



# SEATTLE STORM

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## **SEATTLE STORM WINS PRESEASON FINALE AT PHOENIX, 76-70**

*Storm Opens Regular Season May 15 at Los Angeles*

**PHOENIX** – The Seattle Storm closed out its preseason slate with a 76-70 road win over the Phoenix Mercury on Sunday at Talking Stick Resort Arena. Alysha Clark led the way with 20 points on 8-of-11 shooting for the Storm, which used a dominant third quarter to bounce back from its loss to Phoenix in the preseason opener last Wednesday.

Clark had a tremendous first half, scoring eight points in the first quarter and seven in the second before heading to the bench with three fouls. Point guard Sue Bird assisted on three of Clark's first four baskets. Before picking up her third foul, Clark scored on two straight possessions to trim Phoenix's lead from eight to three at the midway point of the second quarter.

The Storm jumped out to a 12-7 edge early on, but Phoenix exploded for 18 points in the final five minutes of the first quarter to take a 25-21 lead. Both teams went cold in the second period, putting up just 12 points apiece on 31 percent shooting for Seattle and 21 percent for the Mercury.

After recording eight points, four rebounds and three assists in the first half, Bird remained on the bench in the second half just as she did on Wednesday. Even without its star point guard, the Storm went on an 8-0 run to take a 44-42 lead with five minutes to go in the third quarter. From there, Phoenix tied the game twice but never regained the lead.

Jewell Loyd assumed much of the point-guard duties, dishing out six assists in the third quarter and finishing with a game-high eight dimes. The Storm was ahead 58-52 heading into the final period after outscoring Phoenix by 10 in the third. In the fourth quarter, Abby Bishop hit a pair of three-pointers to help Seattle hold on for the victory.

Bishop was second behind Clark with 10 points, while rookie guard Blake Dietrick hit a couple of key three-pointers in the second half to record her first career points with the Storm. Forward Mistie Bass led the Mercury with 14 points.

Seattle was without several key contributors on Sunday, including No. 1 draft pick Breanna Stewart, who attended her college graduation ceremony. Jenna O'Hea, Kaleena Mosqueda-Lewis and Quanitra Hollingsworth were not with the team due to overseas commitments, while Crystal Langhorne and Monica Wright sat out to rest.

For the fifth straight year, Seattle will face the Los Angeles Sparks in its regular-season opener. The game tips off at 2 p.m. next Sunday from STAPLES Center in Los Angeles. The Storm will host the defending WNBA champion Minnesota Lynx in its home opener on Sunday, May 22, in the first of 15 regular-season home games televised on JOEtv.

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