

# The Freakish Advantage of NBA All-Stars

Draymond Green and Kawhi Leonard have the perfect combination of height and wingspan to rule in today's league

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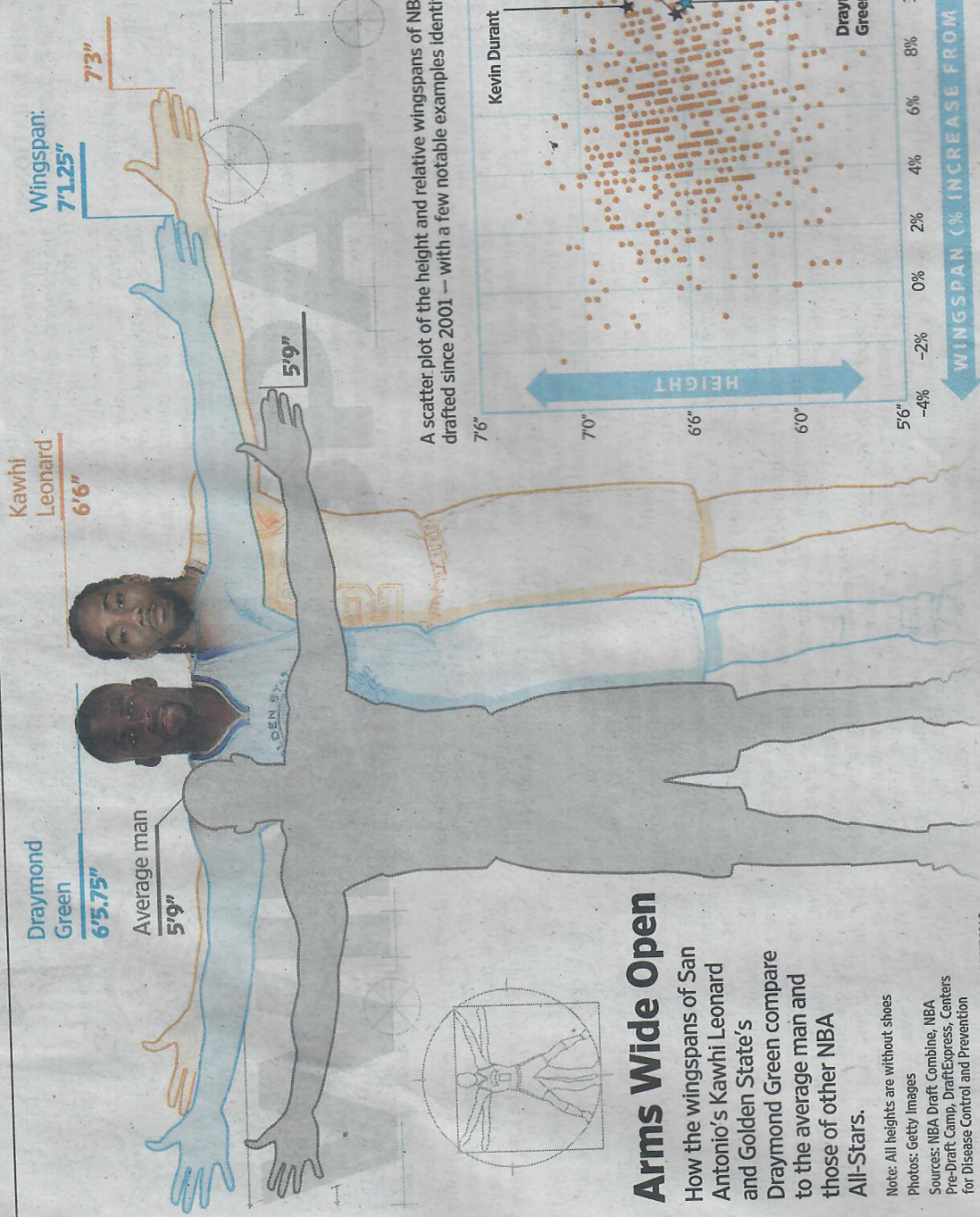
Draymond Green is the most valuable player in today's NBA. Kawhi Leonard is a forward center. It's all of the above. The prototype is someone who plays in the position but every position. That's a huge problem for most players, though, because players like Kawhi Leonard don't exist. They are not a mix of two different types of players and far between that you can't find them on your fingers. Kawhi Leonard is a text message.

Draymond Green is a forward center. Kawhi Leonard is one of these unique players. So is Golden State Warriors guard Draymond Green. Both have been named All-Stars this season and are indispensable pieces on the Golden State Warriors' two best teams after a series of losses. Basketball forces collided with genetics in an unusual genetic advantage: Kawhi Leonard's wingspan.

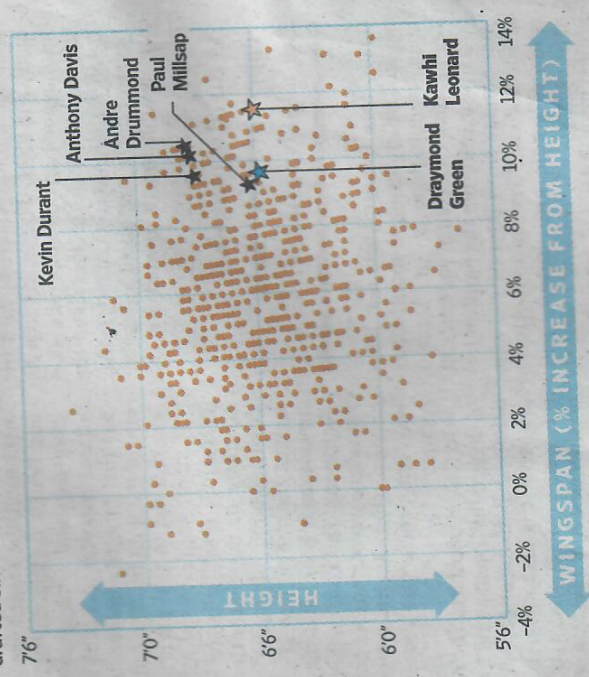
Draymond Green and Kawhi Leonard are both about 6'7" without shoes, but the best measure of how big they play is their wingspan. They're armed with wingspans that are among the most impressive on earth.

Anyone who has seen Leonardo DiCaprio's sketch of the Vitruvian Man knows the average person's wingspan is roughly equal to his height. NBA players, though, aren't average people. NBA players have a wingspan-to-height ratio of 1.06 to 1, according to a DraftExpress database of players who were drafted in the last three years, and they're such a remarkable sample that a ratio of 1.1 is more common in the league than the ordinary 1 to 1.

Draymond Green and Kawhi Leonard are outliers among the outliers. Green's wingspan is 1.09 times his height without shoes, and that's nothing compared to Kawhi Leonard's. Leonard turned heads



A scatter plot of the height and relative wingspans of NBA players drafted since 2001 — with a few notable examples identified.



## Arms Wide Open

How the wingspans of San Antonio's Kawhi Leonard and Golden State's Draymond Green compare to the average man and those of other NBA All-Stars.

Note: All heights are without shoes  
Photos: Getty Images  
Sources: NBA Draft Combine, NBA Pre-Draft Camp, DraftExpress, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
MIKE SUDAL/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

## Lord of the Wings

Compare your wingspan to those of NBA All-Stars Draymond Green and Kawhi Leonard: Leonard's wingspan is about 7.25 pages wide; Green's is a little over 7 pages. Lay flat on your back and stretch your wingspan stretched across the length of the pages

Warriors passed on picking him twice. There was one person, though, who was confident enough to see this coming. Before the draft, like any other college graduate applying for a job, Green was asked about his size. Most teams considered it a weakness because he seemed to be neither a small forward nor a power forward. Green

Leonard's wingspan is about 7.25 pages wide; Green's is a little over 7 pages. Lay flat on your back and stretch your wingspan stretched across the length of the pages