



DECADE OF HIGH HANDS

BEST TEAMS OF THE DECADE

- 2010-11 **WASH DC CAPITALS** (145-128-13, 1st overall pick, 4th best record)
- 2011-12 **PHOENIX COYOTES** (37-42-13, 31st overall pick, 10th best record)
- 2012-13 **MINNAPOLIS WILD** (52-28-10, 1st overall pick, 1st best record)
- 2013-14 **ST. LOUIS BLUZZARDS** (52-29-10, 3rd overall pick, 1st best record)
- 2014-15 **ST. LOUIS BLUZZARDS** (58-23-11, 1st overall pick, 1st best record)
- 2015-16 **ST. LOUIS BLUZZARDS** (58-23-11, 1st overall pick, 1st best record)
- 2016-17 **ST. LOUIS BLUZZARDS** (56-25-11, 1st overall pick, 1st best record)
- 2017-18 **ST. LOUIS BLUZZARDS** (56-25-11, 1st overall pick, 1st best record)
- 2018-19 **ST. LOUIS BLUZZARDS** (56-25-11, 1st overall pick, 1st best record)

BEST MOMENTS OF THE DECADE

- The Savior by Braden Holtby in Game 2 of the Stanley Cup Final** - Holtby's heroics in Game 2 helped the Capitals clinch the Cup.
- Nolan Ryan's game-winning 3-pointer in Game 6 of the 2017 Eastern Conference semifinals** - Ryan's clutch shot sent the Predators to the playoffs.
- 1. 2013 National, MLB** - The Yankees won their 24th World Series.
- 2. 2019 National, NHL** - The Capitals won their 4th Stanley Cup.
- 3. 2019 Stanley Cup Finals** - The Capitals defeated the Bruins.
- 2012-13 Minnesota Wild** - The Wild won their first Stanley Cup.
- 2014-15 St. Louis Blues** - The Blues won their first Stanley Cup.
- 2016-17 St. Louis Blues** - The Blues won their second Stanley Cup.
- 2017-18 St. Louis Blues** - The Blues won their third Stanley Cup.
- 2018-19 St. Louis Blues** - The Blues won their fourth Stanley Cup.

SPORTS

HOBBLED AGA

WITH WALL SIDELINED FOR A YEAR OR MORE, WIZARDS ARE A FRANCHISE IN TRANSITION

By Matthew Pass
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

John Wall ruptured his left Achilles tendon after slipping and falling in his home, the Wizards announced Tuesday night, leaving the franchise without its most valuable player for the start of the season.

Wall will need surgery and he's expected to be out for a year or more. The 29-year-old was already out for the season after undergoing heel surgery last month.

The Wizards' general manager, Wilfried Bruggmann, said Wall slipped and fell on Monday while "preparing for a shower." The doctor added an initial check following the fall, but didn't reveal a tear, only for it to be discovered when he went in to clean the infection.

Dr. Robert Anderson, who performed the heel surgery, will repair Wall's Achilles tendon in Green Bay, Wisconsin, but that cannot be scheduled until the infection clears. Bruggmann said the operation will likely happen next week.

As for Wall's recovery, Bruggmann said it's early to tell if the five-time All-Star Wall will return next season.

"We're going to try and stick by it."

▶ 2019 WIZARDS | B13

Guard John Wall, who is making \$19.2 million this season, is signed with the Washington Wizards through the 2023 season on a max contract. He will make \$46.2 million next season, \$41.2 million in 2020-21, \$44.3 million in 2021-22 and \$47.3 million in 2022-23.

▶ Missed one game with right shoulder dislocation on Nov. 20, 2017.

▶ Injured his left wrist in the 2015 Eastern Conference semifinals against the Hawks and missed three games in the series.

▶ Played in only 41 games last season, when he had an operation on his left heel.

▶ It was announced Tuesday that Wall & five other All-Star will undergo surgery to repair a ruptured left Achilles tendon.

▶ Will fans numb to the pain even feel this punch?

▶ John Wall for at least a full season, says a source close to the Wizards.

▶ The news that the Wizards' star guard ruptured his Achilles following surgery by Dr. Robert Anderson will be devastating for the Wizards and I would guess, devastating for the Wizards fans.

▶ I qualify the impact on Wizards because it's possible that this fan base is so damaged after the season of failure, disappointment and dysfunction that it may be numb to such bad news.

▶ The speculation is that Wall may not even be able to recover from staying part in his health activities for a year after the surgery to repair the Achilles heel — surgery that has not even been scheduled yet — let alone actually step back on the court to play for the basketball team that is required to pay him about \$20 million for the next five years.

▶ Let's deal with the humanity of John Wall first. This may be a personal crisis for the 29-year-old but beyond...

▶ DARRIN PAYNE BY THE NUMBERS

Games starts	16
Sacks	5
Total tackles	56
Solo tackles	35
Pass deflections	1
Force on fumbles	1
Fumble recoveries	1

REDSKINS Payne looks like a star, jury still out on rest of 2018 picks

By Matthew Pass
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The 219 Washington Redskins in 2018 are enough to evaluate. Not good enough to grade. Grading the team off the field is an exercise in futility. The Redskins' offense and defense are still in shambles. The team's performance is still in shambles.

▶ DARRIN PAYNE (No. 13 overall)

- ▶ Key stat: 77. What it means: The pick was a surprise. Payne was a second-round pick, but he played like a star.
- ▶ Key stat: 56. What it means: Payne's 56 total tackles were a surprise. He had 13 solo tackles and 43 assisted tackles.
- ▶ Key stat: 1. What it means: Payne's 1 sack was a surprise. He had 13 solo tackles and 43 assisted tackles.

▶ DARRIN PAYNE (No. 59)

- ▶ Key stat: 77. What it means: Payne was a surprise pick.
- ▶ Key stat: 56. What it means: Payne's 56 total tackles were a surprise.



SPORTS

JUST A DAY AT THE OFFICE

Inside Alex Ovechkin's signature move

By Anna Zelinka
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

It's called his "office" — the "Ovi spot" or even the "Ovi-zoo." No matter what you name it, it's where Alex Ovechkin does some of his best work.

Washington Capitals fans will always know how potent Ovechkin is when he shoots from the left circle or above. Actually, opposing players and coaches, and pretty much everyone around the NHL, are just as aware.

It's one of the most predictable things in hockey, but that doesn't make it any easier to defend.

"Entering Wednesday, according to statistics from NHL.com, 201 of the Bruins's 612 career goals came from the left circle or above. That's 43.4 percent of his goals all-time. On the power play alone, 95 of Ovechkin's 244 career goals were one-timers from his office 38 percent." It's become his signature move, especially since the 2013-14 season when there was an uptick of these goals.

Finding a comparison to hockey is difficult, it might be more apt to invoke Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's shot, Derek Jeter's jump-throw from shortstop or Bruce Smith's frightening pass rush. Some of Ovechkin's new teammates had to cope with this while playing on their old team — penalty kill units — players like forward Carl Hagelin and defenseman Nick Jensen, who came to Washington via trade last season. Jensen said Ovechkin has "the best shot in the league" and his old Red Wings penalty kill focused on eliminating his opportunities. "We tried to take him away as much as possible," Jensen said. "What that does is that kind of takes a piece of your penalty kill and focuses a lot of resources on just that one guy. And you look at the other guys who are on this power play, they're not shields like that." The others had similar avatars: Part of what makes Ovechkin so lethal on power plays is the quality of the unit around him.

▶ 652 Career regular season goals scored by Ovechkin in 250 games with the Washington Capitals. He has scored 5.02 goals per game in 652 career regular season games.

▶ "I think every player, you always try to find something new. I think right now, this time of year, you don't have to try something new because maybe it's not going to work. You have to stick with what you have."

— Alex Ovechkin, Capitals forward

WIZARDS

Beal's swagger carries Wizards past Mavericks, spoils Nowitzki party

By Matthew Pass
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Wizards' season has largely been frustrating to everyone involved with the team. But in Washington's victory against the Dallas Mavericks, Bradley Beal carried a swagger his team's record was in tatters.

The Wizards star steered down center Salim Martić after a vicious dunk. He wowed Mavericks' rookie Luka Dončić's complaints following a blocked shot. Time and time again, Beal unleashed his swagger on the court.

Beal's 30 points, 11 rebounds and five assists were all in the final 20 minutes of the game. He finished with 13 points, seven rebounds, four assists and three steals.

The game was also another step in the Dirk Nowitzki retirement tour — except the Mavericks star has repeatedly said he's not ready to step away after this season. Nowitzki, 39, has spent the last several seasons as a role player for the Mavericks. He was named MVP in the first year when the franchise moved into the new arena in 2001.

Beal's performance was a statement. "Thank You Dirk" displayed on the jumbotron. German Ambassador Stefan Heisterhoff was in attendance to see the 40-year-old Mavericks star.

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