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Springboard Capstone Project-1

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On the Way of Being Superstar

Every off-season, the time between the end of the playoffs and the start of the following season, teams need to decide what to do with their players and players whose contract is about to expire need to decide for the amount of money they will sign their contract. Will they consent to the amount they are offered? Will they ask for higher amounts? Or even letting others team that they are ready to sign contact with them? As they all know there are many choices for both players and teams. It is up to players to convince teams that they are worth for what they are asking.

During the 2018-2019 season, Luko Dončić, a Slovenian basketball player, made his first debuts in the NBA after being the 3rd pick of 2018 NBA Drafts. He was just an 18-years-old kid who started playing like a superstar in the NBA. Within a short period of time, he was able to win the hearts and minds of NBA fans not just Dallas Mavericks fans but all other teams' fans. After being drafted, Luko Dončić signed a rookie scale contract on Monday, July 9, 2018. According to the contract, he will be paid \$6,560,640 for the 2018-2019 season, \$7,683,360 for the 2019-2020 season, \$8,049,360 for the 2020-2021 season and last year of contract he will be paid \$10,174,391 with 3rd and 4th years are optional in his contract. Which means, the Dallas Mavericks can offer him a new contract for the 2020-2021 season and the rest. Moreover, Luko Dončić may ask for a better salary from his team because he may think he deserves higher amounts of salary. For a rookie these 6 and even 7 figures salary sounds good. However, Luko Dončić cannot be compared with other rookies. Especially after the retirement of the Dallas Mavericks Legend Dirk Nowitzki, Luko Dončić will be the new leader of his team. In

his first year, Luko Dončić averaged 21.2 points, 6 assists, 7.8 rebounds and also 1.1 steals per game. These stats were impressive for a young rookie. Further to his 2018-2019 season Luko Dončić averaged 28.7 points, 8.7 assists, 9.3 rebounds and also 1.1 steals per game. He improved a lot more than expected and people think that he has not done with his improvement yet. The more he plays the more he scores and gets closer to be the long-term leader of his team. Instead of waiting for his contract to expire, Luko Dončić should be signing a new contract with Dallas Mavericks and the team's general manager should be hurrying up if he wants Luko Dončić to keep playing like a superstar for his team.

Through some Exploratory Data Analysis, I have found that the statistics that have the strongest correlation to salary are points per game, assists per game, rebounds per game. The slopes for each of these stats compared to their 2018-2019 salary are \$824,000 per PPG, \$1,746,000 per Assist, and \$1,845,000 per Rebound. If you multiply his averages by these slopes, you attain \$17,468,000, \$10,476,000 and \$14,391,000 respectively. Even just looking at his first year stats, he is already worth around 13 or 14 million dollars. When we look at his 2019-2020 season stats, I will multiply his stats from the 2019-2020 season by these slopes and I get \$23,648,000, 15,190,200 and \$17,158,500 respectively. As you can see, his 2nd year stats provided much higher numbers. Just after a year, now he is worth 19 or 20 million dollars.

With the fact that he has been improving since his first debut, he will be scoring, assisting much more than before and he will be worth more money than this. It is not right for him to keep playing for around 10 million dollars while he is worth around 20 million dollars. It is Luko Dončić's wholly right to ask for higher salaries. We will soon see what Dallas Mavericks General Manager decides about Luko Dončić. Also, we will soon see if Luko Dončić wants to keep playing until his contract expires and sign a max contract with his team. Let's wait and see what the future brings.