

CENTER COURT

WASHINGTON WIZARDS 2024-25





We are remaining steadfast in our plan and strategy to improve and compete hard every game. **You, our fans, are the lifeblood of our franchise** and I can't thank you enough for your support.

Dear Wizards Fans,

As we continue through the 2024-25 season, we're proud to present this year's Wizards Magazine. Our goal is to give you a closer look at the players and staff who make the Wizards who they are, from on-court stats to their off-court lives.

Under President Michael Winger, General Manager Will Dawkins, and Head Coach Brian Keefe, the team continues pursuing its goal of being a competitive force in the NBA's Eastern Conference. While the process will take time, we're excited that we've added players, coaches and staff to help us achieve ongoing, year-after-year success. We are not going to cut corners or skip steps in our effort. Each game moves us closer to our objective, and we believe that the foundation we have built is strong.

We're especially pleased with the camaraderie the team displays each day. Our players and coaches see the big picture and are committed to improving everything from on-court performance to off-court habits. Everyone is bought in and is in it together.

In addition to the players we drafted the past two seasons—Bilal Coulibaly, Alex Sarr, Bub Carrington, and Kyshawn George—we have excellent veterans who joined us this past offseason: Malcolm Brogdon and Jonas Valančiūnas. Malcolm and Jonas have been wonderful mentors to their younger teammates, always leading by example on and off the court.

From the early Fall, our players attacked Jump Season, gathering in the D.C. area for informal workouts, building chemistry and sharpening their skills. The culture that Michael, Will and Brian are building is strong and steady. Our player development efforts are already showing results with our players improving each game across key statistical categories. With player growth comes team growth, and with team growth comes sustainable success.

We are remaining steadfast in our plan and strategy to improve and compete hard every game. You, our fans, are the lifeblood of our franchise and I can't thank you enough for your support. Thank you for your commitment to the Wizards and we are glad to continue building a team and culture that you can be proud of.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted Leonsis".

Ted



They're in the paint. And sculpture. And photographs. The National Gallery of Art is the only place in DC where you can find a painting by Leonardo da Vinci, a giant blue rooster towering over Pennsylvania Avenue, and a 6.1-acre garden in the heart of the city. Like Jordan, Jonas, Alex, Bilal, Corey, Malcolm, and Jared, you can come to the National Gallery to get up close with art that moves you or to connect with loved ones. Each visit is unique and always unforgettable.

Whether you're here for our world-renowned impressionist collection or a scoop of gelato, there's something for everyone, and it's yours to discover.

National Gallery of Art

PAINTINGS BY
MARK ROTHKO

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
EAST BUILDING, TOWER 1

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CHRISTOPHER ROTHKO / ARTISTS
RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK

Bilal Coulibaly
PHOTOGRAPHED BY
KENNY GIARLA

PREGAME

Song

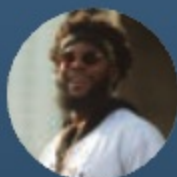
MARVIN BAGLEY III
Jay-Z or
J. Cole



PATRICK BALDWIN JR.
Rap music



SADDIQ BEY
Jeezy



MALCOLM BROGDON
Big
K.R.I.T.



JARED BUTLER
"I'm Me"
by Lil Wayne

BUB CARRINGTON
Future

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE
NBA
Youngboy



BILAL COULIBALY
"Last Song"
by Hunxho



JOHNNY DAVIS
Future



KYSHAWN GEORGE
NBA
Youngboy



ANTHONY GILL
I don't listen
to music
before a game

RICHAUN HOLMES
"N95" by
Kendrick
Lamar

COREY KISPERT
Anything by
Drake is good.
Our team's
really good on
the aux

KYLE KUZMA
Hip-hop

JORDAN POOLE
BabyTron
or any
Detroit rap

ALEX SARR
BossMan
Dlow

JONAS VALANČIŪNAS
I don't listen
to a ton
of music

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC
Serbian
music



photographed by
KENNY GIARLA

At what age did you start showing an interest in music?

Since I was five or six years old. My dad used to play a lot of different music in the car, and over time I caught interest in the songs, and how the songs made me feel and what the songs were about. I realized I wanted to do the same thing, so from then on, I just started writing my own songs, trying to copy what I was hearing, and making it my own. As I got older, I got better, experienced more in life, so I had more things to say and talk about. I just kept working at it. From age five or six till now, I'm still learning and growing. It's definitely a passion.

In what ways has music impacted your life?

Music has impacted my life in a lot of ways. As an athlete, before the game I listen to music to help me calm down. It helps me stay calm before I go out there and compete. Even when I'm experiencing different things in life, music helps me relax and gives me a getaway from what's going on. So, it has impacted my life tremendously, and that's why I do it [make music], in hope that it does the same to others.

When did you start writing and recording music?

I started writing music at age five or six. I didn't record my first song until high school though, I think my sophomore year. I had a lot of journals and files of my raps and songs that I had written over the years.

MARVIN BAGLEY III



MARVIN BAGLEY III

How did you choose your

stage name? My stage name is MB35. MB are my initials, and 35 is my number. I combined the two, but it has a lot of meanings. My mom has five boys, so I have two older brothers and two younger brothers, I'm the middle one. So, I'm the

third child, so three-five. It connects a lot of things in my life, and I just roll with it. I like the way it sounded and whenever I see people, they started calling me three-five, not MB, but just three-five, and it was something that stuck so I stayed with it.

You released your latest EP *Until Next Time* in July 2024, tell me a little bit about it.

Until Next Time is an EP that I released during the summer. I'm working on my album now, and it's a preview of what's to come. There are a lot of different stories on the EP, just a

lot of different emotions that connect to the next project. So, it was just an "until next time," until you get to hear the rest. A lot of people loved it, and I'm happy with the responses. It's just a preview for the next one.

You've released a lot of music over the last few years, do you have a favorite song?

Favorite song...let me think real quick. I have a song called Patience. Both of them – Patience 1 and Patience 2, which is on the EP. Those are my favorite songs because I go really in-depth into my personal life, stuff that many people don't get to see. I was vulnerable on those songs and opened up in ways that I hadn't before. A way that only people that are around me get to see. So, to put that out in the world, I would say that both Patiences are my favorite.



Who are some of your musical influences?

My favorite rapper is J. Cole. I listen to him a lot, especially these days. I like his message and what he raps about. He's had a big impact on me and is inspirational. So, guys like J. Cole, Tupac, and Nas. I can go on, but just to name a



PLAYER PICKS

Morning
 Evening

East Coast
 West Coast

Window Seat
 Aisle Seat

Cats
 Dogs

Introvert
 Extrovert

Orange Juice
 Apple Juice

Summer
 Winter

Text
 Phone Call

Passenger
 Driver

City
 Suburbs

Pancakes
 Waffles

Still Water
 Sparkling Water



MARVIN BAGLEY III WAS PHOTOGRAPHED AT HR (HOME RULE) RECORDS IN WASHINGTON, D.C. HR RECORDS SUPPORTS THE HOME RULE MUSIC AND FILM PRESERVATION FOUNDATION. VISIT WWW.HRMFDC.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.

few. Those are guys that I listen to and draw inspiration from.

Who is your dream producer or artist to work with? I would love to work with Pharrell. I like Metro Boomin too. So, probably

those two. They're opposite ends, but I would say those two.

How often do you listen to music? What genres of music do you like, and do you have any genres you dislike? I listen

to music every day – whenever I'm not playing. I listen to soul, R&B, and rap. I try to explore a lot of different genres that I wouldn't normally gravitate towards. I'm exploring pop, I'm getting into that a little bit. I just love music; I love the creativity that goes into it.

Is there a song that always makes you happy when you hear it? *h u n g e r . o n . h i l l s i d e* by J. Cole. I listen to that song when I need some encouragement or just want to feel good. I like that song a lot.

What's the most memorable concert you've been to? J. Cole. I got a chance to see his show when I was in Sacramento. I had known him before, but after the concert, I got a chance to sit down and talk with him after. It was a great experience, and I took a lot from that.

If you could only listen to one album on repeat for the rest of your life, what would it be? One album...*Honestly, Nevermind* by Drake. That's probably the one I would listen to.

MUSIC RAPID FIRE
Who is your favorite all-time artist? Tupac.

Your favorite current artist? J. Cole.

Your favorite all-time song? "Thriller" by Michael Jackson.

Favorite current song or song you have on repeat? Song I have on repeat right now is "Port Antonio" by J. Cole.

One album you could list to from start to finish. The album I listen to from start to finish is Summer Walker's album *Over It*.



photographed by
ROB BANEZ

What activities do you enjoy doing during your free time?

I love playing video games, going on hikes with my dog, and trying out new restaurants in the city.

What are a few of your favorite video games?

I like Madden, Call of Duty, and I play Minecraft a bit. Those are kind of my three.

What are some essentials you bring on the road with you and why?

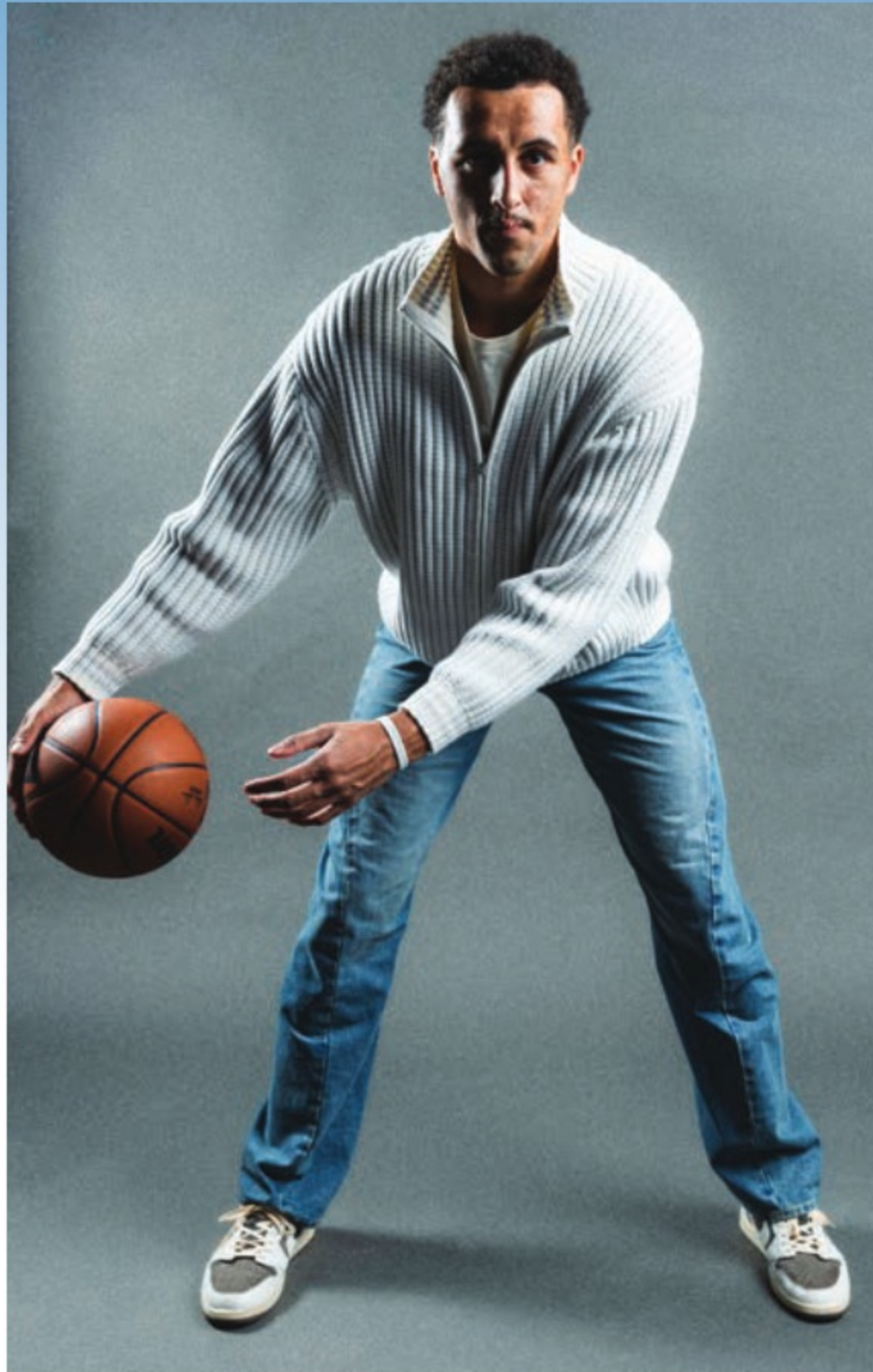
I love being on my computer and watching movies, so I need my headphones. I try to make a playlist of artists from the various cities we go to. I can't forget the phone – I have to stay locked in with family and friends.

Do you have any game day rituals?

A game day nap, that's about it. I take about a one-to-two-hour nap before the game.

How would you describe your ideal day off?

In the morning, I get a workout in. If I'm at home, I knock out some chores around the house. I'll also go shopping for some groceries and then watch a movie. I'll then get another workout in.



PATRICK BALDWIN JR.



What are three words you would use to describe yourself? Calm, funny, and kind of stoic.

Why did you choose those words? I think people that have known me long enough know that I like to stay out of the way.

I do have a funny side to me, but on the court, I don't like to show emotion.

You have an English bulldog. What is your bulldog's name and how old is he? His name is Zeus and he's almost two years old.

Why did you choose a bulldog?

I think they're cute but sort of ugly at the same time and really funny. There's just something about his presence that makes everyone smile. He doesn't care that I'm a basketball player, he doesn't know if I made or missed shots, and he's just a great best friend to always have.

What is the last TV show you've binged?

This was a long time ago, but I think it's called *The Night Agent*. I think they're making a second season, so I might have to watch.

Did you do anything exciting this past summer? Any vacations you took that were memorable?

I went to Europe and visited four different places – Milan, Barcelona, Lake Como, and Paris.

You wear the number seven, is there any meaning behind your jersey number?

I was drafted by Golden State, and at the time, it was the only cool number available. The meaning that I've created to it is that it's one under my mom's number. She had breast cancer during my senior year of high school and my freshman year of college, and her number was eight. So, I think if I can stay under her number for the rest of my career that'd be great.

Which three people you would invite to your dream dinner party?

I would invite LeBron James, my father, and Zeus.



PLAYER PICKS

Morning
 Evening

East Coast
 West Coast

Window Seat
 Aisle Seat

Cats
 Dogs

Introvert
 Extrovert

Orange Juice
 Apple Juice

Summer
 Winter

Text
 Phone Call

Passenger
 Driver

City
 Suburbs

Pancakes
 Waffles

Still Water
 Sparkling Water

PREGAME

meal

MARVIN BAGLEY III
Salmon, mashed potatoes, and broccoli

PATRICK BALDWIN JR.
Fish and rice

SADDIQ BEY
Salmon

MALCOLM BROGDON
Rice with chicken

JARED BUTLER
French toast and scrambled eggs with peppers and onions

BUB CARRINGTON
Rice with steak



JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE
Chicken and rice

BILAL COULIBALY
Alfredo pasta with salmon

JOHNNY DAVIS
A sandwich

KYSHAWN GEORGE
Alfredo pasta

ANTHONY GILL
I have the same smoothie before every game

RICHAUN HOLMES
Pasta with red sauce



COREY KISPERT
PB&J

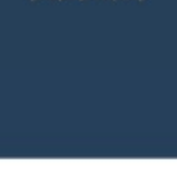
KYLE KUZMA
Omelet with ham, peppers, and onions

JORDAN POOLE
Pasta with chicken

ALEX SARR
Chicken and rice

JONAS VALANČIŪNAS
Seabass

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC
Pasta with red sauce and chicken





You've created a guide to some of your favorite places in D.C. Tell us why you chose each place.

I chose the Washington Monument because it was something that I always remember driving past every time I came into the city as a kid. It always caught my eye, caught my attention. As I got older, I learned more about its significance and how much of a landmark it is, helping define the city.

I chose the Museum DC clothing store because it's near and dear to my heart. The people who own it and run it, LeGreg Harrison and Muhammed Hill, I've been close to since I was in high school. They have helped me grow as a player and navigate life around the city. I have learned many different things from them. They have helped me expand my style. They [Harrison and Hill] just mean a lot to me. I always want to show love and appreciation to them. I discovered Highlands Café & Grill from a former trainer. They serve some of the best food in the city – brunch, dinner, anything you need. It's kind of low-key too. They now have a second location in Southeast, D.C. It's one of my favorite spots probably my favorite spot to eat in D.C.

Are there any other spots that you think people visiting D.C. shouldn't miss?

I would recommend the African American Museum of History. It provides a ton of information and there's so much to see. It's something that's very impactful and it can be emotional for people. It's really eye-opening, and they have

photographed by
KENNY GIARLA

SADDIQ BEY





done a great job with it. I believe it's going to end up being a pillar for the city, so I would definitely recommend that.

Other than Highlands Café, what are a few of your favorite restaurants in D.C.? I think The Park at 14th is great and has a vibe. Ben's Chili Bowl is also underrated.

When people talk about the DMV, what typically is the first thing that comes to your mind?

And what's one misconception most people have about the area? When I think of the DMV, the first thing that comes to my mind is definitely hoops [basketball]. I grew up in Prince George's County [PG], it's such a small area but a lot of great hoopers came out of there [from PG] that are in the league, in college, and overseas. I personally think we have the best area for hoops in the world. One misconception I would say is that people think the DMV is



bigger than what it really is. We have had so much basketball success in this area, and we are compared to other big states like Texas and California. They are bigger than us, but I believe we have an edge when it comes to basketball because we are a smaller pool of players, but we have had great success.

The DMV area has produced many NBA players. What was it like growing up in this area and

playing high school basketball here? It was highly competitive. When I was five, all the games were crazy. Parents and the crowd were going crazy. It felt like you were in an NBA game by age eight. Once I got to high school, I would have played in so many "big games" that I just wanted to perform well. There's so many different hoopers and many different opportunities to play against some of the best players in the area and in the country. Every day was a battle.

PLAYER PICKS

<input type="radio"/> Morning <input checked="" type="radio"/> Evening	<input checked="" type="radio"/> East Coast <input type="radio"/> West Coast	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Window Seat <input type="radio"/> Aisle Seat	<input type="radio"/> Cats <input checked="" type="radio"/> Dogs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Introvert <input type="radio"/> Extrovert	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Orange Juice <input type="radio"/> Apple Juice
<input type="radio"/> Summer <input checked="" type="radio"/> Winter	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Text <input type="radio"/> Phone Call	<input type="radio"/> Passenger <input checked="" type="radio"/> Driver	<input checked="" type="radio"/> City <input type="radio"/> Suburbs	<input type="radio"/> Pancakes <input checked="" type="radio"/> Waffles	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Still Water <input type="radio"/> Sparkling Water

You were playing against someone great on the other team. So, it really helped prepare you for the next level.

At what age did you start playing basketball and who got you interested in the sport?

I started hooping at age four. My mom and my uncle were the two people who put the ball in my hands. I always give them a lot of credit. I didn't really have an option, everyone in my family played, but I loved it at such a young age. I fell in love with the game, and I always wanted to play it. I would tell them, let's go to the court.

You wear the number 41. What's the meaning behind the number? 41, comes from my mom. She wore it in college and she's my biggest role model. She's sacrificed and done so much for me. I want to make sure I honor her and represent her when I'm out there, so that's why I chose 41.

Wizards General Manager Will Dawkins has talked about how you've attacked your rehab since you tore your ACL in March 2024. What have you learned about yourself through your rehab journey? I've always been a big believer

in God. I've had strong and unwavering faith, but it tested me for sure. This journey has made me put my money where my mouth is, being able to dive into that, and make sure that I continue to be locked in on my faith. It has really taught me how much my spirituality and relationship with God is important. I am also learning more about my body. It has made me think about things I haven't thought of before. Every day it's been a great challenge to get better, not only as a player but also physically, mentally, and spiritually. I think it's been a

great test for me, and it has continued to increase my love and hunger for the game. It's hard to watch without wanting to get in there and help the team. My team's doing a great job and everyone around me is keeping me sane.

You talked about how your mom was a big mentor and role model for you growing up. Was there anyone else that you admired or looked up to?

I would say my favorite hooper was Kobe. He was one of the first players I really watched. It crushed me when he passed away. He was someone who studied the game –how he approached it, how he attacked it. I know a lot of people say they're Kobe fans, but I genuinely was. Even though I didn't know him, he meant a lot to me as a hooper. Being able to watch him from afar and learn from him. So, basketball-wise, Kobe's my favorite player ever.

What are some interests you have outside of basketball?

The Joker is my favorite character; I have all the movies and have a lot of Joker memorabilia. I also like lifting and bodybuilding. I'm not a bodybuilder, but I like lifting and working out. I just started getting into pool, so I've been playing a lot of pool recently. I'd like to say I'm good at it or I'm getting good at it.



favorite

BASKETBALL SHOE



MARVIN BAGLEY III
Kobes

PATRICK BALDWIN JR.
Kobe 8

SADDIQ BEY
Kobe 6

MALCOLM BROGDON
KD 9

JARED BUTLER
Kobe 6

BUB CARRINGTON
Kobe 6

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE
Kobe 4

BILAL COULIBALY
The shoe I wear right now is the Tatum 3

JOHNNY DAVIS
Anything Adidas

KYSHAWN GEORGE
I'm currently wearing the Sabrina 2

ANTHONY GILL
Paul Georges

RICHAUN HOLMES
Jordan 4

COREY KISPERT
I wear the Sabrina 2

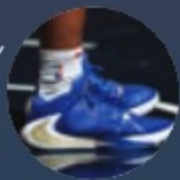
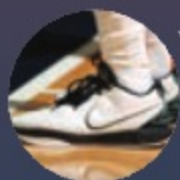
KYLE KUZMA
Kobes

JORDAN POOLE
Nike G.T. Cut 3

ALEX SARR
Any low-top shoe

JONAS VALANCIUNAS
Any Nike shoe

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC
Kobes





THE WIZARDS GIVE BACK TO D.C.'S YOUTH COMMUNITY



RICH KESSLER

RICH KESSLER



Sports have the ability to change lives, especially at a young age.

Participation in sports like basketball can provide children with a safe space to connect with friends, learn life skills, improve physical and mental health, and discover a lifelong passion. However, many children are still facing barriers to play, whether due to lack of access or resources. Monumental Sports & Entertainment recognizes the organization can make a difference and has launched a multi-million-dollar youth sports initiative, District of Play, to bridge those gaps.

"We're not just here to win games, play games, and compete for championships," says John Thompson III, Senior Vice President of Monumental Basketball. "We are part of the city. And we have not just a responsibility, but a desire to embrace the city. District of Play is just one small measure, one small token, one small way that the organization is trying to give back to the city."

District of Play, designed to evolve with feedback to meet the community's needs, includes several basketball programs focused on three broad pillars: improving access for those kids most likely to be left out, providing kids with a safe space to play, and engaging the community. Phase one of the initiative will span four years, and Monumental has partnered with the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Positive Coaching Alliance, USA Basketball, and more, to help accomplish their goals, says

Monumental Sports & Entertainment's multi-million-dollar youth sports initiative aims to give kids more opportunities to play basketball through **District of Play.**

BY KELYN SOONG

PHOTOGRAPHY BY WASHINGTON WIZARDS AT THE WIZARDS' PLAYERS AT THE TEAM'S ANNUAL OPEN PRACTICE IN OCT. 2024



Jr. Wizards Youth Basketball Skills Clinic for Kids affiliated with Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling



RICH KESSLER

Shannon Clancy, Director of Youth Basketball for Monumental.

The organization plans to identify and select multiple basketball courts in the city — at least one indoor court at a local school or community center, and two outdoor courts — to refurbish every year. That means patching cracks, replacing backboards, fixing broken lights or fences, and addressing any other necessary repairs the facility needs. "We'll tailor the plan for each individual court," Clancy says. "Each one is kind of its own separate project."

Monumental will also donate a regulation-sized basketball to every elementary school student in DCPS, totaling nearly 30,000 basketballs. Additionally, District of Play will provide free community basketball clinics in Wards 7 and 8 featuring Washington Wizards, Washington Mystics, and Capital City Go-Go players, scholarships for basketball camps, and annual coaching clinics.

This September, Wizards head coach Brian Keefe led the first annual coaches' workshop for other basketball coaches of all levels in the area. He was joined by head coaches Kenny Blakeney from Howard University, Ed Cooley from Georgetown University, and Duane Simpkins from American University. More than 150 coaches attended the free event.

"We're here to serve the youth," Thompson says. "We're here to create opportunities for young boys and girls to hoop."



Wizards' players at the team's annual Open Practice in Oct. 2024.



MALCOLM BROGDON

photographed by KENNY GIARLA

**PIERRE LEGROS I
CHERUBS PLAYING
WITH A LYRE, 1672-1673**

**NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
WEST BUILDING
- EAST GARDEN COURT**

You contributed to the National Basketball Social Justice Coalition, The Power of Basketball: NBA players, coaches, and team governors on the fight to make a better America. Talk about what advocacy means to you? It means advocating for the things you care about and highlighting issues that are important to you, either through your experiences or your loved ones' experiences.

Making an impact in the communities you live and work in is of importance to you. What subjects or causes do you feel strongly about? One of them is the criminal justice system – correcting the system, especially for Brown and Black people. Another is clean water. Clean water has always been an important issue that I've really cared about and chosen to work on

abroad. And then, social justice in general – how people of color are viewed in this country by the police and by authority in general.

Who's been the most influential person in your life and why? I would say my mom. She helped me find my identity growing up as a young Black kid in the South, in Atlanta. She's gave me a



MALCOLM BROGDON

🔴 Morning
🟡 Evening

🔴 East Coast
🟡 West Coast

🟡 Window Seat
🔴 Aisle Seat

🟡 Cats
🔴 Dogs

🔴 Introvert
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🔴 City
🟡 Suburbs

🔴 Pancakes
🟡 Waffles

🔴 Still Water
🟡 Sparkling Water

PLAYER PICKS



THOMAS COLE
THE VOYAGE OF LIFE: YOUTH; 1842

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
WEST BUILDING – MAIN FLOOR –
GALLERY 60

sense of identity and purpose. My morals and how I view the world have been shaped through the things she taught me.

If you weren't in your current profession, what would you be doing? Hopefully, I'd be playing in the English Premier League [soccer], but if I was not a professional athlete, I think I'd be living somewhere in Africa, really focusing on the clean water issue.

Who is your favorite Premier League team? Arsenal

You and current teammate Anthony Gill were former teammates at UVA. Did you ever envision that you'd be on the same team again? No, no, it was a total surprise, and it's been a lot of fun to be his teammate and to be back reunited with him and his family.

As a vet in this league, what's the best piece of advice you'd give your rookie teammates? What is the best advice you received as a rookie? The advice I'd give the rookies is to enjoy the process. Don't look too much on the results; instead,

focus on the process. Enjoy the grind every day. And the best piece of advice I was given was to "keep the main thing the main thing," which means basketball is what's probably allowed you to live your lifestyle, allowed you to travel, and do all the amazing things you get to do, so make sure you prioritize that over everything.

What are a few items you always bring on the road with you and why? I bring my headphones everywhere because I love music, so I'm always listening to music.

I also bring a white noise machine for when I sleep.

What's on the top of your bucket list? On the top of my bucket list is to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

What is the most recent thing (skill, technique, theory, subject, etc.) you taught yourself? The most recent? I've been reading a lot of articles in The Economist on foreign affairs and what's going on in our country and abroad. So that's what I've been educating myself on lately.



CELEBRATE THE DMV AND ITS HISTORY WITH TWO NEW WIZARDS JERSEYS

The City Edition uniform honors the connectivity of the DMV, and the Statement Edition jersey pays homage to D.C.'s distinctive flag.

BY KELYN SOONG

photographed by STEPHEN GOSLING/NBAE





Not every NBA jersey references the history of the United States or honors the host city's distinctive flag.

The Washington Wizards' two new jerseys this season do both. The City Edition jersey continues the theme of last season's boundary stone-inspired uniform, completing a two-year story arc spotlighting the boundary stone markers that designate the original outline of the new federal capital of the United States. It also pays tribute to Benjamin Banneker, an African American mathematician and astronomer who helped establish the position of the first stone in 1791. The uniform also features a new color that represents the connectivity of the DMV. The Statement Edition is an extension of the team's "For the District" campaign, paying homage to D.C.'s flag and its characteristic design.

"We're always trying to come up with something unique and different," says Hunter Lochmann, Chief Marketing Officer at Monumental Sports & Entertainment.

CITY EDITION: BEYOND BOUNDARIES
The City Edition Beyond Boundaries uniform certainly stands out for its color – hydrogen blue, which had never been used on an NBA jersey before. The subtle, light blue color, along with the speckled blue ripple effect pattern trim, symbolize the waterways surrounding D.C. "We like the idea that the water is kind of the connectivity with D.C., Maryland, and Virginia, and bringing everything together," says Rebecca Winn, the Wizards Senior Vice President of Marketing.

Printed across the jersey's chest are the words "The District of Columbia," in black-letter, or Gothic script, a font reminiscent of those used on 18th-century maps. "DMV" is highlighted in the same font style on the buckle of the shorts. The team's classic ball logo appears on the right side of the shorts, with a boundary stone replacing the Washington Monument in the design. Six white stars surround the logo, with three framing each side to represent the three-star design on the D.C. flag.

A City Edition thematic court will be used concurrently when the players wear the City Edition jerseys.

"The boundary stones are

"the origins of Washington, D.C.," says Stephen Powers, a Wizards season ticket holder and amateur historian. "They really are what has created the landscape of how we developed this whole region."

STATEMENT EDITION

The Statement Edition uniform debuted in November, and this marks the first time since the 2019-20 season that the Wizards are wearing a new Statement jersey. The uniform features the classic Wizards colorway with a navy base and red accents, and white writing and numbering. Like the D.C. flag, the uniform includes three red stars and two horizontal red bars. The word, "district" in "The District of Columbia," includes an outline of the Washington Monument within the "d" and a basketball above the second "i".

"You can't change a Statement Edition very often," Lochmann says. "But when we got the opportunity to change it, we were ready for a refresh."

Fans will be able to purchase the Beyond Boundaries jersey at shopwashwizards.com and at the Capital One Arena Team Store; the Statement Edition jersey is currently available both online and at the Team Store.



PHOTO BY KENNY GIARLA



MY *style*

MARVIN BAGLEY III
Confident. Whatever I'm wearing, I just wear it with confidence

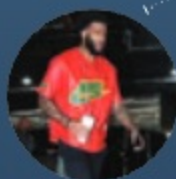
PATRICK BALDWIN JR.
Very basic

SADDIQ BEY
Low-key. It's calm but loud at the same time—some of the accessories pop

MALCOLM BROGDON
Simple, chic, and classy

JARED BUTLER
Simplistically fashionable

BUB CARRINGTON
Relaxed



JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE
Comfy

BILAL COULIBALY
Chill, comfortable, and classy

JOHNNY DAVIS
Very casual

KYSHAWN GEORGE
Casual and calm. Nothing crazy

ANTHONY GILL
I look like a dad

RICHAUN HOLMES
Laid-back. 90s baggy clothes, almost like a krump dancer from back in the day



COREY KISPERS
Understated, clean, and classic

KYLE KUZMA
Myself

JORDAN POOLE
Effortless

ALEX SARR
Comfy

JONAS VALANČIŪNAS
Simple

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC
Simple





JARED BUTLER

photographed by KENNY GIARLA

What are three words you would use to describe yourself? Genuine, sarcastic, and introspective.

This past summer, did you do anything exciting? Any vacations you took that were memorable? I did a lot of hiking, explored the cultural scene, and went horseback riding. It was a lot of fun.

Since living in Washington D.C., what have been some of your favorite things to do? I love to take walks in the different neighborhoods. I feel like each neighborhood has its own identity. So, experiencing all of those has been amazing.

You've been very outspoken about causes that have impacted your life, even

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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(ARS), NEW YORK.



JARED BUTLER

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Morning <input type="radio"/> Evening	<input checked="" type="radio"/> East Coast <input type="radio"/> West Coast	<input type="radio"/> Window Seat <input checked="" type="radio"/> Aisle Seat	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Cats <input type="radio"/> Dogs	<input type="radio"/> Introvert <input checked="" type="radio"/> Extrovert	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Orange Juice <input type="radio"/> Apple Juice
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Summer <input type="radio"/> Winter	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Text <input type="radio"/> Phone Call	<input type="radio"/> Passenger <input checked="" type="radio"/> Driver	<input type="radio"/> City <input checked="" type="radio"/> Suburbs	<input type="radio"/> Pancakes <input checked="" type="radio"/> Waffles	<input type="radio"/> Still Water <input checked="" type="radio"/> Sparkling Water



Butler spoke at the Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Association's (HCMA) congressional briefing on Capitol Hill in February 2024

about? Nothing too special. I like to read books.

What's the last book you read?
I read a book called *Delighting in the Trinity* by Michael Reeves.

Last TV show you binged?
Curb Your Enthusiasm. I'm kind of a sarcastic guy and I love how Larry David can take normal everyday situations and find the humor in all of them.

Do you have any pets? If not, what would be your dream pet?
I don't have pets, but my dream pet is either a Doberman or a Bernese Mountain Dog. Those are my two dream pets once I have a family.

Do you have any game day rituals? No rituals, just a solid nap.

What's your favorite genre of music and the best concert you've been to? My favorite genre of music is country. Over the past few years, I've been avidly listening to country. The best concert I've ever been to was a Luke Combs concert. He is a great performer.

You wear the number four, does the number hold any significance to you?
No meaning to the number four, it was just the only single digit number the Wizards had available.

speaking on Capitol Hill last year about Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy. Have you always felt the importance to educate and be an advocate for others? No, I didn't always feel the need until maybe my college years – my younger years in college. I saw the impact of other individual's voices, and their ability to share how they felt about certain topics, and it really impacted me. That's when I became super passionate about it.

What's an interest or hobby that fans might not know



BUB CARRINGTON



JENNIFER POTTHEISER/NBAE

photographed by
ROB BANEZ

Carrington and his family
at the 2024 NBA Draft

What was it like hearing your name being called on draft night and what was the feeling knowing that you had gotten selected by the Wizards?

I was anxious. There was a lot of standing around, a lot of waiting. It was a mix of being super excited and anxious at the same time. Being drafted by the Wizards was an unreal feeling; it didn't feel real.

How nice is it to have the support of your family close by?

It's super, super nice. It just makes life a lot easier. I'm so used to them being at every game, and now it's easier for that to happen.

Since moving to D.C., what are a few things you've enjoyed doing? I like going to the Washington Monument; it's

really nice. I also enjoy going to Insomnia Cookies. I'm excited to explore more.

You were a multi-sport athlete in high school. Did you always know basketball would be the sport you committed to long term?

At a young age, no. But once I got to high school, I grew, so basketball became a little easier. So, I stuck with that.

What number did you wear during high school? In high school, I wore seven, which I wore in college as well. I also wore 11 in high school.

Who were your sports idols growing up? Did any have an influence on you?

I really liked Kevin Durant [KD] growing up. I also really liked Mookie Betts and Ed Reed. Yeah, KD definitely had an influence on my game. He likes mid-range shots, and that is something I really wanted to add to my game as well.

BUB CARRINGTON

You attended the Ravens game on Sept. 29, where you were also recognized on the field prior to the game. What was that experience like? Have you always been a Ravens fan?

I've always been a Ravens fan, so it was definitely a special feeling. I don't go to NFL games often, and then the one I do go to, I got to go on the field. So, it was really special.

You've been very active in the Baltimore and D.C. communities over the last few months – hosting back-to-school giveaways, visiting a MedStar Health hospital in Baltimore, and hosting a pregame meet-and-greet before the Wizards game on Oct.30. Why is it im-

portant for you to be an active participant in the community?

That's how I was raised. My parents really, really like helping others as well. I like helping people and giving back to the community too, and now I'm in a position where I can do it at an effective and efficient level.

What's your game day routine?

Have any teammates passed down advice? Yes, they have told me to try to get a nap in before games. They also told me to try to meditate or find any type of solitary, quiet, alone time before the game. Other than that, I just pray before the game.

Do you have any hobbies or interests outside of sports?

I like Legos. I'm currently building a Millennium Falcon; it's a Star Wars thing.

You have a unique collection of pajama pants. How long have they been a staple in your wardrobe?

Do you have a favorite pair? I do have a very unique collection. I would say they have been a staple in my wardrobe since high school, around my sophomore or junior year. I think I'm now at 43 pairs. My Rick and Morty pajamas are probably my favorite pair.



BALTIMORE RAVENS



JOEY PULONE



Morning
 Evening

East Coast
 West Coast

Window Seat
 Aisle Seat

Cats
 Dogs

Introvert
 Extrovert

Orange Juice
 Apple Juice

Summer
 Winter

Text
 Phone Call

Passenger
 Driver

City
 Suburbs

Pancakes
 Waffles

Still Water
 Sparkling Water

favorite

RESTAURANT



MARVIN BAGLEY III
Philippe Chow

PATRICK BALDWIN JR.
Filomena

SADDIQ BEY
Highlands
Café & Grill

MALCOLM BROGDON
ilili

JARED BUTLER
Del Mar

BUB CARRINGTON
Surfside

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE
The Park
on 14th

BILAL COULIBALY
L'Ardente

JOHNNY DAVIS
Rosa Mexicano
in National Harbor

KYSHAWN GEORGE
Hell's Kitchen or
Le Diplomate

ANTHONY GILL
ilili in the Wharf

COREY KISPERT
Limani in the
Wharf. My favorite
non-sit-down
restaurant is
the Italian Store
in Arlington

KYLE KUZMA
Filomena

ALEX SARR
Philippe Chow

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC
Balos





CHEF RUDY

As a former athlete, Wizards Chef **Rudy Moures** knows what is needed for professional athletes to reach their athletic goals. Feeding the team at home, and on the road, Moures shares his culinary journey and the importance of food and nutrition.

BY LUKE ASKEW

photographed by **KENNY GIARLA** AT THE SALAMANDER DC HOTEL



The Washington Wizards have

entered the second year of leadership under Monumental Basketball President Michael Winger and General Manager Will Dawkins, and significant changes have already taken place. On the court, those changes have included a restructuring of the roster, most notably displayed by the influx of youth, and an enhanced focus on player development designed to establish a sustainable culture of professionalism and success.

While the most public-facing changes are what happens with the on-court talent, there are also key changes happening behind the scenes. One area the Wizards are placing a strong emphasis on as the team continues to lay the foundation for the future is nutrition and dietary planning.

"Proper nutrition is essential for general health, training, and recovery which will ultimately lead to performance," said Monumental Basketball Chief Medical Officer Daniel Medina, "In the NBA particularly, nutrition plays a vital role, especially since recovery time is limited. Replenish its energy and repair muscle tissue as has been extensively described in literature. After exercise, the body needs to replenish its energy and repair muscle tissue, as extensively described in literature. For this reason, we have developed a nutrition program that has continuity from our practices to our games, not only at home but also on the road."

For the second consecutive season, the Wizards have a full-time private chef who travels with the

team for each road game. Chef Rudy Moures prepares pregame meals, travel day meals, snacks for the plane, postgame meals, and most importantly, meals on the road. Not a single game day meal goes by that doesn't have Chef Moures' stamp of approval.

Moures has a rich cultural background. He was born in a small town in France right outside of Paris. He lived there until he was six years old when his family moved to East Africa, where he then lived in Kenya and Tanzania for about four years. After that, his family made their way to the United States, starting in Boston before making Washington, D.C., their home.

Food was always big for Moures and his family. "Growing up in a French household, cuisine and dinners are a big ordeal start to finish," he said. "We're doing full courses. Everyone's sitting together as a family. So, that was always my upbringing, centered around food and family gatherings."

Moures' food experience runs deep, but he also has an impressive athletic background. During college, he was on the wrestling team at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He says that experience helped him understand the dietary needs of athletes, especially coming from a sport like wrestling where gaining or losing weight is a primary focus.

"Diet was always important," said Moures. "Figuring out how to properly put on weight or lose it for weigh-ins. I always took careful attention to what I



The added consistency and importance put on nutrition is another example of our intentionality behind increasing player care and wellness.

— WILL DAWKINS

was eating and how I was eating. That kind of led me into this realm. It helps me understand the mental approach needed to be an athlete, and I think food plays an important role. It's part of the puzzle, and I think having done it myself lets me approach the athletes in a more comparable way."

Growing up with a family that focused on mealtime made it easy for Moures to appreciate the importance of food. Combine that with his athletic experience and it's easy to see why Moures chose the direction of being a private chef for professional athletes.

"It's always been about athletes," Moures said confidently. "I didn't come from the background of the restaurants, fine dining establishments. It was always about the athlete first. What can you put into an athlete's body to help them perform at their best...it's always been about athletic performance and getting an edge."

Chef Moures has a loaded resume when it comes to cooking for professional athletes. While this is his second season traveling full-time with the Wizards, he had previous experience cooking post-game meals for the Wizards and Washington Capitals after home games. Before that, he spent roughly 10 years with the Washington Nationals.

The organization adding Moures has been a significant addition to the Wizards franchise and its goal of providing a first-class experience to the players.

"What we are trying to build is a high-performing environment that is repeatable day in and day out," said Dawkins. "The addition of Rudy and his crew traveling allows our athletes and staff just that. The added consistency and importance put on nutrition is another example of our intentionality behind increasing player care and wellness."

The impact which the front office was hoping to create has been felt by players.

"The consistency is huge," said Wizards forward Anthony Gill. "For NBA players, you're trying to find different rhythms throughout the season, and that's one rhythm that you don't have to change. You know it's going to be consistent every time. You can go to different hotels and have different food all the time throughout each postgame, and that's not something you usually look forward to. But now we know we have consistent food moving forward at every game and every trip that we go on, so it's been amazing."

For Wizards 20-year-old Frenchman Bilal Coulibaly, Chef Moures has been crucial to his transition into the NBA over the last season and a half, but into adult life in a new country. "The relationship grew faster than usual because he speaks French," said Coulibaly.

With the additions of 2024 second overall pick, Alex Sarr and rookie Kyshawn George, Moures is just

I think quality over everything is a big mantra for me, down to the oils, the spices, the seasonings.

one of the many new faces around the organization that speaks French and has international roots, connecting him with the team's diverse group of players.

Coulibaly also mentioned how helpful it is to have Moures helping him with his food planning. "That's one of the main things. Whenever I get home, I don't have to worry about making food or ordering food."

In regard to traveling with the team, Moures says the total buy-in from the franchise has been helpful. "The organization has given the culinary team the utmost support," Moures said. "I think the players are fantastic. They appreciate and buy into what we're trying to accomplish."

Being a private chef for an NBA team is a strenuous and time-consuming job. Behind every piece of food eaten, there's a great deal of preparation and coordination. How are the ingredients sourced? How do we keep the food fresh? Where does the cooking actually take place? These are only a few of the countless questions Chef Moures must have



RUDY'S RECIPES

PERFORMANCE BITES

- 1 cup cashew butter or preferred nut butter
- 1 cup granola (finely chopped)
- 1/2 cup quick oats
- 1 tablespoon MCT oil
- 2 tablespoon raw honey
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon dates (finely chopped)
- 1 pinch celtic sea salt
- 1 heaping scoop whey or plant based protein

1. In bowl or mixer add all ingredients until combined.
2. Use a medium cookie scoop or your hands to form the dough into 20-25 1.5-ounce performance bites.
3. Store the bites in an airtight container in refrigerator or freeze for added texture if the bites will not be refrigerated for extended periods of time.

CARIBBEAN BARBEQUE CHICKEN

- 2.5 pounds of boneless and skinless chicken thighs
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons avocado oil
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1.5 teaspoons cumin seeds, toasted, grinded
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon brown monk fruit
- 1.5 teaspoon finely chopped oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon grass-fed ghee for searing

1. Mix vinegar, avocado oil, garlic, cumin seeds, smoked paprika, brown monk fruit, oregano, cayenne pepper and salt and pepper together to create a marinade.
2. Pour marinade over chicken until completely coated and place in the refrigerator for 2 hours.
3. Pull chicken from refrigerator and temper prior to cooking.
4. Add the ghee to a skillet and sear the chicken until brown, approximately 3 minutes per side. Finish the chicken in a 350-degree oven for 10 minutes or until internal temperature reaches 165 degrees F.

JASMINE RICE

- 2 cups jasmine rice
- 2.5 cups spring water
- 1 tablespoon salt or salt to taste
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons grass-fed ghee

1. Using a 3-quart sauce pot, sauté the minced garlic in the ghee on medium heat.
2. Toast the rice in the ghee and garlic until the rice turns an opaque color.
3. Add salt and turn heat down medium/low.
4. Add water to rice and turn heat up to high and bring to a boil.
5. Stir until rice absorbs water - careful not to burn.
6. Once boiling, cover with a tight-fitting lid and reduce heat to low. Cook for approximately 18 minutes.
7. Add additional salt if preferred.
8. Fluff rice with fork.

answers for at all times.

"The biggest thing is I vet my vendors really well," said Moures. "I travel to their farms. I do yearly visits. I think quality over everything is a big mantra for me, down to the oils, the spices, the seasonings. Obviously with our produce and our proteins as well. On the road, it's a little more based off of each city. We still, fortunately, are able to source the same quality products from a protein standard, but we typically source as local as possible for our produce in each city."

One of the coolest things Moures does for the team on the road is prepare postgame meals that are related to the city they're playing in. For example, when the Wizards were in Milwaukee, Moures drove outside of the city to find a good quality bratwurst provider.

While gathering the ingredients is a process that requires lots of care, the seemingly simple task of finding the kitchens to do the actual cooking can sometimes be difficult considering most NBA arenas don't have a full commissary at the ready. When the Wizards are at home, Moures and his team, including sous-chefs Eric Smith and Ben Howe, are able to operate out of their home base in D.C. On the road, however, Moures relies on his network of connections.

"We can't give away too many secrets because it's a copycat league," Moures said with a laugh. "On the road, we typically source an off-site kitchen that we'll find through contacts I've built over the years. I've built a pretty strong repertoire of contacts in each city. And then we'll also operate out of the hotel kitchens."

Preparing the food in a third-party building (i.e. not at the actual arenas) means Moures and his team have to transport everything after it's been cooked. That isn't always as easy as it sounds, either. "We were in Detroit last season, and it actually started snowing," Moures recalled. "Typically, we get a large SUV to transport food safely to the arenas, and we were [originally] unable to do so because of the icy conditions. When we're faced with an arena that's 30 minutes away, it's pretty hectic, but we ended up getting it done. We just stayed calm and contacted everyone at the stadium to expedite the process of entry."

Of course, all of Moures' hard work and dedication to crafting the team with the tastiest and healthiest food possible doesn't go unappreciated by the players.

"The enchiladas that [Moures] made a couple games back were definitely the best enchiladas I've ever had," said Gill.

In addition to Moures' cooking ability, Gill was also happy to hype him up as a person. He loves how easy it is to communicate with Moures about meal planning and dietary needs.

"Chef Rudy is very receptive to everything that we say," said Gill. "It's just been amazing to have him."



Definitely an emphasis on quality over everything... **I take great pride in visiting my farmers.**



What inspired you to decide to become a chef? I was inspired to help educate others on the importance of whole food-based meals and how that impacts athletes. I also think from a performance standpoint, it was an interest of mine to see how cooking your own foods and taking care of your sourcing, ingredients, and your preparation methods would result in better performance. For me, it was on the wrestling mat, and then I actually cooked for a couple of my teammates as well. And now working with professional athletes for over a decade, always seeing the results from a performance standpoint.

How do you describe your

overall cooking philosophy or style, and is there a type of cuisine that you tend to make the most? Definitely an emphasis on quality over everything. Never cutting a corner on the quality of the ingredients we're using. And knowing where your food comes from. I take great pride in visiting my farmers.

For my cooking style, I like to sear most of my products to give a mild caramelization flavor. I do a lot of that style of cooking.

The type of cuisine I tend to make most is Latin American. I really like those flavors, those seasonings, and I think with the emphasis on quality of sourcing ingredients with those types of flavors, it's a really nice combination.

Has your cultural background influenced your cooking style?

Definitely. My cooking style is very unique in the food world because I like to cook almost everything family/home style. Most restaurants and chefs like to cook as early as possible, which there are some benefits to doing so, but I try to always push the envelope to try to keep the product as fresh as possible.

What was the first dish you ever made and how old were you? Beef bourguignon with my grandmother when I was seven or eight years old.

Do you have a signature dish, and if so, what is it? My rice. I bring a lot of different variety and flavors to the way that I cook my rice, and I think it's such a versatile dish that you can really pair with other products.

What are some of your favorite ingredients to work with? I love grass-fed ghee. I really like to work with tallow, beef tallow. I think it's a great substitute for junk fry oils. And then from a vegetarian/vegan standpoint, I love high-quality extra virgin olive oil.

How do you conceptualize game day (pregame or postgame) menus? I think it's based on first, our timing. We obviously have mostly 7:00 p.m. games, but if there's any

changes to game time, that comes into effect. Then also what we've offered to the players recently and what we're looking to offer in the early future.

In terms of conceptualizing, I think pregame we like to keep it light: grab-and-go, heavy on fresh organic fruits. Postgame meals are where we have a lot of fun and bring different flavors.

How does feeding a professional athlete differ from a regular person? I think volume. Definitely a higher volume just because of the high activity they're putting in. I think a professional athlete is nutrient timing, as well, kind of going off what I just said about pregame meals, based off the activity load that they're about to put in, and then their recovery from a re-feed perspective. It's based around their activity levels more so than a regular person.

What's the best meal you've ever had and where?

It would have to be about five years ago when we had a huge family trip to Paris. Everyone was there. We took a large bus and went to the Eiffel Tower, and they have a restaurant called Le Jules Verne that's on the second floor. It gives you a beautiful view over Paris, and the cuisine was fantastic. Small plates – it was a 14-course meal.



JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE



Justin and Julian Champagne exchanging jerseys following the Wizards at Spurs game on Nov. 13, 2024

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WASHINGTON WIZARDS

Who's been the most influential person in your life and why?

I would have to say my parents. They sacrificed a lot to make sure I got to where I wanted to be. So, shout out to them.

Who are three people you would you invite to your dream dinner party?

Usain Bolt, LeBron James, and Martin Luther King Jr.

What are some essentials you bring on the road with you and why?

I always bring

my PlayStation 5 because I spend a lot of time in my hotel room.

What games do you play?

I play Madden and Call of Duty – my girlfriend and I compete against each other.

Your favorite non-basketball hobby?

Either fishing or cooking.

Do you have a signature dish?

I either make chicken cutlets with rice and corn, or jerk chicken with rice and corn.

What do you enjoy doing around Washington, D.C.?

I love riding the Lime bikes around.

If you could only listen to one song for the rest of your life, what would it be and why?

That's a tough one. I'd go with "Bad Day" by Daniel Powter.



JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE

☐ Morning
☑ Evening

☑ East Coast
☐ West Coast

☑ Window Seat
☐ Aisle Seat

☑ Cats
☐ Dogs

☐ Introvert
☑ Extrovert

☑ Orange Juice
☐ Apple Juice

☑ Summer
☐ Winter

☑ Text
☐ Phone Call

☐ Passenger
☑ Driver

☑ City
☐ Suburbs

☑ Pancakes
☐ Waffles

☑ Still Water
☐ Sparkling Water

PLAYER PICKS



It's my favorite song ever. It reminds me of when I was a kid. I'm not sure why, but I think I first heard it covered by Alvin and the Chipmunks, so it just stuck with me.

What's on the top of your bucket list? I'm really afraid of heights, but I'd like to go skydiving one day.

How have you enjoyed this season so far? It's been great. Just being out there with the guys, competing every day, and working on building the team the right way.

What is a hidden talent you have? I'm really good at Scrabble. I'd challenge anyone on the team to a game.

Your twin brother Julian plays for the San Antonio Spurs, what is it like have a sibling in the NBA? What was it like to play against each other for the first time? It's fun. We get to watch each other's games and give feedback on what we could have done better. It's definitely cool having my brother in the NBA, especially when I get to see him and play against him. The first time we played against each other was surreal. We're twins, and there aren't many twins in the NBA. So, being able to get on the court and play against each other was a dream come true.

MY SUPER

power

MARVIN BAGLEY III
Never feel physical pain / being able to heal instantly

PATRICK BALDWIN JR.
Telekinesis



SADDIQ BEY
Invincible



MALCOLM BROGDON
Reading minds



JARED BUTLER
Influence



BUB CARRINGTON
Telepathy

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE
Super strength

BILAL COULIBALY
Being invisible



JOHNNY DAVIS
Ability to fly



KYSHAWN GEORGE
Teleportation



ANTHONY GILL
To know when people are telling a lie

RICHAUN HOLMES
Teleportation



COREY KISPERS
Teleportation

KYLE KUZMA
Ability to fly

JORDAN POOLE
Ability to fly

ALEX SARR
Teleportation

JONAS VALANČIŪNAS
To sleep all day

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC
Ability to fly



WIZARDS GUARD **BILAL**

COULIBALY IS REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

The 20-year-old France native enters his second year with the Wizards and has the league on notice.

BY KELYN SOONG

photographed by
KENNY GIARLA

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BARNETT NEWMAN
THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS: LEMA SABACHTHANI (1958-66)
SEVENTH STATION, EIGHTH STATION, NINTH STATION, TENTH STATION

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART | EAST BUILDING, TOWER LEVEL - GALLERY 615



Bilal Coulibaly smiles at the question.

At just 20 years old, the second-year Washington Wizards guard is still growing. Yes, he's been asked about that before many times. When he returned to Washington, D.C. this summer, Coulibaly regularly received one comment: "Everybody said, 'Oh, you look taller,'" he says. "So, we had to measure myself."

It turned out to be true.

Coulibaly entered the NBA listed at 6-foot-6, but measured at 6-foot-7-and-a-half-inches without shoes and 6-foot-9 with shoes this offseason. (His official height is listed as 6-foot-8.) In more ways than one, Coulibaly, who became the youngest player to start a game in Wizards history last season, is reaching new heights.

He says that he has improved on his 39-inch vertical leap from last year and has a 7-foot-3-inch wingspan. "Sometimes when he jumps in practice, I feel like it's 40-plus," Wizards forward Anthony Gill says of his teammate's vertical.

Coulibaly, who grew up in Courbevoie, a suburb of Paris, and won a silver medal with Team France at the 2024 Paris Olympics, is set to be a fixture in the Wizards' plans moving forward.

"He's an example of what the future is going to look like in terms of players who can play multiple positions, make reads, are long, athletic, have an IQ," Wizards general manager Will Dawkins says. "Those guys typically do well, and we're happy that we have him at a young age to help shape his development."

A QUICK ASCENT

Coulibaly wasn't supposed to play basketball.

He primarily competed in judo as a kid, reaching yellow-orange belt, and when Coulibaly was around age 10, his father, Makan, and mother, Emma, tried to register him for the local soccer club in Courbevoie, but the team's roster was full.

Since Makan, a French native whose parents emigrated from Mali, played basketball in his teenage years and rooted for the Chicago Bulls and Michael Jordan — his favorite team and player — in the 1990s, he suggested that his son give basketball a try. Plus, Emma says in French, Coulibaly didn't

handle losing well in judo and would criticize himself harshly afterward, so she figured with a team sport, "it's not just you losing, it's the whole team losing."

Basketball taught him lessons on how to handle losses, and he quickly became hooked on the sport.

Coulibaly's favorite player was Kyrie Irving, and he owned a replica of Irving's No. 11 Boston Celtics jersey. His father was also a big fan of the New York Knicks and Carmelo Anthony, so the two of them would watch those games together. When they weren't watching basketball, father and son would compete against each other in NBA2K.

"That's how I really started getting into basketball, playing video games," Coulibaly says.

Not long after he began, he skyrocketed nearly nine inches to 6-foot-6 in a span of about two years as a teenager, becoming one of the top players on the Metropolitan 92's U21 team. For the 2022-2023 season, Coulibaly split playing time between the U21 team and the senior squad, where his teammates included 7-foot-3 Victor Wembanyama, the 2024 NBA Rookie of the Year.

He really sets the tone as far as what it means to work hard in this organization.

—ANTHONY GILL



Bilal, pictured, in front of Theaster Gates' *Ground Rules (Black Line)*, a monumental work, which explores concepts of spiritual and material exchange through the painterly and sculptural application of reclaimed gym flooring.

Coulibaly displayed his dominance on the U21 team that season, averaging 21.9 points, 6.4 rebounds, and 2.6 steals in 16 games. By that point, his potential was clear, and NBA scouts began to pay attention.

"I was playing with the older guys, and I was better than most of them," Coulibaly says. "Scouts kept coming and everything. At first it was one team. After that, I saw two to three scouts."

Being an NBA player was no longer just a dream for Coulibaly.

On June 22, 2023, at Barclays Center in Brooklyn, the Wizards acquired Coulibaly, the seventh overall pick in the 2023 NBA Draft, in a trade with the Indiana Pacers. Coulibaly was coming to D.C.

"Initially the plan was to put Bilal's name in the season after, but he exploded," Makan says. "It was impossible to let the NBA train pass."

RISING STAR

Kaysha Songna, Coulibaly's older sister, uses her vacation days to visit Coulibaly in D.C. and attend Wizards games. She still can't quite believe that her

little brother — the jokester in the family — is on the same court as NBA superstars she's seen on TV.

"It's crazy," Songna, 28, says in French.

After Coulibaly signed his rookie contract that paid him roughly \$6.6 million his first year, his first purchase was a Mercedes-Benz GLA SUV for his mother. This summer, Coulibaly got his driver's license, meaning he doesn't need his teammates anymore for rides.

He can drive his Range Rover. In the offseason, Coulibaly signed with Jordan Brand, and his apartment is packed full with Nike gear and shoes.

Those are luxuries of an NBA player, but in many ways, Coulibaly is still a typical 20-year-old. He enjoys playing NBA2K with his Wizards teammates and friends back home in France. And during the 2024 Paris Olympics this summer, he started watching YouTube tutorials on how to draw.

"I like to draw cartoons. I like to draw nature, too," Coulibaly says. "It's just something I do to get away a little bit."

There are still some things he misses from France. Popcorn with sugar at movie theaters, for starters.

THEASTER GATES
GROUND RULES (BLACK LINE); 2015

245.1 × 609.6 CM
(96 1/2 × 240 IN.)
WOOD FLOORING

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
EAST BUILDING
MEZZANINE — TERRACE



PLAYER PICKS

Morning
 Evening

East Coast
 West Coast

Window Seat
 Aisle Seat

Cats
 Dogs

Introvert
 Extrovert

Orange Juice
 Apple Juice

Summer
 Winter

Text
 Phone Call

Passenger
 Driver

City
 Suburbs

Pancakes
 Waffles

Still Water
 Sparkling Water



**CALDER TOWER
ALEXANDER CALDER**

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
EAST BUILDING
TOWER LEVEL

ALEXANDER CALDER © 2024
CALDER FOUNDATION,
NEW YORK / ARTISTS RIGHTS
SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK



"We have sweet popcorn, like popcorn with sugar," Coulibaly says. "And you only have salt. It's crazy."

Gill, who is in his fifth year with the Wizards, describes Coulibaly's personality as "really caring." "He doesn't want to hurt anyone's feelings, which I love him for that," he says. "There's no joke that is at the expense of anybody else."

Gill remembers seeing Coulibaly in action for the first time. He was sitting on his bed one night watching YouTube videos that analyzed prospective players in the 2023 NBA Draft. Most of the attention was on Wembanyama, Coulibaly's friend and teammate who became the eventual No. 1 overall draft pick by the San Antonio Spurs. But as soon as Coulibaly popped up on the screen, Gill turned to his wife.

"I told her before I knew we were going to get him, that this is the best player in the draft," he says.

Gill still believes that "100 percent."

"Just watching him during a pre-draft, I was able to see how he was understanding his body and the proportions of his body and just everything, his athleticism, just putting that all together to create a really great basketball player," he says.

In his rookie season, Coulibaly, the first Wizards player to wear No. 0 since three-time NBA All-Star Gilbert Arenas, averaged 8.4 points, 4.1 rebounds, and 1.7 assists while shooting 43.5 percent from the field in 63 games. In March, he fractured his right wrist and missed the remainder of the season.

Even in the limited sample, Coulibaly proved he's a player to watch. He was one of 11 NBA rookies selected to play in the 2024 Rising Stars Challenge. His rookie highlight reel showcases his explosiveness, aggressive drives to the rim, court vision, leaping ability, soaring blocks, and playmaking skills. Wizards coaches often relied on Coulibaly to match up defensively against the opposing team's best player. He guarded players like Kevin Durant, Jalen Brunson, and Jayson Tatum, an assignment he fully embraced.

"He wasn't afraid of that," Dawkins says. "He didn't back down."

SETTING THE TONE

On the morning of Oct. 30, Dawkins was sitting in his office at the MedStar Health Performance Center in Southeast, D.C. when he looked out his window onto the court below.

The Wizards were preparing for their game against the Atlanta Hawks later that night at Capital One Arena, and shootaround hadn't started yet. But Coulibaly was already there, practicing his shots.

This scene plays out regularly.

On a typical day, Coulibaly wakes up by 7:30 in the morning. He gets in his car by 8:30 to arrive at the



Coulibaly with his mom and sisters following the men's basketball gold medal game at the 2024 Paris Olympics

He's an example of what the future is going to look like in terms of players who can play multiple positions, make reads, are long, athletic, have an IQ.

—WIZARDS GENERAL MANAGER WILL DAWKINS

Wizards' practice facility by 8:45 a.m. He receives treatment from his physiotherapist at 9 a.m., and then practices his shots for an hour. If he's hungry, he takes a 30-minute break to eat. He's in the weight room before practice starts at 11 a.m. After the two-hour team practice finishes, Coulibaly continues to work on his shots for another half an hour, followed by treatment.

Then it's time to go home. Play video games. Hang out with his family. Watch some movies. Coulibaly is in bed by 10:30 p.m.

"He's always in the gym. He's there early," Gill says. "That speaks to the team. Like, if he's in the gym working that extremely hard like that, everybody else has no reason not to do that. So, he really sets the tone as far as what it means to work hard in this organization."

Dawkins calls Coulibaly a "lifelong learner." Give him a new drill or new move, and he'll pick those up quickly. When Coulibaly injured his shooting hand last year, he worked out with his left-hand while recovering. It's paid off. On Nov. 10 against the Orlando Magic, Coulibaly accelerated to the rim and slammed down a left-handed dunk — the first of his career — on the way to 20 points, six rebounds and six assists.

"He's one of the guys that you can lean on in the future," Gill says when asked what he wants Wizards fans to know about Coulibaly. "You guys are going to be in the arena, rooting him on, because he's going to be leading this team to a championship."



JOHNNY DAVIS



You have a daughter named Sky, what's the best part about being a dad? I would say the best part about being a dad is seeing her wake up every morning and just her smiling and enjoying the day.

What are some essentials you bring on the road with you and why? I bring my glasses because I hate wearing contacts. I also bring my retainer because my mom gets mad at me when I don't wear it.

What's your favorite non-basketball hobby? Favorite non-basketball hobby is golfing. I try to get out and golf whenever I can.

What are some of your favorite activities to do during the off season at home in Wisconsin? One of my favorite activities is fishing. I like to go out and play



PHOTOGRAPHS BY WASHINGTON WIZARDS





JOHN FISHER / GETTY IMAGES

Johnny Davis #1 and Jordan Davis #2 during the Badgers game against the Illinois State Redbirds on December 29, 2021

golf as well. I like to sit outside and hang out, enjoy the weather.

Do you have any hidden talents and how did you discover it?

I wouldn't say it's a hidden talent, but I take very long naps, and I just sleep a lot. I discovered it when I got to college.

What three guests would you invite to your dream dinner party?

Tiger Woods, Barack Obama, and Denzel Washington.

If you only had one sense (sight, hearing, smell, taste

and touch), which one would you want? Ooh, that is a tough one. Definitely the ability to hear.

You have a couple of tattoos. Do you have a favorite one and do any of them have significant meaning?

Most of them have some meaning to me, but after a while I also needed to fill in some spots. I'd say the one on my chest is my favorite because that was my very first tattoo.

You have a twin brother named Jordan who you played basketball with at Wisconsin. What was it like growing up as a twin

and both playing on the same team? It was great. Wherever I went or whatever I did, he was always there with me. Playing basketball with him was very easy because we grew up playing together our whole lives. So, it was kind of like a sixth sense. I just knew where he was going to be on the floor and what he was doing.

If you could have one talent that you don't currently have, what would it be? I would love to be able to cook, so I could cook for myself and my family because I cannot cook.



- Morning
- Evening

- East Coast
- West Coast

- Window Seat
- Aisle Seat

- Cats
- Dogs

- Introvert
- Extrovert

- Orange Juice
- Apple Juice

- Summer
- Winter

- Text
- Phone Call

- Passenger
- Driver

- City
- Suburbs

- Pancakes
- Waffles

- Still Water
- Sparkling Water

best GIFT

MARVIN BAGLEY III
The best gift I received was a video game for Christmas when I was a kid

PATRICK BALDWIN JR.
My parents got me stock in Apple one year, and that was interesting

SADDIQ BEY
My rookie year, I bought my mom a truck

MALCOLM BROGDON
My kids are the best gift I've received

JARED BUTLER
The best gift I ever received was a dirt bike in fifth grade

BUB CARRINGTON
The best gift I received was a Nerf gun I got for Christmas when I was 11



JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE
My mom always gets me white t-shirts. It's my favorite gift to receive, every time

BILAL COULIBALY
Last year, I received a POGA from a teammate

JOHNNY DAVIS
Best gift I've received is my daughter

KYSHAWN GEORGE
I gave my brother a first-class trip from Switzerland to visit D.C. for the holidays

ANTHONY GILL
The best gift is life

RICHAUN HOLMES
The best gift I've received is my kids



COREY KISPERS
My parents surprised me with a bike when I was eight years old, and it was the best thing ever

KYLE KUZMA
The best gift I gave someone was a bag

JORDAN POOLE
The best gift I received was a Bible

ALEX SARR
I gave a drawing to my mom

JONAS VALANČIŪNAS
I'd have to ask my wife, "How did I do?"

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC
The best gift I gave was a trip to Dubai for my parents' birthday



KYSHAWN GEORGE

photographed by
KENNY GIARLA

Have you always had an interest in cooking? And if so, what are a few of your favorite dishes to make? As a kid, I used to watch a whole bunch of cooking shows, so I think I've always had an interest. I usually make non-complicated dishes – pasta, rice, curry chicken, stuff like that. Coming home after practice, I don't want to get into anything too deep.

What cooking shows did you watch as a kid? Top Chef, but the France version.

What type of food do you love to cook? I don't have a particular type of food that I love to cook. I just take ingredients, I have my seasonings, and I just try to chef up something with whatever is in my fridge.

Did you get your interest in cooking from someone in particular? My mom cooks for the family, but my dad knows how to cook too. My grandma is a big food person, so I guess it's kind of in the family.

Is there a particular dish you remember someone in your family making that you loved? My grandma's banana cake.



PHOTOGRAPHED AT DÖGON IN THE SALAMANDER HOTEL

KYSHAWN GEORGE

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<input checked="" type="radio"/> Summer <input type="radio"/> Winter	<input type="radio"/> Text <input checked="" type="radio"/> Phone Call	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Passenger <input type="radio"/> Driver	<input checked="" type="radio"/> City <input type="radio"/> Suburbs	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Pancakes <input type="radio"/> Waffles	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Still Water <input type="radio"/> Sparkling Water

PLAYER PICKS



Any favorite snacks?

I like Sour Patch Kids.

Favorite comfort food? Crepes.

Something hot and sweet.

If you could share a meal with three people, dead or alive, who would it be? Probably just my family.

Switching over to basketball.

What excites you the most about the season? Just having the opportunity to play in my first NBA season. We're a young group; I have great teammates. It's going to be fun.

At what age did you start playing basketball and how did you get into the sport?

I can't remember when I started playing basketball, but my dad coached me. He used to play too, so I think that's where it came from.

Did you have any specific players you grew up watching?

I watched highlight tapes and AND1 Mixtapes of Allen Iverson, Vince Carter, and Tracy McGrady.

What are some essentials you bring with you on the road?

Headphones for sure, can't leave without them. My phone - obviously, lip balm, and my charger.

What's your favorite way to spend a day off? Chill and relax at home. Not doing too much.



What's the best meal you've ever had? My favorite meal is oxtail, rice and peas, and plantains. That's my favorite meal.

You spent the majority of your life growing up in Switzerland and throughout Europe. What are a few food related things that surprised you in America? I was surprised by how many fast-food restaurants there are, and how many people eat on the go.

Any American foods you love?

I like all types of food, but Barbecue in particular.

What's your go-to breakfast?

It depends, I can't have too much of the same thing. Right now, it's a cream cheese with lox bagel.



ANTHONY GILL



photographed by
ROB BANEZ

Making an impact in the communities you live and work in is of importance to you.

What are some causes that you feel strongly about? Being such a strong family man, I'm a big believer in supporting families in any way I can. On the flip side, I love to support those who are not privileged enough to have a stereotypical, fully functioning family. And I always support our military.

Have you always been into giving back and being involved in the community? Yes, even when I was in Russia and Turkey. I was always looking for opportunities to serve in whatever way I could, even if I didn't speak the same language.

You're a father to four children. What's the best part about being a dad? Watching my kids grow and giving and receiving love. It's been amazing and a blessing. I'm so thankful.

What's the best career advice you've been given and what's the best advice you'd give your



Gill at a Wizards back-to-school event in Aug. 2024



ANTHONY GILL

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rookie teammates? Best career advice that I've been given is to take full advantage of each and every day. Tomorrow is not promised, so enjoy the day that you have. Work extremely hard every single day, every time you step onto the court. That's the same advice that I would give to the rookies.

What's your favorite genre of music and the last concert you went to? My favorite genre of music is 90s R&B, and the last concert that I went to was Jelly Roll.

What are some of your favorite things to do around D.C. with your kids? Anything that they want to do. We go to parks and museums. They love this place called Scramble in Alexandria, Virginia.

If you only had one sense (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch), which one would you want? I would choose sight because I want to be able to watch my kids grow up.

What are three words to describe yourself? I'm going to go with caring, faithful, and a husband.

What is your greatest achievement? Marrying my wife.



go-to **ITEMS**



MALCOLM BROGDON



BILAL COULIBALY



KYSHAWN GEORGE



COREY KISPERT



KYLE KUZMA



ALEX SARR

CLOSET

Hoodie

Travis Scott Jordans

Hoodie

Hoodie

Jacket

A pair of jeans that fit large

SCENT

Silver Mountain Water by Creed

Currently a Dior fragrance

Right now, it's a Valentino fragrance

No. 1 by DIME

Oud

I have two Diptyque fragrances that I use

SHOE

Jordan 1 Lows

Travis Scott Jordans

Sneakers

Nike Dunks

Barefoot shoe

Versace trainers

ACCESSORY

Watch

Cup of coffee

My earrings, chain, and bracelet

Cup of coffee

Bag

Versace necklace

BEVERAGE

Water

Shirley Temple (I love them)

Water

Coffee

Water

Shirley Temple

FOOD

Hot wings

Italian

Jamaican

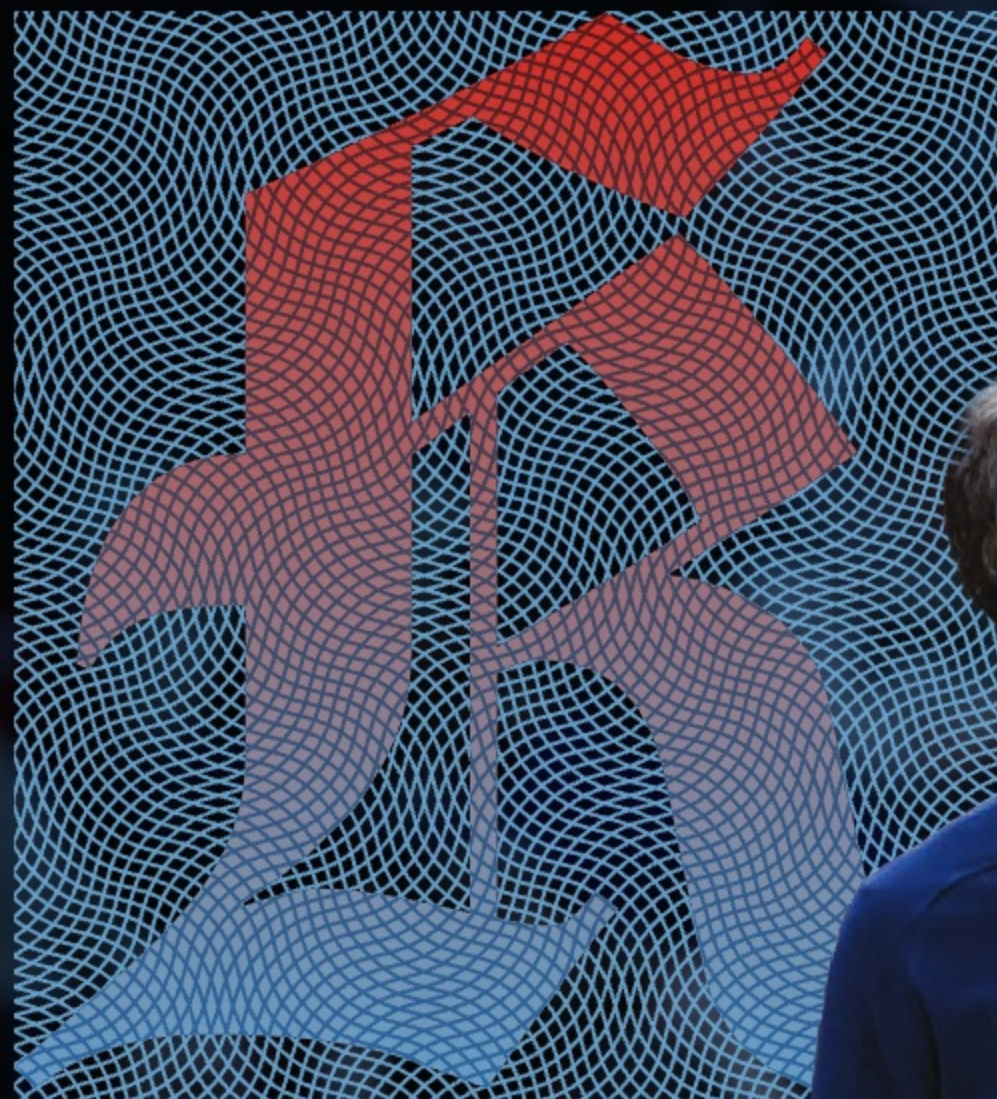
Mediterranean

Italian

Wings with mumbo sauce



Head Coach Brian Keefe with rookie Alex Sarr during the first half of the Wizards vs. Hawks game on Oct. 30.



WIZARDS HEAD COACH BRIAN KEEFE IS ALWAYS TEACHING

Keefe's passion, intensity, ability to connect with players and develop them fits well with what the young team needs. **BY KELYN SOONG**

SCOTT TAETSCH/GETTY IMAGES, WIZARDS VS. ATLANTA HAWKS, OCTOBER 30, 2024



He's going to let his presence be felt, and I think that's why he's a good head coach.

—WILL DAWKINS, WIZARDS GENERAL MANAGER



Don't let Washington Wizards head coach Brian Keefe's reticence about himself and his succinct answers during media appearances fool you. Keefe, the franchise's 26th head coach, is hardly reserved or low-key.

Just ask the people who know him.

"He's an aggressive and an intentional coach who doesn't like the attention on him," says Wizards general manager Will Dawkins. "He's going to let his presence be felt, and I think that's why he's a good head coach."

Or as second-year Wizards guard Jordan Poole puts it: "He's a psycho, maniac on the court. Off the court, he's just really, like, chill, humble, like an honest guy, very laid back, but between those lines, he's just a nutcase. So, it's a really good transition to have, especially as a coach."

For the young Wizards team undergoing what Dawkins calls a "transformational period," Keefe's passion, intensity, and ability to connect with players

and develop them fits well with what the franchise needs. This helped the 48-year-old Keefe secure his first permanent head coaching job after 18 years as an assistant in the NBA. Last season, Keefe led the team as an interim head coach for the final 39 games before being named to his current role in May after an extensive search.

Keefe kept working on his craft and knew he would be ready whenever the opportunity arrived.

"The most important thing I wanted to do is be the best in the role that I had," Keefe says. "And if that worked out, that I would maybe get a chance to do this someday, great. But the focus was really just to be the best that I can in the role that I was, wherever I was."

PUTTING OTHERS FIRST

Keefe realized he wanted to be a coach at a young age.

Growing up in Winchester, Mass., part of the Greater Boston area, he was inspired by his parents to get into coaching. His father coached him in various sports and his mother was a teacher. "The two people who were my biggest mentors in life were teachers," Keefe says. "I think of coaching as teaching."

By the time he was 13, Keefe understood the profound impact coaches had on others and envisioned a similar path for himself — even as he excelled on the court. This surprises Dawkins a little bit. Most kids at that age, he says, want to play in the NBA, not become an NBA coach. And Keefe "was a pretty good player," Dawkins adds.

Listed as a 6-foot-4, 185-pound shooting guard, Keefe graduated Winchester High School in 1994 as the program's all-time leading scorer with 1,163 points — a record that would stand for 24 years. He averaged 28 points his senior year, and in 2004, was inducted into the Winchester Sports Foundation Hall of Fame.

Keefe played collegiately for two seasons at UC Irvine, where he earned All-Big West Second Team honors as a sophomore, before transferring to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, for his final two seasons. In 1998, Keefe helped UNLV win the Western Athletic Conference men's basketball tournament, scoring a team-high 18 points in the championship game to upset No. 20 New Mexico, 56-51, and earn an NCAA Tournament berth.

Throughout his playing career, Keefe leaned into his leadership roles as a captain. "I was always trying to get the best out of our team when I was a player, try to be a great example as a worker and as an example of someone to model behavior after," he says.

That part doesn't surprise Dawkins.

"He really puts other people first," he says. "He's a caring individual."

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Kevin Durant first met Keefe when he was just 18. He was selected second overall by the Seattle SuperSonics (now the Oklahoma City Thunder) in the 2007 NBA Draft and Keefe had just started working for the franchise as a player development coach.

In 2016, Durant told reporters about the invaluable impact Keefe has had on his career.

"He wouldn't take any credit for it, but he taught me everything I know, as far as how I approach shootarounds, practices, games, workout sessions, just everything," Durant said. "He's one of the most



Wizards vs. Golden State, November 4, 2024

STEPHEN GOSLING/NBAE

influential guys I know in this business and this game and life, so I got nothing but respect for BK."

After graduating college in 1999, Keefe started his coaching journey at the University of South Florida and Bryant University in the early 2000s. He joined the San Antonio Spurs as a video coordinator in 2005, with the team winning an NBA championship in his second season. He spent time with the Oklahoma City Thunder as an assistant coach on two separate occasions, from 2007 to 2014 and 2019 to 2020. He also was an assistant coach for the New



He does a really good job of pushing
you really hard, but also giving
you **credit when you deserve it.**

-JORDAN POOLE



STEPHEN GOSLING/NBAE

Keefe at his introductory press conference in June 4, 2024

York Knicks from 2014 to 2016, the Los Angeles Lakers from 2016 to 2019 and the Brooklyn Nets from 2021 to 2023. The Wizards hired Keefe as an assistant coach in July 2023.

At each stop, he's observed what has made teams successful and incorporated aspects of those lessons into his own coaching style. Keefe has built a reputation as a coach who's skilled in developing young players and has mentored multiple All-Stars and MVP players early in their careers, like Durant, Russell Westbrook, James Harden and Shai Gilgeous-Alexander. In his time with the Wizards, he's been credited with motivating players and putting them in positions to succeed.

"I've worked with a lot of different guys, young, old, guys who are in between in their careers, a lot of different things," Keefe says. "The number one thing was developing relationships with whoever I was working with, finding out who they are, what made them tick, and then helping them realize where they wanted to go, and helping develop a roadmap for them for that."

Last year, as interim head coach, multiple players improved in various statistical categories under his guidance. Keefe was originally named the Wizards interim head coach on Jan. 25, 2024, and in the final 39 games of the season, the Wizards had an 8-31

There's no magic pill to this. You got to show up and do the work. That's what we're about here.

-BRIAN KEEFE



record, but the team showed improvements, particularly on defense. Under Keefe's direction, the Wizards held opponents to the second-lowest three-point percentage (34.5 percent) in the league.

"He'll give you your flowers when you deserve them, or if you've done a good job," Poole says. "But he'll also jump you and be very honest if he doesn't feel like you're playing up to your standards, and if he feels like you can be a better player. He does a really good job of pushing you really hard, but also giving you credit when you deserve it."

ALWAYS TEACHING

For Keefe, coaching is about helping people realize and achieve their goals and dreams.

"I get to be a part of people's stories," he says.

Even as a head coach, he finds time to work with players one-on-one. On the day before training camp began this season, Dawkins stopped by the Wizards' practice facility in Southeast, D.C., to pick up something he left in his office. While he was there, he saw Keefe going through shooting drills with second-year guard Bilal Coulibaly, a player Keefe guided last season as an assistant coach.

"He loves it," Coulibaly says. "You can tell."

Keefe has maintained a developmental mindset. This season, he is emphasizing building the right habits, stacking good days and not skipping any steps.

"We focus on what we can control, and that's the day-to-day stuff, the preparation, all the stuff behind the scenes that, obviously, the fans don't always get to see," Keefe says. "But I think that's the stuff that's going to make us sustainable."

Before joining the Wizards, Keefe would occasionally visit Washington, D.C. during the summer to work with players on different teams. And now that Keefe is here, full-time, he has wasted no time getting involved in the community.

The D.C. area is a talent-rich, basketball hotbed, and this offseason, Keefe approached the team's front office with an idea: He wanted to put on a free coaches' clinic for other basketball coaches in the area. That resulted in the Wizards hosting their first annual coaches' workshop in September headlined by Keefe, and joined by head coaches Kenny Blakeney from Howard University, Ed Cooley from Georgetown University and Duane Simpkins from American University.

More than 150 coaches attended the event. Keefe was in his element and doing what he does best — teaching.

"There's no magic pill to this," he says. "You got to show up and do the work. That's what we're about here."



RICHAUN HOLMES

photographed by
ROB BANEZ

Do you have any pets? If not, what is your dream pet? I do, I have a Doberman named Dynasty. She's one, so she's in that terrible-twos type phase. So, it's a lot of fun at the house right now.

Did you always want a Doberman? I didn't. I never really knew what type of breed I wanted, but I liked her, and my son liked her, so it was perfect.

What activities do you enjoy during your free time? I like playing spades, I'm a big-time movie watcher, and I enjoy building Legos with my son – just really being around family.

What do you enjoy doing around Washington, D.C.? I like sightseeing, there's a lot of history around here. I've been to the National Museum



RICHAUN HOLMES

of African American History a few times. There are a lot of places to see, a lot of things to learn, and I'm looking forward to exploring more.

At what age did you start playing basketball and how did you get into it (and who helped you get into it)? I've been playing basketball since I was two or three. I began playing in the parks and then organized basketball when I was around 12. My whole family loved basketball. I grew up in Chicago, and Michael Jordan was everybody's idol, so everyone I knew played basketball.

As a vet in this league what's the best piece of advice you'd give your rookie teammates? What is the best advice you received as a rookie? Just work hard, no matter what the opportunity looks like. You never really know when an opportunity will come, and you want to be prepared for that opportunity. You would rather be prepared for an opportunity that never comes than not be prepared when the opportunity does come. The best piece of advice I was given as a rookie was "hard work beats talent, talent doesn't work hard." I've outworked a lot

of guys more talented than me, so that always stuck with me.

What are some essentials you bring on the road with you and why? I always bring the basics (deodorant, underwear, etc.) and then I will travel with either a PlayStation 5 or Xbox One, it depends on which one fits in the bag that day.

Do you have a game day routine or superstitions? How long have you had this routine? Since I got drafted, I've always taken a pregame nap. You figure out early in your career you're going to need that game day nap.

I don't really have any superstitions; I just have to pray before every game.

If you could describe your ideal day off, what would it look like? Doing absolutely nothing. Just sitting there, binge watching a show on Netflix, and chilling.

You wear the number 22, what's the meaning behind the number? September 22nd is my mom's birthday, and I was trying to find a number to wear when I first got into the league. That was the only one that had any significance, so I've tried to wear it when it's available.



Morning
 Evening

East Coast
 West Coast

Window Seat
 Aisle Seat

Cats
 Dogs

Introvert
 Extrovert

Orange Juice
 Apple Juice

Summer
 Winter

Text
 Phone Call

Passenger
 Driver

City
 Suburbs

Pancakes
 Waffles

Still Water
 Sparkling Water

favorite

VACATION DESTINATION



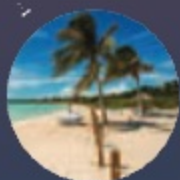
MARVIN BAGLEY III
Turks and Caicos

KYSHAWN GEORGE
Somewhere in the islands

PATRICK BALDWIN JR.
Lake Geneva, Wisconsin

ANTHONY GILL
Charlotte, North Carolina

SADDIQ BEY
I don't go on vacation much



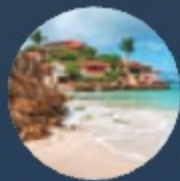
RICHAUN HOLMES
Turks and Caicos

MALCOLM BROGDON
Saint-Tropez



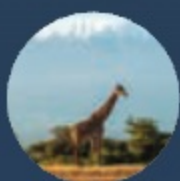
COREY KISPERT
Greece

JARED BUTLER
London



KYLE KUZMA
Greece

BUB CARRINGTON
Tenerife, Spain



JORDAN POOLE
Hawaii

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE
Jamaica

ALEX SARR
France

BILAL COULIBALY
I went to Tanzania and Costa Rica this past summer, so I'd say both

JONAS VALANČIŪNAS
St. Barts

JOHNNY DAVIS
Bahamas

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC
Greece



COREY KISPERT

photographed by
KENNY GIARLA

PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE
NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART



You've talked about your love for coffee. When did you start getting into coffee and what's your go-to coffee order?

I started drinking coffee my last year of high school. I got right into black coffee, the jet fuel. It put some hair on my chest immediately, but I certainly got into coffee and the artistry of it, and the taste of it probably halfway through college.

What's your coffee setup at home? I got a full espresso machine with a custom grinder. A whole setup where I can tamp the beans, spread them out, and make sure that the pour is perfect. I've also got a scale and everything, so it's pretty precise.

Do you always drink black coffee, or do you experiment with other coffee drinks? I don't have the latte art down yet, but my wife does. She was a barista for a couple years, so she can do the artwork and foam the milk and everything. I need to learn how to do that. I'll throw in a latte or a cortado every now and again.

Bitty & Beau's in Georgetown is a coffee shop that celebrates diversity within its workforce and has employed over 400 people nationwide with disabilities. You've talked about it being one of your favorite places in D.C. to get coffee. Talk about why it's so special to you.

Yeah, it hits home. I have a nephew who has Down syndrome, and to see a company working with people who have so much to offer and give is really special. Their coffee is great, and you leave with a smile on your face for how good the coffee tastes and the experience you had.

You play pickleball and golf in your free time. How did you get into the sports? Pickleball was invented in the state of Washington, so it's been

COREY KISPERT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Morning 🟡 Evening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🟡 East Coast 🔴 West Coast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Window Seat 🟡 Aisle Seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🟡 Cats 🔴 Dogs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Introvert 🟡 Extrovert 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Orange Juice 🟡 Apple Juice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Summer 🟡 Winter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Text 🟡 Phone Call 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🟡 Passenger 🔴 Driver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🟡 City 🔴 Suburbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🟡 Pancakes 🔴 Waffles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🟡 Still Water 🔴 Sparkling Water

PLAYER PICKS



around forever. I grew up in my backyard playing with my parents and friends. Golf is something that I've kind of gotten addicted to since college. It's a way for me to get outside and get fresh air. We're in the gym a lot. We're in buses and cars and parking garages all the time, so for me to get fresh air is really important. I also love the competitiveness of it.

What's your favorite course that you've played at? What's your favorite course in D.C.? My favorite course in D.C. is Army Navy Country Club. I really enjoy it. My favorite course

that I've played in the world is Chambers Bay Golf Course in Tacoma, Washington.

Last season your high school retired your jersey. What did that mean to you? That was awesome. I had a lot of people there, a lot of support from when I was a little tyke. It was really cool to see people who have contributed to my life before I even got to the NBA still supporting me. It was a surreal, awesome moment, and it was great to be home and watch the high school team win. Watching the jersey go up was pretty cool too.

LEO VILLAREAL MULTIVERSE, 2008

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
EAST BUILDING - CONCOURSE

What were some of your favorite things you did this offseason? Any places you visited? Any new hobbies? I officiated a wedding this summer, and that was the highlight of it. It was in the South of France, in a castle around the water. I was definitely more nervous to do that than to be in my own wedding, but I'm glad that I did it. It was an amazing experience, and I would love to do it again. I also love to cook. I cook pretty much all of my own food. My wife and I have put a big emphasis on the stuff that we eat and the recipes that we make. It's paid dividends, both in how I feel and then how I play, and the food tastes great. It's a way for me to decompress after a long day.

Do you have a favorite dish? I make a really good salmon taco bowl with my own homemade taco seasoning.

What are some of your favorite things to do around D.C.? It's a place where you can visit different places and do different things for weeks on end and never repeat. I love the diversity of activities. It's a great place for my family to come visit, and it's an easily walkable city too. So, you can park yourself downtown for a couple

hours and never get bored.

You have a classic, fresh, timeless style. What goes into your game day fits? It's exactly that. I don't want to be overpowering with my style. I want to be super subtle but have a clean and classy look. Hopefully, I've kind of achieved that. I'm looking to expand it a little bit this year. It is something that translates both to the tunnel and then out on the street, I don't really have any second thoughts about it.

If you could shop at only one clothing store or site, what would it be? I've gotten a lot of really good stuff from Hudson recently. They're a denim jeans brand. They make stuff long enough for me, so it's great.

What's the best piece of advice you would give your rookie teammates, and what's the best advice you received as a rookie? The best advice I would give to the rookies is to be yourself. There's a lot of pressure from people – your family, fans, to change who you are and be a certain way. But you're in the league for a reason, so you've got to stick with that and double down on your strengths. The best advice I got as a rookie was to balance the work. It's a long season, there are a lot of games, and your body takes a beating, so you have got to balance how much you recover and how much work you put in.



KYLE KUZMA

photographed by KENNY GIARLA, AVI GERVER, STEPHEN GOSLING, AND MICHAEL CUMMINGS

Since launching the Kyle Kuzma Family Foundation (KKFF) in 2023 you've made an impact in multiple communities you've lived and played in. Why did you choose to launch this foundation? To be able to give back and pave it forward for future generations beyond my life.

KKFF's main initiative is to support single mothers and their children, a cause that is close to you. Did you always know this was the initiative you wanted your foundations work to do? I've always known that I wanted my foundation to focus on this line of work

because it's very authentic and relatable to my life story.

Your mom, Karri, is the president of KKFF. What is it like to work with her? It's amazing to work with her, especially in a business relationship and not just as a friend and a mom. It's very, very interesting, and you see different sides of the person.

It's amazing to work with her, especially in a business relationship and not just as a friend and a mom. It's very, very interesting, and you see different sides of the person.

You've hosted a back-to-school giveaway, held a golf tournament in Miami, and supported communities in D.C. and Flint, MI during the holidays. Has there been a favorite event



1 Kuzma at the KKFF Golf Invitational (Sept. 2024)

2 Monumental Basketball and The Kyle Kuzma Family Foundation Thankful Meals - Eagle Academy Public Charter School in Washington, DC. (Nov. 2023)

3-6 The KKFF Golden Ticket Holiday Family Drive - Washington, D.C. (Dec. 2023) Photographed by Avi Gerver

7 Washington Wizards & Kyle Kuzma Back to School Tip-Off (Aug. 2023) Photographed by Stephen Gosling

KYLE KUZMA

you've hosted? I think my favorite event I've hosted was our golf tournament this past summer. We raised a ton of money for our mission and to also have all my friends and family around me supporting a good cause was great.

As you mentioned, you most recently held a golf tournament, Kyle Kuzma Celebrity Golf Tournament, in Miami that raised over \$825,000. What did it mean to see the support others have poured into you and the work you're doing?

It meant a lot to me, just to be able to have contributing people in my life, and relationships to help my mother and I on our mission.

The NBA awarded you the winner of the NBA Cares Bob Lanier Community Assist Award in November 2023 for your charitable efforts throughout the month that included partnering with Monumental Basketball to host the Thankful Meals community outreach and supporting incarcerated mothers and their families in your hometown of Flint, MI. What did it mean to be recognized by your peers for your work? I think that was a really cool moment. Winning the Community Assist Award

8 Kuzma was named the November 2023 NBA Cares Bob Lanier Community Assist Award winner

9-10 Kuzma at the Genesee County Jail in Flint, MI. For the holidays, Kuzma passed out gifts to the inmate's children. He also unveiled Kuz's corner – two newly renovated jail cells as a part of a larger effort to upgrade the facility's conditions

for the month was a big indictment of my team and my mom and how much they're trying to push the envelope. That was a byproduct of that.

Are there any exciting projects or activations you hope to launch with your foundation in the future? A scholarship fund. That's coming next, and I'm super excited for it.

You have many hobbies and interests – last year you opened a coffee shop Childhood Café in NW D.C. What is your go-to order? My go-to order is an iced matcha latte.



Morning
 Evening

East Coast
 West Coast

Window Seat
 Aisle Seat

Cats
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 Extrovert

Orange Juice
 Apple Juice

Summer
 Winter

Text
 Phone Call

Passenger
 Driver

City
 Suburbs

Pancakes
 Waffles

Still Water
 Sparkling Water

WHERE I WANT TO GO

next

**MARVIN
BAGLEY III**
Greece

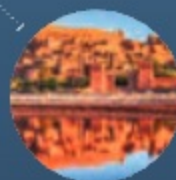
**PATRICK
BALDWIN JR.**
Switzerland

**SADDIQ
BEY**
Turks
and Caicos

**MALCOLM
BROGDON**
Morocco

**JARED
BUTLER**
I want to go back
to London

**BUB
CARRINGTON**
Greece



**JUSTIN
CHAMPAGNIE**
Greece

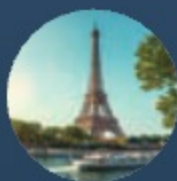
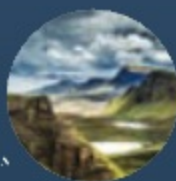
**BILAL
COULIBALY**
Hawaii

**JOHNNY
DAVIS**
Italy

**KYSHAWN
GEORGE**
Turks and
Caicos

**ANTHONY
GILL**
Charlotte,
North Carolina

**RICHAUN
HOLMES**
Santorini,
Greece



**COREY
KISPERT**
The UK
(England,
Scotland,
and Ireland)

**KYLE
KUZMA**
Turkey

**JORDAN
POOLE**
New
Zealand

**ALEX
SARR**
France

**JONAS
VALANČIŪNAS**
St. Barts

**TRISTAN
VUKCEVIC**
Greece



94 QUESTIONS WITH JORDAN POOLE



photographed by
KENNY GIARLA

1. Describe yourself in three words. Chill, smooth, and genuine

2. Your favorite non-basketball hobby? Sleeping

3. Do you have any pets? Three cats

4. If you could be any animal, what would you be and why? I would be a jaguar because it's a big cat, but they don't get the most love, and they're under the radar. Otherwise, I'd

be a flamingo because they stand out without trying

5. What is your perfect candle (scent)? Lavender with a little bit of oak

6. Do you have any travel hacks/tips you swear by? Yes, always bring a blanket or pillow with you

7. Window or aisle seat? Window seat

8. What do you wear when you're traveling? A sweatsuit



ROXY PAINE
GRAFT, 2008-2009

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
SCULPTURE GARDEN

JORDAN POOLE

9. What are three things you never travel without? A laptop, UNO cards, and the Bible

10. Dream country to visit? New Zealand

11. Style icon? Adam Sandler

12. Do you have a secret talent? Nope, no secret talents

13. Most adventurous thing you've done in your life. I went ziplining once

14. Clothing item everyone should have? A hoodie

15. City or suburbs? Suburbs

16. The person you call when you need advice? I pray to the Lord

17. Best way to decompress? I take a walk

18. What's your favorite color? Pastel blue

19. Least favorite color? Burgundy

20. Coffee or tea? Tea, particularly Earl Grey tea

21. If you were stuck on an island and had to choose one food that you could eat without getting tired of it, what would it be? Chocolate chip cookies

22. Favorite NBA city (that's not D.C.) Portland

23. What song can you listen to on repeat? Anything by BabyTron

24. Favorite current song? "It's Us" by Babyfxc E

25. What's a cause that's important to you? The environment

26. Sweet or savory? Sweet

27. What's one thing people don't know about you? I've never solved a Rubik's Cube

28. What's your favorite card or board game? UNO

29. How do you start your day? I wake up and then I go to the bathroom

30. Which NBA player do you think has the best style? Why? Anthony Gill. It's very basic and he doesn't do too much

31. If you could switch lives with one person for a day, who

would it be? The prime minister of England

32. Besides your phone or wallet, what is an item you always bring with you? My laptop

33. What's a talent you wish you had? I wish I could bounce, just have stupid bounce

34. What Olympic sport (Winter or Summer) would you want to compete in? Bobsledding

35. Favorite snack? Chocolate chip cookies

36. What makes the perfect chocolate chip cookie? It must have the perfect texture – crispy on the outside and soft on the

inside. It can't be too soft though; I don't want it falling apart

37. What's your favorite movie from the last year? Deadpool & Wolverine

38. What's your favorite fast-food order? A Chick-fil-A sandwich

39. What do you usually eat for breakfast? Oatmeal

40. How did you start playing basketball? My mom wanted me to get out of the house

41. Three words to describe living in D.C. Activities, culture, and seasonal

42. What's your guilty pleasure?

ROXY PAINE
GRAFT, 2008-2009

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
SCULPTURE GARDEN

Chocolate chip cookies

43. Do you play any musical instruments, if not which instrument do you wish you could play? No, but I'd want to learn how to play the triangle

44. Winter or summer? Summer

45. Would you consider yourself an introvert or extrovert?

Ambivert, I'm right in the middle



- 46. Favorite type of juice?** Martinelli's apple juice
- 47. Start, Bench, Cut - pancakes, waffles, and french toast.** Start pancakes, bench waffles, and cut french toast
- 48. What's your favorite time of day?** 6:00 p.m. In the fall it's when the sun starts to set
- 49. Biggest strength?** My ability to sleep
- 50. Text or phone call?** Neither
- 51. Favorite quote?** Slow is smooth, smooth is fast
- 52. Something that makes you smile?** My cats
- 53. Favorite childhood cartoon?** Rick and Morty
- 54. All-time favorite musical artist?** Grover Washington, Jr.
- 55. What's your ideal vacation?** My house
- 56. Color you wear the most often?** Black
- 57. Do you like surprises? Last time someone surprised you?** No, I don't like surprises, and never
- 58. Best concert you've been to?** Khalid
- 59. A hobby you have that most people wouldn't know about.** I take walks
- 60. Favorite sport to watch?** Volleyball
- 61. Name three people, dead or alive, you'd like to have dinner with.** Jesus, Barack Obama, and Denzel Washington
- 62. Favorite outdoor activity?** Walking
- 63. You're stranded on a desert island, which teammate would you bring with you?** Either Bilal [Coulibaly] or AG [Anthony Gill]
- 64. Where is your favorite place to be?** My bed
- 65. What is your favorite genre of music?** Indie
- 66. What is one thing on your bucket list?** To buy everybody in the bar a drink
- 67. What is your biggest achievement?** Making it to 25 - I don't take it for granted that I

- see a birthday each year
- 68. What is your favorite tattoo that you have?** My Jackie Robinson tattoo
- 69. One thing you always have in your refrigerator.** Milk
- 70. Do you cook?** No, not yet
- 71. Who was your role model growing up? Why?** I never really had one
- 72. What does your ideal day off look like?** I wake up from a really long sleep, probably around 12:00 p.m. I'll eat, play a game for a little bit or watch a movie. I'll then take a walk, take a nap, and probably chill some more before going back to sleep
- 73. Favorite fruit?** Strawberries
- 74. Favorite player to play against?** Jaren Jackson Jr.
- 75. Glasses or contacts?** Glasses
- 76. At what age did you realize you could play professionally?** My senior year of high school
- 77. A language you want to learn?** French

- 78. Advice you'd give the rookies?** Keep going
- 79. Most memorable career game?** Game 6 of the 2022 NBA Finals
- 80. Any pregame rituals or superstitions?** I always get a pregame nap in
- 81. Biggest pet peeve?** Screamers
- 82. Last year, you designed a jacket with local D.C. designer Chris Pyrate. Who is your dream designer to collaborate with?** My dream collaboration would be with Aimé Leon Dore
- 83. What's one thing that you would love to master?** Silence
- 84. Online or in-person shopping?** Online
- 85. Go-to pizza order?** Sausage and pepperoni
- 86. Favorite Wizard jersey this season?** The white one is my favorite
- 87. Biggest fear?** Spiders
- 88. This past summer held a basketball camp in partnership with Jr. Wizards and held a back-to-school giveaway in**

- Southeast D.C. Why was it important for you to immerse yourself in the D.C. community?** To give the youth hope
- 89. Motto you live by?** It's already written
- 90. Apple juice or orange juice?** Apple juice
- 91. Favorite book?** *Discipline Is Destiny: The Power of Self-Control* by Ryan Holiday
- 92. Were you named after someone, if not how did your parents decide on your name?** I'm named after my mom's maiden name
- 93. What was the first basketball jersey you owned?** An Allen Iverson jersey
- 94. What is your favorite ice cream flavor?** I rarely have ice cream - maybe once or twice a year. If I do, it's probably strawberry

LOUISE BOURGEOIS
SPIDER, 1996, CAST 1997

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART -
SCULPTURE GARDEN



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favorite

MOVIE/TV SHOW



MARVIN BAGLEY III
Martin

PATRICK BALDWIN JR.
Elf

SADDIQ BEY
Spongebob

MALCOLM BROGDON
Succession

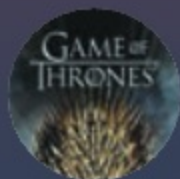
JARED BUTLER
Back to the Future
(the first one)
/ One Tree Hill

BUB CARRINGTON
Right now,
it's New Girl

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE
Transformers

BILAL COULIBALY
Snowfall

JOHNNY DAVIS
That '70s
Show



KYSHAWN GEORGE
Space Jam /
Top Boy

ANTHONY GILL
Talladega
Nights

RICHAUN HOLMES
Game of
Thrones

COREY KISPERT
Good Will Hunting /
Breaking Bad

KYLE KUZMA
Martin

JORDAN POOLE
Rick and
Morty

ALEX SARR
Lord of
the Rings

JONAS VALANCIUNAS
Vikings

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC
Snowfall



ALEX SARR



photographed by
KENNY GIARLA

ABOVE:
NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
WEST BUILDING – WEST
GARDEN COURT

RIGHT:
NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
WEST BUILDING – ROTUNDA

You designed a hat that was given out as a Wizards giveaway. Tell me a little bit about the hat and the design process behind it. The hat is navy blue, and I think it looks really good. I tried to include elements on it that remind me of home and things that are important to me.

How would you describe your style? Are there specific pieces

or brands that you gravitate towards? I like being comfortable in general, especially as a tall guy. Sometimes, you don't have the option for clothes to fit properly, but I really like my clothes to fit, whether it's my pants or whatever I'm wearing.

Have you always had an interest in fashion? At what age did your interest blossom?



ALEX SARR

Kind of recently, probably two or three years ago. I'm now starting to look more into clothing in general and trying to look proper.

How has your personal style evolved over the years and have any factors influenced how you dress today? I feel like over the years, I've evolved by wearing different types of clothing. I used to wear only tracksuits, Nike Techs, stuff like that. I've now evolved a little bit.

You signed a partnership with Versace recently. Was being involved in fashion something you always wanted to get into? Yes, I've kind of always wanted to work with a brand, and have a few outfits by them, so I was really happy about it.

The lines of sport, fashion, and culture have blurred, and the arena tunnel has now become an athlete's runway. How would you describe your game day style, and does it change from home to away? It doesn't change from home to away. I would describe it as comfy. I wear things I feel comfortable in mostly.

Being 7'2", what are some of the challenges of finding clothes? Do you work with a stylist and how often do you

have to have clothes custom made? It depends, it's more of a challenge to find shoes. Clothes are pretty easy, honestly. So, it all depends. I can't show up just anywhere, but online I can find almost everything.

Is there anyone's style that you emulate, or you model your style off of? Not really. A lot of the guys on the team dress well, so sometimes I might look at what they have on and try to steal it.

Do you have a favorite fashion trend or style that you really like? Is there a fashion trend that fans will never see you in?

I like baggy jeans, but at the same time I like fitted jeans too. Yeah, I don't know if there's something fans won't see me in. I might try a lot of different things.

Is there a specific go-to item in your closet or a type of clothing that holds sentimental value to you? Cardigans hold

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
WEST BUILDING - WEST
GARDEN COURT

sentimental value to me because my grandma liked cardigans a lot, so I mess with cardigans.

As an NBA player you spend a lot of time on the road. Is there something you always bring with you? I travel with my pillow everywhere.



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Passenger
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Pancakes
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Still Water
 Sparkling Water

favorite HOLIDAY



**MARVIN
BAGLEY III**
Thanksgiving

**PATRICK
BALDWIN JR.**
Christmas

**SADDIQ
BEY**
Christmas

**MALCOLM
BROGDON**
Christmas

**JARED
BUTLER**
Easter

**BUB
CARRINGTON**
Christmas

**JUSTIN
CHAMPAGNIE**
Christmas

**BILAL
COULIBALY**
Summer

**JOHNNY
DAVIS**
Valentine's Day

**KYSHAWN
GEORGE**
Summer

**ANTHONY
GILL**
Christmas

**RICHAUN
HOLMES**
Christmas

**COREY
KISPERT**
Fourth of July

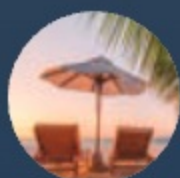
**KYLE
KUZMA**
Christmas

**JORDAN
POOLE**
Christmas

**ALEX
SARR**
Summer

**JONAS
VALANČIŪNAS**
Summer

**TRISTAN
VUKCEVIC**
Thanksgiving





JONAS VALANČIŪNAS

photographed by KENNY GIARLA

PHOTOGRAPHED ON THE STEPS OF THE WEST
BUILDING AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART



JONAS VALANČIŪNAS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Morning 🔴 Evening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 East Coast 🔴 West Coast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Window Seat 🔴 Aisle Seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Cats 🔴 Dogs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Introvert 🔴 Extrovert 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Orange Juice ☉ Apple Juice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Summer ☉ Winter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Text 🔴 Phone Call 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Passenger 🔴 Driver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 City 🔴 Suburbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Pancakes 🔴 Waffles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☉ Still Water 🔴 Sparkling Water



Photographed in front of the National Gallery of Art East Building

What activities do you enjoy during your free time?

I'm a nature kid. I like nature and I like exploring things. I also like food and trying different cuisines. Just trying different stuff in general. Life is too short not to explore.

What are some essentials you bring on the road with you and why? I'm easygoing, I'm not a high-maintenance guy. I bring some clothes, my vitamins, and my laptop. I will also bring a charger, which is the most essential.

When did you start playing basketball and how much NBA were you able to watch growing up? I did not watch a lot of NBA games when I was growing up because of the time difference. I started to play basketball when I was eight or nine years old.

As a vet in this league what's the best piece of advice you'd give your rookie teammates? What is the best advice you received as a rookie? Well, you have to know what you want to do with your life. You're in control of your life. Today's rookies are talented and highly paid, but they still need to stay humble, work hard, and be goal-orientated if they want to achieve their goals. The best piece of advice I was given as a rookie is hard, I've been around so many people

who have given me advice. People who led by example was something that stood out to me. I had some good veteran players around me who led me the right way.

Do you have any game day rituals? I don't have any game day rituals, but I do everything the same. Everything has to be the same – same timing, same order. So that's my routine. Maybe you can call it superstition. If something goes differently, I freak out.

If you could describe your ideal day off, what would it look like? I'd start by having an easy-going morning with the kids. We'd have a good breakfast, and then, maybe some fun activities. I would have a "cheat meal" lunch, and a nice dinner with my wife.

What are some things you like to do with your kids? I do a lot of the activities my kids like to do. They enjoy playing video games and card/board games. They also like playing outside. So, I engage in some of their favorite activities to have quality time with them.

What are some things you are looking forward to exploring around D.C.? There's a lot of museums, a lot of history, and a lot of nightlife. It's a big, multicultural city. I'm enjoying my time in D.C. so far.



MOST USED

app

MARVIN BAGLEY III
Instagram

PATRICK BALDWIN JR.
iMessage

SADDIQ BEY
iMessage

MALCOLM BROGDON
iMessage

JARED BUTLER
iMessage

BUB CARRINGTON
Teamworks



JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE
iMessage

BILAL COULIBALY
TikTok or Instagram

JOHNNY DAVIS
Instagram

KYSHAWN GEORGE
Spotify

ANTHONY GILL
iMessage

RICHAUN HOLMES
X (formerly Twitter)



COREY KISPERT
iMessage

KYLE KUZMA
Instagram

JORDAN POOLE
Apple Music

ALEX SARR
Instagram

JONAS VALANČIŪNAS
iMessage

TRISTAN VUKCEVIC
TikTok



TRISTAN VUKCEVIC



photographed by
ROB BANEZ

Who's been the most influential person in your life?

Definitely my parents. They are the people I go to when I need advice and just the way they raised me.

What are some essentials you bring on the road with you and why?

My phone, so I can talk to my family. I also bring my PlayStation because I've got to play video games and it's a way to stay connected to my friends.

What do you enjoy doing around Washington, D.C.?

I enjoy trying different restaurants around the city.



Your favorite non-basketball hobby? How long have you had this hobby? I love to play video games. Call of Duty is my favorite game to play – I've played it for over 10 years.

When did you get into video games? I started playing video games when I was very young. I remember playing Nintendo when I was a kid, and then the PSPs, the PlayStations. I'm a big fan.

Do you have any game day rituals? I have the same breakfast and same lunch for every game. For breakfast I have scrambled eggs and french toast, and then for lunch, I always have chicken pasta with red sauce.

Your ideal day off? I definitely try to sleep in as much as I can. I will then wake up, try to eat good meals throughout the day, and play video games. I might go out and grab a nice dinner.

What's a prized possession and why? My kitten, Apollo. She's 10 weeks old. JP [Jordan Poole] convinced me to get a cat.

Growing up abroad, what are some things you miss about home during the season?

My family and my friends. Growing up in Athens, Greece, and Belgrade, Serbia, it's very far away from D.C. Being far away from my family and friends and the time difference has been a big change.

When did you start playing basketball and how much NBA were you able to watch growing up?

I was always into basketball because my dad played professional basketball. So, since I was born, I was going to his games. I think for my second birthday, I got a little hoop. My mom has videos of it. I wasn't able to watch many NBA games on a regular basis because the time difference is so big. I remember I watched Christmas Day games because they were on earlier in the day and I would also wake up at 3-4 a.m. to watch the NBA Finals.

If you weren't a basketball player, what would you be? I'd be a gaming streamer or a comedian.

Morning
 Evening

East Coast
 West Coast

Window Seat
 Aisle Seat

Cats
 Dogs

Introvert
 Extrovert

Orange Juice
 Apple Juice

Summer
 Winter

Text
 Phone Call

Passenger
 Driver

City
 Suburbs

Pancakes
 Waffles

Still Water
 Sparkling Water

favorite

DESSERT



**MARVIN
BAGLEY III**
Cheesecake

**PATRICK
BALDWIN JR.**
Tiramisu

**SADDIQ
BEY**
Sorbet

**MALCOLM
BROGDON**
Bread
pudding

**JARED
BUTLER**
Cheesecake

**BUB
CARRINGTON**
Key lime
pie

**JUSTIN
CHAMPAGNIE**
Cheesecake

**BILAL
COULIBALY**
Fondant
au chocolat

**JOHNNY
DAVIS**
Chocolate
cake

**KYSHAWN
GEORGE**
My grandma's
banana cake

**ANTHONY
GILL**
Chocolate chip cookies

**RICHAUN
HOLMES**
Oatmeal
raisin cookies

**COREY
KISPERT**
My mom's
strawberry roll pie

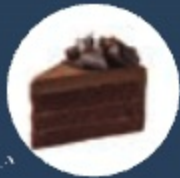
**KYLE
KUZMA**
Tiramisu

**JORDAN
POOLE**
Chocolate chip cookies

**ALEX
SARR**
Key lime pie

**JONAS
VALANČIŪNAS**
Lazy cake

**TRISTAN
VUKCEVIC**
Crème brûlée





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