

Nikola Topić vs KK Split 12/18/2023

In a competitive game where Nikola Topić fouled out, he was able to display his consistent playmaking, scoring creativity, and pick and roll IQ as a ball handler at a high level throughout. Some areas he still needs to improve on are shooting consistency and defensive impact.

Topic does a great job at leveraging any space created particularly through screens to generate easy shots for either himself or his teammates. Even on plays where he misses in the paint or teammates can't finish the play, his feel for getting to the right spot at the right time is very apparent. An example of his finishing ability was at 2:27 of the third quarter where after getting a screen and switch, Topic used a hesitation dribble to freeze the opposing big before blowing by him on a particular angle to finish in the paint in a creative way. Although he initiated plays for his team the majority of the time he was on the court, he displayed flashes of the ability to play off the ball.

His ability as a playmaker is very high especially at his age. Topic's playmaking makes his team noticeably more active off ball because more times than not he is able to playmake to the right player. An example of this was at 8:52 of the second quarter where after cutting in from the corner, Topic was able to pass out of a contested layup to an open three point shooter on the wing. His size also helps him see passes most point guards simply wouldn't be able to see. His jump shot is a work in progress, he is confident when shooting, has good touch, and has decent mechanics, which are good indicators but struggles to consistently hit from deep.

Defensively, Topic struggled immensely when tested with physical and more veteran players. Oftentimes, he would reach when he did not need to or be too physical with an opposing player bumping into him, which led to him fouling out of his game. Topic's wingspan does not appear to be very long and could be another limitation to his ability to defend high level players consistently.

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