who commanded the defense, swarming all around the court, disrupting many passes and altering many shots. Heading into the 4th quarter, the score was 26-18 in favor of the Rockets.

Early in the 4th quarter, it appeared as though the Thunder were going to put the Rockets away when Battaglia knocked down a 3-pointer that hit nothing but net, giving his team the 29-18 advantage. However, the Rockets were not ready to give up. Tayden Williams swarmed on defense, grabbing many rebounds, and recording 3 of his 5 steals. In addition, Maximus Townsend began to take control of the offense. After hitting a free-throw, Max got a steal that he pitched up to Johnathan Touma, who knocked down a 3-pointer, cutting the lead back to single-digits. On the offensive possession, Max stepped into a deep 3 pointer, and nailed it. With one minute remaining, the score was 29-25 in favor of the Thunder. While Max did score one more time, it was too little, too late, as the Thunder were able to advance the ball and keep possession during the final 30 seconds. The Thunder snuck away with the victory, 29-27.