

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Tristan Vukcevic

Media Conference



Q. What countries do you have a passport for?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: I have a Serbian passport. I have a Swedish passport. I have Greek citizenship.

Q. You're not a citizen of Serbia and Sweden?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: I don't know if I count as a citizen. Sweden, I don't remember the last time I've been there. Don't put that out. They may come and take my passport away (laughter). I'm joking.

Living in the States with a Serbian passport. No good. I'm joking.

Q. In what ways do you feel like your game has grown over the last months?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: I think my body's improved. We talk about me being more active and more aggressive, just showing like with the stats, the deflections, that part of my game.

During the season I got more and more consistent, especially like I said before, when I signed the contract, kind of felt a nice relief. Everything going way smoother for me after that.

Q. You mentioned the deflections. Coach Keefe brought that up a lot this year, especially in the second half. How gratifying was it to see the hard work pay off on defense?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Yeah, it's great to show that. A lot of people don't see the work behind the scenes. Just being here all summer, doing our jump season, then season starts and you see the improvement. You obviously very happy 'cause you worked so hard, then having that outcome and something good happen out of all the hard work is a great feeling.

Q. I asked Justin this. I have to ask you. I told him I

noticed the opposing players always look at him on the bench when they want to talk back to the Wizards bench. He said you kind of taught him how to trash talk. What is your perspective on that?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Yeah, you know, a little trash talk is not bad in the game gets people going, gets myself going, gets my teammates going. It's part of the game. I like to do it. It's fun. So yeah.

Q. A lot of your teammates say that you're kind of the life of the locker room, that you add spirit to the locker room, a good spirit. Would you elaborate on that? What are you like when we're not seeing you?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: I'm just myself. I think I just go in and talk to everybody, see how everybody's doing. Just enjoy the day, have fun. I'm here by myself in the States. These are all my people. People in the Wizards organization are family to me. I have a great connection and great relationship with everyone on the staff and the players.

Just go in with good vibes, happy to go to work. Doesn't matter the outcome, win five games, lose five games, just keep the same energy in the facility, in the arena, yeah.

Q. A few of the other guys, people go to different cities, they pair off. As you said, sometimes all you have is each other. Is there a summer camp vibe?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: What do you mean?

Q. You guys, there's not a lot of teams that have a young core.

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: We're definitely very, like, connected. We're all young. We all working towards our goal. We do hang out a lot off the court, in the hotel, the airplanes. Hopefully we meet up this summer somewhere all of us. We're obviously going to be in DC working, getting better.

But I think it's also good for us to go somewhere, enjoy



some time off, just build, talk to each other. Everybody's different. You got to talk to people differently. Some people like some things, dislike some things.

Just knowing everybody's personality and character, I think that will definitely help us. It will definitely translate on the court, I believe.

Q. You're one of the longest tenured guys on the team. Walk through how odd that constant turnover is.

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: It's a (indiscernible) of business. Everybody knows that. So just going to work every day with a smile. We have an amazing job. We get paid to do something we love, a lot of money. We can't complain about that. So yeah.

Q. Now that it's been a couple months with A.D., what have you learned from him that sticks out to you the most?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Just how he sees the game. Talked a lot, especially we're playing the same position, how he attacks the post, what he sees, like the mismatch, just different things.

We're both injured, so we didn't get much time on the court, time at all. It was just a little bit after practice. Little details he'll tell me. During the game he'll always give me advice, which is very helpful. Hopefully this summer get in the gym together and I can learn a lot. He's champion, world champion, Olympics, all that.

So I can't wait. I'm super excited to have somebody like that, big-time, next to me on a day-to-day level. I can learn from him on his daily habits, how he gets ready. Having his advice 24/7 available is going to be super helpful, I think.

Q. You and Bilal came into the league at the same time. What have you seen him grow in the most?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Yeah, his offensive game has improved a lot. Just adding things to his bag, being more aggressive, being more comfortable with the game. In the States obviously it's different for us. Growing up in Europe, playing in Europe our whole life, coming here, it's a different game. Him getting adjusted to that. His athletic ability. His defense, deflections, blocks. You can see he took a big step into his offensive game.

Q. About Anthony Davis, when we do watch the bench, you and he are talking all the time. Why do you guys get along like you do? Big age gap there.

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Yeah, maybe 'cause we have the same birthday. Let's start from that. We both March 11th. It's mostly me talking to him. I just love to talk. It's me always asking questions. Maybe off-the-court stuff, on the court during the game, asking how he sees some things throughout the game. Talk a lot about Olympics, 2028 in L.A.

We all know that I'm going to go at him. Can't wait to play against him. I told him that already. Just talking and learning from somebody that big-time, just having information and everything from him.

Q. Do you think part of it is that you share a sense of humor?

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC: Yeah, he's definitely got a nice sense of humor. You don't know what to expect when somebody comes in. So him fitting into our little goofy, young squad was great to see. Him just being involved and helping everything from guards to bigs was super helpful.

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