

## Around the NBA: Phoenix Suns draft pick update

Written by  
Friday, 04 April 2014 13:00 -

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The Washington Wizards just clinched a playoff berth, guaranteeing the Suns three first round picks in the 2014 NBA Draft.

When [Suns](#) general manager Ryan McDonough took over the Phoenix job, he immediately began unloading veterans and stockpiling draft picks. By the time the dust had settled, the Suns were left with four potential picks in the first round.

Now, with the season nearing its end, it is time to take a look at those draft picks and where they will end up.

### Minnesota Pick

The pick acquired from Minnesota (Wes Johnson trade under Lance Blanks) is top 13 protected this year, meaning the [Timberwolves](#) have to finish in ninth place in the West for the Suns to get that pick. Currently, they are in 10th, 6.5 games back of the ninth-placed Suns with seven games left to play. Basically, Minnesota has to win out while the Suns have to lose the rest of their games.

The Suns have an important decision on their hands. Do they give up on their chase for the playoffs and instead play for that extra pick? It's never too late to start tanking. Can you imagine what McDonough could do with back to back picks at the end of the lottery?

Huh? No? OK then. Sorry folks, the Suns aren't getting this pick this year.

**Targets projected in that range:** Doesn't matter.

### Washington Pick

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This pick was acquired by McDonough in the [Marcin Gortat](#) trade, and with the [Wizards](#) clinching a spot in the playoffs this week, it officially belongs to the Suns. Currently, the Wizards are sitting at sixth in the East, and considering all the West playoff teams have a better record than they do it means the Suns would receive the 17th pick.

There is still some room for this to move around, however. The Wizards are 1.5 games back of the [Brooklyn Nets](#) and two games ahead of the [Charlotte Bobcats](#) with six games to play. That means the Suns are pretty much locked into the 16th, 17th or 18th spot.

So, the Suns traded for a top 12 protected pick and in the process sent back a player that would help ensure they would receive that pick. Shrewd move.

**Targets projected in that range:** [DraftExpress](#) - [T.J. Warren](#) (F, N.C State), [Kyle Anderson](#) (SF, UCLA), [Montrezl Harrell](#) (PF, Louisville); [NBA Draft Insider](#)

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[Adreian Payne](#) (PF, Michigan State), Clint Capela (F, International), [James Young](#) (SF, Kentucky)

### Indiana Pick

The Suns have already won this trade big time. [Miles Plumlee](#) has been a solid rotation player and [Gerald Green](#) has been even better than that, and all the Sun had to give up was Luis Scola. Now on top of that, the Suns are going to get a late first round pick.

The [Pacers](#) looked like the best team in the league (outside of when they played the Sun) for much of the season, but lately they've been free-falling, all the way back to the pack. Meanwhile, San Antonio just reeled off 19 in a row to take the best record in the league while Miami has passed them up in the East. The [Oklahoma City Thunder](#) and [Los Angeles Clippers](#) have better records right now as well.

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That is as far as they are probably going to fall, however, unless the Pacers continue to play poorly. The [Houston Rockets](#), sitting with the sixth best record in the league, are three games back and Indiana has just six games left to play.

The Pacers aren't catching the [Spurs](#), and it's very unlikely that they catch the Thunder. That means that pick is looking like it will be in the 26-28 range depending on how it shakes out between the [Heat](#), Pacers and Clippers.

**Targets projected in that range:** DX - [Rodney Hood](#) (SF, Duke), [Elfrid Payton](#) (PG, Louisiana),  
[leanthony Early](#) (F, Wichita State); NBADI -  
[Willie Cauley-Stein](#) (C, Kentucky),  
[Nik Stauskas](#) (SG, Michigan),  
[K.J. McDaniels](#) (SF, Clemson)

[C](#)

### Suns Pick

That leaves us with just the Suns' own pick, which actually has a wide range.

If the Suns miss the playoffs, they will be drafting at 14. The Timberwolves aren't catching them as I've already said and the East is the East. Whichever of Phoenix, Dallas and Memphis misses the playoffs is locked into the best record among lottery teams. At 14, they are very unlikely to move up.

**Targets projected in that range:** DX - [Doug McDermott](#) (F, Creighton), [Tyler Ennis](#) (PG, Syracuse),  
[Gary Harris](#) (SG, Michigan State); NBADI -  
[Jerami Grant](#) (SF, Syracuse), Dario Saric (SF, International),  
[Rondae Hollis-Jefferson](#)

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If the Suns make the playoffs, whether it is as a 7 or an 8 seed, they are going to jump ahead of the lower half of the Eastern playoff teams. Depending on how Toronto and Chicago finish, the Suns could end up in the 18-22 range.

**Targets projected in that range:** DX - [P.J. Hairston](#) (SG, NBADL/North Carolina); NBADI - [Sam Dekker](#) (SF, Wisconsin), Zach Lavine (SG, UCLA)

Phoenix also has a mid-second round pick, so go ahead and plug in your favorite decorated senior or pick the craziest draft and stash international name for this spot.

Hopefully this gives you a better idea for what to watch for (in addition to the playoff race). The Suns basically have three picks in the second half of the first round, and you can look at all of the players from 10-35 or so on your favorite mock draft to see who the Suns might draft. A package-and-trade up move is also very possible, as three guaranteed rookie contracts is a lot to take on for a team with an already full roster.

No matter how things shake out, we can all have confidence knowing Ryan McDonough is the man making the decisions.