

USA Basketball Team Built to Bring Home the Gold and Nothing Less

Written by Forward Times Staff
Thursday, 12 July 2012 20:46



(Via AJC.com) – They lost Dwyane Wade but gained Kevin Durant. Dwight Howard’s size has given way to Russell Westbrook’s speed.

The Americans know their men’s Olympic basketball team will look much different than the one that captured gold four years ago in Beijing. Three of the most important players from that team were unable to return, but the carryovers keep talking about being better now than they were then.

“I think it has the potential to be that if we learn to use our versatility. It’s a more versatile team than 2008. Now does that translate into being better?” coach Mike Krzyzewski said Sunday. “Although we don’t have the center, that team didn’t have Durant or Westbrook. So it’s a different team and we’ll see if it becomes better, but it can be. It could be.”

In some ways, that’s difficult to envision. Wade was the team’s leading scorer, averaging 16 points in just over 18 minutes per game off the bench. Howard started at center and averaged 10.9 points while shooting 74.5 percent from the field. Chris Bosh, also out this summer, backed him up and shot even better, knocking down 24 of 31 shots (77.4 percent) and leading the team with 6.1 rebounds per game.

How can any team make up for all that?

USA Basketball Team Built to Bring Home the Gold and Nothing Less

Written by Forward Times Staff
Thursday, 12 July 2012 20:46

“Well, we have some guys that can pick that up,” LeBron James said. “I mean, D-Wade was our leading scorer, but we didn’t have Kevin Durant on our team. We didn’t have the activity of Tyson Chandler on our team as well and the athleticism at the point guard position.” Westbrook is an offensive upgrade over Jason Kidd, the point guard not back from ’08, and is

seen by teammates as the player who could most easily fill Wade’s role as the game-changer off the bench. As James sees it, Andre Iguodala is more athletic than Tayshaun Prince, and James Harden can do more things offensively than Michael Redd.