

Coby White's Shot Creation in the Post-Lavine Era

SUMMARY TAKEAWAYS

1. **Elevated Offensive Role:** After the Zach Lavine trade, White excelled as the primary shot creator in the Bulls fast-paced offense, increasing his usage rate (+2.9 percentage points), unassisted FGM (76th to 95th percentile), and fastbreak points (+3.5 PPG).
2. **Rim Versatility:** White's ability to finish strong or with finesse has made him a top finisher in the restricted area, boosting his FG% from 61.9% to 66.7% after the All-Star break (88th percentile).
3. **Increased Unassisted Non-Corner 3s:** White's growth and effectiveness in creating his own shot is evident in his non-corner threes as he sits in the 99th percentile in FGA and 97th percentile in FGM, also increasing his percentage of unassisted NC3s from 24% to 34% post All-Star.
4. **Leverage Midrange as Three-Level Scorer:** White's midrange efficiency improved significantly after the Zach Lavine trade, shooting 48.8% (70th percentile) and reinforcing his potential as a three-level scorer.
5. **Develop Efficiency and Shot Selection:** Despite his high volume in non-corner 3s (99th percentile) and non-RA paint shots (89th percentile), White's FG% was only 37.6% for non-corner threes (55th percentile) and 51.9% for non-RA paint shots (76th percentile), which he can improve on with quicker decision-making while he has the ball and refining his footwork and shot selection in the paint.

CONTEXT

After being nominated for the Kia NBA Most Improved Player award in 2023–24, many expected Coby White's improvement to continue this season especially after the departure of star player DeMar DeRozan. However, his role and scoring statistics remained largely the same at the beginning of the year as Zach Lavine took the reins of primary scorer of the team. Once the Bulls traded Lavine around the All-Star break, White's performance immediately skyrocketed as he shined in his new role as the team's main offensive threat.

White's scoring dramatically increased after the Zach Lavine trade, jumping from 18.2 to 24.5 points per game post All-Star. In March, he was awarded [Eastern Conference Player of the Month](#) in which he averaged 27.7 points and a 57.1% FG%. Beyond his elevated scoring, he also demonstrated increased aggressiveness by shooting more take-charge shots and attempting a higher percentage of the team's shots from his own creation.

ROLE UPGRADE

White showcased his upgraded role on the team through his higher usage and general aggressiveness after the All-Star break. His usage rate, percent of team's field goals made, and percent of team's points represent how much of the team's plays and shots ended with his creation. His unassisted field goals made, personal fouls drawn, and fastbreak points

demonstrate his aggressiveness in taking charge on offense. While most of his usage and aggressiveness stats remained about the same from 2023–24 to 2024–25 pre All-Star, he made bigger jumps after the All-Star break.

Season	2023-24	2024-25 Pre All-Star	2024-25 Pre All-Star Δ	2024-25 Post All-Star	2024-25 Post All-Star Δ
Usage % (USG%)	22.6	22.7	+0.1	25.6	+2.9
<i>USG% Percentile</i>	85th	85th	-	92nd	-
% of Team's FGM (%FGM)	21.1	21.2	+0.1	25.8	+4.6
<i>%FGM Percentile</i>	74th	73rd	-	87th	-
% of Team's Points (%PTS)	22.0	22.9	+0.9	27.5	+4.6
<i>%PTS Percentile</i>	77th	79th	-	88th	-
Unassisted FGM	3.4	2.5	-0.9	4.8	+2.3
<i>Unassisted FGM Percentile</i>	84th	76th	-	95th	-
Personal Fouls Drawn (PFD)	3.7	3.1	-0.6	4.7	+1.6
<i>PFD Percentile</i>	92nd	87th	-	96th	-
Fastbreak Points (FB PTS)	3.0	3.3	+0.3	6.8	+3.5
<i>FB PTS Percentile</i>	95th	95th	-	99th	-

White's usage rate was up +2.9 percentage points, going from 85th percentile to 92nd percentile in the league. He now had the new team-high of 25.6% after Lavine's departure, whose usage rate was 26.3% before he was traded. White also took a larger percentage of the team's shots and made more unassisted shots post All-Star, becoming one of the top players in the league in unassisted field goals made as he jumped from 76th percentile to 95th percentile. The Bulls are now relying on him to be the main shot creator of the team.

Additionally, he drew +1.6 personal fouls and scored +3.5 fastbreak points per game, demonstrating his take-charge mentality when attacking the defense and in transition. His aggressiveness ranks high amongst other players in the league with personal fouls drawn in the 96th percentile and fastbreak points in the 99th percentile.

On the other hand, White's playmaking has slightly dropped with -0.6 assists per game from last season to the beginning of this season, and an additional -0.2 decline after the All-Star break. This decrease is largely due to the acquirement of Josh Giddey in the offseason who has become the designated point guard and main playmaker of the team, made evident by his team-high assist rate of 32.2%. Similarly, White's turnovers had only a minor change with -0.4 turnovers per game after the All-Star break, which is consistent with team performance as the Bulls focused on taking better care of the ball as the season went on.

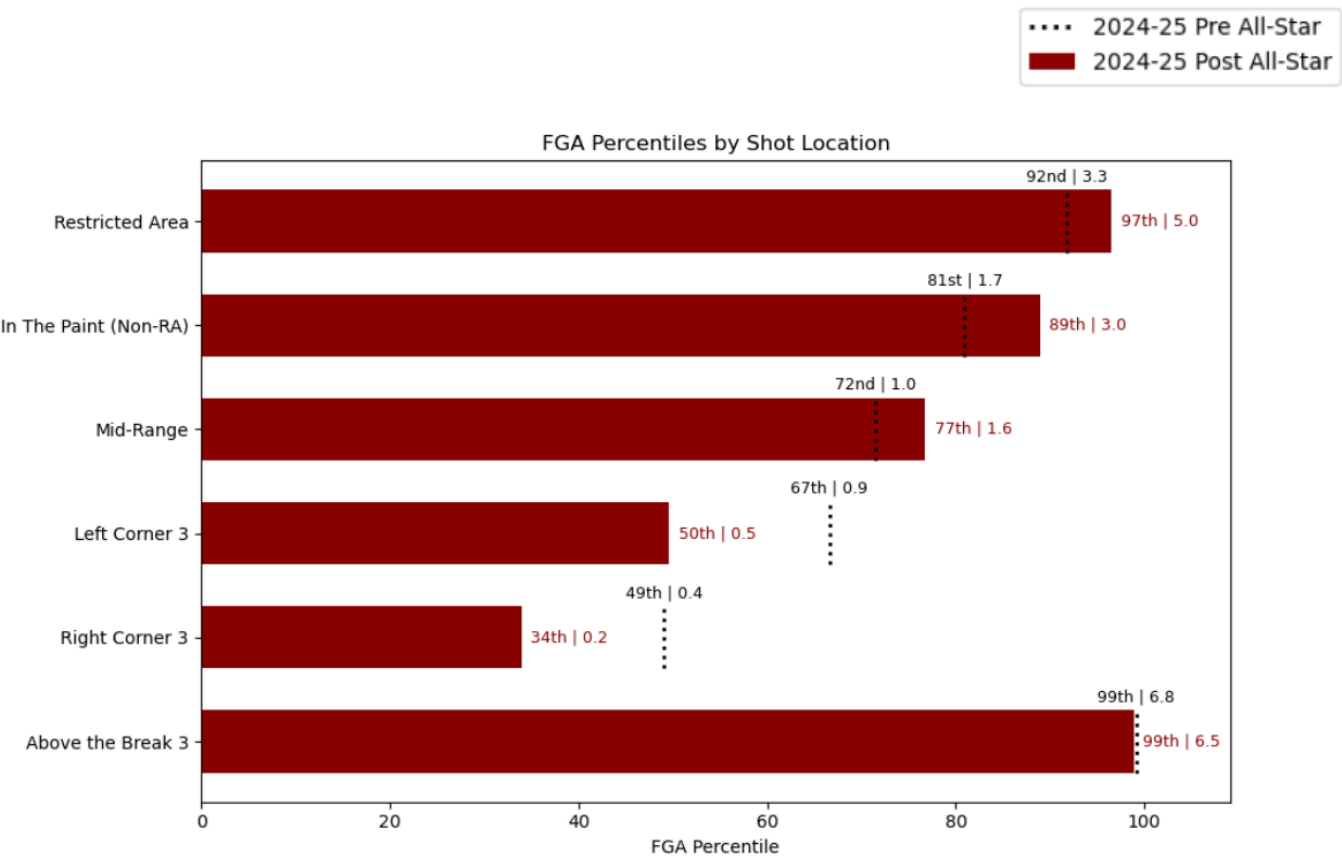
Overall, White has proven that he can perform at a high level as the main offensive threat on the team through his elevated scoring and aggressiveness after the Zach Lavine trade. While his shot creation has increased, his playmaking has slightly decreased due to a larger percentage of his plays resulting in shot attempts. However, his turnover rate has remained largely the

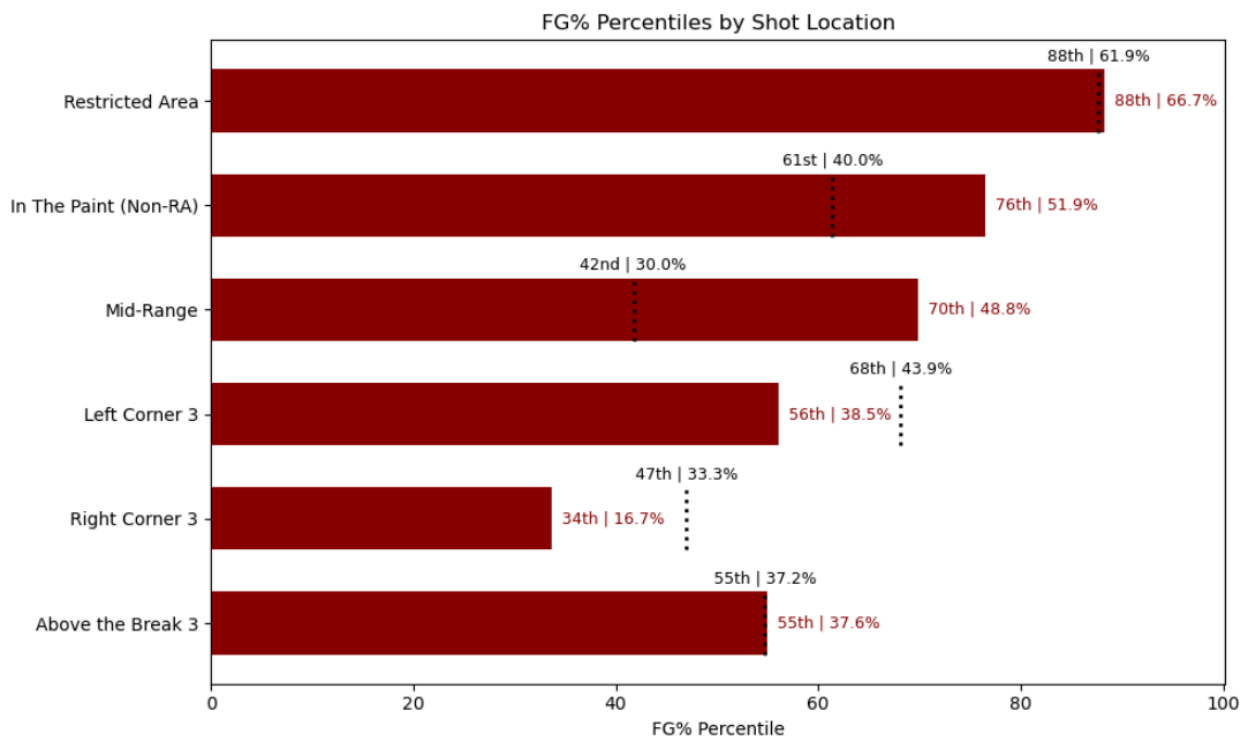
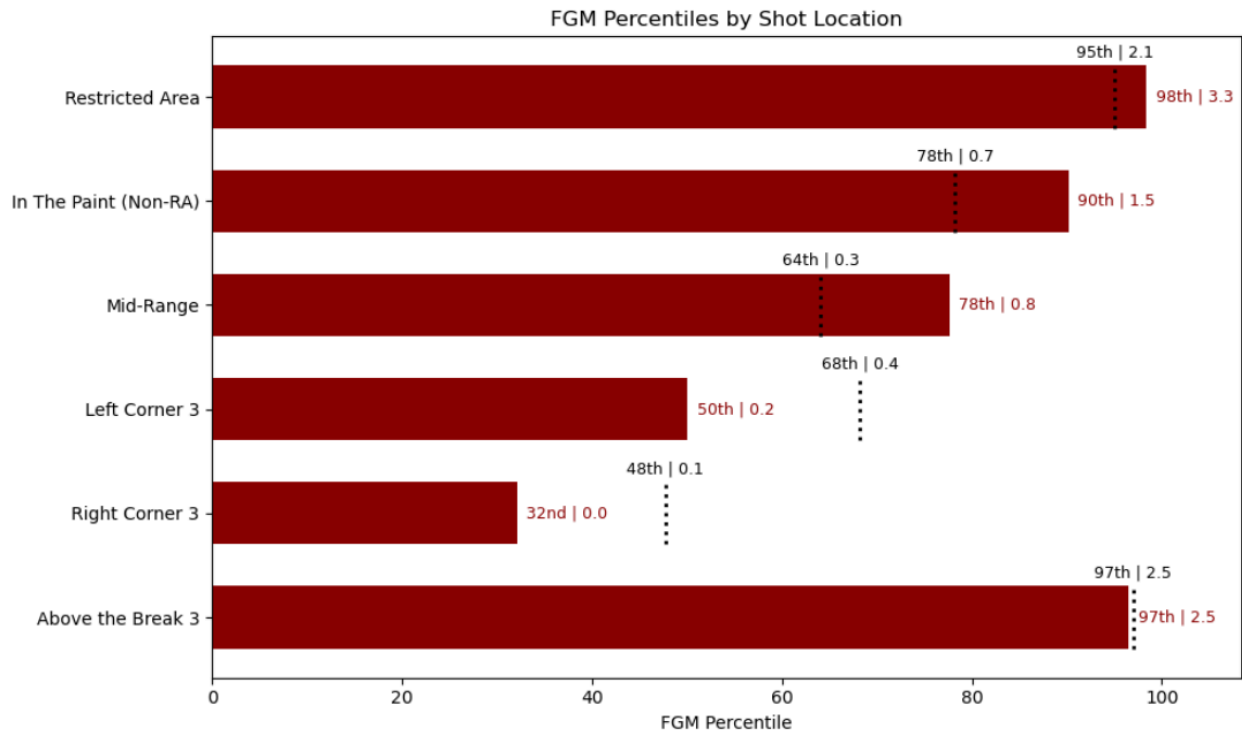
same, showing that he’s able to take care of the ball even while becoming more aggressive on offense.

SHOT PROFILE

As the new primary scorer of the team, how has White been able to create more shots after the All-Star break? Where is he most effective as a shot creator, and in what areas can he improve his efficiency?

Each bar chart shows White’s percentile ranks in field goal attempts (FGA), field goals made (FGM), and field goal percentage (FG%) per game at every general shot location. He attempted and made majority of his two-pointers in the paint and most of his three-pointers above the break, two areas where he ranked near the top of the league. He shot the least amount of shots in the corner due to his new role as the team’s primary scorer, which has increased his shot creation and lessened his opportunities to get assisted corner threes.





Some may attribute his higher volume of shots in the paint and above the break to the Bulls fast-paced offense, which is focused on attacking the rim and shooting threes. However, his FGA

and FGM actually slightly decreased in the paint from last season to the beginning of this season pre All-Star, before dramatically increasing to the 90th+ percentile after All-Star. Similarly, he was shooting about the same amount of non-corner threes last season as this season, yet increased the percentage of those threes that were unassisted. Therefore, we can assume that White's elevated scoring performance is a byproduct of his upgraded role.

Strengths

I. VERSATILITY IN ATTACKING THE RIM:

White has thrived in attacking the rim this past season and especially after Zach Lavine's departure, ranking in the 97th percentile in FGA and the 99th percentile in FGM in the restricted area (RA). Despite the high volume, he still maintained a high FG% jumping from 61.9% to 66.7% (88th percentile) after the All-Star break.

What makes him so effective is his versatility in finishing around the rim, where he can switch from going up strong with a lot of contact from the defender vs. using his pivots and soft touch in his layups. This allows him to drive on different types of defenders, using his strength and physicality against a fast guard that's able to stay close to him, or using his finesse and shiftness to finish away from a shot-blocking big.

***Clip 1:** White uses his body and physicality to go up strong with contact from the defender*

***Clip 2:** White uses his finesse and change of pace to get to the restricted area and lay the ball up away from the defender*

II. UNASSISTED NON-CORNER 3s:

Consistent all season, White shot a high volume of non-corner threes (NC3) after the All-Star break, with 6.5 FGA in the 99th percentile and 2.5 FGM in the 97th percentile. While he's maintained his volume of NC3s after the All-Star break, he's actually increased the percentage of unassisted NC3s from 24% to 34% which was in the 75th percentile in the league, demonstrating his comfortability in shooting more take-charge threes.

One of White's ball-handling strengths is his side-to-side dribbling. While he can go fast downhill in transition, his halfcourt drives often come from a change of pace where he's using his crossovers and behind-the-back move to lull the defender before either attacking or pulling up at the three. Paired with his step-back jump shots where he increased his FG% from 35.2% to 43.2% post All-Star, he can leverage this ball-handling and shot combo as a valuable counter-move to his rim-attacking ability. He can freeze the defender who's threatened by his downhill movement by making a move to put the defender on his side, then make a quick stop and shoot a step-back three. This will be especially valuable in end-of-shot-clock and clutch situations where he is now the designated player relied on to make a play.

***Clip 3:** White freezes his defender with a behind-the-back dribble before pulling up from the three*

III. MIDRANGE EFFICIENCY:

Although the midrange (MR) is not White's bread and butter, he proved to be more efficient at the midrange after the Zach Lavine trade with a FG% of 48.8% (70th P) after only shooting 30.0% before the All-Star break. While not necessarily shooting a high volume, these MR shots are still representative of his new role as a shot creator given 80% of his MR FGM were unassisted.

White's offensive focus should remain on attacking the rim and shooting threes to stay consistent with the Bulls offensive play style, but he can continue to leverage his high efficiency at the midrange to solidify himself as a three-level scorer and an unpredictable shot creator. One way to do this without changing his style of play is to utilize his side-to-side dribbling specialty to slowly move into the paint. He often plays around with his crossovers at the three point line, then decides to quickly drive or pull up at the three. On occasion, he can also utilize this ball-handling to move closer to the rim even with the defender still in front of him, then have the option to quickly stop and pull up at the midrange instead of going all the way to the rim.

Clip 4: White uses his shiftiness to move closer to the rim then freezes his defender and pulls up at the midrange

Areas of Improvement

I. NON-CORNER 3s EFFICIENCY AND SHOT SELECTION:

White's NC3 FG% was only in the 55th percentile at 37.6% despite being one of the top players in the league in NC3 FGA and FGM. He should continue to work on improving his efficiency given he's going to be relied on to take more of these threes as the primary scorer of a high three-point shooting team.

Besides catch-and-shoot threes, he is most efficient when he holds the ball between 2–6 seconds and makes 3–6 dribbles before shooting the three (~40% FG%), likely because he's able to use his shifty side-to-side dribbling to get in a rhythm without rushing into a shot. However, the longer he holds the ball, the lower his three-point FG% (25.0% with touch time of 6+ seconds and 30.4% with 7+ dribbles). Thus, he should be aware that the more he dribbles the ball and unable to create a shot within a few seconds, he should look to attack and create a shot in the paint or kick out to a teammate rather than settle for a lower-percentage three-pointer.

II. FOOTWORK AND FINESSE IN THE PAINT:

White's aggressiveness is not only demonstrated in attacking the rim, but also driving in the paint and making shots outside the restricted area. While his non-RA paint FGA and FGM still rank in the ~90th percentile, he was not as efficient as his RA shooting with a FG% of 51.9% (77th P). As he continues to be aggressive in attacking the paint and remain at the top of the league in FGA, he should work to improve his efficiency in these non-RA paint shots.

Although one of his strengths is his ability to go up strong when attacking the rim, he should utilize more of his finesse when he shoots a non-RA paint shot. His footwork and change of pace allows him to be shifty even when he's inside the paint and surrounded by defenders, so he should utilize his pivots and quick stops to get a solid footing before putting up a floater, short jumpshot, or fadeaway in order to get the highest-percentage shot he can get.

III. STRATEGIC SHOT AND ACTION TYPES:

In addition to putting up more shots in practice, White can also improve his efficiency by looking further into what type of shots and action types he is getting these shots from. For example, given his lower efficiency in NC3s relative to his high volume, it's important to explore what action types he's most efficient in (isolation, pick-and-rolls, etc.) so the team can call plays that will place him in his strengths. Similarly, he can explore what types of shots he's shooting in the paint outside of the restricted area (floaters vs. jumpshots) so he can work on developing these shots.