

Where the Raptors won: DeMar DeRozan's ultra-efficient performance against an elite defender

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TORONTO – Before Sunday's game against the Raptors, Warriors head coach Mark Jackson said that his team could not afford to be on the receiving end of a "special night" from one of Toronto's scorers. DeMar DeRozan responded by delivering one of the most efficient offensive performances of the season in a [104-98 win](#) for Toronto.

DeRozan scored 32 points on just 16 field goal attempts and 22 total possessions. By comparison, Warriors All-Star Stephen Curry had a game-high 34 points but needed 35 possessions to get there.

"[DeRozan] was efficient," said Raptors head coach Dwane Casey. "[He] got to the free-throw line which was huge and didn't settle for jump shots when he had an opportunity to drive to the bucket."

What made the scoring outburst even more impressive was that much of it came against [Andre Iguodala](#), who is anecdotally and statistically one of the league's top perimeter defenders.

Iguodala guarded DeRozan on 10 possessions and the Raptors guard couldn't have asked for better results. He scored 14 points against Iguodala, even though the Warriors' defence, ranked third in the NBA in defensive rating, did a good job keeping him away from the basket.

The table below shows where DeRozan's offence came from. Points scored on free throws are included in the area of the court where the foul was drawn.

SHOT SELECTION	POSS.	POINTS	PTS PER POSS.	AT THE BASKET	MID-RANGE	THREE
Total	22	32	1.45	5 (8 PTS)	15 (21 PTS)	2 (3 PTS)
vs. Iguodala	10	14	1.4	1 (2 PTS)	9 (12 PTS)	0

"A lot of people don't understand how tough it really is night in and night out when a team is throwing its best defender at you, denying you the ball, trying to [be physical with you]," said DeRozan. "I kind of struggled with that early in my career. I'm trying to figure out ways to beat guys like that."

68 per cent of his shot attempts were perimeter two-pointers, which is by every statistical measure the least efficient shot in basketball, but the Raptors were able to get DeRozan open looks by creating space on the floor with both on-ball and off-ball screens.

"I thought our bigs did a good job of screening for him, they put a body on Iguodala, and DeMar did a good job taking advantage of it," said Casey.

Overall, DeRozan was 8-for-12 on perimeter twos and 1-for-2 on threes. Of the six fouls he drew, three were at the rim and three were away from the basket. He also had six assists and zero turnovers, showing off his much improved playmaking abilities.

Toronto doesn't typically win when the game is played at a faster pace. They used 99 possessions on Sunday, which is up from their average of 94.5 per game, but DeRozan's efficiency from mid-range nullified any advantage Golden State might have gained by forcing the Raptors out of their comfort zone. The Warriors used 108 possessions, nine more than Toronto, thanks to plus-seven edge in offensive rebounds but didn't capitalize on their extra opportunities.

Sunday's game was a dream performance for DeRozan against a top-notch defensive team and an elite defensive player. While living and dying with mid-range jumpers is a dangerous proposition over the long-term, considering the circumstances, it was a special night indeed.

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