**PG – Vasilije Micic**

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BANKABLE NBA SKILL: penetration; scoring off of dribble and high screens.

 Will it translate to NBA? Yes. He has the quickness necessary to play lead guard in the NBA. He must improve handling on-ball pressure which is not as intense in the Adriatic League.

SIZE FOR POSITION: While he does need to get stronger, Micic plays stronger than he looks. He uses his body well to shield ball and hold-off defenders.

 Height: 6’3” Plays like: 6’5”

DEFENSIVE LIABILITY? No. His on-ball defense is a weakness but not enough to outweigh his strengths. However, he may be exposed when closing out on shooters (weakside).

BEST STYLE/FIT: Uptempo, free-flowing attack using multiple screen-rolls. He’s at his best in semi-transition, running early screen-roll. He may struggle in a set, halfcourt offense where movements are assigned. Does not respond well to rigid, old-school coaching (i.e.- Serbian nat’l team coach Dusan Ivkovic).

POSITIONING GRADE: (does player put himself in *position* to do the following, outside of set plays?)

Scoring - Excellent (has a knack for finding open spots)

Shooting - Mediocre (he could improve at using off-ball screens, trusting in teammates)

Passing: Mediocre (he’s much better at getting open for scoring opportunities)

Help Defense – Poor (often finds himself out of position as ball swings around)

On-ball Defense – Mediocre (some say this is a major weakness, I say it is marginable)

Rebounding – Poor (while he does like to mix it up inside, he prefers to get back on defense)

DETAILS: Micic plays bigger than listed. He’s very crafty when coming off of high screens, using his body well inside to shield defenders and throw-off shot-blockers (rare for a 19 y/o guard). He does struggle at times against on-ball pressure, as his personality is to keep the offense flowing. Jamming him in the backcourt is the best way to affect him. He’s a rhythm player who needs a free-flowing style of play to be most successful. He has a very fluid shot, with both arms going up and then coming down together after follow-through. Very smooth mechanics. He also passes the ball on-handed off dribble very well. It is usually under control and hits the target in shooting pocket. At the rim, Micic is comfortable switching to his left hand at the last second.

ATTITUDE: Vasilije isn’t a big ‘rah-rah’ guy. However, he is a good teammate and fiery competitor. His energy and exuberance can lift teammates when he’s on a roll. Like with most 19-year olds, his head will drop if that rhythm is gone or if he feels the coach is riding him too hard (see Coach Ivkovic – Serbian Nat’l Team). Nevertheless, I think this is more a product of his eagerness to prove himself and to show that he is a premier player despite the knee injury.

POSITIVES: Micic shined in the under-19 European tournament earlier this year. If he continues to develop, he has a long and bright future ahead of him in the pick-n-roll friendly NBA. He may also develop into a good combo guard, as his catch-n-shoot game is also very good. 2016 is his target draft with the 1st round being very possible. As of today, I’d still say early 2nd rd. Though I do think PGs overseas develop more skills than domestic ones due to the style of play and responsibility in the Euroleague (vs NCAA).

CONCERNS: Vasilije lacks some explosiveness when attacking the rim. This is unlikely to be improved with mere strength and conditioning (you either got it or you don’t). Also, his balance is not what I’d like to see from a lead guard. I’ve seen him fall over against pressure defense numerous times, which is rare for a PG. Part of this may be due to his stance, which sometimes has him leaning forward too much. Flexion in his knees is somewhat poor. His on-ball defense is a concern, though one that I think will improve as he gets more comfortable with his body. His weakside defense, though, leaves a lot to be desired. Vasilije must improve his court awareness on the defensive end. A good player for him to watch would be Steve Nash, who improved his team defense over the years despite poor on-ball skills. Micic also must show more consistency in 2013-14, as his numbers in the Adriatic League were far from impressive last season (11.8 ppg, 5.0 apg, 3.8 tpg). He did come on strong, though, to end the season. Lastly, a player who suffers a serious knee injury and requires surgery at such a young age (17) does warrant concern. But he looks to have recovered his speed and quickness.

INSIDER: Vasilije may lack the drive and desire to be great. His entire life he was given a chance to play in the youth national teams & senior pro teams (U14, U16) ahead of players more talented than him. This was mostly due to his relationship with agent Misko Raznatovic (currently president of Micic’s pro team Mega Vizura). This makes me wonder how hungry he is, specifically for physical development. Vasilije also suffered a serious knee injury two years ago, one which cost him an entire year of basketball. This has slowed his development some. Despite this time away from the game, he didn’t bulk-up much in his upper body. He is a bit behind his age group, physically. However, this isn’t paramount for a PG nor is it something that can’t be fixed by professional strength coaches. Lastly, look for a more focused Micic in 2013-14. Due to Adriatic League rules which say that there can only be a maximum of two professional teams in one city, his team (Mega Vizura) is moving outside of Belgrade. This means less media hype and distractions for him as he improves.

Video Clips:

Serbian National Team Eurobasket preparation match vs France (2013)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bXodY84ysg>

27:20 – Micic loses balance bringing the ball downcourt against a single defender. Falling forward, he carelessly flips the ball over shoulder (turnover).

31:35 – Micic shows his craftiness with runner in the lane (off pick-n-roll). Exhibits good body control as he slows down to avoid shot-blocker Alexis Ajinca.

1:33:43 – In overtime, Micic makes one-handed pass on fastbreak to open shooter. Shot was missed but the pass was right decision. Shows great ball control and also confidence making such a pass in tight ball game.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86n128NG8yA>

0:42 – Vasilije shows his skills in the post. He is very comfortable using his body to feel where the defender is, both in the post and coming off of high screens. This also shows good footwork.

0:56 – Two consecutive clips where Micic shows his catch-n-shoot prowess. Steps into shot nicely, both arms go up and come down together. This ability will be valuable if one day used as combo guard off bench.