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In NBA exhibition game, Jazz give glimpse of glory

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The Jazz opened the NBA's long-locked doors Monday.

Eleven current and former Utah players weren't allowed to wear team colors. Coach Tyrone Corbin didn't pace and bark from the sideline. General manager Kevin O'Connor wasn't watching from his customary midcourt seat inside EnergySolutions Arena.

But for a few hours at Salt Lake Community College, an estimated 2,750 basketball fans saw a glimpse of what life is like when their hometown NBA team is actually allowed to play a game.

Led by Alec Burks' team-high 29 points and five made 3-pointers, a group of Jazz players downed a collection of NBA players 144-128 inside Bruin Arena.

Golden State's Stephen Curry scored a game-high 38 points and knocked down nine 3s, while Utah forward Derrick Favors added 24 points and Jazz guard C.J. Miles scored 21. Former Brigham Young standout Jimmer Fredette recorded 19 points.

The lockout-inspired contest benefited several charities and saw an estimated 900 tickets sold on game day.

"[I was asked], 'Do you think we'll lose fans because of the lockout?' And I said, 'These people here don't do that,' " Miles said. "These people here have been supportive through every event. And this is our tradition here."

The tradition continued with Burks, who battled Curry for the spotlight. Burks was the No. 12 overall pick of the 2011 NBA Draft, and the former Colorado star shined Monday during his Salt Lake City debut.

"I didn't know he can shoot that well," Favors said. "He can shoot, he's athletic — he's pretty good."

While Burks stood out, the No. 3 pick of the 2011 draft remains a mystery.



Rick Egan | The Salt Lake Tribune Ronnie Price goes in for a slam dunk for Utah, in the NBA lockout charity exhibition game at Lifetime Activities Center at Salt Lake Community College, Monday, November 7, 2011.

Jazz rookie center Enes Kanter took the court matched up against his mentor and future teammate, Utah veteran center Al Jefferson. But the UnderKanter versus Big Al showdown never materialized.

Kanter scored four quick points, but he was forced to leave the game after being elbowed by Favors. Kanter walked off the hardwood with blood dripping from his mouth, and he spent halftime signing autographs and adjusting to eight stitches in his chin and bottom lip.

“It was still fun, because it was first time playing with my teammates and in front of our fans,” Kanter said. “I enjoyed it. Six, seven minutes, but I still enjoyed it.”

Fans appeared to love the entire event.

Large crowds filled the walkways, waiting for players to leave the locker room after the game. Photos were taken. Hands were shaken. Momentos were requested and received.

And Jazz guard Ronnie Price left SLCC by delivering a final message.

“Thanks for coming out,” Price said to a fan, as the Jazz guard walked across center court to sign more autographs and take more photos.

Then he was gone.

The doors were locked again.

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Storylines

R In short • A team of Jazz players downed a group of NBA players 144-128 Monday during a charity exhibition game at Salt Lake Community College.

Key stat • Utah rookie guard Alec Burks scored a team-high 29 points and sank five 3-pointers.

Key moment • Jazz rookie center Enes Kanter left the game midway through the first quarter due to a busted lip and chin. He received eight stitches.

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