

= Dirk Nowitzki =

Dirk Werner Nowitzki (German pronunciation : [ˈdɪʁk ˈvɔn ˈnoʊvʲtʃki]) (born June 19 , 1978) is a German professional basketball player for the Dallas Mavericks of the National Basketball Association (NBA) . An alumnus of Röntgen Gymnasium and the DJK Würzburg basketball club , Nowitzki was chosen as the ninth pick in the 1998 NBA draft by the Milwaukee Bucks and immediately traded to the Mavericks , where he has played since . Listed at 7 ft 0 in (2 @. @ 13 m) , Nowitzki is considered one of the greatest power forwards in basketball history .

Nowitzki led the Mavericks to 15 NBA Playoffs (2001 ? 2012 ; 2014 ? 2016) , including the franchise 's first Finals appearance in 2006 and only championship in 2011 . He is a 13 @-@ time All @-@ Star , a 12 @-@ time All @-@ NBA Team member , and the first European player to start in an All @-@ Star Game as well as the first to receive the NBA Most Valuable Player Award (2007) . Nowitzki is the highest @-@ scoring foreign @-@ born player in NBA @-@ history , currently being ranked 6th in all @-@ time scoring with over 29 @,@ 000 regular @-@ season points . He is also one of seven players who achieved a 50 ? 40 ? 90 season (2007) . He is the first Maverick voted onto an All @-@ NBA Team and holds several all @-@ time Mavericks franchise records . Kareem Abdul @-@ Jabbar and Nowitzki are the only players to achieve four consecutive 30 @-@ point , 15 @-@ rebound post @-@ season games (2001 ? 2002) .

Nowitzki led the German national basketball team to a bronze medal in the 2002 FIBA World Championship and silver in EuroBasket 2005 , and was the leading scorer and MVP in both tournaments . He was named the Euroscar European Basketball Player of the Year by the Italian sports newspaper Gazzetta dello Sport for five years running from 2002 to 2006 and again in 2011 . He was also named the Mister Europa European Player of the Year by the Italian sports magazine Superbasket in 2005 , and the FIBA Europe Men 's Player of the Year twice in 2005 and 2011 .

On December 18 , 2011 , Nowitzki was named the 2011 German Sports Personality of the Year , the first basketball player to receive the award . On December 10 , 2012 , he became the first non @-@ American player to receive the Naismith Legacy Award .

= = Early years = =

Born in Würzburg , Germany , Nowitzki comes from an athletic family : his mother Helga Nowitzki (née Bredenbröcker) was a professional basketball player and his father Jörg @-@ Werner was a handball player who represented Germany at the highest international level . His older sister Silke Nowitzki , a local champion in track and field , also became a basketball player and now works for the NBA in International TV .

Nowitzki was a very tall child ; most of the time he stood above his peers by a foot or more . He initially played handball and tennis , but soon grew tired of being called a " freak " for his height and eventually turned to basketball . After joining the local DJK Würzburg , the 15 @-@ year @-@ old attracted the attention of former German international basketball player Holger Geschwindner , who spotted his talent immediately and offered to coach him individually two to three times per week . After getting both the approval of Nowitzki and his parents , Geschwindner put his student through an unorthodox training scheme : he emphasized shooting and passing exercises , and shunned weight training and tactical drills , because he felt it was " unnecessary friction " . Furthermore , Geschwindner encouraged Nowitzki to play a musical instrument and read literature to make him a more complete personality .

After a year , the coach was so impressed with Nowitzki 's progress that he advised him : " You must now decide whether you want to play against the best in the world or just stay a local hero in Germany . If you choose the latter , we will stop training immediately , because nobody can prevent that anymore . But if you want to play against the best , we have to train on a daily basis . " After pondering this lifetime decision for two days , Nowitzki agreed to enter the full @-@ time training schedule , choosing the path to his eventual international career . Geschwindner let him train seven days a week with DJK Würzburg players and future German internationals Robert Garrett , Marvin Willoughby and Demond Greene , and in the summer of 1994 , then 16 @-@ year @-@ old

Nowitzki made the DJK squad .

= = DJK Würzburg (1994 ? 1998) = =

When Nowitzki joined the team , DJK played in the Second Bundesliga , South Division . His first trainer was Pit Stahl , who played the tall teenager as an outside @-@ scoring forward rather than an inside @-@ scoring center to utilise his shooting skills . In the 1994 ? 95 Second Bundesliga season , ambitious DJK finished as a disappointing sixth of 12 teams ; the rookie Nowitzki was often benched and struggled with bad school grades , which forced him to study rather than work on his game . In the next 1995 ? 96 Second Bundesliga season , Nowitzki established himself as a starter next to Finnish star forward Martti Kuisma and soon became a regular double @-@ digit scorer : after German national basketball coach Dirk Bauermann saw him score 24 points in a DJK game , he stated that " Dirk Nowitzki is the greatest German basketball talent of the last 10 , maybe 15 years . " DJK finished second in the South Division , but could not earn promotion after losing , 86 ? 62 , in the deciding match versus BG Ludwigsburg : in that game , Nowitzki scored only eight points .

In the 1996 ? 97 Second Bundesliga season , the team 's top scorer Kuisma left the team , and Geschwindner replaced Pit Stahl as head coach . Filling the void , Nowitzki averaged 19 @.@ 4 points per game and led DJK again to second place after the regular season , but could not help his team gain promotion . In the following 1997 ? 98 Second Bundesliga season , Nowitzki finished his " Abitur " (German A @-@ levels) , but had to do compulsory military service in the Bundeswehr which lasted from September 1 , 1997 to June 30 , 1998 ; Nowitzki described this period as " a tough time at first ; we had no privileges and had to participate in all the drills ... later (after finishing the tough " Grundausbildung " , the most intensive initial part of the service) it was much more relaxed . " Concerning basketball , the 18 @-@ year @-@ old , who had grown to 6 ft 11 in (2 @.@ 11 m) tall , made progress , leading DJK to a 36 : 4 point total (in Germany , a victory gives 2 : 0 points and a loss 0 : 2) and ending as leading scorer with 28 @.@ 2 points per game . In the promotion playoffs , DJK finally broke its hex , finishing at first place with 14 : 2 points and earning promotion to the next higher league ; Nowitzki scored 26 points in the deciding 95 ? 88 win against Freiburg and was voted " German Basketballer of the Year " by the German BASKET magazine .

Abroad , Nowitzki 's progress was noticed . In 1996 , FC Barcelona Bàsquet wanted to sign him , but Nowitzki refused to move before finishing his Abitur . A year later , the teenager participated in the Nike " Hoop Heroes Tour " , where he played against NBA stars like Charles Barkley and Scottie Pippen . In a 30 @-@ minute show match , Nowitzki outplayed Barkley and even dunked on him , causing the latter to exclaim : " The boy is a genius . If he wants to enter the NBA , he can call me . " On March 29 , 1998 , Nowitzki was chosen to play in the Nike Hoop Summit , one of the premier talent watches in U.S. men 's basketball . In a match between the U.S. talents and the international talents , Nowitzki scored 33 points on 6 @-@ of @-@ 12 shooting , 14 rebounds and 3 steals for the internationals and outplayed future US NBA players Rashard Lewis and Al Harrington . He impressed with a combination of quickness , ball handling , and shooting range , and from that moment a multitude of European and NBA clubs wanted to recruit him .

= = Dallas Mavericks (1998 ? present) = =

= = = Difficult start (1998 ? 99) = = =

After leading DJK Würzburg to promotion and with his Abitur and military service behind him , Nowitzki looked to the NBA for his future . Projected to be seventh pick in the 1998 NBA draft , he passed up many college offers and went directly into the NBA as a then @-@ still rare prep @-@ to @-@ pro player . In particular , Rick Pitino and Don Nelson , head coaches of the Boston Celtics and Dallas Mavericks respectively , were highly interested in acquiring him . After a 45 @-@ minute private workout with Pitino , where Nowitzki showcased his versatile shooting , rebounding and

passing skills , the Boston coach immediately compared him to Celtics legend Larry Bird ; Pitino assured Nowitzki that he would draft him with the Celtics ' first @-@ round draft pick at # 10 .

However , Pitino 's plan was foiled by Nelson , whose team had the sixth pick . Nelson worked out draft day deals with the Milwaukee Bucks and the Phoenix Suns : the Mavericks wanted Nowitzki and Suns reserve point guard Steve Nash ; the Bucks desired muscular forward Robert Traylor , who was projected to be drafted before Nowitzki ; and the Suns had set their sights on forward Pat Garrity , who was projected as a low first round pick . In the draft , the Mavericks drafted Traylor with their sixth pick , and the Bucks selected Nowitzki with their ninth and Garrity with their nineteenth pick . The Mavericks then traded Traylor to the Bucks for Nowitzki and Garrity , and they in return traded the latter to Phoenix for Nash .

In retrospect , Don Nelson , who had once coached the Bucks , had an outstanding trade instinct , essentially trading future career underachievers Traylor and Garrity for two future NBA MVPs in Nowitzki and Nash ; in addition , the new recruits quickly became close friends . Nowitzki became only the fourth German player in NBA history , following pivots Uwe Blab and Christian Welp and All @-@ Star swingman Detlef Schrempf , who was a 35 @-@ year @-@ old veteran of the Seattle SuperSonics when his young compatriot arrived . Nowitzki finished his DJK career as the only Würzburg player to have ever made the NBA .

In Dallas , Nowitzki joined a franchise which had last made the playoffs in 1990 . Shooting guard Michael Finley captained the squad , supported by 7 @-@ foot @-@ 6 @-@ inch (2 @-@ 29 m) center Shawn Bradley , once a number two draft pick , and team scoring leader Cedric Ceballos , an ex @-@ Laker forward . Nowitzki experienced a rocky start : prior to the 1998 ? 99 NBA season , NBA commissioner David Stern wanted to introduce a salary cap , causing the NBA players ' union to declare a strike , the combination putting the entire season in jeopardy . In limbo , Nowitzki returned to DJK Würzburg and played thirteen games before both sides worked out a late compromise deal that resulted in a shortened schedule of only 50 instead of 82 regular season games .

When the season finally started , Nowitzki struggled . Played as a power forward by coach Don Nelson , the 20 @-@ year @-@ old felt overpowered by the more athletic NBA forwards , was intimidated by the expectations as a number nine pick , and played bad defense , causing hecklers to taunt him as " Irk Nowitzki " , omitting the " D " which stands for " defense " in basketball slang . He only averaged 8 @-@ 2 points and 3 @-@ 4 rebounds in 20 @-@ 4 minutes of playing time . Looking back , Nowitzki said : " I was so frustrated I even contemplated going back to Germany [the jump from Second Bundesliga to the NBA] was like jumping out of an airplane hoping the parachute would somehow open . " The Mavericks only won 19 of their 50 games and missed the playoffs , although Nowitzki completed the season with eight double @-@ digit scoring games out of the last twelve .

= = = " Big Three " (1999 ? 2004) = = =

1999 ? 2000 season

In the 1999 ? 2000 NBA season , Don Nelson wanted to use Nowitzki as a point forward to make use of his passing skills . However , one of the most important moves was made off the hardwood : until then , the owner of the Mavericks was Ross Perot , Jr . , who had bought the franchise for \$ 125 million , but had no plans of investing in players and admitted he knew little of basketball . On January 4 , 2000 , he sold the Mavericks to Internet billionaire Mark Cuban for \$ 280 million . Cuban quickly invested into the Mavericks and restructured the franchise , attending every game at the sidelines , buying the team a \$ 46 million six @-@ star Boeing 757 for traveling , and increasing franchise revenues to over \$ 100 million . Nowitzki lauded Cuban : " He created the perfect environment ... we only have to go out and win . " As a result of Nelson 's tutelage , Cuban 's improvements and his own progress , Nowitzki significantly improved his averages . The second @-@ year pro now averaged 17 @-@ 5 points , 6 @-@ 5 rebounds and 2 @-@ 5 assists per game in 35 @-@ 8 minutes , had nine double @-@ double games , and scored a career @-@ high 32 points twice . He was voted runner @-@ up in the NBA Most Improved Player Award behind Jalen

Rose , and made it into the NBA All @-@ Star Sophomore squad along with peers Paul Pierce and Vince Carter . In the traditional Rookie @-@ Sophomore match , he scored 17 points , grabbed six rebounds and dished out four assists in an overtime loss against the rookie team led by Steve Francis and Lamar Odom . The 7 @-@ foot @-@ 0 @-@ inch (2 @-@ 13 m) Nowitzki also was chosen for the NBA All @-@ Star Three Point Shootout , becoming the tallest player ever to participate . After draining 15 shots in the first shootout , he entered the final round , where he finished as runner @-@ up to Jeff Hornacek . While he improved on an individual level , the Mavericks missed the playoffs after a mediocre 40 ? 42 season .

2000 ? 01 season

In the 2000 ? 01 NBA season , Nowitzki further improved his averages , recording 21 @-@ 8 points , 9 @-@ 2 rebounds and 2 @-@ 1 assists per game . Now playing the power forward position , he became the second player in NBA history after Robert Horry to score 100 3 @-@ pointers and 100 blocks in the regular season by registering 151 and 101 , respectively . As a sign of his growing importance , he joined team captain Finley as only one of two Mavericks to play and start in all 82 games and had 10 games in which he scored at least 30 points . Nowitzki became the first Maverick ever to be voted into the All @-@ NBA squads , making the Third Team . In addition , his best friend Nash became a valuable point guard , and with Finley scoring more than ever , pundits were calling this trio the " Big Three " of the Mavericks .

Posting a 53 ? 29 record in the regular season , the Mavericks reached the playoffs for the first time since 1990 . As the fifth seed , they were paired against the Utah Jazz of all @-@ time assist leader John Stockton and second all @-@ time leading scorer Karl Malone . After losing the first two games , Nowitzki scored 33 points in Games 3 and 4 and helped to tie the series . In Game 5 , the Mavericks trailed the entire game until Calvin Booth made a lay @-@ up that put them ahead , 84 ? 83 , with 9 @-@ 8 seconds left . Jazz players Bryon Russell and Malone missed last @-@ second shots and the Mavericks won , setting up a meeting with Texas rivals San Antonio Spurs . The Mavericks lost the first three games , and Nowitzki fell ill with flu and later lost a tooth after a collision with Spurs guard Terry Porter . After a Game 4 win , Nowitzki scored 42 points and 18 rebounds in Game 5 , but could not prevent a deciding 105 ? 87 loss . While Sports Illustrated pointed out that the Mavericks shot badly during Game 5 , Nowitzki was lauded for scoring his playoff career @-@ high 42 points . Nowitzki said : " It 's a disappointment to end the season on a blowout . "

2001 ? 02 season

Prior to the 2001 ? 02 NBA season , Nowitzki signed a six @-@ year , \$ 90 million contract extension , which made him the second highest @-@ paid German athlete after Formula One champion Michael Schumacher . He continued to improve , now averaging 23 @-@ 4 points , 9 @-@ 9 rebounds and 2 @-@ 4 assists per game , was voted into the All @-@ NBA Second Team and into his first All @-@ Star Game . He also had 13 games with at least 30 points and 10 rebounds , third behind Shaquille O 'Neal and Tim Duncan . Powered by new recruit Nick Van Exel , who became a high @-@ scoring sixth man , the Mavericks " Big Three " convincingly made the playoffs with a 57 ? 25 record .

The Mavericks swept Kevin Garnett and the Minnesota Timberwolves in the first round of the 2002 NBA Playoffs 3 ? 0 : Nowitzki outscored Garnett with 33 @-@ 3 points per game versus 24 @-@ 0 . In the second round , the Mavericks met the Sacramento Kings with rival power forward Chris Webber . After splitting the first two games , Kings coach Rick Adelman changed his defensive scheme : before , Webber had defended Nowitzki one @-@ on @-@ one , but now , the Kings coach ordered his smaller but quicker player Hedo Türko?lu to cover Nowitzki . Türko?lu would use his agility to play Nowitzki tightly , and if the taller Maverick tried to post up Türko?lu , Webber would double team Nowitzki . In Game 3 in Dallas , the Mavericks lost , 125 ? 119 ; Nowitzki scored only 19 points and said : " I simply could not pass Türko?lu , and if I did , I ran into a double team and committed too many turnovers . " In Game 4 , more frustration awaited the German : the Mavericks gave away a 14 @-@ point lead , although the entire Kings starting frontcourt of center Vlade Divac and power forward Chris Webber (both fouled out) and small forward Peja Stojakovi? (injury) were eliminated in the closing stages of the game . Nowitzki missed two potentially game deciding jump shots , and the Mavericks lost , 115 ? 113 , at home . In Game 5 , the demoralised Mavericks

were no match for the spirited Kings , lost , 114 ? 101 , and were eliminated again . Among others , nba.com remarked that the Kings defended better than the Mavericks : in those five games , the statisticians counted 115 Sacramento layups against the Mavericks , meaning the Kings averaged 23 uncontested baskets (i.e. , 46 easy points) per game . However , Nowitzki received a consolation award : the Gazzetta dello Sport voted him as " European Basketballer of the Year " , his 104 votes lifting him over second @-@ placed Dejan Bodiroga (54) and Stojakovic (50) .

2002 ? 03 season

Before the 2002 ? 03 NBA season , Don Nelson and Mark Cuban put more emphasis on defense in the training drills , specialising in a zone defense anchored by prolific shotblockers Raef LaFrentz and Shawn Bradley . The Mavericks won their first eleven games , and Finley , Nash and Nowitzki were voted " Western Conference Players of the Month " in November 2002 . In that season , Nowitzki lifted his averages again , now scoring 25 @.@ 1 points , 9 @.@ 9 rebounds and 3 @.@ 0 assists per game . In addition , the German had 41 double @-@ double games , the seventh highest figure that season . By averaging 25 @.@ 1 , he became the first European to score 2 @,@ 000 points in a season . As a reward , he was voted into the All @-@ Star Game and the All @-@ NBA Second Team again , and was also runner @-@ up in the " German Athlete of the Year " election , only losing to ski jumper Sven Hannawald . He led the Mavericks to a franchise @-@ high 60 ? 22 record , which earned them the third seed : as a result , the Mavericks had to play sixth seed Portland Trail Blazers in the 2003 NBA Playoffs . Now playing in a best @-@ of @-@ seven series instead of the former best @-@ of @-@ five , the Mavs quickly won the first three games , but then completely lost their rhythm and the next three . In Game 7 , Portland held the game close , but Nowitzki hit a clutch three to make it 100 ? 94 with 1 : 21 left and the Mavs won 107 ? 95 . " This was the most important basket of my career , " he later said , " I was not prepared to go on vacation that early . " He later added in an ESPN interview : " We had to be more physical in the paint and rebound the ball . We worked hard all season to get the home @-@ court advantage and we used that advantage today . "

In the next round , the Mavericks met the Kings again . After losing Game 1 at home 124 ? 113 , Nowitzki (25 points) and veteran sixth man Van Exel (36) led Dallas to a spectacular 132 ? 110 Game 2 win in which the Mavericks scored 83 points in the first half . Helped by the fact that Kings star forward Chris Webber injured his meniscus , Nowitzki and Van Exel led the Mavericks to a 141 ? 137 OT win in Game 3 , before dropping Game 4 99 ? 83 , where Nowitzki only scored 11 points and was ejected after angrily kicking over a load of towels . After splitting the next two games , Nowitzki delivered a clutch performance in Game 7 , scoring 30 points , grabbing 19 rebounds and playing strong defense , and led the Mavericks to a series @-@ deciding 112 ? 99 win . ESPN lauded Nowitzki as " Big D " , and after again winning a Game 7 , the German added : " We 've really learned how to close games out . "

In the Western Conference Finals , the Mavericks met the Spurs again . In Game 1 in San Antonio , Nowitzki scored 38 points on Duncan and led his team to a 113 ? 110 win . In Game 2 , Duncan quickly put Nowitzki in foul trouble , and the Spurs equalised the series with a 132 ? 110 win . In Game 3 , Nowitzki went up for a rebound and Spurs guard Manu Ginóbili collided with his knee , forcing him out of the series : without their top scorer , the Mavericks still fought valiantly and trailed , 3 ? 2 , before Spurs guard Steve Kerr got hot from beyond the arc late in Game 6 to help San Antonio clinch the series with a 90 ? 78 victory . Don Nelson later commented : " We were playing so well for so long and the bottom just dropped out ... We went cold at the wrong time . " Nowitzki took very little consolation in the fact that he again was voted " European Basketballer of the Year " and was named " Best European Basketballer " in a general survey of the NBA general managers .

2003 ? 04 season

In the 2003 ? 04 NBA season , Cuban and Nelson decided to add more offensive wing players to their squad . As a result , the Mavericks acquired two All @-@ Star forwards , namely Golden State Warriors All @-@ Star forward Antawn Jamison (along with Danny Fortson , Jiri Welsch and Chris Mills , for Van Exel and role players) and Antoine Walker (Boston Celtics) who came for center Raef LaFrentz . Basketball experts were wary about the latter trade , because it sent away the Mavericks starting center ; they argued it left a hole in the middle that the aging , injury @-@ prone

backup pivot Shawn Bradley could not fill anymore . Unable to trade for a new center , Nelson decided to start the prolific rebounder Nowitzki at pivot , put Walker on Nowitzki 's usual power forward spot and played Jamison as a high @-@ scoring sixth man . To cope with his more physical role , Nowitzki put on 20 lb (9 @.@ 1 kg) of muscle mass over summer , sacrificed part of his agility , and put more emphasis on defense rather than scoring : as a result , his averages fell for the first time in his career , dropping to 21 @.@ 8 points , 8 @.@ 7 rebounds and 2 @.@ 7 assists per game , but he still led the Mavericks in scoring , rebounding , steals (1 @.@ 2 spg) and blocks (1 @.@ 35 bpg) . These figures earned him nominations for the All @-@ Star Game and the All @-@ NBA Third Team . Compiling a 52 ? 30 record , the Mavericks met their familiar rivals the Sacramento Kings once again , but were eliminated in 5 .

= = = Franchise player (2004 ? present) = = =

2004 ? 05 season

Before the 2004 ? 05 NBA season , the Mavericks were re @-@ tooled again . Defensive center Erick Dampier was acquired from the Golden State Warriors , but Nowitzki 's close friend Steve Nash left Dallas and returned to the Phoenix Suns as a free agent . During the season , long @-@ time head coach Don Nelson resigned , and his assistant Avery Johnson took on coaching duties . In the midst of these changes , Nowitzki stepped up his game and averaged 26 @.@ 1 points a game (a career high) and 9 @.@ 7 rebounds , and his 1 @.@ 5 blocks and 3 @.@ 1 assists were also career numbers . In addition , Nowitzki scored at least 10 points in every game and was one of four players who registered at least 1 @.@ 2 steals and blocks per game . This was also his second 2 @,@ 000 @-@ point season ; his 26 @.@ 1 points scoring average set a new record by a European player . On December 2 , 2004 , Nowitzki scored 53 points in an overtime win against the Houston Rockets , a career best . As a reward , Nowitzki was voted to the All @-@ NBA First Team for the first time . He also placed third in the league 's MVP voting , behind Nash and Shaquille O 'Neal . By being elected to the All @-@ NBA First Team , Nowitzki became the first player who did not attend a United States high school or college to be on the All @-@ NBA First Team .

However , the Mavericks had a subpar 2005 NBA Playoffs campaign . In the first round , Dallas met Houston Rockets scoring champion Tracy McGrady and 7 ? 6 center Yao Ming , and Nowitzki was expected to average high figures against unheralded forward Ryan Bowen : nba.com described Bowen as " overmatched " versus the German . Instead , Bowen limited Nowitzki to just 21 points in Game 1 and 26 points in Game 2 , where the latter hit 8 of 26 shots from the field . The Rockets took a 2 ? 0 series lead before the Mavericks won three games in a row . After losing Game 6 , Dallas won Game 7 convincingly and won the series even though Nowitzki struggled with his shooting . In the Western Conference Semifinals , the Mavericks met the Phoenix Suns , the new club of Nash . They split the first four games , before the Suns won the last two games . In Game 6 , which the Mavericks lost in overtime , Nowitzki was again not at his best : he scored 28 points , but also sank only 9 of his 25 field goal attempts ; in addition , he was visibly irritated , repeatedly shouting at his teammates and missing all five of his shots in OT .

2005 ? 06 season

Prior to the 2005 ? 06 NBA season , veteran Mavericks captain Michael Finley was waived over the summer , and now Nowitzki was the last player remaining from the Mavericks ' " Big Three " of Nash , Finley , and himself . Nowitzki blossomed as the sole franchise player , averaging 26 @.@ 6 points , 9 @.@ 0 rebounds , and 2 @.@ 8 assists . Not only was this his third 2 @,@ 000 @-@ point season , but his scoring average of 26 @.@ 6 points was highest ever by a European . He improved his shooting percentage , setting personal season records in field goals (48 @.@ 0 %) , three @-@ point shots (40 @.@ 6 %) and free throws (90 @.@ 1 %) . During the 2006 All @-@ Star Weekend in Houston , Nowitzki scored 18 points to defeat Seattle SuperSonics guard Ray Allen and Washington Wizards guard Gilbert Arenas in the Three @-@ Point Shootout contest .

Nowitzki paced Dallas to a 60 @-@ win season . The team finished with the third @-@ best record in the league , behind the defending champion San Antonio Spurs and defending Eastern Conference champion Detroit Pistons . As in the 2004 ? 05 season , he finished third in the league 's

MVP voting , this time behind Nash and LeBron James . He was again elected to the first team All @-@ NBA squad . Nowitzki confirmed his superstar status during the playoffs as he averaged 27 @.@ 0 points , 11 @.@ 7 rebounds , and 2 @.@ 9 assists . The Mavericks swept the Memphis Grizzlies , 4 ? 0 , with Nowitzki scored a clutch three @-@ pointer in the closing seconds of Game 3 which tied the game and forced overtime . In the Western Conference Semifinals , the Mavericks played against the San Antonio Spurs again . After splitting the first six games , the Mavericks took a 20 @-@ point lead in Game 7 before Spur Manu Ginóbili broke a tie at 101 by hitting a 3 with 30 seconds left . On the next play , Nowitzki completed a three @-@ point play , which tied the game at 104 . In the end , the Mavericks won , 119 ? 111 , and Nowitzki ended the game with 37 points and 15 rebounds . Nowitzki commented : " I don 't know how the ball went in . Manu hit my hand . It was a lucky bounce . "

The Mavericks advanced to the Western Conference Finals , where they again met the Suns . Nowitzki scored 50 points to lead the Mavericks to a victory in the crucial Game 5 with the series tied at 2 ; the Mavericks won the series in six games and faced the Miami Heat in the 2006 NBA Finals . A content Nowitzki commented : " We 've been a good road team all season long , we believed in each other . We went through some ups and downs this season , but the playoffs are all about showing heart and playing together . " Of Nowitzki 's performance , ESPN columnist Bill Simmons wrote , " Dirk is playing at a higher level than any forward since [Larry] Bird . " The Mavericks took an early 2 ? 0 lead , but then gave away a late 15 @-@ point lead in a Game 3 loss and finally fell to a scoring onslaught by Heat Finals MVP Dwyane Wade : Wade scored at least 36 points in the next four games , all of which the Heat won . Nowitzki only made 20 of his last 55 shots in the final three games as the Mavericks lost the Finals series , 4 ? 2 , to the Heat . The German was criticized by ESPN as " clearly ... not as his best this series " and remarked : " That was a tough loss (in Game 3) and that really changed the whole momentum of the series After that , they got confidence . They played a lot better afterwards . "

2006 ? 07 MVP season

The 2006 ? 07 season was the year Nowitzki was named the league 's Most Valuable Player . He shot a career @-@ best 50 @.@ 2 % from the field , and recorded averages of 24 @.@ 6 points , 8 @.@ 9 rebounds , and 3 @.@ 4 assists and led the Mavericks to a franchise @-@ high 67 wins , which meant Dallas earned the first seed of the 2007 NBA Playoffs . He averaged 50 % from the field , 40 % for three pointers , and 90 % from the free throw line becoming , at the time , only the fourth player in NBA history to join the 50 ? 40 ? 90 club . Nowitzki was touted as the overwhelming favorite for the Most Valuable Player award , and was expected to lead the Mavericks to an easy win against the eighth @-@ seed Golden State Warriors , despite the Warriors having won all three regular @-@ season meetings against Dallas . However , the Mavericks ended up losing to the Warriors in six games , marking the first time a # 8 seed had beaten the # 1 in a best @-@ of @-@ seven series in NBA history . In the clinching Game 6 , Nowitzki shot just 2 ? 13 from the field for only eight points . Defended by Stephen Jackson , Nowitzki averaged nearly five points less than his regular @-@ season average in that series and shot 38 @.@ 3 % from the field as compared to 50 @.@ 2 % during the regular season . He described that loss as a low point in his career : " This series , I couldn 't put my stamp on it the way I wanted to . That 's why I 'm very disappointed . " In spite of this historic playoffs loss , Nowitzki was named the NBA 's regular @-@ season Most Valuable Player and beat his friend and back @-@ to @-@ back NBA MVP Nash with more than 100 votes . He also became the first European player in NBA history to receive the honor .

2007 ? 08 season

The 2007 ? 08 campaign saw another first @-@ round playoffs exit for Nowitzki and his Mavericks . Despite a mid @-@ season trade that sent veteran NBA All @-@ Star Jason Kidd to Dallas , the Mavericks finished seventh in a highly competitive Western Conference . Nowitzki averaged 23 @.@ 6 points , 8 @.@ 6 rebounds , and a career @-@ high 3 @.@ 5 assists for the season . In the playoffs , they faced rising star Chris Paul 's New Orleans Hornets , and were eliminated in five games . The playoff loss led to the firing of Avery Johnson as head coach and the eventual hiring of Rick Carlisle . The few positive highlights that season for Nowitzki were his first career triple @-@ double against the Milwaukee Bucks on February 6 , 2008 , with 29 points , 10 rebounds , and a

career @-@ high 12 assists , and on March 8 , 2008 (34 points against the New Jersey Nets) , when he surpassed Rolando Blackman with his 16,644th point to become the Mavericks ' all @-@ time career points leader .

2008 ? 09 season

The 2008 ? 09 NBA season saw Nowitzki finish with averages of 25 @.@ 9 points , 8 @.@ 4 rebounds , and 2 @.@ 4 assists . He was fourth in the league in scoring , and garnered his fourth All @-@ NBA First Team selection . He also made the 2009 All @-@ Star game , his eighth appearance . Nowitzki led Dallas to a tight finish towards the playoffs , finishing 50 ? 32 for the season (6th in the West) , after a slow 2 ? 7 start . In the playoffs , the German led Dallas to an upset win over long @-@ time rival San Antonio (the third seed) , winning the first @-@ round series , 4 ? 1 . The Mavericks , however , fell short against the Denver Nuggets , 4 ? 1 , in the second round , with Nowitzki averaging 34 @.@ 4 points , 11 @.@ 6 rebounds , and 4 assists in the series .

2009 ? 10 season

The Mavericks finished the 2009 ? 10 NBA season as the second seed for the 2010 NBA Playoffs ? it was their 10th consecutive season with at least 50 regular season wins . Notable additions to the squad were multiple All @-@ Stars Shawn Marion and Caron Butler , with the latter coming in the second half of the season . On January 13 , 2010 , Nowitzki became the 34th player in NBA history ? and the first European ? to hit the 20 @,@ 000 @-@ point milestone , while ending the regular season with averages of 25 points , 7 @.@ 7 rebounds , 2 @.@ 7 assists , and 1 block . He was selected to the 2010 All @-@ Star Game , his ninth appearance . The Mavericks faced off against San Antonio once more in the first round of the playoffs , but for the third time in four seasons , they failed to progress to the next round . Nowitzki was the only consistent player throughout the series for the Mavericks , averaging 26 @.@ 7 points per outing , while Jason Terry , second @-@ leading scorer for the Mavericks , averaged 12 @.@ 7 points per game compared to his 16 @.@ 6 regular season . Despite being a free agent , on July 5 , 2010 , Nowitzki agreed to remain with Dallas by re @-@ signing to a four @-@ year , \$ 80 million deal .

2010 ? 11 championship season

The most significant change to the 2010 ? 11 team roster was the arrival of Tyson Chandler via trade . Nowitzki was injured in the middle of the season , during which the Mavericks recorded their worst losing streak in over a decade . Nowitzki finished the regular season with averages of 23 points , 7 rebounds , and 3 assists . Despite missing 9 games , Nowitzki was selected to the 2011 All @-@ Star Game , his tenth appearance . The Mavericks concluded the regular season with 57 wins , seeding third behind the Spurs and Lakers for the 2011 NBA Playoffs . During the playoffs , despite their seeding , many predicted that Dallas would lose in the first round to Portland , and after blowing a 23 @-@ point fourth @-@ quarter lead in Game 4 to even the series at 2 ? 2 , the Mavericks appeared ready for another postseason collapse . However , Dallas won the final two games to advance . They then swept the two @-@ time defending champion Lakers in the semifinals in Phil Jackson 's final year as an NBA coach . In the Conference Finals , they faced the Oklahoma City Thunder and their All @-@ NBA duo of Kevin Durant and Russell Westbrook . In Game 1 , Nowitzki scored 48 points while shooting 12 / 15 from the field while setting an NBA record of 24 consecutive free throws made in a game as well as most free throws in a game without a miss . In Game 4 , with Dallas up , 2 ? 1 , Nowitzki scored 40 points to rally his team from a 99 ? 84 deficit in the fourth quarter with 5 minutes left and eventually win , 112 ? 105 , in OT to take a 3 ? 1 series lead . Dallas overcame another fourth @-@ quarter deficit in Game 5 to win the Western Conference Title . In the 2011 NBA Finals , Dallas once again faced the Heat , which had acquired All @-@ Stars LeBron James and Chris Bosh before the season began . During the Game 1 loss in Miami , he tore a tendon in his left middle finger ; however , MRIs were negative , and Nowitzki vowed that the injury would not be a factor . In Game 2 , he led a Dallas rally from an 88 ? 73 fourth @-@ quarter deficit , capped by a driving left @-@ handed layup over Bosh to tie the series at 1 . Miami took a 2 ? 1 series lead after Nowitzki missed a potential game @-@ tying shot at the end of Game 3 . Despite carrying a 101 ° F fever in Game 4 , he hit the winning basket to tie the series yet again at 2 , evoking comparisons to Michael Jordan 's " Flu Game " against Utah in the 1997 NBA

Finals . Dallas went on to win the next two games , with Nowitzki scoring 10 fourth @-@ quarter points in the series @-@ clinching game in Miami , bringing the first championship to the franchise . In the series , Nowitzki scored 62 points total in the six fourth quarters , equaling the combined fourth @-@ quarter output of James and Wade . He was named Finals MVP , joining a list of 10 other players to have been an NBA champion , NBA Finals MVP , an NBA regular season MVP , and a ten @-@ time All @-@ Star . For the 2011 playoffs , Nowitzki averaged 27 @.@ 7 points , 8 @.@ 1 rebounds , and 2 @.@ 5 assists in 21 games .

2011 ? 12 season

As Dallas celebrated their title , the NBA was in a lockout . It ended on December 8 , 2011 . The defending champions lost core players , such as DeShawn Stevenson , J.J. Barea , Peja Stojakovi? , and Tyson Chandler , while adding veteran all @-@ star Vince Carter , Lamar Odom , and Delonte West in free agency . The Mavericks played only two preseason games , which led to a slow start for Nowitzki . Soon , Nowitzki became the 98th player in NBA history to play in 1 @,@ 000 games . Nowitzki received his championship ring on January 25 , 2012 . After scoring his 23,335th point , Nowitzki passed Robert Parish on the all @-@ time scoring list at # 20 . He then passed Charles Barkley for 19th , and scored his 24,000th point on April 15 , 2012 against the Lakers . Nowitzki blocked a shot by the Celtics ' Avery Bradley , which was his 1,000th block . He became one of only 3 players in NBA history with at least 1 @,@ 000 3 @-@ pointers and blocks , joining Clifford Robinson and Rasheed Wallace . Nowitzki made his 11th straight All @-@ Star game appearance in Orlando . Nowitzki scored 31 points in the second half against Houston on April 18 , 2012 , including 21 in the fourth quarter . It marked the third @-@ highest scoring half by a Dallas player in franchise history . The 21 points in the fourth quarter also represented Nowitzki 's third @-@ highest scoring quarter of his career . Carrying the load of the Mavericks , Nowitzki led his team in scoring 45 times . On March 30 , he led the Mavs down from 15 points , including a game winner , against the Magic . Nowitzki 's streak of 11 seasons with 1 @,@ 500 points came to an end after scoring 1 @,@ 342 in the shortened NBA season . The Mavs clinched the seventh spot in the West , and were matched against the Oklahoma City Thunder in the 2012 NBA Playoffs . The Thunder swept the Mavs in 4 games .

2012 ? 13 season

After failing to sign coveted free agents Deron Williams and Steve Nash , the Mavericks retooled their roster by letting go of Jason Kidd , Jason Terry and Brendan Haywood , and acquiring younger players such as O. J. Mayo , Darren Collison , as well as veteran big men Chris Kaman and Elton Brand . Nowitzki plans to play out the remainder of his 4 @-@ year , 80 million dollar contract that expires in 2014 . Nowitzki underwent knee surgery in October 2012 and missed the first 27 games of the season . He returned on December 23 , 2012 , in a game against San Antonio .

In January 2013 , Nowitzki and some of his teammates (including Mayo , Brand , Kaman , Carter and then teammate Dahntay Jones) made a pact not to shave their beards until the team reached .500 . They were often called " The Beard Bros. " On April 14 , 2013 , after a fade away jumper in a game against the New Orleans Hornets , Nowitzki became the 17th player in NBA history to score 25 @,@ 000 points . The Mavs went on to win the game , climbing back up to .500 with a 40 ? 40 record and Nowitzki shaved his beard . However the Mavericks missed the playoffs for the first time since Nowitzki 's second season , ending their 12 @-@ year playoff streak .

2013 ? 14 season

At the start of the season , the Mavs let go of players they had signed the year before like O.J. Mayo , Chris Kaman , Elton Brand and Darren Collison to make room for the signing of shooting guard Monta Ellis and point guard Devin Harris . On November 12 , 2013 , in a 105 ? 95 victory over the Washington Wizards , Nowitzki finished the game with 19 points and passed Jerry West on the NBA scoring list with 25 @,@ 197 points . On November 20 , 2013 , in a 123 ? 120 victory over the Houston Rockets , Nowitzki finished the game with 35 points and passed Reggie Miller on the NBA scoring list with 25 @,@ 298 points . On December 23 , 2013 , in a 111 ? 104 victory over the Houston Rockets , Nowitzki finished the game with 31 points and passed Alex English on the NBA scoring list with 25 @,@ 631 points .

On January 29 , 2014 , Nowitzki scored his 26 @,@ 000 point in a 115 ? 117 loss to the Houston

Rockets . In 35 minutes of play , he recorded 38 points , 17 rebounds and 3 assists . On March 12 , 2014 , in a 108 ? 101 victory over the Utah Jazz , Nowitzki finished the game with 31 points and passed John Havlicek on the NBA scoring list with 26 @,@ 426 points . On April 8 , 2014 , Nowitzki scored his 26,712th point , passing Oscar Robertson to move to the 10th position on the all @-@ time scoring list . Nowitzki led the Mavericks back to the Playoffs where they would face their in state rival San Antonio Spurs in the first round . Dallas lost the series in seven games and the Spurs went on to win the NBA championship .

2014 ? 15 season

On July 15 , 2014 , Nowitzki re @-@ signed with the Mavericks to a reported three @-@ year , \$ 25 million contract . He was also reunited with former championship teammate Tyson Chandler , who was traded to Dallas after a 3 @-@ year stint with New York . Also to come over from New York was point guard Raymond Felton . The Mavericks made big strides in the off @-@ season to put Dirk with some considerable talent , signing a rising small forward Chandler Parsons and veteran point guard Jameer Nelson . The Mavericks later signed former championship teammate J. J. Barea after the Timberwolves waived him .

On November 11 , 2014 , Nowitzki scored 23 points to surpass Hakeem Olajuwon as the highest @-@ scoring player born outside the United States , as the Mavericks came from 24 points down to defeat Sacramento 106 ? 98 for their 21st straight regular @-@ season win at home against the Kings . Nowitzki hit a jumper from just inside the three @-@ point line early in the fourth quarter to pass Olajuwon at No. 9 , and he finished the night at 26 @,@ 953 career points . Six days later , Nowitzki became the fourth player in NBA history to eclipse 27 @,@ 000 career points with the same franchise , joining a prestigious group that includes Michael Jordan , Karl Malone and Kobe Bryant . On December 26 against the Los Angeles Lakers , Nowitzki passed Elvin Hayes for eighth place on the NBA 's all @-@ time scoring list . He went on to pass Moses Malone for seventh place on the NBA 's all @-@ time scoring list on January 5 , 2015 in a 96 ? 88 overtime win over the Brooklyn Nets . He recored his 10,000th career rebound on March 24 against the San Antonio Spurs , and scored his 28,000th career point on April 1 against the Oklahoma City Thunder .

The Mavericks finished the regular season as the No. 7 seed in the Western Conference with a record of 50 ? 32 . They faced the Houston Rockets in the first round of the playoffs and lost the series in five games .

2015 ? 16 season

On November 11 , 2015 , Nowitzki scored a season @-@ high 31 points in a 118 ? 108 win over the Los Angeles Clippers . He also grabbed a team @-@ high 11 rebounds and passed former teammate Shawn Marion for 15th on the all @-@ time career rebounding list . On December 12 , in a loss to the Washington Wizards , he moved past Jason Richardson for 16th all @-@ time in three @-@ point shots made , finishing the game with 1 @,@ 609 career three @-@ pointers . On December 23 , Nowitzki moved past Shaquille O 'Neal into sixth place on the NBA 's career scoring list , then made the go @-@ ahead basket with 19 @.@ 2 seconds left in overtime to help the Mavericks defeat the Brooklyn Nets , 119 ? 118 . On January 12 , in an overtime loss to the Cleveland Cavaliers , he became the 14th NBA player to reach 46 @,@ 000 career minutes . On January 18 , he tied a season high with 31 points and had 11 rebounds for his sixth double @-@ double of the season in a 118 ? 113 overtime win over the Boston Celtics . On February 21 , he scored 18 points against the Philadelphia 76ers , becoming the sixth player in NBA history to reach 29 @,@ 000 career points . Three days later , he set a new season high with 33 points in a loss to the Oklahoma City Thunder . On March 20 , he set another season high mark with 40 points in a 132 ? 120 overtime win over the Portland Trail Blazers . His 20th career 40 @-@ point game was his first since January 2014 , and the first by a 37 @-@ year @-@ old since Karl Malone in 2000 ? 01 . On April 11 , in a win over the Utah Jazz that clinched the Mavericks a spot in the playoffs for the 15th time in 16 years , Nowitzki hit four three @-@ pointers , becoming the 15th player in NBA history with at least 1 @,@ 700 career triples .

In Game 4 of the Mavericks ' first @-@ round playoff series against the Oklahoma City Thunder , Nowitzki passed Elgin Baylor (3 @,@ 623 points) for 15th on the NBA 's career playoff scoring list .

2016 ? 17 season

On July 22 , 2016 , Nowitzki agreed to re @-@ sign with the Mavericks on a two @-@ year , \$ 50 million contract .

= = International career = =

Nowitzki began playing for the German national basketball team in 1997 . In his debut tournament , the 1999 FIBA European championship , the 21 @-@ year @-@ old rookie emerged as the main German scorer , but Germany finished seventh and failed to qualify for the 2000 Olympic Games . In the 2001 FIBA European Championship , Nowitzki was top scorer with 28 @.@ 7 points per game , and narrowly lost the MVP vote to Serbian player Peja Stojakovi? . Germany reached the semifinals and were close to beating host nation Turkey , but Hedo Turkoglu hit a 3 @-@ point buzzer beater to tie it , and the Turks eventually won in overtime . Germany then lost 99 ? 90 against Spain , and did not win a medal . However , with averages of 28 @.@ 7 points and 9 @.@ 1 rebounds , Nowitzki led the tournament in both statistics , and was voted to the All @-@ Star team . Back home , the German basketball team attracted up to 3 @.@ 7 million television viewers , a German basketball record at the time .

Nowitzki finally earned his first medal when he led Germany to a bronze medal in the 2002 World Championship . In the quarter @-@ finals against the Pau Gasol @-@ led Spain , Spain was up 52 ? 46 after three quarters , but then Nowitzki scored 10 points in the last quarter and led Germany to a 70 ? 62 win . In the semi @-@ finals , his team played against the Argentinian squad led by Manu Ginóbili , but despite leading , 74 ? 69 , four minutes from the end and despite Argentina losing Ginobili to a foot injury , the South Americans won , 86 ? 80 . However , the Germans won 117 ? 94 against New Zealand in the consolation finals and won bronze , and tournament top scorer Nowitzki (24 @.@ 0 ppg) was elected MVP . Back in Germany , over 4 million television viewers followed the games , an all @-@ time record in German basketball history .

The 2003 FIBA European Championship proved to be a major disappointment for Nowitzki and his German squad . In a preparation game , he suffered a foot injury after a collision with French player Florent Pietrus ; as a result , Nowitzki played inconsistently and was also often target of hard fouls . In the decisive second round match against Italy (only the winner was allowed to play the medal round) , Germany lost , 86 ? 84 , finished ninth and did not qualify for the 2004 Olympic Games . Nowitzki scored 22 @.@ 5 points per game (third overall) , but in general seemed to lack focus and dominance due to his injury .

In the 2005 FIBA European Championship , Nowitzki came back strong . He surprisingly led a depleted German squad into the Finals , beating title favorites Slovenia in the quarter @-@ finals and Spain in the semi @-@ finals on the way . Eurobasket pundits praised Nowitzki in both matches : against Slovenia (76 ? 62) , the forward scored a game high 22 points and commented : " The Slovenians underestimated us . They said we were the team they wanted and that was wrong , you shouldn 't do that in the quarter @-@ finals . " Against Spain (74 ? 73) , Nowitzki scored a game @-@ high 27 points and scored the decisive basket : down by one and with only a few seconds to go , he drove on Spanish forward Jorge Garbajosa , and hit a baseline jump shot over Garbajosa 's outstretched arms with 3 @.@ 9 seconds to go . The German later commented : " It was indescribable . Garbajosa kind of pushed me towards the baseline so I just went with it . " Despite losing the Finals , 78 ? 62 , to the Greeks , Nowitzki was the tournament 's leading scorer (26 @.@ 7 ppg) and second @-@ leading rebounder (10 @.@ 8 rpg) and shot blocker (1 @.@ 8 bpg) , and was voted Most Valuable Player of the tournament . When he was subbed out towards the end of the final , Nowitzki received standing ovation from the crowd , which he later recalled as " one of the best moments of [his] career " . In the 2006 FIBA World Championships , Nowitzki led the German team to an eighth place and commented : " It 's tough luck . But overall , finishing eighth in the world is not bad . "

In the 2007 FIBA European Championship , in which the top three teams automatically qualified for the 2008 Olympics , Nowitzki led Germany to a fifth place . He was the leading scorer with 24 @.@ 0 points per game . The fifth place meant that Germany fell short of direct qualification , but was

allowed to participate in the 2008 Olympic Qualifying Tournament . Nowitzki led Germany into a decisive match against Puerto Rico for the last remaining slot . In that crucial match , he scored a game @-@ high 32 points and was vital for the 96 ? 82 win which sent the German basketball team to their first Olympics since the 1992 Summer Olympics . Nowitzki was chosen to be the flag bearer for the German Olympic Team at the Opening Ceremony for the 2008 Olympics . Nowitzki led the German team to a tenth @-@ place finish , and averaged 17 @.@ 0 points , and 7 @.@ 6 rebounds for the tournament . In 2009 , Nowitzki skipped the 2009 FIBA European Championships . In July 2010 he said that he would skip the 2010 FIBA World Championship .

In Summer 2011 , Nowitzki played with Germany in the EuroBasket 2011 , where the team reached ninth place . In 2015 , Nowitzki captained Germany at the EuroBasket . They won only one game , and were eliminated in the group stage , on home soil . In January 2016 , Nowitzki officially announced his retirement from Germany 's national team . In his career with Germany 's senior men 's national team , he averaged 19 @.@ 8 points , 7 @.@ 3 rebounds , and 1 @.@ 6 assists per game .

= = Player profile = =

Nowitzki is a versatile frontcourt player who mostly plays the power forward position , but has also played center and small forward throughout his career . An exceptional shooter for his size , Nowitzki has made 88 % of his free throws , nearly 50 % of his field goal attempts and nearly 40 % of his 3 @-@ point shots , and won the 2006 NBA All @-@ Star Three @-@ Point Shootout competition . In 2006 ? 07 , Nowitzki became only the fifth member of the NBA 's 50 ? 40 ? 90 Club for players who shot 50 % or better from the field , 40 % or better on three @-@ pointers , and 90 % or better on free @-@ throws in a single season while achieving the NBA league minimum number of makes in each category .

Throughout Nowitzki 's career , he has responded to the increased pressure of the playoffs by increasing his productivity . As of the end of the 2013 ? 14 season , he had averaged 22 @.@ 5 points and 8 @.@ 1 rebounds in the regular season . In the playoffs , he has averaged 25 @.@ 6 points and 10 @.@ 1 rebounds , which only Hakeem Olajuwon , Bob Pettit and Elgin Baylor have managed to do . In the most pressure packed games , such as playoff elimination games he averages 28 @.@ 8 points , 11 @.@ 8 rebounds . He has had 14 elimination games where he scored 30 or more points , which ties him with Jerry West for most all time . Of the top 100 elimination game performances in the last 20 years , Nowitzki has had the best performances in 8 of them , more than any other player in the NBA in that same time frame .

His shooting accuracy combined with his long seven @-@ foot frame and unique shooting mechanics , such as having a release point above his head , makes contesting his jump shots very difficult . Before the start of the 2011 NBA Finals , LeBron James called Nowitzki 's one @-@ legged fadeaway the second most unstoppable move ever , only behind Kareem Abdul @-@ Jabbar 's skyhook . Additionally , Nowitzki can put the ball down and drive with it from the perimeter , like few have been able to do with his size . NBA.com lauds his versatility by stating : " The 7 ? 0 forward who at times mans the pivot can strike fear in an opponent when he corrals a rebound and leads the break or prepares to launch a three @-@ point bomb . " Charles Barkley says the best way to guard Nowitzki is to " get a cigarette and a blindfold " . Later on in his career , Nowitzki also developed an unorthodox post up game , often backing down his opponents from the free throw line or near the middle of the key , opening up the floor for multiple passing angles should a double team come his way . When defenses guard Nowitzki with one of their biggest men , who is then pulled out to the perimeter , the net effect is that while Nowitzki 's own statistics are actually compromised by being out of position to offensively rebound or make an easy close @-@ range basket , the rest of the team becomes more offensively potent with the defense having to be spread across the floor . Often , this creates mismatches that his teammates can exploit . The Mavericks system and international play exposed him to an open passing game , making him dangerous as a point forward and post playmaker as well .

Nowitzki averages just over one block per game and never made an All @-@ Defense Team .

However , playing more around the perimeter took him out of position where a typical power forward would be detracted from his overall defensive stats . Despite rarely blocking shots , he is ranked 8th in active players for defensive win shares as of July 2014 .

Nowitzki is the 17th player in NBA history , and the first European , to hit the 25 ,000 point milestone . Apart from being the Mavericks ' all time leader in points , rebounds , field goals , field goal attempts , 3 pointers , 3 point attempts , free throws , and free throw attempts , Nowitzki has made the NBA All Star games thirteen times and the All NBA Teams twelve times . He was voted NBA MVP of the 2006 - 07 NBA season , becoming the first European player to receive the honor , as well as the MVP of the 2011 NBA Finals . Other achievements include winning the 2006 NBA All Star Three Point Shootout , being voted European Basketballer of the Year five times in a row by La Gazzetta dello Sport , and being the leading scorer and MVP of the 2002 FIBA World Championship , and EuroBasket 2005 tournaments .

In 2013 , Michael Jordan called Nowitzki one of only four current players (alongside LeBron James , Tim Duncan , and Kobe Bryant) who could be nearly as successful in his era of basketball .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = NBA statistics = = =

Correct as of the 2015 - 16 regular season

= = = = Regular season = = = =

= = = = Playoffs = = = =

= = = = Triple @ doubles = = = =

= = = International statistics = = =

= = Career highlights = =

NBA

NBA Finals MVP : 2011

NBA Most Valuable Player : 2007

13 x NBA All Star : 2002 - 2012 , 2014 - 2015

12 x All NBA Team : 2001 - 2012

4 x First Team : 2005 - 2007 , 2009

5 x Second Team : 2002 - 2003 , 2008 , 2010 - 2011

3 x Third Team : 2001 , 2004 , 2012

Three @ Point Shootout Champion : 2006

NBA Shooting Stars champion : 2010

Ranked 6th in all time @ scoring

Ranked 8th in all time defensive @ rebounds

Ranked 2nd in all time NBA Finals free throw percentage

82 consecutive free throws made (the third @ longest streak of all time)

One of six players with at least 25 ,000 points , 10 ,000 rebounds , 3 ,000 assists , 1 ,000 steals and 1 ,000 blocks

One of two players with 150 three @-@ pointers and 100 blocks in a single season : 2001
 One of four players with an NBA Playoff career average of 25 ppg and 10 rpg (25 @.@ 3 ppg , 10 @.@ 0 rpg through 2016 postseason)
 One of seven members of the 50 ? 40 ? 90 club : 2007
 One of three players to surpass the mark of 1 @,@ 000 in both three @-@ pointers and blocks for the career
 One of ten players to surpass the marks of 25 @,@ 000 in points and 10 @,@ 000 in rebounds for the career
 Holds the record for most free @-@ throws made in a single playoff season with 205 free @-@ throws made : 2006
 Dallas Mavericks all @-@ time statistical leader in games , points , rebounds , field goals , three @-@ point field goals and free throws
 German national basketball team
 2002 FIBA World Championship : bronze medal , MVP , top scorer , all @-@ tournament team
 EuroBasket 2005 : silver medal , MVP , top scorer , all @-@ tournament team
 2006 FIBA World Championship , EuroBasket 2001 , EuroBasket 2007 : top scorer , all @-@ tournament team
 Goldener Ehrenring (golden honorary ring) of the DBB (German Basketball Federation) : 2007
 Second leading scorer (1052 points) in the history of EuroBasket
 Leading scorer in the history of the German national basketball team (3045 points in 153 international games)
 Member of the German national basketball team which was voted Outstanding German Team of the Year : 2005
 Other achievements and highlights
 German League MVP : 1999
 6 x Euroscar : 2002 ? 2006 , 2011
 2 x FIBA Europe Men 's Player of the Year : 2005 , 2011
 Mr. Europa : 2005
 5 x All @-@ Europeans Player of the Year : 2005 ? 2008 , 2011
 German national flag bearer at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing , China
 Best NBA Player ESPY Award : 2011
 Best Male Athlete ESPY Award : 2011
 Outstanding Team ESPY Award with the Dallas Mavericks : 2011
 Sports Illustrated NBA All @-@ Decade Second Team (2000 ? 2009)
 Silbernes Lorbeerblatt : 2011
 German Sports Personality of the Year : 2011
 Ranked 55 in SLAM Magazine 's 500 greatest NBA @-@ players of all @-@ time list : 2011
 Naismith Legacy Award : 2012
 Magic Johnson Award : 2014

= = Personal life = =

Nowitzki 's older sister , Silke Nowitzki , described Nowitzki as a confident but low @-@ key character , unspoiled by money and fame . He also enjoys reading and playing the saxophone . Nowitzki passed his Abitur examination at Röntgen Gymnasium Grammar School of Würzburg . He also founded the Dirk Nowitzki Foundation , a charity which aims at fighting poverty in Africa .

Nowitzki dated Sybille Gerer , a female basketball player from his local club DJK Würzburg . The relationship started in 1992 and lasted for 10 years before it eventually ended ; Nowitzki said , " At the end , we found out we developed in separate ways It did not work anymore , but we are still good friends . " He added : " I surely want to start a family and have kids , but I cannot imagine it happening before I become 30 . "

In 2010 , Nowitzki met and began dating Jessica Olsson , sister of twin Swedish footballers Martin Olsson and Marcus Olsson . The couple got married on July 20 , 2012 , at Nowitzki 's home in

Dallas . They have a daughter , born in July 2013 and a son , born in March 2015 . Though Nowitzki has considered acquiring U.S. citizenship , he remains a German national .

Nowitzki acknowledged close ties to his mentor Holger Geschwindner , whom he called his best friend . He is also good friends with his ex @-@ teammate Steve Nash . Nash said of playing with Nowitzki , " We were both joining a new club , living in a new city , we were both single and outsiders : this creates a bond He made life easier for me and I for him Our friendship was something solid in a very volatile world . " Nowitzki added , " He would have also become a good friend if we had met at the supermarket . "

= = Books = =

Nowitzki 's career has been chronicled in books . Dirk Nowitzki : German Wunderkind , written by German sports journalists Dino Reisner and Holger Sauer , was published in 2004 by CoPress Munich . The 160 @-@ page hardcover book follows Nowitzki 's beginnings in his native Würzburg , documents his entry and ascent in the NBA , and ends at the beginning of the 2004 ? 05 NBA season .

In November 2011 the Würzburg local newspaper Main @-@ Post published a 216 @-@ page book written by its sports journalists Jürgen Höpfl and Fabian Frühwirth : Einfach Er ? Dirk Nowitzki ? Aus Würzburg an die Weltspitze , (Just Him ? Dirk Nowitzki ? From Würzburg to top of the world) . Both Höpfl and Frühwirth accompanied Nowitzki throughout his career , collecting interviews and photos used in the book . It looks back on the 2011 NBA Finals but also has a strong focus on Nowitzki 's relation to his hometown Würzburg and his career progression beginning there . It features insights from former coaches , family members , and friends .