**Frank Preston’s 2015 NBA Lottery Mock Draft**

1. ***Minnesota-*** the Minnesota Timberwolves are in a win-win situation, with the number one pick in this year’s draft. They have the option to pick from one of two very promising big men. The T-wolves are a very young team with young talent at the wing positions with their young stars Andrew Wiggins, Zach Lavine and Point guard Ricky Rubio returning from injury. They can now focus their attention on upgrading an already solid front line of center Nikola Pekovic and Power forwards Gorgui Deng and Kevin Garnett.

**The Pick:** **Jahlil Okafor- 6’11 /PF/C Duke**

Jahlil Okafor is a polished offensive player with several post moves. Okafor moves fluidly in the post with soft hands and excellent footwork. He will come in and make an instant impact from day one. I believe that he will continue to get better and can play the four or the five in the NBA. Skilled Post-up big man don’t come around very often, but when they do you can’t pass that type of skill set up.

1. ***L.A. Lakers-*** the Lakers had to be the luckiest team on draft lottery night. Not only did they swap spots with the Knicks who should have had the second pick according to their record, but by getting the second pick they insured themselves to keep their protected pick, which would have gone to Philadelphia had the pick fell outside of the top five. This pick isn’t as obvious as it seems. The Lakers is a team with glaring needs everywhere. Besides the veteran Kobe Bryant the Lakers need to address every position. They have some nice role player type pieces in place with Jordan Clarkson, Julius Randle, and Nick Young, but they need to start finding their franchise players of the future. Ohio State’s De’Angelo Russell would make a lot of sense here, but passing on a potentially dominate big-man here is too tempting to pass on.

**The Pick:** **Karl Anthony Towns- 7’0 /C /Kentucky**

Towns has the potential to be a dominant two-way big man in the league for years to come. Towns is a very athletic, an agile big man who has skills to score in a variety of ways, he will be able to defend multiple positions, and defend the pick and roll.

1. ***Philadelphia-*** Will this be the year that the 76ers finally settle down and end the years of tanking? I personally feel like the taking has worked in their favor and they are now set up to build a young and talented nucleus of Noel, Embid and this year’s #3 pick. The Sixer’s also has six second round picks which should give them great flexibility.

 **The pick: D’Angelo Russell- 6’5/G/Ohio State**

I wasn’t in love with the 76ers trading away Carter-Williams last season, but drafting D’Angelo Russell at this spot will turn out to be an upgrade at the PG position. Russell is a do it all, stat stuffing PG, with elite court vision and passing ability. He also has the ability to score from anywhere on the court. Russell has the tools to become an all-time great NBA player.

1. ***New York-*** After a long and miserable season for the Knicks, the time has finally come where some positive things could happen. Although some of the moves that Phil Jackson has made over the last year had seemed questionable at the time, it has put the Knicks in a great position to turn their entire roster around and could possibly become a serious contender in the NBA next season. This could be the spot in the draft where we could see a blockbuster trade being made, similar to the Boston Celtics trading the 5th pick in the draft for Ray Allen Several years ago.

**The Pick: Justice Winslow/6’6/G-F/Duke**

Excellent two-way player, Winslow can do it all. Good shooter, can put the ball on the floor and finish well around the basket. Excellent defender, should be able to play two guard and small forward.

1. ***Orlando****-* the Orlando Magic has a nice young team and has their backcourt of the future in PG Elfrid Payton and SG Victor Olidipo. SF Tobias Harris and C Nik Vucivic are also very talented and proven front court players for the magic. Last season’s lottery pick PF Aaron Gordon is very talented and athletic, but he is still a raw talent that will continue to get better as he gets stronger. With this pick Orlando can be flexible and should just take the best available player no matter the position, as they really don’t have many holes, they just need their young players to grow and continue to improve.

**The Pick: Kristaps Porzingiz/7’1/PF-C/Latvia**

Excellent shooter, can shoot from NBA Three with ease. Can also put the ball on the floor and attack, excellent floor spacer. Porzingiz will need to bulk up.

1. ***Sacramento****-* The Kings has some nice pieces with Cousins, Gay, and Collinson but will need to continue to add talent to the team playing in the loaded western conference. Demarcus Cousins made enormous strides this year and I expect him to continue to become more dominate in the near future. This will be year two for George Karl and his first off-season and first full season with the team. Sacramento Could be a team on the rise in the western conference under George Karl.

**The Pick: Emmanuel Mudiya/6’5/PG/China/Texas**

True point guard, good playmaker, good athlete. With many questions surrounding the kings, Mudiya should be able to solidify the lead guard position for them for years to come.

1. ***Denver-*** the Denver Nuggets is a team that has struggled to play up to the level of where they should be. Injuries and coaching changes may have played a role in that, but they haven’t gotten consistency from any of their top players.

**The Pick: Mario Hezonja/SG/Croatia**

Dynamic athlete and excellent shooter. Hezonja could thrive in Denver if they get back to playing a fast pace style of play. Hezonja is great in the open floor.

1. ***Detroit-*** the Detroit Pistons showed signs of life after their mid-season trade of Josh Smith. Assuming that most of the current roster returns, Detroit is heading in the right direction, and Stan Van Gundy may just be a couple of moves away from being a playoff team in the east.

**The Pick: Stanley Johnson / 6’7/SF/Arizona**

Tough hard nose two-way player, who would thrive under Stan Van Gundy.

1. ***Charlotte-*** the Charlotte Hornets seemed to be a team with potential before the season started, but it didn’t take very long to see that the Lance Stevenson move didn’t fit in with the rest of the roster. The organization will have to solve that issue and several more.

**The Pick: Frank Kaminsky /6’11/PF/Wisconsin**

Kaminsky would be a nice addition to the Hornets roster, he can play a stretch four role and help space the floor for Kemba Walker to penetrate, and Al Jefferson’s post-ups.

1. ***Miami-*** one year after LeBron James leaves the Heat, they find themselves back in the draft lottery, however it’s not as bad as it seems; or is it? Injuries had plenty to do with the Miami’s short comings, but one has to wonder will that trend continue especially with an ageing D-Wade.

**The Pick: Willie Cauley Stein/6’11/PF-C/Kentucky**

You can never have enough defensive players in the NBA. Cauley-Stein would give the Heat a second elite rim protector (Hassan Whiteside). Cauley Stein is an excellent athlete and defender who can guard multiple positions. He should also help the Heats transition game, he runs the floor like a deer.

1. ***Indiana-*** The season went just about the way it should have for the Pacers, they played tough and hard every night and even found a way to hang around in the playoff hunt, but without their all-star Forward Paul George for most of the year they are in the draft lottery.

 **The Pick: Sam Dekker/6’7/SF/Wisconsin**

Sam Dekker is a good all-around player, he can shoot from all over the floor, and also put the ball on the floor and make a play. Indiana can use someone who can score.

1. ***Utah-*** this could be another team looking to move around in the draft, the Jazz has possible trade bait with Trey Burke or Dante Exum. The Jazz is a young team that seems to be stuck in the mud in the loaded western conference.

 **The Pick: Myles Turner/6’11/PF/Texas**

This pick is based on upside. Turner needs to fill out his body, but once he bulks up he has the potential to become a good pro. He has a nice stroke for a big man, good athlete, moves around well, should be a good defender in the NBA.

1. ***Phoenix-*** the Phoenix Suns is an exciting team that played on the playoff bubble all year. Although they didn’t make the playoffs, they have lots of talent and momentum moving into next season.

**The Pick: Trey Lyles/6’10/PF/Kentucky**

Huge upside, could develop into a good all-around player. He can play around the basket, and also step outside and shoot. Lyles could be an all-star five years down the road.

1. ***Oklahoma City-*** When healthy the Oklahoma City Thunder is a team with almost zero holes in my opinion. Adding a top notch shooter would go a long way for the Thunder. I fully expect them to be a serious contender in the NBA next season if healthy.

**The Pick: Devin Booker/6’6/SG/Kentucky**

Excellent shooter with great range. Perfect type of player for Oklahoma City to add to their bench rotation, should be an excellent floor spacer.