

2005 Final NBA Mock Draft --- Tuesday, June 28th, 2005
BY MATTHEW HATFIELD

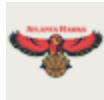


1. Milwaukee Bucks

C Andrew Bogut

Utah

It's coming down to Andrew Bogut of Utah and North Carolina's Marvin Williams; no trade. Milwaukee has to salivate about the potential Williams has. That said, Bogut has the chance to be special, too. He was the best player in College Basketball this past season and displays exceptional passing skills. Bogut can score, rebound and shoot the required percentage to be a productive guy for quite some time. What he needs to work on is his overall defensive game. Holding on to Michael Redd and getting T.J. Ford, a top ten pick of two years ago, back into the fold will put coach-less Milwaukee back in the position of fighting for a playoff spot. Improving as a team on the defensive end is the key for them in 2005-06.



2. Atlanta Hawks

F Marvin Williams

No. Carolina

It's no secret that that the Atlanta Hawks, **who became the first team ever to fail to win consecutive games during the regular season**, need a point guard. Tyrone Lue doesn't cut the dice. Problem is Atlanta simply cannot pass up Bogut or Marvin Williams for Chris Paul. It would be tremendously easier for them to take Bogut since the Hawks are already stacked with young guys who can play the 3 or 2. Taking Williams - like we think they will do since there really isn't a buyer out there for the 2nd overall choice - means either Boris Diaw, Al Harrington or an even younger pup will be out the door. Atlanta, which is nearly six million dollars under the salary cap, might be able to lure Bobby Jackson or Earl Watson over in free agency. They do that and the chance of them losing 43 games by 10+ points will be significantly slimmer.



3 (6). Portland Blazers

SF/SG Martell Webster

High School

27. Portland (via Utah)

C Martynas Andriuskevicius Lithuania

Why does Portland want to trade down? Very simple. The team, coming off its worst season since 1973-74, wants to go young after all those years of being old. Last year in the 2004 draft, the Blazers took High School product Sebastian Telfair, who happens to play point guard like Paul. Overall, Portland ranked 27th in league scoring so in order to improve that they would like to make a deal where they can pick up another scorer and get Martell Webster, the Seattle prep star that's more re-fined than Gerald Green (who we thought Portland would originally take). A trade is on the table and ready to be completed. Portland would get the 6th and 27th selections as well as Gordan Giricek and Kirk Snyder from Utah in exchange for this pick and Ruben Patterson. A wrench could be thrown into this possible deal and that's the fact Patterson has made it known he doesn't want to play for the Jazz organization.



4. New Orleans Hornets PG Chris Paul Wake Forest

Last year the Hornets mortgaged their future by trading away players such as Baron Davis, David Wesley, Jamal Mashburn and others. In the '04 draft they took J.R. Smith, a kid with an abundance of talent. New Orleans averaged 88.4PPG - dead last in the entire league. Someone with scoring and distributing ability is what they're looking for. Paul's a guy right up their alley. If you ask me, he was the ACC's best point guard each of the last two seasons as a freshman and sophomore. Doesn't get much better than that does it?



5. Charlotte Bobcats PG Raymond Felton No. Carolina
13. Charlotte Bobcats PF Charlie Villanueva Connecticut

I truly believe this is where the draft really begins. Charlotte knows one of the three marquee point guards - Deron Williams, Chris Paul, or Raymond Felton - will be available. Most likely the PG on the board is Felton, a Carolina favorite obviously. Brevin Knight was serviceable, ranking near the top in assists this past season. Although, Knight played well, he doesn't possess scoring ability and really has not had back-to-back good seasons since entering the league in Cleveland years ago. Bernie Bickerstaff's Bobcats are contemplating whether to trade up or not. Staying put gives them the option of taking Gerald Green or Danny Granger, then drafting Sean May perhaps at #13. Finally, a match made in heaven is Villanueva joining old UCONN teammate Emeka Okafor.



Ray Felton could be joining a team that lost 16 games by three points or less in Charlotte. (AP/David J. Phillip)



6 (3). Utah Jazz PG Deron Williams Illinois

I've said it and thought it from day one: Deron Williams is the ideal point guard on a Jerry Sloan coached team. In fact, Williams is my third best player overall in this draft. So it makes perfect sense for Utah to complete their trade with Portland so that they can get Williams. He had a great NCAA Tournament and really at times was the best player on the floor for Bruce Weber in his three-guard attack. The Jazz, coming off their first losing season since 1982-83 (pre Stockton-to-Malone), had **11 different guys start at least 15 games**. Having Andrei Kirilenko healthy, plus Carlos Boozer and Mehmet Okur up front, Utah might not be a sub-.500 ball club for very long.



7. Toronto Raptors
16. Toronto Raptors

SF/SG Gerald Green
C Andrew Bynum

High School
High School

Only three players remain from the 2002-03 Raptors team. That tells us Toronto has undergone a major overhaul since then. Vince Carter was traded midway through the '04-05 campaign, leaving the reigns to second-year post presence Chris Bosh from Ga. Tech. Toronto's biggest need is at shooting guard, despite the fact point guard is not a real strong position for them, especially with a disgruntled Rafer Alston at the controls. Channing Frye is very much in the mix (if still on the board) as are Danny Granger and maybe Martell Webster. Packaging both picks for Canadian native Jamaal Magloire - currently with the New Orleans Hornets - has been speculated the last 24-48 hours.



8. New York Knicks
30. New York Knicks

C/PF Channing Fry
PF Chris Taft

Arizona
Pittsburgh

High School player Andrew Bynum is the sleeper pick, even though New York has never taken a guy from the ranks below college. Personally, it equals a huge bust pick if they go that route. Frye is the surest big man in this draft after Bogut. A two-time All-Pac-10 performer, Frye has good skill all around, played very well in the tourney, and rebounding at a high level is his only noticeable flaw. Maybe it's May, maybe not. My question is do they want another undersized power forward? They've got a trade pending where they would give up Kurt Thomas (a similar player) for Quentin Richardson, who one has to think is going to be trade bait or get someone else dealt (Houston, Hardaway, etc.). What you also might get with Frye is shot blocking, a category the **Knicks ranked last overall with 3.2BPG**. The second rounder is key just like it was last year where they nabbed a real sleeper in UCLA small forward Trevor Ariza. His old teammate - Dijon Thompson - loves the big city lights, too.



9. Golden State Warriors **PF Hakim Warrick**

Syracuse

Warrick has gone as far as hinting he wants to play for Golden State, saying he'd like to play with Baron Davis in an up-tempo style of offense. **Golden State was 16-38 pre-Davis and 18-10 with him at the helm**. GSW will have a tough pick to make nonetheless if Granger and Frye are there. Backcourt help is not needed. A sleeper pick would be Ike Diogu, a guy that could demand defensive focus on the low block, opening

more things up for Adonal Foyle in the middle. Mike Dunleavy Jr. mans the small forward position well since he can shoot the ball solidly. Derek Fisher, Jason Richardson, Mikael Pietrus and Davis make up one of the game's elite backcourts. What Warrick, an athletic player in his own right with a terrific wingspan and promising defensive skills, brings is rebounding. The Warriors ranked 29th in the NBA at [-] 3.9RPG. Chris Mullin and the brass up front know they're on the cusp of making a playoff run.



10. Los Angeles Lakers PF Sean May No. Carolina

Does Dr. Phil have the prescription to fix the Lakers? Does it really matter? Jackson is getting a tasty \$10 million dollars a year over the next three seasons and is dating Owner Jerry Buss' daughter - Jeannie. What LA needs most in this draft is more bulk/beef in the middle and a point guard to runt the show. Los Angeles went from 4th to 23rd in field goal percentage in one season. Big reason - Shaq - and his pals: Karl Malone, Derek Fisher, Gary Payton, and others departed. They're going to build this team around Kobe Bryant and are interested in making a deal to move up in this draft. In order to do that, shipping Caron Butler and maybe center Vlade Divac away is their best way to go if they want pick #3 overall, which currently belongs to Portland. There they have the opportunity to take Marvin Williams if he's there, a seasoned point guard, or stay put and take whichever other Tar Heel is left - Sean May or Raymond Felton.



11. Orlando Magic SF Danny Granger New Mexico

To tell it like it is - Orlando is too talented to be coming consecutive losing seasons for the first time since the team's inception. Steve Francis has to either A.) be converted to shooting guard or B.) go elsewhere. Senseless describes them going point guard for the simple fact they chose St. Joe's Jameer Nelson last year. Orlando has to feel pretty good if big 6-9 small forward Danny Granger from New Mexico, who had good showings prior to the NCAA Tournament, is there. Charlotte could reach for him at #5 overall, although they seem more set on taking Felton or someone else. Granger also could slip to the very end of the lottery to a team like the Timberwolves at #14 overall. My thinking on this one is the Magic like Webster and Warrick. Neither will be there, but Granger could be. Alternate option is Oklahoma State forward Joey Graham.



12. Los Angeles Clippers SG Rashad McCants No. Carolina

Odd that the Clippers finished three games ahead of their intra-city rival the Lakers at 37-45. Coach Dunleavy does have a point guard in Shaun Livingston, an injury prone, yet entertaining ball handler. Bobby Simmons is a free agent they yearn to keep. Is Kerry Kittles, though? Whether he is or not, a lengthy/versatile forward to go with Elton Brand might be the way to go. Joey Graham and Hakim Warrick are options and ideal fits if there. If not, I see one of two players going to the team that went **4-13 in games decided by three points or less.** Texas A&M shooting guard Antoine Wright or UNC talent Rashad McCants is t he pick. LAC is enamored by McCants, someone that

has attitude problems but surely won't slip by Minnesota and Indiana. This franchise is known for taking the stick figure busts. Does that mean Martynas Andriuskevicius?



14. Minnesota Timberwolves SG Francisco Garcia Louisville

Minnesota missed out on the playoff festivities one season after reaching the Western Conference Finals. In order to improve their 44-38 overall record, Minny may want to start over for this year before making the title run in '06-07. Their needs include a center and a combo guard that can come off the bench before eventually cracking the starting five. **Wolves must find an aggressive type of player who can help them get to the line more often. Minnesota made just 22.2 trips per game - last in the league.** Kevin Garnett is there to stay for this year, but what about after that? Weed out Latrell Sprewell and either Sam Cassell or Wally Szczerbiak. It would be best for the team.



15. New Jersey Nets PF Fran Vazquez Spain

New Jersey announced Monday that they've declined to pick up the option on Clifford Robinson, a veteran forward with better than adequate range. **Pre-Vince Carter the Nets were 9-16. With him the team went 33-24 and clearly looked like the third or fourth best team in the East after Detroit and Miami.** Believe it or not, even with the trio of Carter, Richard Jefferson and Jason Kidd, New Jersey can use another light scorer around the basket. NJ was 29th in NBA points per game; a stat that's sure to be much better for them in 2005-06. Charlie Villanueva averaged 14PPG and 8RPG as a sophomore at Connecticut. He had a big first half vs. NC State before cooling off enormously in the second half. I see the Nets making a play for sweet shooting 6-10 forward Fran Vazquez alongside Nenad Krstic unless Villanueva is there.



17. Indiana Pacers SG Antoine Wright Texas A&M

Rashad McCants definitely makes a lot of sense as Reggie Miller's replacement. McCants could give them even more outside shooting, a place where Indiana ranked in the top ten (7th to be exact), and will split some time with Fred Jones and Stephen Jackson at the wing position(s). What Rick Carlisle and the Pacers have to be searching for is a shooter that will help them get sold on a particular lineup. Because in 2004-05, the Pacers **used 30 different starting lineups - 2nd most in pro basketball history.** Garcia might be someone the Pacers target. Salim Stoudamire has a sweet stroke for a lefty, but 17 is kind of high. My crystal ball says Jason Maxiell (Cincinnati) and Ronny Turiaf (Gonzaga) are solid candidates to go to Indian in the next round.



18. Boston Celtics SF Joey Graham Oklahoma St.

Danny Ainge would be thrilled to see Graham still on the board at #18 overall. It's very conceivable Graham goes #11 overall. Also, it's just as conceivable he goes anywhere from 11-18. What this would do is re-unite Graham with his Oklahoma State

teammate Tony Allen. Boston's draft of 2004 consisting of Allen, Delonte West and Al Jefferson has the makings of being near spectacular. Both of those second rounders could come in handy for the C's. Another big like Randolph Morris (Kentucky), LSU's Brandon Bass and Poland's Marcin Gortat all figure into the discussion. Whoever goes at #18, Doc Rivers is going to emphasize shooting a high percentage (46.8FG% - 3rd).



19. Memphis Grizzlies PG Jarrett Jack Ga. Tech

Defense was a point of emphasis with Hubie Brown and Mike Fratello, who took over a 5-11 team and guided them to a 40-26 mark the rest of the way. Fratello's Grizz **held foes under 100 points 66 times.** Impressive to say the least. Not so impressive was how the team reacted vs. Phoenix in the opening round of the playoffs. Earl Waton's a free agent, while Jason Williams has to play well in '05-06, otherwise he'll be gone. Jarrett Jack was one of the under the radar PG's in college hoops, ranking in the top ten in the ACC in field goal percentage, free-throw percentage, assists and steals. Jack has great strength, was the 6th player in school history to score 1000+ points, but has to cut down on run-killing turnovers. In essence, Memphis wants a slasher who can play extended minutes like a Francisco Garcia or Julius Hodge if Jack is not the route the go. Jerry West is **THE** best front office guy around and might surprise us with Monta Ellis too.



20. Denver Nuggets SF Yaroslav Korolev Russia
22. Denver Nuggets SG Salim Stoudamire Arizona

Under George Karl the Nuggets (2nd in both assists and steals) won 32 of their final 40 regular season contests, plus defeated the World Champion Spurs in Game 1 of the playoffs. They dropped the four subsequent games because of a lack of outside shooting from the two-guard position. Voshon Lenard's status is up in the air so it makes sense for them to get one now that can light it up from downtown. Rudy Fernandez was their original target supposedly. Now I think if you've got to package all three picks to get who you want (Garcia) - get him. The frontcourt is set, Carmelo Anthony is the franchise player you can build around, and there are two combo guards in Andre Miller and Earl Boykins. Denver's such a crafty organization with Kiki that it wouldn't shock me to see them land a Salim Stoudamire.



21. Phoenix Suns PF Ike Diogu Arizona St.

No team had a better regular season record than the Suns' 62-20. **Phoenix was first in scoring offense; last in scoring defense.** That single statistic says it all. A trade is pending with the Knicks that would send Quentin Richardson, who was disappointing vs. San Antonio in the playoffs, for role player power forward Kurt Thomas. Add depth is the key for the Suns unless Joe Johnson don't come back at shooting guard then that would be their spot to address. It's all about mindset on the defensive end for them and Diogu can give them a presence off the bench with Steven Hunter, provided he is resigned. 7-0 249 pound France center Johan Petro has been talked about as well. At the

age of 19, Petro's already play with Tony Parker on the France Junior Natl. team and has the long frame to alter shots in the paint.



23. Sacramento Kings PF Wayne Simien Kansas

Sacramento's 13.1 turnovers per game was most in the NBA. However, it's a misleading statistic due to all the nifty passes they make. By mid-season, Sacramento pulled the trigger on the second of two deals during the year. It sent Chris Webber to Philadelphia in exchange for a couple of backups. Kings must get a forward now and keep everything else in tact. Of course, that is baring a big-time small forward slips through the cracks and changes it all. Then it would be time to trade Peja Stojakovic in the summer for another big piece. Sac is set at C with Brad Miller, SG with Cuttino Mobley (a free agent alongside Bobby Jackson - both of whom might be back) and PG with Mike Bibby. Villanueva comes to mind here if available as do Chris Taft and Wayne Simien from Kansas. Finding scorers won't be an issue for the 2nd ranked offensive club.



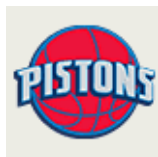
24. Houston Rockets PG Roko Ukić Croatia

The Juwan Howard injury was killer for them. It prevented them from having that third scorer to help them defeat Dallas and get a shot at the run-and-gun Suns. Tracy McGrady and Yao Ming are two franchise players good enough to carry them to a Championship **if** Carol Dawson and company make the right selection. Houston desperately needs a third scorer here. Even with Jon Barry and Dikembe Mutombo heading bye-bye for free agency, defense wasn't a problem. Houston was 3rd in the league, allowing a mere 91PPG. Simien's an interesting prospect. Reason why is **he was the only player in the Big 12 last season to average a double-double**. That's good anyway you slice it, but there is injury concern with him. Think point guard and think Chris Taft, despite the fact he lacks some things in his game.



25. Seattle Sonics C Johan Petro France

Seattle was second in all of pro hoops in rebounding margin. Believe it or not, they may prefer going small at 25 overall instead of big. There are quite a few inside guys that can patrol the paint adequately. And when the Sonics decide to pursue centers/power forwards - they turn out like Robert Swift. A more physical point guard to backup Luke Ridnour is an option. Antonio Daniels was a good backup in 2004-05, though he and Ray Allen could go elsewhere when they see the right dollar signs. Petro and Taft are tempting. My guess is Petro, someone Seattle ought to seek a trade with tonight.



26. Detroit Pistons SF/SG Julius Hodge NC State

Monta Ellis once scored 72 points in a High School game. He compiled a record of 129-16 in four years of High School in Mississippi. Finally, he averaged 38.6PPG, 7.9RPG and nearly seven assists a night. So why would the Pistons pass on this guy? First off, an international player is a possibility here, in spite of Darko's struggles/lack of playing time. Secondly, Julius Hodge is on the board and put on a dazzling performance in a second round tourney upset of Connecticut. Thirdly, Detroit returns about 99% of its roster for 2005-06 barring any trades. Trade or Hodge is what my gut tells me.



28. San Antonio Spurs SF Ersan Ilyasova Turkey

A most international of teams how Commissioner David Stern put it (something like that), the Spurs say why not keep the trend going? This Turkey player - and no we're not calling him a turkey, lets make that perfectly clear - doesn't have to play right away. San Antonio won 40 games by 10+ points for a reason. They're very good and don't need to fill many areas.



29. Miami Heat G Luther Head Illinois

Illinois guard Luther Head - the top scorer on the national runner-up - had a great pre-draft camp. He's capable of going as high as 17th overall to Indiana or slipping into the early part of the second round where Atlanta would **definitely** ponder Mr. Head. One place I don't see Head going is Denver because the Nuggets have a couple of combo guards already. Miami kind of does too, but he can provide them with another player to spell Dwyane Wade and Damon Jones. Kind of play the role Keyon Dooling did at times this year. Head's a guy that never quits, therefore should blend right in with this buch.