

Heat, Thunder Earn Top Seeds in 2013 NBA Playoff Bracket

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The regular season in the NBA is in the books and the playoffs are about to get underway. After taking somewhat of a backseat to a thrilling March Madness tournament, the professionals will now take center stage.

To celebrate the start of the postseason, PrintableBrackets.net is offering fans a printable and complimentary 2013 NBA Playoff bracket sheet.

“What has already been an amazing year in sports rolls on with the start of the 2013 NBA Playoffs,” said Printable Brackets spokesman Zaniel Worth.

LeBron James and the defending champion Miami Heat locked up home court advantage throughout the playoffs after going 66-16 during the regular season. The Heat will open defense of their title against the Milwaukee Bucks in the opening round of the Eastern Conference playoffs on Sunday.

“Miami enters the 2013 NBA Playoffs as the heavy favorite to repeat as champions,” said Worth.

“Barring a significant injury, nearly everyone believes that the Heat will make a third straight trip to the NBA Finals at the very least.”

Also in the East, the second-seeded New York Knicks will clash with the long-time rival Boston Celtics, the Indiana Pacers will hook up with the Atlanta Hawks, and the Brooklyn Nets will battle the Chicago Bulls.

In the Western Conference, the Oklahoma City Thunder earned the top seed after going 60-22 during the season. OKC, which is looking to avenge last year’s loss to the Heat in the Finals, will meet James Harden and the Houston Rockets in the first round.

“Things in the Western Conference are certainly more wide open,” said Worth. “The Thunder will be the favorites to come out of the West, but the Spurs, Nuggets, Clippers and Grizzlies all have a good shot to displace the defending conference champions.”

Perhaps the most intriguing first-round matchup features the Spurs against the Kobe Bryant-less Los Angeles Lakers. The Lakers didn’t even secure a spot in the playoffs until the final day of the regular season. Also out West, the Nuggets will meet the Golden State Warriors, while the Clippers will collide with the Grizzlies.

The 2013 NBA Playoff bracket is perfect for creating a pool with your friends or co-workers, or just for fans who want to follow their favorite team’s potential road to a championship. Get the 2013 NBA playoff bracket, printable NFL schedules for all 32 teams and hundreds of other tournament brackets at www.PrintableBrackets.net.