

BENO UDRIH Q & A

with Andrew Nicholson

photos courtesy: Rocky Widner / NBAE / Getty Images

Beno Udrih grew up in Slovenia a country located in southern Central Europe bordering Italy and the Adriatic Sea. While his homeland is thousands of miles away, he grew up, believe it or not, rooting for the Kings. Learn more about the Kings newest addition!

How did you start playing basketball?

I grew up playing. When I was nine years old, I tried soccer, handball and all kinds of sports. My dad was actually a basketball player but he never forced me to go into basketball. He always wanted me to figure out what I liked on my own. Once I decided to go into basketball, I stuck with it. I started loving it and that's how I became a basketball player.

When you were growing up, were you able to watch NBA games?

Yes, but not as many as today in Slovenia. As I grew up, we had more and more NBA team's games. It used to be just the Finals and that was it.

What was your favorite team growing up?

Believe it or not, it was the Kings because they had Peja (Stojakovic) and Vlade (Divac). So I liked that team and the Spurs of course. I always liked them because I grew up on that kind of basketball mentality—defense and then offense. So I knew their system. I understood the way they played basketball.

Did you ever play as the Kings on video games?

I remember when I was little, my brother and I would always play NBA Live and I always had Sacramento Kings. It's not a lie!

How did you choose #19?

I had 14 in San Antonio, so I needed a change. I said I wanted a fresh start. Fourteen was my number in San Antonio because June 14th is my mother's birthday. December 19th is my dad's, so I took 19. And the nine is actually like a family number. Because my father wore nine and my brother wore nine. I also wore nine back in Slovenia, so I tried to get nine here, but Kenny (Thomas) has that.

What was the main thing you learned from your time with the Spurs?

I learned how to play smart basketball. To be a true point guard you have to be able to find people. For example, find Brad on the roll when we were playing pick and rolls. With the Spurs it's just small things that really helped me.

Do you have a pregame meal you like to eat?

Not really. When my mom comes to visit me she cooks for me so that's always good. Otherwise, I don't eat anything. Right now, in the hotel, it's a Caesar salad with chicken or something like that. I like to go into games a little bit hungry. I don't like to be full. So today I didn't eat a lot before the game.



What do you like to do away from the court?

I like to play video games, watch movies and hang out with my friends. I've already hung out with a couple of my new teammates. I went to their house. Really, I just try to relax when I'm not playing.