

Cavs Looking for Second Round Steals

Written by {ga=mikeperry}

Wednesday, May 25 2011 6:00 PM - Last Updated Wednesday, May 25 2011 7:55 AM



With the 2011 NBA Draft a couple of weeks away there is a ton of speculation about who the Cleveland Cavaliers should select with the No. 1 overall selection. Kyrie Irving is the general consensus choice, with Derrick Williams, a small forward from Arizona, a relatively distant second.

Some people want Enes Kanter with the No. 4 pick (he will be gone by then) or the freakish athlete from The Congo, Bismack Biyombo...a young power forward prospect that can jump out of the gym, block shots in bunches and run the floor like a madman.

There are about five or six players the Cavaliers could end up with from No. 1 and No. 4 selections, Irving, Williams, Kanter, Kemba Walker, Biyombo or Kawhi Leonard (a tough, defensive-minded power forward with limited offensive abilities at this point). Any two from this list would be fine with me, with my personal preference sees them taking Williams and Kanter.

But the draft is not over for the Cavaliers after that No. 4 overall pick. They also own the No. 32 selection and the No. 54. While this draft is considered fairly weak and top-heavy, the team could help itself immensely if it were to hit on a player with either one of these picks.

So what kind of player are we talking about in the second round? Well, obviously the No. 32 pick will give the Cavs a better opportunity to land someone that can help soon than the No. 54

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pick. But don't sell that No. 54 pick short...especially if they do what I hope they will do.

There will be some talent lower in the draft, regardless of what the so-called experts are saying. In fact, there will be quite a few players you probably even heard of, which is often not the case when it comes to the later selections in the NBA Draft. Here are a few names you should be happy to hear if they are called when the Cavaliers are making their second-round selections because they will be able to eventually help the team.

And there is one player that will make for a very special story if he is selected by the Cavaliers. It's quite obvious who I am talking about. So here, in no kind of order whatsoever, is a list of players the Cavs should be looking at in the second round:

Demetri McCamey, PG, Illinois – McCamey had a solid season for the Illini and should be around when the Cavaliers are on the clock for pick no. 32. The 6-foot-3, 200-pound McCamey has a nice pedigree, having played in high school for the fabled Gene Pingatore at St. Joseph in suburban Chicago, where he was a four-year starter, before heading to Illinois.

His senior season at Illinois, McCamey averaged 14.6 points, 6.1 assists and 3.4 rebounds per game. He finished 10th in the nation in assists and is just the second player in Big Ten history to graduate with more than 1,600 points and 700 assists.

As a junior he was named to the All-Big Ten First Team and was on the Third Team as a senior. McCamey is a decent shooter (he hit 45.1 percent of his 3-pointers) and an above-average passer and defender. He will have to work on his ball-handling and penetration to be successful at the next level.

McCamey finished his career at Illinois with 1,718 points, sixth in school history.

Norris Cole, PG Cleveland State – Cole would be a very popular choice with the fans in Cleveland, but he is more than worthy to be selected with the No. 32 pick. Cole, a 6-2, 170-pound combo guard, is a pure scorer that turned himself into an outstanding perimeter shooter by putting up thousands of shots daily during his collegiate career.

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The Dayton Dunbar product is very coachable and has the raw talent for that to be a big bonus. He is a gifted penetrator that can finish at the rim, he almost always makes the right pass and works hard on defense. Cole plays defense with his feet instead of reaching and averaged just 2.4 fouls per game as a senior.

He scored 21.7 points, 5.3 assists and 5.8 rebounds per game as a senior, also recorded 2.2 steals per contest and shot 85.3 percent from the free throw line.

Cole also turned in one of the best college basketball games in the last decade against Youngstown State, scoring 41 points, grabbing 20 rebounds and handing out nine assists in 40 minutes of action.

Cole would be an instant fan favorite and has the offensive game to be a factor at the next level.

Xavier Silas, Northern Illinois – Silas is an unheralded player from Northern Illinois in the Mid-American Conference, but he has definite pro potential. He was the only player in the top five nationally in scoring that stands 6-5 or taller, and is one of the top pure scorers in the country. At 6-5, 200 he has a solid shooting guard's body, although he may lack the defensive quickness to be a consistent defender at the NBA.

Silas led the MAC in scoring at 22.3 points per game, and he also grabbed 4.6 rebounds per contest. A pure shooter with NBA 3-point range, he shot 41.3 percent from beyond the arc as a senior.

Silas will have to work on his defense and can play out-of-control at times, but his low national profile will make him a value pick late in the draft or if he can be signed as an undrafted free agent.

Nolan Smith, PG Duke – While Kyrie Irving spent most of the season injured, former McDonalds High School All-American Nolan Smith more than capably made the transition from

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shooting guard to the point for the Duke Blue Devils. Smith averaged 20.6 points, 5.1 assists and 4.5 rebounds as a senior and tended to come up big in big games. In the ACC title game against North Carolina he scored 20 points and handed out 10 assists as the Blue Devils claimed the tournament championship.

Turnovers were a bit of a problem for Smith and his first step is not awe-inspiring, but he has a good mid-range jumper and is exceptionally strong. He has the chance to be a lock-down defender in the NBA because of his physical tools as well as his basketball intelligence.

Smith is not as good out on the break as he is in the half-court and he has trouble finishing at the rim, but this will come. His defensive game is NBA-ready while his offense will need work. A project at this point.

Chandler Parsons, SF Florida – Parsons, at 6-10, 218 needs to put on some weight, but he has a polished game and could develop into a decent small forward. He averaged 11.3 points and 7.8 rebounds per game while shooting 54.4 percent from the floor for the Gators, and has the ability to extend the defense with a deft touch from outside. Parsons shot 38 percent from 3-point range and his mid-range game is nice. He can put the ball on the floor, distribute the ball and works hard without the ball in his hands.

Parsons has virtually no low-post game, but he is a solid defender who, at times, struggles against stronger players in the post. He might still be there when the Cavaliers pick at No. 32.

Kyle Singler, SF Duke – Singler is another Duke product that is more reputation than talent, but he does have some raw ability. At 6-9, 225 he has decent size, but he's not a very good finisher, defender or rebounder. One thing he can do, however, is shoot the ball from distance and shooters will always find a home in the NBA.

Singler played 34.8 minutes per game as a senior, scoring 16.9 points and grabbing 6.8 rebounds per contest. He shot 49.7 percent from the floor and 80.6 percent from the line.

Singler isn't someone to be very excited about, but in the right offense he could make a

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contribution.

David Lighty, SG Ohio State – Lighty has, perhaps, the best intangibles of anyone in the draft. A great teammate with a ton of versatility, Lighty may end up being the best player from Thad Matta's recruiting class that landed Greg Oden and Mike Conley in Columbus.

Lighty is quick, strong and athletic that can play above the rim, is a good finisher and is a strong one-on-one player.

Lighty is a strong defender that loves to be physical and put a body on people. At 6-6, 215 he has a strong body and is a good leaper.

As a senior Lighty scored 12.1 points per game with 4.0 rebounds and 3.3 assists and 1.5 steals. He shot 42.9 percent from 3-point range and hit a number of big shots. He's a clutch player that, I think, is one of the most underrated players in this draft. I have heard Lighty could possibly go undrafted, and if he is still there when the Cavs are on the clock with the 54th pick would be the steal of the draft.

Vernon Macklin, PF Florida – Think power. Big power. That's what Vernon Macklin's game is all about. How strong is he? Strong enough to get down low on any defender in college basketball. During his senior season, when he averaged 11.6 points and 5.4 rebounds per game, Macklin shot just three jumpers all season. Think about that for a second...just three jump shots in 30-plus games. Macklin shot 59.3 percent from the floor with a variety of dunks and power moves in the post. Also can shoot a hook shot with both hands.

As a defender he is athletic and agile. He uses his 7-foot-3 ½ inch wingspan to get his hands on a lot of loose balls and has a standing reach of over nine feet.

Macklin will be an enforcer at the NBA level, the kind of player that would protect a Kyrie Irving.

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DeAndre Liggins, SG Kentucky – Liggins is kind of an enigma. We all remember how effective he was in the NCAA Tournament against Ohio State, when he gave the Buckeyes all kinds of trouble on both ends of the floor. But Liggins has also had his downers and can be a petulant, whiny complainer that eschews hard work. If he was playing for a paycheck he may put forth maximum effort, but you never know.

What is obvious is that the 6-6, 205-pound small forward is blessed with the physical tools to be a great player. He has a 7-foot wingspan and his vertical leap is well over 40 inches. But the seven feet of arms are at times offset by the 10 inches of weakness between his ears.

Liggins averaged 8.6 points, four rebounds and 1.2 steals for the Wildcats last season, but he has to work on his perimeter shot. He is a great athlete with a lot of toughness, can penetrate and finish and is an outstanding asset in the open court.

But he makes poor decisions at times and can be lazy on defense, although he has the reputation of a defensive stopper. Liggins could end up a Bruce Bowen-type of player, or he could end up as one of the top players in England, Spain or somewhere else overseas. If he can grow up he could be a very serviceable NBA player. Time will tell, but his physical tools make him worth a flier late in the draft.

John Leuer, PF Wisconsin – Leuer averaged 18.3 points per game in Bo Ryan's plodding offense at Wisconsin, so you know he can shoot. He also grabbed 7.2 rebounds a game and shot 84.3 percent from the free throw line.

At 6-11, 228 pounds he has an outstanding frame that includes a seven-foot wingspan, plus he is very intelligent and can shoot the lights out. He is in range when he steps off the bus, although his release will have to get quicker.

Leuer entered high school as a point guard, and even though his body out-grew the position he kept the exceptional ball-handling ability. He's a great shooter, has great footwork and a high basketball IQ. He will have to get stronger to defend the small or power forward position, but he could very possibly end up a poor man's Dirk Nowitzki. I have no idea why Leuer is ranked so low in all the mock drafts and prospect lists, but he would be a steal at No. 54. Heck, I wouldn't complain if the Cavs took him at No. 32. I really like this kid and his game.

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Malcolm Lee, PG/SG UCLA – Lee is not a shooter, he's a scorer. The 6-5, 200 pound guard has crazy leaping ability and decent quickness. But he's a classic "tweener." He is not big enough to play the small forward position, and not fast enough to guard most 2-guards. He is quick, but not quick enough cover the shooting guards in the NBA at this point.

Lee is a slasher that can finish, but he can be out-of-control at times. He is a smart player that knows his limitations and his athleticism makes up for a lot of his on-court sins, but he is very unpolished. He would be a project and a stint in the D-League would help him immensely. Lee did score 13.1 points per game and shoot 53.4 percent from the floor last season, but he is not a big rebounder or distributor. He can be a ball-stopper on offense. His physical tools aside, his catch-and-shoot game could give him value on an NBA roster for quick points off the bench.

Chris Wright, SF Dayton – Wright is a lot like Malcolm Lee, only a bit bigger at 6-8, 214. He also had one of the best first steps in the NCAA last season and is an explosive leaper with strength enough to finish in traffic.

One of Wright's problems has been a lack of focus, and that dogged him his entire career at Dayton. As a sophomore he blossomed into the Flyers' go-to player on offense, but he never showed much improvement as a junior and senior.

Wright needs to improve his handle and concentration level, but his quick first step and ability to finish with power will cause some NBA general manager to take a chance on him. If he ends up in Cleveland he could be an improvement at the three over Alonzo Gee. However, he is raw. The Cavs could take the Christian Eyenga route with him and let him develop before throwing him into the fire. But, down the line, Wright will be a legitimate NBA player.

Gary Flowers, SF Southern Miss – Flowers is an intriguing prospect and I have seen more than one mock draft that has the Cavaliers taking him with the 54th pick. The 6-8, 214-pound small forward from Southern Miss has a huge 7-4 wingspan and a 40-inch vertical leap. He's a pure scorer with a polished mid-range game, but he has lapses on the defensive end. Last season he averaged 18.8 points and 7.7 rebounds while blocking 1.4 shots per game...pretty good for a small forward. Although Flowers has difficulty getting his own shot he is an explosive finisher.

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Flowers also had behavior issues in the past. He was dismissed from the team at Oklahoma State for possession of marijuana and has had other run-ins with the law...all of them minor.

At 54 he would be a strong value pick.