

I'm still euphoric over what I felt was an incredible draft by Danny Ferry, Mike Brown, and the Cavaliers front office last night. In my latest, I hit again on Shannon Brown and Daniel Gibson, and make the case that last night's draft was phenomenal television. With just five minutes between picks, recognizable names, Knick Fan melting down all over the place, and a little stand up comedy from David Stern ... I found the draft to be an all around enjoyable viewing experience.



That was the most fun I've ever had watching the NBA Draft.

My Cavaliers had a great night in my view, which is always the most important component to an enjoyable draft experience. They snagged two players I was incredibly high on, selecting Michigan State combo guard Shannon Brown at #25, and University of Texas point guard Daniel Gibson at #42. Both players will make this basketball team, and the ultra-athletic Brown should have an immediate impact filling the role of the soon to be departed Flip Murray. Brown is a complete player that defends, shoots, and runs the floor better than Flip and it's a coup that he was still on the board at #25.

Gibson is more of a developmental project, but there's no doubting his talent. Gibson was named the Big 12 Freshman of the Year in 2005 before having an up and down sophomore season for the Longhorns. Gibson is a bona fide scorer who the Cavs view as a point man, and while they won't say it publicly ... are high enough on him to believe he is the future at point guard for this team. Gibson will

need some time to develop his distribution and floor leadership skills. He struggled with them so much at Texas last year that they actually played him at off guard for the better part of the last half of the season.

Even aside from what I saw as a good night for the Cavs, I just really enjoyed the Draft last night.

Limiting selections to five minutes gave the telecast a nice pace, with no large blocks of dead time that inevitably would be filled by some talking head droning on and on a la the NFL Draft telecasts. The entire two round draft was completed in just over four hours. Disallowing high school entries made the names once again recognizable. Combined with an off year for international talent, the vast majority of the 60 total selections were guys I had seen play on several occasions over the course of the last couple seasons.

In addition, there were a slew of trades last night, which kept things exciting. Four of the top seven players changed teams after donning their initial baseball caps, and there were fifteen deals in total, including five trades made by the Portland Trail Blazers alone. The Blazers caught the ire of the ESPN talking heads, but emerged with four first round picks, adding LaMarcus Aldridge, Brandon Roy, Sergio Rodriguez, and Joel Freeland to the NBA's worst team from a season ago.

The atmosphere was also more jovial than it's ever been in past years. David Stern kept the mood light by admonishing himself after a mispronunciation, and using the podium to call out ESPN's Dan Patrick for poking fun at him and also for their panel of analysts harsh critique of almost every draftee's game. Stern also played the Russ Granik card to the hilt, as this is his deputy commissioner's last season calling out the second round selections. The stoic and personality deprived Granik has gained cult-hero status with the drunkards that attend the draft each season. Fans this year took things to a new level, waving hand held Granik masks in the air ... and chanting "four more years" as the second round wound to a close.

And I'd be remiss if I didn't mention Knick Fan, who was in as rare a form as ever last night. Coming off the heels of the worst season in franchise history, Knick Fan compensated by seemingly starting their tailgate around 6 AM. And Isiah failed to disappoint once again, taking some no name from South Carolina who was being projected as a late second round pick off the board at #20 when guys like Marcus Williams and Shannon Brown were still on the board. While always classic, this year's venture into the stands with the hand held mike was the most memorable ever ... as one molared Knick Fan after another slurred unintelligible taunts at Isiah Thomas and James Dolan into the mike.

In just a couple seasons, the NBA Draft has gone from unbearable to must see TV. The NBA successfully capitalized off of a great regular season, and the most thrilling post-season playoff tournament in recent league history, delivering a great event last night. David Stern continues to be the best commissioner in all of sports, and one of the best commissioners in sports history.

Just four months until the season starts ...