

Linsanity?



Jeremy Lin broke onto the scene in the NBA in the month of February. He quickly became a national and worldwide phenomenon and is one of the few athletes to be featured on the cover of Time magazine. His likeable personality and his underdog story along with his play on the court have turned him into a worldwide phenomenon. Of course Jeremy is fortunate to be playing in the NBA's biggest market and to have a huge following not only in the U.S. but in China. It is time for some Linsanity math using real Linsanity data.

Jeremy Lin scored more points in his first five starts than any other player in NBA history. The table below shows the other leaders in points scored in first five starts. Jordan, James and Bryant were not among the top six but we added their numbers to the list for comparison reasons.

1. 136 points in five starts is a lot, but how much more is that per game than the other players in the table? Find each player's points per game over the five games:

Player	Points first 5 Games	Points Per Game
Jeremy Lin	136	
Dan Issel	129	
Shaquille O'Neal	129	
Freeman Williams	125	
Jerry Stackhouse	124	
Dominique Williams	124	
Michael Jordan	116	
Lebron James	84	
Kobe Bryant	80	

2. What statistic are you computing when you find points per game? How do you know?

3. What are your observations comparing Lin's points per game compared to the other players in the table?

One reason Lin became such a star so quickly was his play in his first ten starts. Below, in the GAME-BY-GAME STATS table. We have his game-by-game stats from his first eleven starts (the eleventh start against the Heat was a bit of a learning experience for Lin). We are using the first eleven starts because that is all the starts he has had at time of publishing and they represent all of his starts before the NBA all-star weekend break. These were the games that started the phenomenon.

4. Find Lin's first *eleven* starts average for points (PTS), turnovers (TO), steals (STL) and assists (AST). Add these averages to the bottom row of the **RECENT GREAT NBA POINT GUARDS** table. (Note: For more updated Lin stats go to www.basketball-reference.com)

GAME BY GAME STATS															
Date	Opponent	Result	MIN	FGM-A	3PM-A	FTM-A	OFF	DEF	REB	AST	STL	BLK	TO	PF	PTS
Regular															
Feb 23	@ MIA	L 88 - 102	34	1 - 11	0 - 2	6 - 6	1	5	6	3	3	0	8	1	8
Feb 22	vs. ATL	W 99 - 82	32	6 - 11	1 - 2	4 - 4	1	1	2	9	2	0	4	3	17
Feb 20	vs. NJN	L 92 - 100	36	7 - 18	2 - 4	5 - 6	0	7	7	9	4	0	3	6	21
Feb 19	vs. DAL	W 104 - 97	46	11 - 20	3 - 6	3 - 6	1	3	4	14	5	1	7	0	28
Feb 17	vs. NOH	L 85 - 89	40	8 - 18	2 - 5	8 - 10	0	2	2	5	4	0	9	4	26
Feb 15	vs. SAC	W 100 - 85	26	4 - 6	0 - 0	2 - 3	0	5	5	13	0	0	6	1	10
Feb 14	@ TOR	W 90 - 87	43	9 - 20	2 - 2	7 - 11	0	2	2	11	1	0	8	0	27
Feb 11	@ MIN	W 100 - 98	39	8 - 24	0 - 3	4 - 7	2	4	6	8	3	0	6	3	20
Feb 10	vs. LAL	W 92 - 85	39	13 - 23	2 - 4	10 - 13	1	3	4	7	2	0	6	1	38
Feb 08	@ WAS	W 107 - 93	36	9 - 14	0 - 3	5 - 6	1	3	4	10	1	1	2	3	23
Feb 06	vs. UTA	W 99 - 88	45	10 - 17	1 - 3	7 - 9	1	1	2	8	2	0	8	1	28

"Great" Point Guards Career Stats	Points Per Game	Assists Per Game	TO Per Game	Steals Per Game
Steve Nash (2 time NBA MVP, 8 time all-star)	14.5	8.6	2.86	0.8
Derrick Rose (2011 NBA MVP)	20.9	6.8	2.91	0.9
John Stockton (NBA all-time assist leader & steals leader)	13.1	10.5	2.82	2.2
Isiah Thomas (2 time NBA champ, 12 time all-star)	19.2	9.3	3.76	1.9
Russell Westbrook (rising NBA star)	18.5	6.9	3.6	1.6
Jason Kidd (NBA Champ in 2011, 10 time all-star)	13.1	9.1	3.01	2
Magic Johnson (5 time NBA Champ, 3 Time MVP)	19.5	11.2	3.9	1.9
Jeremy Lin (first eleven games)				

RECENT GREAT NBA POINT GUARDS

5. Compare Lin's first eleven starts with the career stats of other recent great NBA point guards. Where do his numbers seem strong? Where does he need improvement?

6. Where would you rank him on this list? It is difficult to rank point guards with only statistics. So much of what a point guard does is similar to a quarterback in football. That is, they set the pace of the game, direct the team and make other players better. All that said, rank the eight point guards based on their statistics. Make sure to use math and show your rationale for the rankings. Here is a little guide to the stats...

- Points are just points scored.
- Assists are when the player passed to or set up another player to score two or three points.
- Turnovers most often lead to the other team scoring two or three points.
- Steals often lead to your team scoring two or three points.

6. Jeremy Lin is making about \$762,200 for this season. Sound like a lot? Compare his salary to that of the other four point guards in this activity, along with his teammate, Carmello Anthony.

Player	Approximate 2011-2012 Salary in U.S. dollars
Carmello Anthony	16,000,000
Steve Nash	11,700,000
Jason Kidd	8,500,000
Derrick Rose	7,000,000
Russell Westbrook	4,000,000

How much do you think Lin should be paid based on these other player salaries? Make sure to justify your response and show your reasoning.

7. Don't feel too bad for Lin. Experts say that he has **unlimited** marketing potential and could make millions in advertising and off of the term, "Linsanty". For example, recently his developmental league jersey, that he used only once, was auctioned on Ebay starting at \$4,000. Lets us assume the jersey was originally worth about \$80. If other Jeremy Lin products were auctioned on Ebay with the same percent price increase or scale factor, how much would the following products go for? Make sure to show how you determined your answers.

Item	Original Cost	Auction Price
Head band used by Lin	\$10	
Basketball used by Lin	\$50	
Shoes used by Lin	\$120	
Couch he slept on at his brother's apartment.	\$1000	

8. According to Sports Illustrated, marketing experts believe that the Jeremy Lin name and marketing power will be worth more than Tiger Woods or Yao Ming. How much might Lin's name/marketing power be worth per year? Here is a list of some of the top paid athletes in 2011. Some of their pay came from salary, but much of it, maybe roughly 40 - 70%, came from endorsements.

8a. If 40 to 70% of David Beckham's earnings came from endorsements how much might he have made in endorsements? About how much might have LeBron James made?

8b. Using the data in the table how much do you think Lin could make in ads/endorsements? Explain how you determined your answer.

Athlete	Total Pay in US \$
Tiger Woods	75 million
Kobe Bryant	53 million
Lebron James	48 million
Roger Federer	47 million
Phil Mickelson	47 million
David Beckham	40 million
Cristiano Ronaldo	38 million
Tom Brady	33 million
Derek Jeter	29 million
Yao Ming (2008)	21.5 million (endorsements only)

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Image from: whotalking.com

Sources:

www.basketball-reference.com

<http://brokejumper.com/nba-news/jeremy-lin-breaks-nba-record-for-most-points-scored-in-first-5-nba-starts/>

<http://www.therichest.org/sports/forbes-highest-paid-athletes/>