

Phoenix Suns Trade Analysis: Both eyes on the future with four potential first round picks in the vaunted

Written by

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All trades are not created equal in present tense. Some trades make teams better in the short term while others are a part or a more methodical, long-term approach, with those trades where there is a vision of small ripples in the water versus a big splash. Some big splashes are smoke and mirrors.

The [Washington Wizards](#) , [Indiana Pacers](#) , and [Milwaukee Bucks](#) can afford to make short-term moves because those teams already have a foot in the door for the playoffs.

For them adding a [Marcin Gortat](#) , a [Luis Scola](#) , or a [Caron Butler](#) is worth dealing away younger prospects and assets because those veterans add a dynamic to the roster. In the short-term those teams become better and more competitive today, but in the long-term those sacrifices catch up to every team and set-up re-building phases that is ultimately unavoidable.

All of the moves made by the [Phoenix Suns](#) over the past year and a half (yes, some credible moves by Mr. Blanks) have created a forecast that is positive.

Today's trade of Gortat, [Kendall Marshall](#) , [Shannon Brown](#) , and [Malcolm Lee](#) gave the Suns another first round pick arming them with the potential to have four first round picks in the vaunted

[2014 NBA Draft](#)

. On top of having their own pick, the team owns the Pacers pick outright, the [Timberwolves](#) pick (Top 13 protected), and the Wizards pick (Top 12 protected).

The Suns drafted their future anchor in [Alex Len](#) last year in the Top 5 of the [2013 NBA Draft](#) , this year, with their own pick, the team will likely have another shot at a franchise player in that same range.

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By all accounts the Suns are projected to be a bottom two team this year in the standings, but a lottery is a lottery and they could select anywhere between 1-5 depending on how the ping-pong balls bounce. The team with the best odds in the [NBA Draft](#) can finish with the top pick (25.0% odds), second overall (21.5%), third overall (17.8%), or the fourth overall pick (35.7%), but can fall no lower than fourth.

If the team finishes with the second worst record (as they are projected to) the odds change ever so slightly for the first overall pick (19.9%), second overall pick (18.8%), third overall pick (18.8%), fourth overall pick (31.9%), and the fifth overall pick (12.3%), but can fall no lower than fifth.

With the first or second worst record the Suns will do no worse than getting the fourth or fifth best prospect in the upcoming draft.

That is relevant because most NBA decision-makers have dubbed [Andrew Wiggins](#) , [Julius Randle](#) , [Jabari Parker](#) ,

, [Dante Exum](#)

, and

[Marcus Smart](#)

as potential franchise changers at the top of the draft. With the current direction of the roster only Len,

[Archie Goodwin](#)

, and either

[Eric Bledsoe](#)

or

[Goran Dragic](#)

seem to have a long-term future with the team. Considering team make-up and long-term projections, something this front office is clearly focused on, any of those five would be an ideal fit.

The Wizards and the Timberwolves are projected to finish anywhere between the 10th-17th overall pick. This means that the Suns could end up with 2, 3, or 4 total first round picks.

On the [NDI Big Board](#) the prospects ranked between 12-17, where the Wizards and

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Timberwolves picks would fall to be owned by the Suns, are

[Gary](#)

[Harris](#)

(Michigan State),

[Bobby Portis](#)

(Arkansas),

[Mario Hezonja](#)

(Croatia),

[Montrezl Harrell](#)

(Louisville), and

[Willie Cauley-Stein](#)

(Kentucky), for a throw-in

[Mitch McGary](#)

(Michigan).

All of those prospects have a lot of upside and could be quality rotation players at the NBA Level. The Suns could get up to two of them.

The Indiana Pacers are one of the better five teams in the NBA and should have a pick between 24-28 this year. Prospects in that range include [Alex Poythress](#) (Kentucky), [LaQuinton Ross](#)

(Ohio State),

[Doug McDermott](#)

(Creighton),

[Noah Vonleh](#)

(Indiana), and

[Spencer Dinwiddie](#)

(Colorado).

All of these picks can be the Suns, they may not get two of them based on the lottery and standings, or might be an attractive package to lure in a star level player to lead the Suns going forward with Len, Goodwin, and the teams top pick.

A combination of the talents listed and others will be on the menu in the 2014 NBA Draft.

The long-term plans are in place for the team and general manager Ryan McDonough has turned things around in a few short months turning two veterans into first round picks. Former general manager Lance Blanks orchestrated the trade that brought in the Minnesota pick. The

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short-term sacrifice's by the organization will have an ultimate payoff in this upcoming June.

This summer has been McDonough's "Ozymandias," the season will be the "Granite State," while next summer's payoff could be "Felina," a perfect ending where all the pieces fit nicely. Until then the Suns and their fans are officially on "2014 NBA Draft Watch."