Scouting: Indiana Pacers Defense

Opponent: San Antonio Spurs (3/31/14)

Matchups:

Hill – Parker

Stephenson – Green

George – Leonard

**West – Duncan \***

**Hibbert – Splitter**

**\*Pacers began w/ cross-match, then switched Hibbert onto Duncan midway thru 1st**

Strategy-

vs PnR: *‘help n recover’ - go over screens w/ PF-C containing until G can get back*

vs off-ball screen/hand-off: *attempt to shoot the gaps*

vs post-up: *single-coverage (vs Duncan, slight help came on dribble)*

vs guard isos\* (below FT line): *force baseline, take away middle*

*\*Spurs did not try this after 1st qtr, instead went to more motion.*

Keys: Pacers perimeter players got caught on screens all night: Hill (v Parker); Stephenson; Turner (screens not as effective on Paul George). Hibbert reluctant to leave the lane, giving up perimeter shots and hanging teammates out to dry. Scola/Mahinmi off bench were out-played by Splitter/Diaw (IND needs Bynum healthy).

1st qtr:

SAS uses 11-0 run to lead 13-5 at first TO (IND getting caught on screens chasing Parker/Green).

IND forcing guards (w/ live dribble) baseline - Parker/Green settle for jumpers (3x: 1 score)…SAS goes away from this rest of game.

SAS screens Duncan into post v West (score).

Parker/Duncan PnR: **Hibbert doesn’t switch out**, stays in lane (score). {TIMEOUT 13-5)

{HIBBERT SWITCHES ONTO DUNCAN, West on Diaw, Turner on Ginobili}

Parker moving without ball, causing problems. Ginobili **scores off baseline OB** (Turner caught on screen). {After getting burned twice, IND switches George onto Ginobili for a few possessions, disrupting Manu.}

Parker scores in early offense, driving right past Pacers in lane (score: 22-15). Diaw hits wide open three off **Hibbert sagging in lane** (score: 25-15).

2nd qtr: (Vogel goes to bench, searching for energy)

Matchups: Sloan-Mills, Turner-Ginobili, Butler-Belinelli, Scola-Diaw, Mahinmi-Splitter

**Splitter too physical** for both Scola/Mahinmi. IND again burned on ‘screen the screener’ play**, not stepping out** (Diaw jumper).

{SAS regulars return, forcing HIBBERT IN to guard DUNCAN}

SAS w/ movt into PnR: Hill goes under screen, **Hibbert sags in lane**, Parker hits J (41-28).

(46-31) **Lance trails screen**, lob to Leonard (missed shot, but WIDE OPEN).

Déjà vu: Parker in early offense **AGAIN drives past Pacers in lane** to score (48-33).

HALFTIME SCORE: 48-35 Parker 14 pts (7/10), Mills 7 pts, (Duncan, Diaw, Green 5 pts each)

\*IND losing guards on screens\*

3rd qtr: **Hibbert v Duncan** (West on Splitter). IND bring better energy on D, but Parker’s hot hand counters it (making contested Js).

Fronting Duncan**, Hibbert gets sealed high-side**, Tim gets DUNK. (66-54)

{66-54: Duncan OUT, Hibbert guarding Splitter}

MOMENTUM PLAY: After IND cuts lead to 66-58, run ends on bad defense by **Hibbert: hangs Hill out to dry** by standing in lane on Mills-Splitter high PnR (score: Mills 3ptr – 69-58).

Final play of qtr, IND all-out traps ball (1st time in game), force miss against SAS reserves {69-59}

4th qtr: SAS PGs (first Mills, then Parker) ultra-aggressive to start qtr; Hill going under screens too much; Splitter again too strong inside for Mahinmi; SAS grows lead.

BAD DEFENSE: **Stephenson loses Leonard** at top of key as he stares at Diaw posting up West (no reason to help), Kawhi lay-up (85-69, 5:30 mark)….Next play, **Stephenson gets caught on screen** (Leonard-Duncan PnR), Duncan gets DUNK (87-71, 4:30 mark).

FINAL SCORE: 103-77

Parker 22 pts (10-18), 4 assts, **1 TO**

Diaw 14 (9 in 2nd half)

Leonard 13 (10 in 2nd half)

Mills 10 pts

The Pacers defense is not where it was earlier in the season. Perimeter players are getting hung up on screens and their ‘bigs’ (namely Hibbert) aren’t helping out nearly as much. Their bench ‘bigs’ aren’t playing nearly as physical enough, making the return of Andrew Bynum CRUCIAL. The team’s emotional leader, Lance Stephenson, hurt the team vs San Antonio with his passive defense. It should be noted that the Spurs (currently on an 18-game winning streak) had revenge on their minds after losing to Indiana at home earlier this season.