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Stoudemire: Suns would've beat Spurs in 2007 if no suspension

By [ANANTH PANDIAN](#) - Jul 10, 2018

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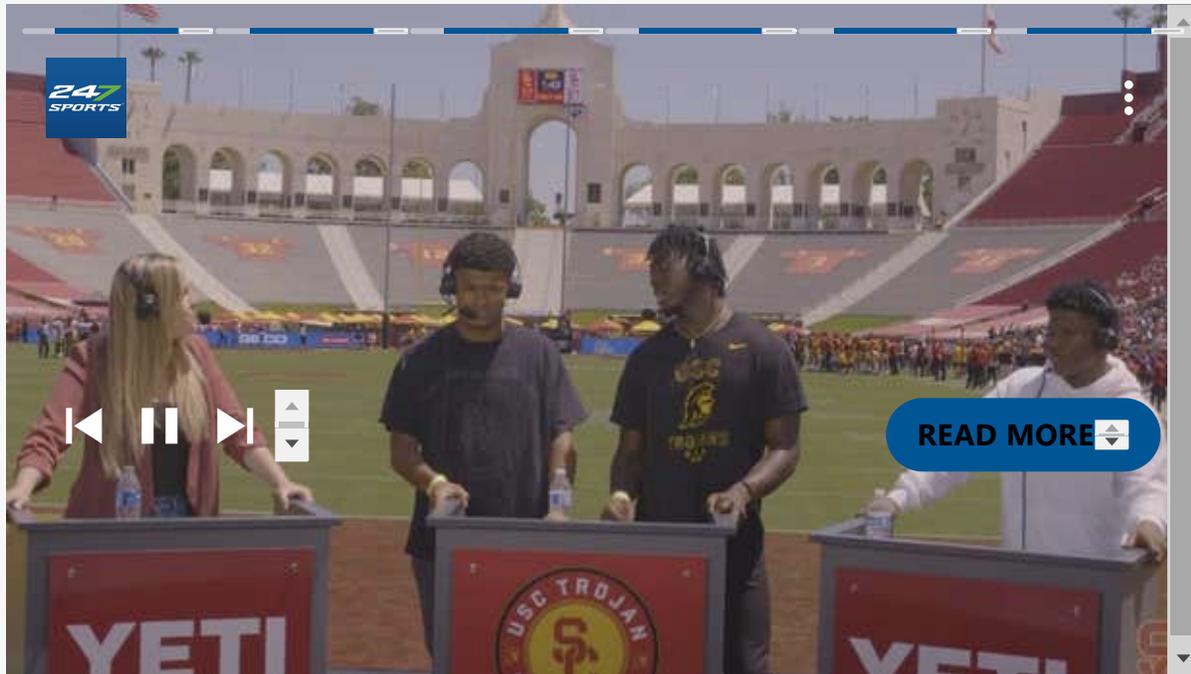
(Photo: Getty)

Back in 2007, the Phoenix Suns finished the regular season with 61 wins and were the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference. But while Phoenix seemed destined to have a lengthy postseason run, the Suns lost in the second round to the San Antonio Spurs, who ended up winning the NBA championship.

One reason Phoenix may have lost to the Spurs is because of the somewhat controversial suspension of Amar'e Stoudemire and [Boris Diaw](#) for Games 5 and 6 of the series. Stoudemire and Diaw stepped on to the court during an altercation

involving Robert Horry and [Steve Nash](#) and without both players, the Suns didn't have enough firepower to get past the Spurs.

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Now 11 years later, the suspension still weighs heavily on Stoudemire as he believes Phoenix would've won the championship that year if he and Diaw weren't suspended.

From Stoudemire's interview with [SB Nation's Ricky O'Donnell](#):

You had some epic clashes with the Spurs in the playoffs. The one that really stands out is 2007, with the Game 4 suspension that happens at 14 seconds left of a game you're going to win. That has to be so tough considering all you did was leave the bench when your teammate got bodychecked, even though that was the rule. It's like you were penalized for standing up for your boy. How much do you replay that scenario in your head? Do you think that was your best chance to win it all?

You look at teams like the Warriors. They are playing the game of basketball the way Dr. James Naismith wanted it to be played.

It was one of our best chances. At the time, no one knew about that rule, about not

stepping on the court. We had no idea about that rule. In the heat of the moment, when Nash got knocked into the scoreboard, we didn't know what to expect. So I'm looking to see what's going on, I'm walking towards Nash, me and also [Boris Diaw](#), and I didn't think nothing of it. No one did.

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Later on, we realized, now they might try to suspend Amar'e and Boris because they're not allowed to step on the court during an altercation. I was like, ah man, I hope not. And sure enough, we got the call that said the NBA had made the decision we're going to suspend Amar'e and Boris for Game 5. I'm like, what? Can they give us a warning at least? Just let us know, here's the rule guys, next time you get suspended. Instead it's first offense, in the playoffs, in the Western Conference Finals [Editor's Note: It was the West semifinals, but the No. 1 seed had already been knocked out] but the powers that be made the decision and Boris and I weren't able to play in Game 5.

The NBA was definitely on edge because of the Detroit-Indiana incident that took place. So I understand that point of view. I just wish they would have given us a warning.

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COMMENTS

The suspensions of Stoudemire and Diaw remain one of the biggest what-ifs in NBA history and if they hadn't been suspended, perhaps the Suns would've won the championship in 2007 instead of the Spurs.