

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Tristan Vukcevic Media Conference



Pelicans 128, Wizards 107

Q. Tristan, what did you make of the opportunity to play extended minutes tonight?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: I just tried to bring energy. I started a little bit slow, a little out of rhythm. Yeah, then just tried to bring energy on the defensive end, just talk, find my teammates, and got a couple of blocks today.

Q. More than a couple; you got five of them. Brian Keefe said your defense has improved lately. How would you describe your progress?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Yeah, I think my defense has been great lately. People keep talking about my defense, but I think I've shown flashes and glimpses of improvement and just understanding when to be, where to be.

Q. When you talk about your understanding on defense, what do you feel like is the biggest difference from last year to this year?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: I feel like I got in better shape this summer, which makes me more active in defense, having more deflections, more blocks, and talking more. That's a big one.

Q. You were able to get yourself to the free-throw line. Where did the aggressiveness come from to make that effort of attacking their bigs the way they were trying to attack you guys?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Yeah, the scouting report, their bigs are not that mobile defensively, and they jump a lot on pump fakes. Going into the game, I just knew that I could draw easy fouls and go to the free-throw line.

Q. Touching back on your defense, I know in your minutes you may get a block here or there, but tonight it seemed like the rotation for you was at a higher level. What have you worked on to be able to put

yourself in that position to make those quick rotational changes similar to kind of what we're also seeing from Alex to protect the rim the way you did?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Yeah, protecting the rim, just staying ready, coming early, doing extra work because you're not playing, you're not really in rhythm, you're not really in game shape. So just getting extra reps, going to the gym in the afternoons, just putting that extra work so when my name gets called up I'm ready and I'm not out there not knowing what to do.

Q. What do you make of Alex Sarr's growth so far this season?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Yeah, he's been incredible. His touch has improved, his shooting. You can just see the difference from last year and this year when he gets to the paint, he's way more aggressive, way more physical, and his efficiency has been way better, so you can just see the work he has put in.

Q. What were your impressions of Derik Queen? Obviously a triple-double, a tremendous talent.

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Yeah, he's an incredible player. I didn't really watch college basketball, but on Instagram I see highlights and that, and I was like, oh, he's nice. He plays with his own pace, finds his teammates, great facilitator. That's like the new big era.

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