



Photo: Brad Penner-USA TODAY Sports

Jeremy Lin: “Someone is always coming for you”

Lin breaks down his mental approach and training regimen.

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Linsane, Lincredible. Linfectious. Lintense. For two incredible weeks in February 2012, a little-known guard who was fighting for a job as the backup point guard’s backup propelled his team to a 7-game winning streak – and inspired some of the best sports headlines New York City papers had seen.

Jeremy Lin, a Harvard University graduate who went unrecruited and then undrafted in 2010 despite a successful high school and college career, scored more points in his first five NBA starts than any player in nearly four decades — and the phenomenon of Linsanity was born.

Over a 13-game period, the guy who'd bounced between the D-League and the NBA — and had been waived by two teams — averaged 22 points and 9.2 assists. The Knicks turned their season around, fans were thrilled, and the team made it to the first round of the playoffs.



Photo: Bob DeChiara, USA TODAY Sports

Lin, now 30, went on to sign with the Rockets and became their starting point guard. Since then, the pick-and-roll specialist has gone on to play for several teams, including Atlanta this season (where he served as a mentor to rookie superstar Trae Young) – before signing in February with the Toronto Raptors.

At 6'3", the talented combo guard is currently counted on to come off the

bench and bring energy and make plays on both ends of the floor. “In terms of offense, I try to be downhill and make plays and score and create scoring opportunities for my teammates,” he says. “On defense, I try to be in the gaps, get deflections, loose balls, rebounds, and push it on the break.”

Lin, who is the only Asian-American player in the NBA, lives by a deep religious faith and an unending quest to improve. He’s shaped his career by always being ready. “Never get comfortable,” he says. “Someone is always coming for you so you always have to be ready.”



Photo. Kyle Terada-USA TODAY Sports

Jeremy’s drills:

Shooting drills, as well as his specialty, the pick-and-roll, are what Lin focuses on. Even after nine years in the NBA, “I want to keep getting better at shooting and continue to be more consistent. I’ve had a few changes over the years to my shot and I’m continuing to hone my shot, so that’s a priority to me.”

Here's Lin's play-by-play description of a favorite pick-and-roll drill:

I get in the mid pick-and-roll, come off and I try to break the floor down to four spots:

- At the rim
- A little bit farther out, which is the floater range
- Mid range
- The three

I want to be able to score from all four territories, or spots, on the floor, so when I come off the pick-and-roll, sometimes I work on getting all the way to the basket and work on hitting finishes; sometimes I work on getting almost all the way to the basket and shooting that floater, or one or two-foot floater step backs; then you have the midrange; and sometimes when the defender goes under on the pick-and-roll and they get hit hard by the screen, you can pop right into a three ball.



Jeremy's general training tips:

- Work harder than everyone else. That's very obvious but it goes without saying that the person who works harder and more consistently will have an advantage in the long run. Make sure you're getting in extra work.
- Work on your weaknesses so that you have more options. A lot of high schoolers love putting on a dunk show because they are great dunkers, but you have to always think that at some point in time, you will run into somebody who will take away your number one strength. The players who make it to the next level will have layers to their game. You need Option A, Option B and Option C. If all you have is Option A it's going to be pretty tough.
- Slow down and have fun. There will always be highs and lows and setbacks and things that will push back your timeline. There will be dreams that will go unfulfilled, but in the midst of all that make sure you're having fun and enjoying the game. Your health isn't guaranteed and you don't know how long you'll play. The game can be taken away from you in

a heartbeat, literally, so you have to enjoy every moment that you're on the floor.



- Nothing replaces sleep. It's the number one thing: sleeping right, well and consistently. You can stretch, ice, and eat right, but sleep's the number one thing.
- Don't get comfortable. Someone else is always coming for you. If you're the best on your team, there's going to be someone else on another team who's better than you. If you're the best in your league, there's going to be someone else in another league who's better than you. If you're the best in your state, there's going to be another person in the state who's better than you. If you're the best in your country there's going to be another person in another country who's better than you.

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