

Phoenix Suns Draft Primer: Pick P.J. Hairston

Written by
Thursday, 21 March 2013 21:55 -



Disclaimer: Yes, I did do that on purpose to get you to read this... No, I am not suggesting P.J. should be the 5th pick... read on.

To tank or not to tank, that has been the question. Well, one question among many for the [Phoenix Suns](#) fans this season.

Over the past few months, we have all had our eye on the ball – that of the ping pong variety. Yet as the season has played out, our vision has become clearer and our fate is coming more into view. We will most assuredly land a lottery pick this draft. Where in the lottery remains a mystery. With luck, we may land the number one pick overall. With every loss, that chance becomes greater. [Yet for some reason, against teams we really shouldn't beat, the Suns decide they come to play and muck up the works.]

Lottery picks are certainly intriguing and something we will all opine about over the remainder of the season and leading up to the draft. Yet there is another storyline that isn't quite as sexy, but could potentially impact the Suns fortunes just as much.

Thanks to our buddies in LA, we will receive another first round pick [if you want to call it that], and will be selecting a player using Miami's draft pick. And as our luck has always gone, both the [Lakers](#) and the [Heat](#) decided to start playing, pushing that pick from a late lottery to picking 30th.

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Yippie!

"But Jason, why would you even suggest that this pick may have the same or better impact than potentially the first pick in the draft"

That is a valid concern. However, as we have seen in the past [cough, ODEN, cough], the first pick is no guarantee. Neither are top five picks, as we have two of them on our roster right now whom we would gladly trade for a Kit Kat bar. [I am overlooking the fact that there is a far greater chance to get a great player up there, but then my article would be fairly short].

While it is a rare sight to see a player selected in second round of that NBA draft actually make a team and produce, it does happen enough to believe that there are opportunities to find a gem amongst the rubble. In fact, since 2000 there have been numerous players able to overcome their poor draft position and become viable NBA players. There have even been rare [soon-to-be] NBA all-stars who were overlooked completely.

In the 2000 NBA draft [possibly the worst draft ever], [Michael Redd](#) was considered the 43rd best player in the draft. In fact, not only was he overlooked by every single team in the league, even the team that finally drafted him picked Jason Collier [15

th

pick] over him and then traded that pick for Joel Pryzbilla. The Suns picked Jake Tsakashitas with the 25

th

pick. UGH!

The next year, teams passed over [Gilbert Arenas](#) [30th - although we now know that might have been a good idea] and Memet Okur [37

th

]. In 2002,

[Carlos Boozer](#)

was overlooked [35

th

] along with

[Matt Barnes](#)

[46

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]. In both of those drafts, there were other players that have had decent role playing careers as well, while a number of first round picks have busted out of the league.

In 2003, the second round boasted a plethora of quality gets [Korver, Kapono, Walton, Pachulia, Bogans, [James Jones](#) , Bonner] and even a couple of high quality players like [Steve Blake](#) [38

th

] and

[Mo Williams](#)

[47

th

]. The 2004 draft missed on

[Anderson Varejao](#)

[31

st

]. In 2005, NBA braniacs goofed up on

[David Lee](#)

[30

th

],

[Monta Ellis](#)

[40

th

] and much maligned

[Marcin Gortat](#)

[57

th

], among others [Bass, CJ Miles, Turiaf,

[Amir Johnson](#)

and

[Lou Williams](#)

]. 2006 gave us

[Paul Millsap](#)

[47

th

],

[Steve Novak](#)

[32

nd

] and PJ Tucker [35

th

].

[Carl Landry](#)

was overlooked in 2007 [31

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] along with

[Glen Davis](#)

[35

th

], while everyone really pooped on

[Marc Gasol](#)

[48

th

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The 2008 NBA draft should have caused a mass firing amongst GM's when they all passed over the likes of Pekovic [31], Chalmers [34], [DeAndre Jordan](#) [35], Omar Asik [36], Mbah-Moute [37] and the DRAGON [45]. Even the last four drafts have produced Crowder[35], Blair [37], Parsons [38], Fields [39], Meeks [41], Thornton [43], Budinger [44], [Danny Green](#) [46] and little old [Isaiah Thomas](#) with the last pick in the draft in 2011.

The Suns, meanwhile, have had 13 first round picks since 2000, and have kept only nine for at least one season, and only ONE past their rookie deal [Amar'e]. "Jake" Tsakalidis, Amaré Stoudemire, [Casey Jacobsen](#) , Žarko ?abarkapa, [Luol Deng](#) , [Nate Robinson](#) , [Rajon Rondo](#) ,

[Sergio Rodriguez](#)

, Rudy Fernández,

[Alando Tucker](#)

,

[Robin Lopez](#)

,

[Earl Clark](#)

,

[Markieff Morris](#)

, and

[Kendall Marshall](#)

. I am not sure even if we had all of those players we would even win 10 games this year.

"But Jason, who should we be thinking about that other teams are sleeping on?"

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Good question. Here are just a few guys that may be available at 30 in this year's draft I think you have to consider if they are available:

Doug McDermott, 6-7 F Creighton: Lottery pick, you say? Very possible. But time and again we have seen guys like McDermott drop in the draft. Unathletic, position-less, older players that impressed in college but have little upside in the eyes of scouts tend to be overlooked. Last year it was [Jae Crowder](#). If McDermott actually comes out early [he is a junior] and slides to 30, this is a no-brainer. This guy can flat out play. He is [Jared Dudley](#) 2.0.

Allen Crabbe, 6-6 G California: The Pac-12 Player of the Year, Crabbe is a shooting guard with good size and the ability to score. He was the leading scorer for an NCAA tourney team that boasts no other players who would make my high school team. While guys like McLemore, Oladipo, Smart, Goodwin will all be gone, and all the love going to the aptly named Glen Robinson III and Tim Hardaway Jr., I am not sure the drop off to Crabbe is very much, if at all. He may move up in the pecking order with workouts, but if he is available at 30, Crabbe would be a solid pick.

Deshaun Thomas, 6-7 F Ohio State: Ohio State is a two seed in the NCAA Tourney, won the Big 10 tourney, was tied for second in the regular season and is ranked seventh in the nation. A team like that usually boasts two or three big time players, a few young solid prospects and a deep bench. Ohio State has Thomas, a solid Aaron Craft, and bodies. Why Thomas goes under the radar is beyond me. The focal point of every opponents scouting report, Thomas still manages to score over 19 a game on one of the best teams in America. This guy is totally overlooked and if available, you would be wise to pick him. Can you say steal of the draft?

P.J. Hairston, 6-5 G-F UNC: Hairston has been an enigma for UNC in his two seasons. A heralded recruit known for his shooting prowess, P.J. came in and disappointed immediately, relegated to spot duty on a loaded team. This season, he has been at times confounding, and others spectacular. The mid-season shift to power forward has spurred a late season run for the Heels, and his play has shown NBA scouts the possibilities he brings to the table. With child, it is a forgone conclusion he will bolt for the NBA. Right now, he is not even projected in the draft at all according to various reports. I am here to tell you that PJ Hairston will not only be a 10+ year NBA player, but will probably end up an all-star. Watch him shoot up the draft during workouts, but if available, he is the one guy you don't pass on, regardless of anyone else listed here. And this is coming from a guy that has seen every single game and gets really pissed at Hairston far too often. His ability is tailor made for the NBA and he will be great. Drafting him at 30 is equivalent to drafting whoever at 14 [if the Lakers missed the playoffs].

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Jahii Carson, 5-9 PG ASU: OK, this is sort of a bonus and I am not sure Jahii will enter the draft, but if he does, and despite the fact we don't need to draft another point guard, I really like Jahii's game. Yeah, he is super small, but so is Isaiah Thomas and he is a really nice young NBA player. Jahii is better than him. If Carson develops a consistent ability to knock down the long ball, watch out.