



The NBA Draft is Thursday and the Cleveland Cavaliers find themselves sitting in a pretty good position.

Holding the top pick in the draft for the fifth time in franchise history – and the second time in the past three years – the Cavs completely control what they want to do when Commission David Stern opens the draft at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn at 7 p.m. (The team also holds picks No. 19, 31 and 33).

Stay put and add another young player to a nucleus of Kyrie Irving, Dion Waiters, Tristan Thompson and Tyler Zeller? The Cavs can do that. Make a trade with some of the assets they have spent three years (and 166 losses) compiling so they can be in contention for the No. 8 seed in the Eastern Conference? They can do that, too.

We think we know what we would like to see the Cavs do with the first pick (more on that in a bit), and we're fairly certain that Cavs general manager Chris Grant has made up his mind what he wants to do. Of course, what they actually will do remains in question as rumors continue to swirl around the team.

So let's try to figure this all out as best we can.

### **The Prospects**

If the Cavs stay at No. 1, there are a handful of players that seem to be the likely pick. But, as Phil Keoghan reminds us each week on *The Amazing Race*, each choice comes with its own set of pros and cons.

Kentucky's [Nerlens Noel](#) would seem to be the logical pick, especially with a defensive-minded coach like Mike Brown back in charge of the Cavs. Noel has been described as a "scary" shot blocker and excellent rebounder, a player that blocked 106 shots and averaged 9.5 rebounds per game in 24 games with the Wildcats.

Noel is also an efficient shot blocker, as 47 percent of his blocked shots last season were recovered by a Kentucky player (according to NBA.com). A player that knows how to block a shot that leads to his team gaining possession, rather than just slapping the ball into the third row, is a nice skill to have.

The argument against Noel is he has virtually no offensive game, is a horrible free throw shooter (52.9 percent) and, despite being 6-foot-10, weighs only 206 pounds. He's only 19 so it seems likely that he will put on weight as he ages, but will he make it long enough to actually reach a point where he can mature? There were times when Tyler Zeller struggled against bigger players last season and he outweighs Noel by more than 40 pounds.

Then there's the questions about Noel's knee. He tore the ACL in his left knee during his freshman season (could be a big deal), injured a growth plate in the same knee while in high school (may not be as big of a deal according to a Cleveland Clinic doctor) and won't be ready to play until sometime in late December at the earliest (not really a big deal in the long run).



