

## Phoenix Suns can't go wrong with young guard Archie Goodwin, picked 29th in the 2013 NBA Draft

Written by

Sunday, 30 June 2013 09:49 -

---



Before you get all up in arms over which player the Suns should have picked at the bottom of the first round, let's first recognize that anyone drafted so late in the game is extremely unlikely to have a productive NBA career.

At that point in the Draft, it doesn't matter if you take a senior, junior, sophomore or freshman. It doesn't matter if you take a specialist or jack-of-all-trades.

Of the 30-32 players drafted at 29 or later since 2000, an average of only 4 players have become quality NBA rotation players or starters each year. That equates to a 15% chance of striking gold. You need to have great scouting and some measure of luck to draft a guy that late who will contribute to your franchise for years to come.

Will 18-year old [Archie Goodwin](#) become one of those four or five players from late in the 2013 Draft who succeed in the NBA?

On the plus side, Goodwin is a great athlete who is still quite young and just scratching the surface of his potential. He has always been one of the top players in his age group, was a McDonald's high school All-American, Mr. Basketball in his home state of Arkansas, led a 21-12 Kentucky team in scoring and led the ACC SECin free throw attempts at just 18 years old.

"Goodwin is an athletic freak," says Glen Logan of SB Nation's UK Kentucky Wildcats blog [ww](#)  
[w.aseaofblue.com](#)

. "He has a blinding first step and a great deal of speed with the ball. He's also incredibly durable. He hit the floor more times, hard, than any player I can ever remember, and he popped up every time. Tough, aggressive kid."

Logan goes on to say that Goodwin is a "tireless worker" who will give 100% all the time and

Written by  
Sunday, 30 June 2013 09:49 -

---

that attacking the rim is Goodwin's greatest strength.

"He's young and raw," Logan said. "But he has every physical tool to be a quality NBA player, even a starter if his shot improves enough. He is also naturally aggressive, and that's something it's almost impossible to teach."

GM Ryan McDonough believes that Goodwin would have been a top-10 pick in 2014 had he stayed in school for his sophomore season, indicating the Suns may have found a gem.

"He was a guy we had targeted the whole time," McDonough said at Goodwin's introductory media conference. "He's a guy we feel has special potential and we didn't want to take a risk somebody ahead of us would take him."

The Suns did work to move up in the draft much higher than 29 to nab Goodwin, but couldn't find a taker. Even moving up one spot to get Goodwin, though, was worth it.

"Right after we got him," McDonough said. "My phone started blowing up [with] a lot of calls and texts saying, *That was our guy, We were trying to get a pick, we were right behind you.*"

Goodwin sounded humble and grateful for the chance to play in the NBA. He knows that, while he has some great skills, he has a great deal to work on.

"I have a lot of room to grow," Goodwin said. "I'm only 18. I can get a lot stronger. I can get a lot more consistent in shooting, getting my dribbling better, and getting a high IQ for the game. There's a lot of things I need to work on, and I'm going to get started as soon as possible."

This statement was in marked contrast to recent Suns rookies who acted as if they'd already arrived. When asked the last two years what they needed to prove, Suns rookies said they had nothing to prove. They talked up their pluses and didn't own up to their minuses. At least Goodwin is starting with the right attitude.

## Phoenix Suns can't go wrong with young guard Archie Goodwin, picked 29th in the 2013 NBA Draft

Written by

Sunday, 30 June 2013 09:49 -

---

With such a great kid with mad athleticism and high potential, what could possibly go wrong? How did this kid drop to 29th in the [NBA Draft](#) at only 18 years old?

Right now, Goodwin is a one-trick pony on offense.

"Attacking the rim is both his greatest strength, and a partial weakness," says Logan, of the KU blog. "Goodwin's perimeter shot is highly inconsistent for three reasons:

- He has an adjustment at the top where he moves his wrist inside and closer to the center of his body;
- He never shoots at a nice, vertical angle, always leaning sideways, backwards or forwards;
- He shoots at a very flat trajectory.

"Here we get into the old saying, *'When all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail,'* Logan continues. "Goodwin saw way more driving opportunities than were actually there at Kentucky, and as a result, created a lot of fouls and a lot of charges."

The [Phoenix Suns](#) see Goodwin in a point guard role in the NBA, as a score-first ballhandler in the mold of [Tyreke Evans](#), [Russell Westbrook](#), [Ty Lawson](#) and even Goran Dragic. The NBA is moving in that direction, where the point guard puts pressure on the defense to collapse, which opens up passing lanes and uncontested 3-point shots.

"Archie does have a reasonably good handle for a 2 guard," Logan says on that front. "But it needs to tighten up a lot for point guard duties. He is very right-handed, and must learn to use his left much, much better both for dribbling and shooting. He does not have a great basketball IQ, as he often makes the wrong decision, but a lot of that is driven by his limited perimeter game and his aggressive nature."

When asked to compare Goodwin to an existing NBA player, Logan found a fit with Sacramento and one-and-done Calipari player Tyreke Evans.

## Phoenix Suns can't go wrong with young guard Archie Goodwin, picked 29th in the 2013 NBA Draft

Written by

Sunday, 30 June 2013 09:49 -

---

"Tyreke went to Memphis, but Calipari did recruit and coach him there just like Goodwin at UK," Logan says. "Tyreke was brought in as an off-guard, just like Goodwin, but like Goodwin, he was a combo in high school.

"Evans' lack of shooting forced Cal to move him to the point, where he excelled. Calipari couldn't really move Goodwin there permanently for several reasons, not the least of which was a depressing lack of scoring threats.

"[Goodwin] wound up playing more of a 2-3 hybrid, with a little reserve point guard. Tyreke's basketball IQ was higher than Goodwin's in college, which is why Goodwin couldn't really handle the point even if we could have left him there."

Another comparison to make is Russell Westbrook, who also played combo guard in college at UCLA before being made a point guard in the NBA.

"As athletic as Goodwin is, Westbrook is more so," Logan says. "With that said, Goodwin is longer, but Westbrook has more natural balance, I think, than Archie does at this point, as well as a functioning left hand and a much tighter dribble.

"The two are similar in some ways, especially how strongly they finish at the rim, and they are somewhat similar in development level coming out of college, although Westbrook had the experience of two years in college, and had a higher basketball IQ."

I want to give a lot of props to Glen Logan for providing great insight into Archie Goodwin. Now we can watch Goodwin develop in the NBA with an eye toward what he needs to improve: his left hand, his shooting and his basketball IQ.

Something Archie has going for him that many rookies don't have is a crazy competitiveness and recognition that he's not already arrived.

## Phoenix Suns can't go wrong with young guard Archie Goodwin, picked 29th in the 2013 NBA Draft

Written by

Sunday, 30 June 2013 09:49 -

---

"We are trying to build a culture here, a good foundation of success," McDonough said. "And that starts with people who work hard and are willing to make the necessary commitment to be great."

Regarding Goodwin, "The coaches had great things to say about him. He was the first one in the gym."

Another big plus is that Goodwin got drafted by the team he really wanted.

"It was a sigh of relief for me," Goodwin said of the Suns trading up for him. "For one, this was the team that I wanted to play for. I feel really comfortable here and I feel like I have the opportunity to do some special things here."

The development of Archie Goodwin will require patience. Of those 4 in 32 who succeed after being taken 29th or later, a few were very young like Goodwin who just didn't hit it off in college or bypassed it entirely (like [DeAndre Jordan](#) , [Monta Ellis](#) , Gilbert Arenas).

We'll see in 2-3 years if Goodwin is a boom or a bust, but all along we'll be able to spend time watching a great, aggressive talent try to find himself in the NBA.

***UPDATE: Tons of errors! Apparently, I am having a bad morning. Put Bradley in title (like the Dbacks prospect, like McDonough's recent combo guard pick) instead of Goodwin. Put ACC. should have been SEC. Put KU instead of UK. Ugh!! How many different fans can I manage to offend in one article? A lot. Many apologies to Diamondback fans, Suns fans, Kentucky fans, SEC fans, and Glen!***