

# NBA All-Star Technology Summit

Friday, February 16, 2024  
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

## Commissioner Adam Silver Opening Remarks

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: Good morning.  
Welcome to Indiana!

(Applause.)

Apologize, it's only Friday, and I'm losing my voice, but hanging in.

So it's been almost 40 years since we last held an All-Star Game here, and we're absolutely thrilled to be back.

And as you all know, Indiana has a long and storied history when it comes to the sport of basketball. But what you may not know is nearly a century ago, the game's inventor, Dr. James Naismith, came to Indiana to watch a high school basketball championship game and said, well, the game was invented in Massachusetts, basketball really had its origin in Indiana, which remains the center of the sport.

And speaking of Indiana basketball, there's no better representative than Larry Bird, who will be interviewed by 29-time Emmy Award-winner Bob Costas later this morning.

And then someone should interview Bob Costas because he has 29 Emmy Awards.

(Laughter.)

And thanks to the leadership of Herb Simon, the longest-tenured governor in NBA history, for making basketball more popular and more important than ever before in this community. Shine a light on Herb, please.

(Applause.)

To Herb; his son, Steve; and to their new partner, Steve Rales, thank you for bringing All-Star back to Indiana and for being such an incredible host. Thank you, Herb.

(Applause.)



As you might expect, one of the themes of these All-Star festivities, given the tradition in Indiana, is Back to Basketball, a return to old traditions like the East v. West rivalry for Sunday's All-Star Game and a return to our standard game format.

But this morning we're looking ahead to the future, as we always do at these Tech Summits. It's fascinating how close the parallels are today to when we first started these Tech Summits nearly 25 years ago in San Francisco.

At that time everyone was talking about the dot-com boom. The hype around it was all-consuming, though there were many skeptics who felt the World Wide Web -- as you remember, that's what they were calling it back then -- wouldn't become as transformational as some were suggesting.

Of course, the Internet went on to impact virtually every aspect of our lives. And there has been enormous disruption in every industry, sports being no exception.

For us, it's transformed our ticketing and merchandising businesses. It brought social media and sports betting to life. And most recently it led to the disruption of our traditional television business, coming from a combination of cord-cutting, always-on screens, and the shift, at least in some sports, to streaming services.

Today, AI is creating a similar excitement to what we saw around those early days of the Internet. Intuitively, most of us have a sense that artificial intelligence is going to change our lives. The question, at least for me, is how?

You'll hear later this morning from Eric Horvitz, a 30-year Microsoft veteran who has been at the forefront of AI research and development. We also have a panel devoted to the AI revolution.

We're, of course, already using AI in many different ways at the NBA. We use it to generate automated highlights in real time. We use it to help our referees track the ball trajectory when reviewing goaltending calls at our Replay Center. We use it to power our NBA app stats bot, which we call Ask NBA, which gives fans access to every stat



from every game based on any question they can possibly ask.

We also use it to translate, instantly, play-by-play commentary into multiple different languages. We use it to track every movement of every NBA player that they make in every single NBA game. The possibilities, as you all know, are endless.

And now the NBA is working on a new initiative to take advantage of the most recent growth and advancements in AI technology. We're calling this initiative -- wait for it -- NBAI.

Let's start with something simple. Assume this Pacers v. Utah Jazz game from early this year is live on a typical night in the season. So I'll begin with something relatively basic: NBAI, show me every NBA game that's within 10 points.

So there it is. This would be in real time, whatever other games are on that night, and you then you can instantly see every close game.

Now we'll make it a little bit more advanced. For example, you can shop during a game -- Michael Rubin will appreciate this: NBAI, I want to buy the sneakers that Tyrese Haliburton is wearing in the Pacers game.

Again, assume this is all happening live.

AI can also allow you to follow your favorite player exclusively. So assuming also there was a Spurs-Cavaliers game that night: NBAI, show me the Spurs v. Cavaliers game with a camera focused exclusively on Victor Wembanyama.

So there you have it. And then you can say just follow one player.

And then this morning, exclusively here, we're going to try something a little bit more advanced: NBAI, bring Victor Wembanyama onstage.

(Victor Wembanyama enters stage; laughter and applause.)

So it's a big thrill to have you here. First of all, how's life going in the NBA so far?

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: I mean, it's been a thrill. Playing for the Spurs is a dream come true.

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: And I know from our earlier conversations, you love technology, you're a bit of a

hobbyist yourself. What do you think of all this AI stuff?

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: I mean, it's incredible. It's still in the early days, and only in the future we'll see what it will look like.

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: That's a good point. And one thing I know from when I first met you, you know, and you embody it, what makes basketball, NBA basketball in particular, so special, it's the passion, it's the intensity, it's the drama.

To me, I often think the NBA is like a great movie.

By the way, what's your favorite basketball movie?

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: I like that French movie "Hoosiers."

(Applause.)

I mean, the coach kind of reminds me of Coach Pop. You know what? Let me try it myself.

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: Okay, go for it.

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: NBAI: Play "Hoosiers."

("Hoosiers" clip playing in French.)

(Laughter and applause.)

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: Victor, that's actually an American film. Parts of it -- you know, it's based in Indiana. Parts of it were filmed right down the street here.

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: No. Definitely French.

(Laughter.)

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: Anyway, wouldn't it be cool if you could take an NBA game in real time and then convert it and watch it as if it were a movie?

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: All right. Let's go back to that Pacers game we were watching before, and I'm going to say: NBAI, show me that Pacers game as if it were a dramatic movie and add some music too.

So then it has to generate it, but all this could happen in real time. So look right behind us, Victor, on this thing here.



(Video clip playing.)

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: Wow, that's -- I mean, it's really cool. You know what? I'm kind of a fan of Spiderman. Do you think we could watch the NBA game like it's a Spiderman movie or something?

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: Well, you know, NBAI is new, but we'll try. So: NBAI, show me the Pacers game as if it were a Spiderman movie. Generates, generates, in real time, with the game.

(Video clip playing.)

AHMAD RASHAD: Hey, man, that's some -- that's some stuff there, boy.

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: Hey. Ladies and gentlemen, our host of the All-Star Summit, Ahmad Rashad.

(Applause.)

AHMAD RASHAD: Man, I'm telling you, that is incredible. Can I try one?

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: No.

AHMAD RASHAD: Oh.

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: No. But wait, wait. I have something better for you. All these years -- well, you missed one year. But all the years, except for that one you missed, you've been the host of our Tech Summit. But with this new AI technology, I'm not sure we really need you to be here in person.

(Laughter.)

AHMAD RASHAD: What?

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: So this is something in the lab we've been working on.

AHMAD RASHAD: Why?

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: Well, you'll see, you'll see.

(Laughter.)

We think we have the ability to take your face, the features of your face, and actually put them, in real time, onto Victor's body.

AHMAD RASHAD: Man, that's impossible.

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: All right. So, Victor, we have to look straight out, and now we're going to project you, and now -- watch closely, everyone -- we're going to transform and take the facial features of Ahmad -- you got to look straight out for this -- it's subtle, and go ahead, and he's his --

(Laughter.)

AHMAD RASHAD: Whoa, hey, whoa.

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: No, no, wait, wait. You stay there. Now speak, speak, speak.

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: Wait. I'm Ahmad Rashad? I'm Ahmad Rashad.

AHMAD RASHAD: What? Wait a minute.

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: Now, wait. Now, just -- we can do this -- this is all in real time -- do a side-by-side of Victor is Victor and Victor is Ahmad. And talk. Say something in French.

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: Bon jour.

AHMAD RASHAD: I could have said that.

(Laughter.)

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: And and touch your face, do whatever.

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: Wow, that's crazy.

AHMAD RASHAD: I didn't know I could speak French that well. That's pretty cool. That's really, really cool. Hey, so try -- say -- can you talk like me when you talk? Does he sound like me when he -- on that thing?

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: I don't know if I can talk like -- yeah, I can try.

(Laughter.)

AHMAD RASHAD: Okay, say "Welcome to Inside Stuff."

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: Wait, Welcome to what?

AHMAD RASHAD: Inside Stuff.

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: You got to look straight.



VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: Welcome to Inside Stuff.

AHMAD RASHAD: That was pretty close. How about: My main man.

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: My main man.

AHMAD RASHAD: There you go. This is really good. Can you make --

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: No, we're leaving.

AHMAD RASHAD: Oh. Can you make Victor you and me Victor?

COMMISSIONER ADAM SILVER: Good luck today.

(Laughter.)

VICTOR WEMBANYAMA: Thank you.

AHMAD RASHAD: All right, man, that's fantastic. Give it up.

(Applause.)

My gosh. I'd love to be 6'4". Anyway, in case there's any doubt, I am the real Ahmad Rashad here. But the secret is out because way behind this whole thing we've been talking about a long time is that -- and I've never said it, and I'm going to say it today, that Victor's my cousin. That's why we look sort of alike. Anyway...

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