

Nikola Topić vs Fmp Beograd October 16, 2023

In a game where Nikola Topić had to wear a mask due to a facial injury he was able to display his aggressive driving, playmaking, and pick and roll IQ as a ball handler at a high level throughout. His consistent performance throughout the game is also notable as he always seemed to be in control particularly in the 4th quarter when his team needed him most. Some areas he needs to improve on are shooting consistency, defensive impact, and rebounding.

What immediately stood out in this game was how easy it was for Topić to generate paint touches for his team. This was initiated primarily through pick and roll sets although his decisive and aggressive ball handling also helped him create space. Once he created the driving angle he was able to finish through contact at an impressive clip especially as a player who does not have a particularly strong frame. A good example of his paint scoring versatility was at 2:39 minutes left of the 4th quarter where Topić managed to dribble all the way to the paint against a defense heavily pressing on him and finished with a contested spin lay up.

Nikola Topić's jumpshot is more promising than most, but still has a long way to go as he seems to lack elevation on his jump shot while also having a low release point. Due to this he struggled to comfortably and consistently make jump shots outside of the paint. In a fundamental sense his jump shot is solid but the points mentioned above created a clear limitation on his performance. His playmaking on the other hand was phenomenal in this game, as he operated as the primary ball handler in half court sets in high pick and roll settings while also generating three point looks through reading was the defense was doing.

Topić's defense was not necessarily notable in this game as he was not able to be disruptive, but also did not make many mistakes while guarding his man besides occasionally being picked on. Perhaps being more aggressive off ball in areas such as physicality when rebounding could help him as a developmental area.

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