



SEATTLE STORM

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NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Kimberly Veale; Manager, Public Relations
(206) 272-2706, KVeale@StormBasketball.com

SEATTLE STORM CLINCHES PLAYOFF SPOT WITH 78-60 VICTORY OVER LOS ANGELES SPARKS

Storm Reaches Postseason for First Time Since 2013; Seattle's Record Stands at 15-17

SEATTLE – The Seattle Storm defeated the Los Angeles Sparks 78-60 on Sunday at KeyArena, clinching a spot in the playoffs with two games to spare. Seattle secured a postseason berth for the first time since 2013, improving to 15-17 and remaining in the seventh playoff spot heading into the final week of the regular season.

The Storm has now earned four consecutive home wins and four straight victories overall, its longest winning streak since 2012. Seattle is 6-2 since Olympic break.

All five starters scored in double figures for the Storm, led by the 20 points of rookie **Breanna Stewart**. **Alysha Clark** and **Crystal Langhorne** each poured in 15 points, with Langhorne also grabbing 10 boards for her second double-double of the year. **Sue Bird** had 12 points in addition to a game-high seven assists, while **Jewell Loyd** added 10 points.

Candace Parker led the way with 20 points for the Sparks, who were held to their lowest scoring output of the season. Former All-Stars **Nneka Ogumike** and **Kristi Toliver**, typical starters for L.A., did not play on Sunday.

After going 16-of-16 at the foul line against Atlanta one week ago, the Storm hit all 18 of its free throws on Sunday, marking the second most foul shots without a miss in franchise history. Seattle also handily won the rebounding battle 40-24.

The Storm created separation from the Sparks right away, taking a quick 8-2 lead and increasing the edge to double digits after four minutes. Seattle got open looks on the perimeter and took advantage, as Bird, Stewart and Clark each drained a three-pointer in the first period. Stewart scored seven straight points, finishing the frame with nine as Seattle held a 28-15 edge.

Langhorne was the catalyst early in the second quarter, scoring inside the paint as the Storm increased its lead to as many as 24. Seattle's edge was 20 by the midway point of the second frame, and the hosts took a 49-27 lead into halftime thanks to a 10-2 run late in the quarter.

The second half was mostly an even battle, as the Storm shot much less efficiently and Parker's team continued to battle. Parker notched nine of her 20 points in the third frame, but Seattle always had a response on the other end of the court, maintaining a 22-point edge heading into the final quarter. The Storm had its biggest lead of the night, 58-32, midway through the third. Stewart was dominant in the frame with nine points.

The Sparks pulled within 15 early in the fourth quarter, but that was the closest it would be after the Storm's starters returned to the floor. Langhorne and Clark each scored a pair of baskets in the final minutes – three-pointers for Clark – to help Seattle hold off the second-place Sparks (24-8).

After playing three games in five days, the Storm will have three days off before battling Phoenix on the road this Thursday. Seattle's final regular-season contest is at home next Sunday against Chicago.