

Who are basketball's top 10?

If you had to pick a team of 10 players from the NBA to play the Russians, who would be on your roster?

Remember to keep a balance, too; not all scorers, rebounders, or defenders, but a mix of all three, along with some unselfish player who will get the ball to those that scoring is their main game.

The world's best pro basketballers, right?

Okay, here's how the Review editors would pick a dream 10, using Strat-O-Matic cards as a gauge of evaluation.

The Review's team would include three true guards, four forwards, a center and two swing players, one a guard/forward combination and the other a center/forward.

MICHAEL JORDAN

Guard...Does it all with a 35.0 scoring average, steals, blocked shots and rebounding...Not much he doesn't do, really...On penetration, he has 12 foul chances (out of 36) and five more chances if you add a "X + F(1)" result on No. 6. Overall, he's awesome on offense in all four categories...Has a 2-12 block rating on penetration shots...Passing; Normal - 1-20 is open position shot for a teammate; Fastbreak - 11-15 is a Dazzler...He rebounds 4 on defense and 2 on offense...And 259 steals are reflected in a defense rating of 21-33 for steals.

MAGIC JOHNSON

Guard...Passing is super as reflected by 6-20 dazzler in normal offense and 3-20 dazzler when Lakers are fastbreaking. Worth probably 10-12 baskets a game because of passing...Great on the fastbreak as Nos. 5-10 on his card are either baskets or he's fouled...Good rebounder, too, particularly on defensive board where he's rated 25 at guard, 3 at right forward and 2 at left forward...Free throws: 2-9 and 12.

LARRY BIRD

Forward...Great outside shooter, with X on Nos. 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 and "open" chances on Nos. 3 (1-17), 4 and 5...Also a great passer as Bird has 2-10 dazzler (normal) and 10-20 dazzler (fastbreak) ratings...Solid rebounder on defensive board: RF-34; LF-6...Has 21-26 steal rating...Free throw shooting is 2-10 and one of best, while Bird also has outstanding 3-point marksmanship rating with 2-6 and 10 being on-target.

DOMINIQUE WILKINS

Forward...Has a lot of "open" chances on outside and penetration columns...Better offensive rebounder than defensive as he's rated RF-3, LF-2 and G-11 on offensive board, RF-1, LF-0, G-4 on defense...For all his inside and penetration moves, Wilkins is not too shabby shooting from outside, including having a 2-5 rating from 3-point range.

CHARLES BARKLEY

Forward...Great action card with something good happening for him whether it be shooting outside or fastbreaking...Offense is his forte and drawing fouls is a big part of his 28.3 scoring average. His card foul chances (out of 36 chances) are: outside - 12; penetration - 18 (plus 4 for an "X + F(1)"); inside - 15 plus 6; and fastbreak - 12 plus
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5...As a rebounder the 6-6, 253-pound Barkley is a RF-24, LF-4 off the defensive glass and RF-14, LF-4 off the offensive...Barkley can also block shots, as his 1-6 overall rating and 6-10, 12 readings both inside and against the fastbreak attest to.

ISIAH THOMAS

Guard...Has good offensive production in outside, penetration and fastbreak columns. Has X on No. 7 and lot of "open" chances when penetrating...Nifty passer, naturally, with 2-13 a dazzler pass in a normal offense and 8-20 when fastbreaking...A thief on defense with 21-26 stealing rating...3-point success: 2-5 and 12.

AKEEM OLAJUWON

Center...Only bona fide center on Review's dream team...On defense he has a block rating of 1-15, inside 2-5 and defending against the 'break it's also 2-5...Rebounding muscle is evidenced by following ratings: offense - C-2, LF-4; defense - C-4, LF-15...Has a 21-30 steal rating to reflect 162 thefts...On offense, inside, Olajuwon has 26 card chances (out of 36) to score or be fouled and, when fastbreaking, 24.

KARL MALONE

Forward...Personification of power forward as inside Malone has an X or is fouled on Nos. 5-8. Can shoot outside and draw fouls when penetrating...Another in line for chairman of the boards as he has LF-9, RF-44, C-3 ratings rebounding off defensive board, LF-3, RF-4, C-1 off offensive. Malone had 986 rebounds...Has 21-25 steal rating.

CLYDE DREXLER

Guard/Forward...His versatility put him on team...Is a solid offensive player with lots of "open" chances outside and penetrating...Can play Big D as steal rating is 21-31 and block against penetration shots is 5-12...Rebounding: offense - G-18, RF-3; defense - G-4, RF-0.

KEVIN MCHALE

Center/Forward...Picked because he can play any of the front line positions...Prolific scorer as evidenced by 25 chances (plus 4 more on an "open" reading on No. 8) to either score a field goal or draw a foul inside...As a rebounder, McHale is a LF-3, C-0, RF-14 on defense and LF-1, C-0, RF-2 working the offensive board...Another intimidator on defense as he has a 1-8 block rating and blocks shots inside and on the break on Nos. 7-10 and 12.

And what about John Stockton, the assist leader in the NBA last year? And what about James Worthy, the Lakers' rising star at small forward? Or how about shooters and scorers like Dale Ellis, Mark Aguirre and Alex English?

And for steals, how about San Antonio's Alvin Robertson, who has a 21-33 rating and came up with 243 in real-life?

And why not such shot-rejectors as Utah's Mark Eaton (1-20, inside 2-6, fastbreak 2-6) and the Knicks' Patrick Ewing (1-19, inside and fastbreak 8-10, 12)?

Everyone can't be on the Americans-are-coming team. How would you pick such a team if you were coaching an NBA all-star squad against the Russians? Let us know. Better yet, why doesn't someone challenge the 10 listed above with a best-of-the-rest team from the NBA ranks?