

Dishin' and Swishin'

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The disproportionately voluminous Hitmen squad faces the precipitous task of being the #8 seed trying to debunk the pre-eminent talents of SABL's titillating twosome – Abdullah and Joe – chieftains of the #1 seeded Triple Threat (or Double Threat, as they are so affectionately known) in this first round match up.

First things first:- If Hitmen plan on effectuating this upset, they will need some stratagem to contain Abdullah on his fervent drives to the hoop as well as the versatile inside outside game of Joe. Hitmen are tall at the guard and SF positions which will meliorate their ability to contain the outside shot of Triple Threat whether in zone or man defense. When it gets to crunch time though, will Sinu, Ekky, Anees or someone else from Hitmen display the intestinal fortitude if summoned to guard the virulent virtuoso, Abdullah, mano E mano? The x-factor on offense for Triple Threat could very well be the venerable Zeb Pirzada. He has not seen a shot he hasn't liked, and with opportunities trifling, he wontedly takes any shot available. If his shot is mellifluous on Sunday and Abdullah/Joe percolate early, look for Triple Threat to put up an insurmountable offensive fulmination.

In the same regard, what will be the diminutive Triple Threat's riposte to the capaciousness of Simran "Lamba" in the painted area with no indubitable center to contend with him? Add to that the teeming abilities of Prince on the offensive glass, Triple Threat will have much to jostle with on the inside. The fact that on several possessions last week, Neil Ramani was so wieldedly able to score inside against Triple Threat, is a salubrious sign for Hitmen and something for Triple Threat to reconcile. Should they chose to collapse a zone on the Hitmen bigs, the Hitmen swing men have manifested very prolific with the 3-ball against Humans and Money Crew in modernistic weeks. Regardless of the defense Hitmen face, Gagan will need run a prudent point and continue being his altruistic self.

Don't let the difference in seeding fool you folks. Lamba's propitious return for the playoffs is decidedly tacit. Expect an offensive game with both teams trying to consummately impose their will on their adversaries.

Triple Threat Keys to victory:

- Supporting cast need not be narcissistic. Let the duo do their due.
- Two man game with Joe and Abdullah against man defense or inside - out through Joe utilizing the three ball against a tall yet sometimes sluggish zone.
- Repress Lamba as much as possible.
- Get Lamba into foul trouble.

Hitmen Keys to victory:

- Force the remaining threats to beat them: Triple Threat's supporting cast have a penchant for turning the ball over; especially late in games.
- Out Muscling and Out Hustling: Feed the big man and crash the offensive glass with fervor.
- Keep up the pace / use their depth.
- Get one of the two threats into foul trouble.
- Avoid a knack to play like the Knicks.

If Hitmen stick to their game plan and can even remotely slow down the prolific Abdullah, this is a viable victory.

I, Walt "Clyde" Frazier, predict a close game, with the clock stoppage forcing Triple Threat deeper into their bench for minutes, allowing Hitmen to hang around and steal this game in the late moments.