



Mason Provides Exciting Ending To Spurs' Win Over Lakers

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Mason drained a jumper and hit the winning free throw after being fouled by Fisher with 10 ticks left.

SAN ANTONIO -- He makes the big shots *and* gets the crunch-time call when he collides in midair with Derek Fisher.

Looks like [Roger Mason](#) is a bigger free-agent steal than the San Antonio Spurs had ever allowed themselves to believe.

So we have to talk about that first.

Remember that Mason dagger from the corner that beat Phoenix at the buzzer on Christmas Day? That was a yawn compared to the wild scenes of Wednesday night, when Mason was not only asked to replace Bruce Bowen as the Spurs' primary Kobe Bryant defender but also intersected in the final seconds with the most notorious Spurs Killer not named Kobe Bryant ... and out-Fisher'd him.

"Typical Spurs-Lakers stuff," Bryant said with a smile, trying to shrug off the crazy back-and-forth of a final 28.9 seconds that somehow left San Antonio clinging to a 112-111 victory.

"That's how it is," Kobe continued. "I hope they get it out of their system and there are no bullets left."

It was the first encounter for these teams since last spring's Western Conference Finals ... and it was honestly more than anyone could have hoped for. Except that the amazing ending to this game of ridiculously good execution and shot-making really wasn't so typical.

Not in this building. Not when Fisher's involved. Surely you're aware, if you've followed this Spurs-Lakers stuff with any regularity, that it's rare when the final play doesn't go Fisher's way at the AT&T Center.

Exhibit A for the forgetful: Fisher's crushing shot to beat the Spurs in Game 5 of a second-round series in 2004 after catching, spinning and shooting with four-tenths of a second on the clock. Exhibit B: Fisher landing on Brent Barry -- but avoiding a whistle -- on the last shot in Game 4 of the 2008 conference finals.

Asked to do a little reflecting after the crowd around his locker dispersed late Wednesday, Fisher conceded: "I guess I've been involved in some interesting moments here."

This, however, is January.

So ...

Sweet as it was for the Spurs to see Mason (18 points) shake free from Fisher near the baseline, gather Matt Bonner's hurried fastball pass and do what Barry couldn't -- initiate contact but also draw the foul as he banged home a long jumper that put him on the line for the decisive point -- there is only so much vengeance San Antonio can claim from a regular-season game. Even an extraordinary regular-season game during which Bryant, before Mason's magic, responded to Tim Duncan's go-ahead heave in the lane by splashing in his own 3-pointer from the left wing with 12.9 seconds remaining.

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