

Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

Monday, May 17, 2021

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Aleksej Pokusevski

Press Conference



Q. Poku, just thinking back to your season, going down to the G-League bubble and coming back and then contributing the way you did, just where do you feel like you're most proud of the growth in your game this season?

ALEKSEJ POKUSEVSKI: Just getting experience to talk to the coach and the staff and the GM. I got time to play. I grew as a player and as a professional on the court. Just like the game slowed down for me through the whole season. Just everything. I don't think there's something special that I want to say about my game, but just like the game slowed down and I can read the game better.

Q. Poku, what are your plans this summer? Do you plan to stay in OKC? Do you plan to travel back home? What are your off-season plans?

ALEKSEJ POKUSEVSKI: I'm just going to take a few weeks off and come back here and work out, get ready for next season, get stronger, get faster.

Q. Just curious about what you thought of Theo's rookie season. You all experienced a lot of things together throughout the course of the year, and just what you think about the way he handled everything.

ALEKSEJ POKUSEVSKI: He had a great season. He played great. He showed that he can play in the NBA, and I think he's going to have a great career here. He's a smart player. He's using his tools pretty good. So I think he had a great season.

Q. Do you plan to be involved with the Serbian National Team this summer and perhaps play in the Olympics, if that's an option?

ALEKSEJ POKUSEVSKI: I didn't decide yet. Like I said, I'm going to be here and workout every day and just get ready for the summer.

Q. Coming into this season, obviously, you had to learn the league, but you're moving to a new country

and just dealing with a different life here as well. Just thinking about where you started when you got here and how you feel now, just how different do you feel in terms of all of that?

ALEKSEJ POKUSEVSKI: Yeah, for sure, I feel much different from the first day until now. Just traveling with the team, going to the G-League, getting back, playing more minutes, playing the starting five, everything plays a role. I feel much comfortable right now living in OKC and just playing.

Q. Do you have a feel for exactly like what skills that you want to work on? I know you said you wanted to get stronger and faster, but are there any specific skills that you feel, after being able to play against almost everybody in the NBA now, that you want to hone in on this summer?

ALEKSEJ POKUSEVSKI: There's nothing really specific I want to work on, just like tightening the dribble, getting stronger, getting my percent up, tripling shots, and everything that has to do with offense. Getting stronger have to do with the defense.

Q. You just mentioned defense. I was just curious maybe what you learned about the defensive end of the floor and what you learned about yourself and how you can impact the game on that end of the floor moving forward.

ALEKSEJ POKUSEVSKI: I've learned that I can use my size pretty good on defense. Just got to get stronger and being able to take those punches from the stronger players and get faster so I can defend the guards. I think I can be a great defensive player. I've just got to work on it pretty good.

Q. I was curious positionally, just kind of where you see yourself. You played mostly on the wing this season, but with strength, do you see yourself defending bigger players down the line, or do you see yourself settling in on the wing?

ALEKSEJ POKUSEVSKI: Like I said, I want to be able to defend all kinds of players. So that's what I want to work on this summer, just getting stronger so I can defend bigger guys, wings, and getting faster on defense, deciding



better so I can defend guards. I want to like defend one through five.

Q. You touched on it a little, but what were the biggest challenges of adjusting to living in Oklahoma City? Any cultural differences or anything like that, just as obviously being a young guy moving over here.

ALEKSEJ POKUSEVSKI: Just learning the place. OKC is a nice city, great for players and just generally professional guys so you can focus on your things. It was pretty tough at the beginning being alone, but right now it's much easier. I know great restaurants, great people. So it feels much better now after a whole season.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports