

In our continuing quest to preview next Tuesday's NBA Draft, and make fans aware of some of the potential selections of the Cavs ... we offer up the latest by Papa Cass. Cassano breaks down six potential targets for the wine and gold at #25, a list that includes several players Cavaliers fans are likely already familiar with.



Visit the Papa Cass weblog at <http://papacass.blogspot.com/>

With the NBA season now wrapped, we turn around and realize that, holy catfish, the draft is only six days away.

The Cavaliers pick 25th in the first round. A yawner pick that will yield a snoozer player? Possibly. But that 25th pick carries more weight than you might realize.

The Cavs had no picks last year. They currently don't have a first-rounder next year thanks to the ill-fated Jiri Welsch trade. So this first-ever draft pick of GM Danny Ferry must produce a player who can come in and make a meaningful contribution from the get-go. Raw project players are unacceptable. The Cavs, who many are already viewing as a dark horse championship contender next season, must find a player who can play now.

Below, in no particular order, I size up some of the players the Cavs might be looking at, their positives and negatives, and above all, their ability to step in and produce as rookies.

Mike Gansey, West Virginia

Gansey was in the stands with a "Witness" t-shirt during the Cavs' playoff run. A product of Olmsted Falls High School, his family is longtime Cavs season ticket holders.

Color me sentimental, but I think the hometown factor would serve as extra motivation for Gansey should the Cavs draft him. I want to see how he would perform playing for the team he grew up rooting for.

Gansey's skills match up well with Cleveland's needs. They need an experienced shooter, and Gansey is that. They need a heady, smart player who finds ways to contribute even when his shot isn't falling. Gansey will do that.

What Gansey isn't is a tremendous athlete. He's a 6'-4" backcourt player who will need to find ways to compensate for his lack of speed and hops. In the NBA, that could be difficult.

I think Gansey could be a solid bench player for many years. At 24 and with stints at St. Bonaventure and West Virginia under his belt, I think he'll have a decent ability to contribute next year.

Quincy Douby, Rutgers

Long story short, Douby is probably the second coming of Damon Jones. He's an undersized combo guard known for his shooting and not much else. I don't see him as a point guard of the future, and the last thing the Cavs need is a shoot-first point guard usurping open looks from LeBron James.

If the Cavs want another catch-and-shoot player who can put the ball on the floor with some proficiency, Douby is their man. I just don't see the point unless Jones is dealt.

Kyle Lowry, Villanova

Lowry probably fits the "point guard of the future" title more than Douby. But if Douby is another Jones, Lowry might be another Eric Snow. The rap on Lowry is that while he's a good ballhandler, his shooting is suspect. He also has had trouble controlling his emotions. Extroverted players who wear their hearts on their sleeves are a double-edged sword. When times are good, they inspire their teammates. When times are bad, they self destruct and become technical foul magnets. Any meltdown candidate should come with a king-sized caveat attached.

Drafting Lowry might mean another year of Snow starting at the point and serving as Lowry's mentor. I question whether anyone really wants that.

Jordan Farmar, UCLA

About the only late first-round point guard who I could see coming in and starting at some point next year. He gained a reputation as a playmaker on a team that reached the NCAA national championship game this spring. If Ferry is truly following the Spurs template of drafting players who actually accomplished something prior to the draft, he should look long and hard at Farmar if he's there. Farmar might even be worth trading up for.

Shannon Brown, Michigan State

Brown is one of those run-fast, jump-high guys who is really tough to project as an NBA player. At 6'-3" he's an undersized two-guard who would have to make the transition to the point. But if he really put his mind and his vast athletic potential to playing the point, he could be a good one. Of course, we all said the same thing about Dajuan Wagner, but injuries and a lack of interest in playing the point killed that off.

If the Cavs draft him, he'll likely find his groove as a combo guard providing energy off the bench, which would probably press Damon Jones into more of a traditional backup point guard's role. I don't know if Jones would be happy there.

Rajon Rondo, Kentucky

His draft status has fluctuated like a river in a rainstorm. One day, he's challenging Andrea Bargnani as the "it" player of this draft, the next, he's settled back into the mid-20s in the mock drafts.

What is known is that point guard Rondo is one of the quickest players in the draft. He has lightning legs and an ability to break down a defender off the dribble. Both are items the Cavs need in a point guard.

He's not terribly polished, so his ability to step in and contribute right away is a concern. As with Lowry, Rondo could probably use a veteran mentor. If that's Snow, drafting him really isn't going to make the Cavs better next season.

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