

Raptors top Knicks to set franchise record with 10th straight win

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By Israel Fehr

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TORONTO – If there was any doubt that the Toronto Raptors are experiencing their halcyon days Thursday night at the Air Canada Centre cinched it.

The Raptors beat the New York Knicks 103-93 to extend their winning streak to a franchise-record 10 games, besting the mark set late in the season by the 2001-02 squad.

And it was no surprise that their All-Stars – yes, it's officially now plural – were prominently involved in sealing the victory.

DeMar DeRozan, who was [named as an Eastern Conference reserve](#) before the game, scored 26 points. Kyle Lowry, voted in as a starter last week for the second straight year, went for 26 as well and dished out 10 assists. It's the first time the Raptors have two All-Stars since 2001, when Vince Carter and Antonio Davis represented Toronto.

"I think it's great for our organization from where we came from, from where these two young men have come from," said head coach Dwane Casey. "It says a lot for how hard they worked and developed themselves into who they are.

"Those two are All-Stars, both of them are All-Stars and they are playing like All-Stars."

Knicks All-Star Carmelo Anthony missed his second straight game with a knee injury, rookie sensation Kristaps Porzingis was a late scratch due to an upper respiratory infection, and a nagging groin issue forced former Raptors guard Jose Calderon to sit out.

Despite being down three starters New York jumped out to an early 15-9 lead, with Langston Gallaway, Arron Afflalo, and Robin Lopez stepping up. It didn't take long after the initial the Knicks burst before the Raptors settled into the game and took control, taking the lead for good with three minutes left in the first. The undermanned Knicks weren't going away, though. With an opportunity for their few healthy regulars to rest at halftime, New York whittled the lead down to one halfway through the third. That's when the All-Stars kicked into high gear.

Lowry, who was questionable to play with a sore wrist, scored 15 of his 26 points over the last 18 minutes of the game while DeRozan iced it by hitting four free throws.

"We made it hard on ourselves but we can't dismiss the fact these young men have strung together 10 [wins], the



first time in 20 years [of Raptors basketball]," said Casey. "It's not the end all, but it's an accomplishment. We have to continue improving the rest of the season. We have a marathon to go to continue to play and get better."

A 10-game winning streak. Two deserving players in a hometown All-Star Game. These are heady times in Toronto. But even the ones behind it are getting ahead of themselves.

"We've got a long way to go. It sucks that we've had to deal with injuries early on and we've still got to play without DeMarre [Carroll] for the next couple weeks," said DeRozan. "Once we get him back, this is most definitely the best Raptors team I've been on."

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