

Phoenix Suns NBA Draft Preview: Isaiah Austin Rising?

Written by

Saturday, 06 April 2013 09:00 -



[Isaiah Austin](#) could be another name you start hearing more about in the coming mock drafts. He's a 19 year old 7'1" freshman center who is a skilled big man with tremendous potential, and helped his [Baylor Bears](#) win the NIT championship against Iowa with a full stat sheet that included 14 points, 9 rebounds, 5 blocks, 4 assists, and 2 steals.

Although Austin has so far been slated as a mid to late first round pick by most, his play in the NIT championship could boost his stock, along with the fact that bigs always rise just before the draft anyway. So who is Austin and what could he bring to a team like the Suns?

Stats:

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Measurables:

- Height: 7'1" (7'0" without shoes)
- Weight: 220 lbs (when soaking wet)
- Wingspan: 7'3"
- Standing Reach: 9'3"

Strengths:

- Tremendously skilled for a big man, very good ball handler and good court awareness
- Can stretch the floor with mid-range and long range shooting out to the three point line
- Good athlete
- Blocks shots (Shows potential to improve as well)
-

Has decent moves to create shot and score

- Decent rebounder

Weaknesses:

- Very thin, will need to add substantial size in the NBA to play in the post
- Plays passive at times
- Inconsistent and has a tendency to disappear
- Not a strong or aggressive player, a small forward in a center's body

My Take:

Isaiah Austin is an interesting prospect with loads of potential, but who so far has yet to show he can play at a high level on a consistent basis. Yes, he helped propel Baylor to a victory over Iowa in the NIT championship and filled up the stat sheet in doing so, but he has had his fair share of bad games lately as well. Against Providence in the second round of the tournament, Austin shot just 1-7 from the field and grabbed only two rebounds. He also has a terrible game against Oklahoma St. in the Big 12 championship where he went 0-6 from the field and scored only two points. As you can see, consistency is a very real issue.

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Austin reminds me a lot of [Perry Jones III](#), and not just because they both played for Baylor. They were both big men with games more suited for the small forward position, and were both very skilled offensively. The difference is, Perry Jones was much further along in his development when he was drafted after his sophomore year. Austin could really use another year of college to develop and prove that he belongs at the next level.

The problem is, if Austin decides to declare for the draft, and there's talk he might, NBA teams won't have the luxury of waiting and watching how he does next year, they'll have to gamble on his potential vs. his risks now. If he does enter the draft, he certainly won't be in the discussion with the Suns' first pick, but if they end up with the 14th pick from the Lakers, he may be considered.

Personally, I would pass on Austin with the 14th pick. There will still be plenty of other players with just as much potential (if not more) and who are already more proven as well. However, this changes if he slides to the end of the first round and the Suns end up with Miami's pick. In a draft short on quality big men I very much doubt this happens, but if it does, he suddenly becomes a much more attractive option.

Poll **Would you want the Suns to draft Isaiah Austin with their second pick in the first round of the draft?**

- Yes, even if it's the 14th pick. He has loads of potential and upside
- Only if the Suns end up with Miami's pick near the end of the first round
- No, I wouldn't take him in the first round at all.

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