

PRO HOOPS DRAFTOLOGY 2026

A collective presentation of:
**FANTASYDRAFT HELP.COM, THE
FDH LOUNGE, AFTER FURTHER
REVIEW WITH JONES &
SPORTSOLOGY** under the banner
of **THE 21ST CENTURY MEDIA
ALLIANCE**

June 19, 2026

**RICK MORRIS/DON PETERSON/BEN
CHEW/RUSS COHEN/JASON JONES**

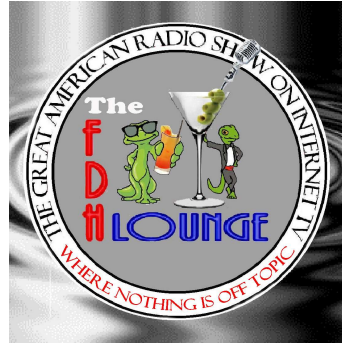


Table of Contents

- Page 1:** Guide Overview, Talent Overview
- Page 2:** Rankings by Position, FDH Top 30 Overall, 2025-26 Team UQB Rankings
- Page 3:** Don Peterson Mock Draft, Strength Of Draft By Position, Top 10 For The Next 10
- Page 4:** Rick Morris Mock Draft
- Page 5:** Preview Of FantasyDrafthelp.com Ultimate Fantasy Hoops Stat For 2026-27 Season
- Page 6:** The FDH Top 30 Players In The NBA, Links To Highlights Of Top Players
- Page 7:** 2025-26 FDH NBA All-Stars By Division, 2026-27 NBA Predicted Standings
- Page 8:** Blank Mock Draft Worksheet, 2026 NBA Draft Team Draft Needs, 2026 Free Agency Preview
- Page 9:** Recommended NBA Divisions Post-Expansion
- Page 10:** The Team Of The 2020s Will Likely Be Crowned Later In The Decade Than Usual

**The FDH Lounge 2026 Pro Hoops
Draft Preview Show:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIQiybdOplg&t=4s>

Welcome! In these pages, you'll be able to read our rankings, both overall and by position. You'll be privy to a list of team needs. You'll be able to read rankings of the talent available in this draft. You'll be able to check out other excellent features, including links to prospect highlight videos. And you'll also be able to peruse a mock draft from FantasyDrafthelp.com and you'll be able to fill out one of your own! All this, and much more, here in PRO HOOPS DRAFTOLOGY 2026!

Not 1, Not 2, Not 3 (Franchise Players In The Draft)

Two or three years ago, it seemed like a lock that PF AJ Dybantsa – who ended up playing for BYU – would become the top pick in the 2026 NBA Draft with his prototype skills for the position. Since then, Kansas SG Darryn Peterson, with his Ray Allen-like offensive skills paired with supreme athleticism, was thought to narrow the gap significantly – assuming that he hadn't actually eked into the lead spot. However, Peterson's struggles to stay healthy/available for the Jayhawks (which may thankfully have been recently diagnosed and dealt with re: creatine use), along with Dybantsa's continual growth in his game, may have locked in the initial 1-2 dynamic that had existed. The consensus third pick in the draft is Duke PF Cameron Boozer, often compared to Kevin Love for his stretch four abilities. The consensus fourth pick in the draft is North Carolina PF/C Caleb Williams, and yet, with all due respect to his game, his shooting is still a work in progress. If there is a fourth franchise player in this draft, it might well be the best of an amazing point guard class, Darius Acuff, Jr. of Arkansas with his elite scoring distribution and court IQ.

Other top point guards in a very, very strong class include Mikel Brown of Louisville, Keaton Wagler of Illinois, Kingston Flemings of Houston and Brayden Burries of Arizona.

THE TOP 75 PLAYERS IN PRO BASKETBALL HISTORY

The NBA's 75th Anniversary has prompted a wave of Best-Of lists, but few with the substance to reinforce the selections. Authors Rick Morris, Ben Chew and Russ Cohen came together to create a list of the top 75 pro basketball players ever, with evidence to justify the placement of each -- as well as biographical details, comparisons of various legends, little-known-but-interesting tidbits, what-if scenarios and much more. Additionally, the book includes our year-by-year ranking of the top players in pro basketball and rosters for hypothetical "Olympic Dream Teams" had they existed prior to 1992. This is a book that is crafted for sports fans who are interested in learning more about the rich history of pro basketball. Available on Amazon.com

FantasyDrafthelp.com/hoops

PRO HOOPS DRAFTOLOGY 2026 PAGE 2

Centers

- 1 Caleb Wilson
- 2 Hannes Steinbach
- 3 Chris Cenac
- 4 Jayden Quaintance
- 5 Aday Mara
- 6 Morez Johnson
- 7 Henri Veesaar
- 8 Tarris Reed
- 9 Zuby Ejiofor
- 10 Motiejus Krivas

Point Guards

- 1 Darius Acuff
- 2 Keaton Wagler
- 3 Kingston Flemings
- 4 Mikel Brown
- 5 Brayden Burries
- 6 Labaron Philon
- 7 Bennet Stirtz
- 8 Christian Anderson
- 9 Meleek Thomas
- 10 Ebuka Okorie

Power Forwards

- 1 AJ Dybantsa
- 2 Cameron Boozer
- 3 Caleb Wilson
- 4 Nate Ament
- 5 Yaxel Landeborg
- 6 Hannes Steinbach
- 7 Karim Lopez
- 8 Chris Cenac
- 9 Koa Peat
- 10 Jayden Quaintance

Small Forwards

- 1 Nate Ament
- 2 Karim Lopez
- 3 Isaiah Evans
- 4 Dailyn Swain
- 5 Joshua Jefferson
- 6 Alex Karaban
- 7 Baba Miller
- 8 Keyshawn Hall
- 9 Otega Owah
- 10 Dillon Mitchell

Shooting Guards

- 1 Darryn Peterson
- 2 Keaton Wagler
- 3 Brayden Burries
- 4 Cameron Carr
- 5 Isaiah Evans
- 6 Meleek Thomas
- 7 Sergio De Larrea
- 8 Keyshawn Hall
- 9 Ryan Conwell
- 10 Jaden Bradley

Top 30 Overall

- 1 AJ Dybantsa
- 2 Darryn Paterson
- 3 Cameron Boozer
- 4 Darius Acuff
- 5 Caleb Wilson
- 6 Keaton Wagler
- 7 Kingston Flemings
- 8 Mikel Brown
- 9 Nate Ament
- 10 Brayden Burries
- 11 Yaxel Landeborg
- 12 Labaron Philon
- 13 Hannes Steinbach
- 14 Karim Lopez
- 15 Chris Cenac
- 16 Jayden Quaintance
- 17 Aday Mara
- 18 Cameron Carr
- 19 Koa Peat
- 20 Bennett Stirtz
- 21 Christian Anderson
- 22 Isaiah Evans
- 23 Morez Johnson
- 24 Allen Graves
- 25 Dailyn Swain
- 26 Meleek Thomas
- 27 Joshua Jefferson
- 28 Henri Veesaar
- 29 Emeka Okorie
- 30 Alex Karaban

**AFTER FURTHER
REVIEW WITH JONES
FDH Senior Editor
Jason Jones breaks
down football, hoops
and comic book
franchises in depth.**

[https://www.youtube.com/
@AfterFurtherReviewwithJones](https://www.youtube.com/@AfterFurtherReviewwithJones)

2025-26 Team UQB Rankings

FantasyDrafthelp.com and The FDH Lounge are expanding the UQB concept to team sports. Our rankings are a mashup of the following measures: a strength of schedule metric, offensive rating, defensive rating, EFG, TS%, Asst/TO ratio, 3% and a modified Win Share formula.

**The FDH
Lounge
Dot Com**

- 1 Oklahoma City
- 2 San Antonio
- 3 Denver
- 4 New York
- 5 Boston
- 6 Cleveland
- 7 Atlanta
- 8 Minnesota
- 9 Detroit
- 10 Charlotte
- 11 LA Lakers
- 12 Houston
- 13 Toronto
- 14 Miami
- 15 LA Clippers
- 16 Golden State
- 17 Phoenix
- 18 Orlando
- 19 Milwaukee
- 20T Philadelphia
- 20T Chicago
- 22T Portland
- 22T Memphis
- 24T New Orleans
- 24T Utah
- 26 Indiana
- 27 Dallas
- 28 Washington
- 29 Sacramento
- 30 Brooklyn

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Did you stay away from players like who would have tanked your team last year like Ja Morant and Trae Young?

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Did you end up with players who helped you succeed last year like Desmond Bane? You're welcome!

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Sportsology provides fun facts, pictures, stories, games, history and opinion about Sports. We give our readers an alternative to recycled stories from traditional news sources. We provide valuable information about sports-related products, so that consumers have the information they need before making a purchase. Our Internet radio broadcasts also offer an alternative to generic Sports talk radio. With gags, guest and an infusion of humor, we talk to you, not at you.

Check out the main site at Sportsology.com and specific sub-sites for baseball, football, hockey, hoops, pro wrestling, video games, DVDs/movies and music.

Don Peterson Mock Draft

| Team | Player | Ht | Wt | Pos | Country/School | |
|------|---------------|--------------------|------|-----|----------------|----------------|
| 1 | Washington | AJ Dybantsa | 6/9 | 215 | PF | BYU |
| 2 | Utah | Darryn Paterson | 6/5 | 195 | SG | Kansas |
| 3 | Memphis | Cameron Boozer | 6/9 | 255 | PF | Duke |
| 4 | Chicago | Caleb Wilson | 6/10 | 210 | PF/C | North Carolina |
| 5 | LA Clippers | Keaton Wagler | 6/6 | 190 | PG/SG | Illinois |
| 6 | Brooklyn | Darius Acuff, Jr | 6/3 | 185 | PG | Arkansas |
| 7 | Sacramento | Kingston Flemings | 6/4 | 185 | PG | Houston |
| 8 | Atlanta | Mikel Brown | 6/5 | 190 | PG | Louisville |
| 9 | Dallas | Brayden Burries | 6/5 | 215 | PG/SG | Arizona |
| 10 | Milwaukee | Nate Ament | 6/9 | 205 | PF/SF | Tennessee |
| 11 | Golden State | Yaxel Lendeborg | 6/10 | 240 | PF | Michigan |
| 12 | Oklahoma City | Karim Lopez | 6/9 | 220 | PF/SF | Mexico |
| 13 | Miami | Labaron Philon | 6/4 | 175 | PG | Alabama |
| 14 | Charlotte | Aday Mara | 7/4 | 260 | C | Michigan |
| 15 | Chicago | Cameron Carr | 6/6 | 185 | SG | Baylor |
| 16 | Memphis | Chris Cenac | 6/11 | 230 | PF/C | Houston |
| 17 | Oklahoma City | Hannes Steinbach | 6/11 | 250 | PF/C | Washington |
| 18 | Charlotte | Morez Johnson | 6/10 | 250 | C | Michigan |
| 19 | Toronto | Bennett Stirtz | 6/4 | 190 | PG | Iowa |
| 20 | San Antonio | Jayden Quaintance | 6/10 | 255 | PF/C | Kentucky |
| 21 | Detroit | Koa Peat | 6/8 | 245 | PF | Arizona |
| 22 | Philadelphia | Allen Graves | 6/9 | 225 | PF | Santa Clara |
| 23 | Atlanta | Christian Anderson | 6/2 | 180 | PG | Texas Tech |
| 24 | New York | Dailyn Swain | 6/8 | 210 | SF | Texas |
| 25 | LA Lakers | Isaiah Evans | 6/7 | 185 | SF/SG | Duke |
| 26 | Denver | Ebuka Okorie | 6/2 | 185 | PG | Stanford |
| 27 | Boston | Joshua Jefferson | 6/9 | 245 | SF | Iowa State |
| 28 | Minnesota | Meleek Thomas | 6/4 | 190 | PG/SG | Arkansas |
| 29 | Cleveland | Henri Veesaar | 7/0 | 225 | PF/C | North Carolina |
| 30 | Dallas | Sergio De Larrea | 6/7 | 205 | PG/SG | Spain |

Top 10 For The Next 10

The FDH Top 10 for the Next 10 is a list attempting to identify the best players in the league -- not necessarily in a pure fantasy sense -- over the course of the entire next decade. It's not a pure 25-and-under draft, but it skews heavily in that direction because most big-time stars are past their primes in their late 30s. Players who are both very young and very skilled already have the biggest edges.

- 1 Victor Wembanyama
 - 2 Anthony Edwards
 - 3 Cooper Flagg
 - 4 Kon Kneuppel
 - 5 Cade Cunningham
 - 6 Jalen Johnson
 - 7 Luka Doncic
 - 8 Tyrese Maxey
 - 9 Deni Avdija
 - 10 Shai-Gilgeous-Alexander
- HONORABLE MENTION
- Nikola Jokic
 - Evan Mobley
 - Scottie Barnes
 - Stephon Castle
 - Dylan Harper

NOTE: Don Peterson mock draft appears courtesy of Peterson Media.

Strength of Draft By Position

GREAT: PG
 VERY GOOD: PF
 GOOD: SG
 AVERAGE: C
 BELOW-AVERAGE: none
 POOR: SF
 HORRIBLE: none

The 21st Century Media Alliance

What initially began as a small coalition of like-minded growing New Media organizations has flourished into a well-rounded creative juggernaut of more than two dozen entities that transcends the notion of traditional labeling. The 21st Century Media Alliance is an umbrella of cooperative companies and professionals that is pursuing many synergistic opportunities and projects. Possessed of varying yet often complementary skill sets, Alliance members are bound by their core principles of inventiveness, communication, pragmatism and dedication to their efforts and those of the larger group. In a great many creative areas, if you're looking to have a job performed the right way, chances are that you need look no further than The 21st Century Media Alliance.

THE WINTER CLASSIC: THE NHL'S SAVIOR Available through Barnes & Noble, Amazon & other fine sellers

Myah Master

The great emerging voice of the 2020s provides help to those struggling with addiction, trauma, weight loss and other major life issues. For information about her books **EVERYTHING I DIDN'T SAY, ON THE ROCKS** and **UNTIL YOU MAKE IT** and her other resources, check out her hub at <https://linktr.ee/chaoticgoodest>

Pullins Law Firm LLC

Scott Pullins: "I have spent my career, both as an attorney, and otherwise, in roles where I help people break down and solve complex problems. After a consultation, you will be put on the path toward resolution of your issue. I will either recommend that you retain me to resolve your issue, I will recommend a trusted colleague, or I will offer some other solution, sometimes even free or at a lower cost than a private attorney, in order to assist you."

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100 Things Rangers Fans Should Know & Do Before They Die (100 Things...Fans Should Know) Available at Amazon.com

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Rick Morris Mock Draft

| | Team | Player | Ht | Wt | Pos | Country/School |
|----|---------------|--------------------|-------|-----|-------|----------------|
| 1 | Washington | AJ Dybantsa | 6/9 | 215 | PF | BYU |
| 2 | Utah | Darryn Paterson | 6/5 | 195 | SG | Kansas |
| 3 | Memphis | Cameron Boozer | 6/9 | 255 | PF | Duke |
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| 29 | Cleveland | Joshua Jefferson | 6/9 | 245 | SF | Iowa State |
| 30 | Dallas | Meleek Thomas | 6/4 | 190 | PG/SG | Arkansas |

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Baseball, football,
hoops, hockey, pro
wrestling, music, it
matters not: nobody,
but nobody, brings it
stronger!

PRO HOOPS DRAFTOLOGY 2026 PAGE 6

The FDH Top 30 Players In The NBA

NOTE: These are the top 30 players in the NBA at the present time – averaging one per team in the league – by determination of FDH Managing Partner Rick Morris. Their ranking in last year's analysis is in parentheses. Players who were included last year, but not this year, are listed below.

TOP TIER

- 1 Victor Wembanyama (9)
- 2 Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (1)
- 3 Nikola Jokic (2)
- 4 Anthony Edwards (4)
- 5 Jalen Brunson (8)
- 6 Cade Cunningham (12)
- 7 Luka Doncic (4)
- 8 Jayson Tatum (7)
- 9 Tyrese Haliburton (*7)
- 10 Tyrese Maxey (17)
- 11 Jaylen Brown (20)
- 12 Giannis Antetokounmpo (6)
- 13 Stephen Curry (5)
- 14 LeBron James (10)

SECOND TIER

- 15 Kevin Durant (11)
 - 16 Donovan Mitchell (7)
 - 17 Jalen Johnson (NA)
 - 18 Jalen Williams (15)
 - 19 Cooper Flagg (NA)
 - 20 Stephon Castle (NA)
 - 21 Kon Kneuppel (NA)
 - 22 Karl-Anthony Towns (NA)
 - 23 Brandon Miller (NA)
- ### THIRD TIER
- 24 Alperen Sengun (25)
 - 25 Deni Avdija (NA)
 - 26 Paolo Banchero (13)
 - 27 Evan Mobley (14)
 - 28 Scottie Barnes (NA)
 - 29 Dylan Harper (NA)
 - 30 Rudy Gobert (27)

Jimmy Butler
Chet Holmgren
De'Aaron Fox
Domantas Sabonis
Franz Wagner
James Harden
Julius Randle
Pascal Siakam
Trae Young

The FDH Lounge: Nothing is Off-topic. Nothing.

Royalty Tours USA

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RoyaltyTours.blogspot.com

"Strike Three!" A Player's Journey through the Infamous Baseball Strike of 1994
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Links to Highlight Videos of Top Prospects

Here are links to some of the best players of the '26 Draft in action:

Darius Acuff, Jr <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UrNWGFI8w9Q>
Nate Ament https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Et_kH0PWPXs
Cameron Boozer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZ7EPyl8tFk>
Mikel Brown <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0KjsmcSlaM>
Brayden Burries https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51z_w6Twyq0
AJ Dybantsa https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz78NP_gU-c
Kingston Flemings <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NMW42Y6ztg>
Yaxel Landeborg <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sx5DPJuBPKI>
Darryn Peterson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UXY7rAQludY>
Labaron Philon <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSszGKjGJME>
Hannes Steinbach <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jofsy7dwp4U>
Keaton Wagler <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jl5Gs-0kkY>
Caleb Wilson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOVYfYNzUjs>

Tomorrow Will Be Televised

Blog and podcasts covering the intersection of TV & technology
<https://www.mediavillage.com/channel/tomorrow-will-be-televised>

DRAFTOLOGY GUIDES

We publish a series of guides such as this through the year as a partnership between Sportsology, The FDH Lounge, FantasyDrafthelp.com and other entities under the banner of The 21st Century Media Alliance. Fantasy Racing (mid-February), Fantasy Baseball (mid-March), NFL Draft (mid-April), NHL Entry Draft (mid-June), NBA Draft (mid-June), Fantasy Football (mid-July), Fantasy Hockey (mid-September), Fantasy Hoops (mid-October).

The FDH Lounge Ultimate Links Page

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<http://thefhdlounge.com/the-fdh-lounge-ultimate-links-page/>

OPTION B: OptionB.org

Option B helps people build resilience and find meaning in the face of adversity. With the book project by Sheryl Sandberg and Adam Grant (FEATURING, AMONG OTHER STORIES, THE INSPIRATIONAL TALE FROM OUR FRIEND VERNON TURNER), you can find stories, research, and practical advice to help you build strength for life's challenges—and help your family and community do the same.

Fantasy Drafthelp Dot Com

Unique methods & winning results for a variety of sports, not just the big boys!

Check out everything we have to offer and never get out-prepared again!

2025-26 FDH NBA All-Stars By Division

| Atlantic Division | | Northwest Division | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| PG | Tyrese Maxey | PG | Shea Gilgeous-Alexander |
| PG | Jalen Brunson | PG | Jamal Murray |
| SG | Derrick White | SG | Anthony Edwards |
| SG | VJ Edgecombe | SG | Jalen Williams |
| SF | Jaylen Brown | SF | Deni Avdija |
| SF | Michael Porter Jr | SF | Peyton Watson |
| PF | Scottie Barnes | PF | Chet Holmgren |
| PF | OG Anunoby | PF | Julius Randle |
| C | Karl-Anthony Towns | C | Nikola Jokic |
| C | Joel Embiid | C | Rudy Gobert |
| Central Division | | Pacific Division | |
| PG | Cade Cunningham | PG | Luka Doncic |
| PG | James Harden | PG | Stephen Curry |
| SG | Donovan Mitchell | SG | Devin Booker |
| SG | Jaylon Tyson | SG | Austin Reeves |
| SF | Duncan Robinson | SF | LeBron James |
| SF | Ausar Thompson | SF | Kawhi Leonard |
| PF | Giannis Antetokounmpo | PF | Draymond Green |
| PF | Evan Mobley | PF | DeMar DeRozan |
| C | Jarrett Allen | C | Deandre Ayton |
| C | Jalen Duren | C | Mark Williams |
| Southeast Division | | Southwest Division | |
| PG | LaMelo Ball | PG | De'Aaron Fox |
| PG | CJ McCollum | PG | Stephon Castle |
| SG | Nickeil Alexander-Walker | SG | Reed Sheppard |
| SG | Desmond Bane | SG | Cedric Coward |
| SF | Jalen Johnson | SF | Kevin Durant |
| SF | Kon Knueppel | SF | Cooper Flagg |
| PF | Paolo Banchero | PF | Jabari Smith Jr |
| PF | Miles Bridges | PF | Zion Williamson |
| C | Bam Adebayo | C | Victor Wembanyama |
| C | Alex Sarr | C | Alperen Sengun |

THE WILL OF TIME

An extraordinary Young Adult time travel story that navigates the troubled terrain of the American Civil War.
Available on Amazon.

RELENTLESS: The highly-anticipated motion picture capturing the incredible life story of our friend Vernon Turner!
Details at VernonTurner.com

[YouTube.com/thefdhounge](https://www.youtube.com/thefdhounge)

The FDH Lounge Top 10 Songs Per Decade Playlist from the 1950s through the 2010s:

<http://thefdhounge.blogspot.com/2021/02/the-fdh-lounge-top-10-songs-by-decade.html>

2026-27 NBA Predicted Standings

EASTERN CONFERENCE
ATLANTIC DIVISION
X-New York 57-25
Y-Boston 52-30
y-Philadelphia 48-34
y-Toronto 40-42
Brooklyn 30-52

CENTRAL DIVISION
X-Cleveland 56-26
Y-Indiana 53-29
y-Detroit 46-36
Chicago 27-55
Milwaukee 24-58

SOUTHEAST DIVISION
X-Atlanta 55-27
Y-Charlotte 51-31
y-Orlando 49-33
Miami 34-48
Washington 27-55

WESTERN CONFERENCE
SOUTHEAST DIVISION
X-San Antonio 59-23
Y-Houston 54-28
Dallas 30-52
Memphis 24-58
New Orleans 18-64

NORTHEAST DIVISION
X-Oklahoma City 58-24
Y-Minnesota 51-31
Y-Denver 49-33
y-Portland 33-49
Utah 27-55

PACIFIC DIVISION
X-LA Lakers 46-36
y-Golden State 45-37
y-LA Clippers 38-44
y-Phoenix 34-48
Sacramento 15-67

PLAY-IN ROUND
Orlando over Philadelphia
Detroit over Toronto
Philadelphia over Detroit
Golden State over LA Clippers
Phoenix over Portland
Phoenix over LA Clippers
CONFERENCE QUARTERFINALS
1 New York over 8 Philadelphia in 5
2 Cleveland over 7 Orlando in 6
3 Atlanta over 6 Boston in 7
5 Charlotte over 4 Indiana in 7
1 San Antonio over 8 Phoenix in 4
2 Oklahoma City over 7 Golden State in 5
3 Minnesota over 6 LA Lakers in 6
4 Houston over 5 Denver in 6
CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS
1 New York over 5 Charlotte in 7
2 Cleveland over 3 Atlanta in 7
1 San Antonio over 4 Houston in 6
2 Oklahoma City over 3 Minnesota in 6
CONFERENCE FINALS
1 New York over 2 Cleveland in 6
2 Oklahoma City over 1 San Antonio in 7
NBA FINALS
Oklahoma City over New York in 6
NBA FINALS MVP
Shai Gilgeous-Alexander

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2026 NBA Draft Team Draft Needs

| | | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Atlanta | PG | C | | | |
| Boston | C | | | | |
| Brooklyn | PG | C | PF | SG | SF |
| Charlotte | C | | | | |
| Chicago | PF | C | | | |
| Cleveland | SF | PG | | | |
| Dallas | SG | SF | C | PG | |
| Denver | SF | SG | | | |
| Detroit | SF | PF | SG | | |
| Golden State | C | SF | PF | PG | |
| Houston | SG | PF | | | |
| Indiana | C | SG | | | |
| LA Clippers | SG | PF | C | SF | |
| LA Lakers | SF | PF | C | | |
| Memphis | PF | SF | C | PG | |
| Miami | PG | | | | |
| Milwaukee | SF | PF | | | |
| Minnesota | PG | | | | |
| New Orleans | PF | PG | | | |
| New York | PF | | | | |
| Oklahoma City | C | | | | |
| Orlando | C | PG | | | |
| Philadelphia | SF | C | | | |
| Phoenix | PF | C | | | |
| Portland | SF | SG | | | |
| Sacramento | PG | PF | | | |
| San Antonio | PF | | | | |
| Toronto | C | | | | |
| Utah | C | SF | | | |
| Washington | SF | SG | PF | | |

Blank Mock Draft Worksheet

- 1 Washington
- 2 Utah
- 3 Memphis
- 4 Chicago
- 5 LA Clippers
- 6 Brooklyn
- 7 Sacramento
- 8 Atlanta
- 9 Dallas
- 10 Milwaukee
- 11 Golden State
- 12 Oklahoma City
- 13 Miami
- 14 Charlotte
- 15 Chicago
- 16 Memphis
- 17 Oklahoma City
- 18 Charlotte
- 19 Toronto
- 20 San Antonio
- 21 Detroit
- 22 Philadelphia
- 23 Atlanta
- 24 New York
- 25 LA Lakers
- 26 Denver
- 27 Boston
- 28 Minnesota
- 29 Cleveland
- 30 Dallas

2026 Free Agency Preview

By Rick Morris/The FDH Lounge

As has been the case in most recent summers, the collection of player options and club options serves as the Kabuki Dance part of free agency. Club options on most players of note should be exercised and player options controlled by many prominent figures should either be invoked or used as collateral for re-signing a prominent contract. You probably have to work your way down to the level of a present-day Brook Lopez to find players who should be on the market.

While LeBron James's free agency won't command nearly the importance/attention of 2010, 2014 and 2018, he'll still – even at age 41 – serve as the biggest star in a thin field. While it makes sense for the Hawks to keep CJ McCollum for at least another two years, he has a chance to out on the market, joining Kristaps Porzingis, Tobias Harris, Anfernee Simons, Nicola Vucevic, Norman Powell, Harrison Barnes and Rui Hachimura on the next tier down.

From there, Khris Middleton, John Collins, Collin Sexton, Jusuf Nurkic, Kevin Huerter, Mitchell Robinson, Coby White, Luke Kennard, Jordan Clarkson, Moritz Wagner, Kelly Oubre Jr, Dean Wade and Ayo Dosunmu will be sucking up most of the remaining available money, with the latter player having done himself a lot of good in the playoffs.

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Recommended NBA Divisions Post-Expansion

With the strong rumors that Seattle and Las Vegas are likely to be brought in via expansion comes speculation about the format of the league once they are admitted. Here is the FDH recommendation for the new divisional structure.

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| EASTERN CONFERENCE | WESTERN CONFERENCE |
| Atlantic Division | Southwest Division |
| Boston | Dallas |
| Brooklyn | Houston |
| Charlotte | Las Vegas |
| Miami | Memphis |
| New York | New Orleans |
| Orlando | Oklahoma City |
| Philadelphia | Phoenix |
| Washington | San Antonio |
| Central Division | Pacific Division |
| Atlanta | Denver |
| Chicago | Golden State |
| Cleveland | LA Clippers |
| Detroit | LA Lakers |
| Indiana | Portland |
| Milwaukee | Sacramento |
| Minnesota | Seattle |
| Toronto | Utah |

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The Team Of The 2020s Will Likely Be Crowned Later In The Decade Than Usual

By Rick Morris/The FDH Lounge

After we noted for a few years the blurring between the previous era and this new era, we proclaimed in this space last year that the new era had finally fully arrived ([The New Era Is Finally Fully Here](#)). We had also previously noted that this ongoing streak of not having a repeat champion since 2017 and 2018 is the longest one since the longest run since 1969-1986 (by far the longest one in NBA history) – although there were only nine different teams that hoisted the trophy in those years! So, aside from the 1970s – and we'll get to that – it wasn't always that hard to determine a Team of the Decade and sometimes/often by this time of the decade.

But this one could go right down to the wire. Boston is the only team in the 2020s to win another conference title along with their NBA title, so by default they would be in the lead. Miami, with two conference titles, could pass them by with an NBA championship, but Pat Riley has rarely been further from that achievement than he is right now. Far more likely is the prospect of a team that made it to the top once surpassing Boston by doing it again and the 2023 (Denver), 2025 (Oklahoma City) and 2026 (New York) champions are the most probable in this category. Of course, if San Antonio won two or three titles in a row at this point, few would be surprised.

Let's look back in time to see when it became clear when a Team of the Decade would be crowned:

^ Miami posted two championships and two conference championships from 2011-14, but of course that run came to a screeching halt with the departure of LeBron James. Golden State only had one title and one conference title when they lost the greatest contest in NBA history, Game 7 of the 2016 NBA Finals, but less than two weeks later, the 73-9 franchise stacked the deck by signing Kevin Durant and in so doing, they purchased Team of the Decade – as titles in 2017 and 2018 followed and a conference title in 2019.

^ The Lakers boatraced the field with titles from 2000-02 and a conference title in 2004. San Antonio, however, stayed right on their heels by making it to the top in 2003, 2005 and 2007. They just needed one more trip to the pinnacle in either 2008 or 2009, but instead the Lakers copped a conference championship in 2008 and an NBA title in 2009 to secure their spot in history.

^ With the Jordan Bulls winning six NBA championships in the 1990s, it's easy to remember that, because of Jordan's hiatus, Chicago's lead over Houston was only 3-2 midway through the decade. But the 1996 team climbed to the top as one of the best single-season squads ever and the 1997 and 1998 championships were merely icing on the proverbial cake.

^ Through 1984, the Lakers were an astounding 0-8 against Boston in the NBA Finals (albeit with seven of the battles occurring from 1959-1969), which severely threatened their chances to become the Team of the 1980s. But they finally got over the hump against Beantown in 1985 and took two more titles in 1987 and 1988, ending the decade on top with an unthinkable five titles and three conference titles against the Celtics' three titles and two conference titles.

^ No decade was as close as the 1970s. The Lakers and Knicks faced each other in the Finals three times, with New York coming out on top twice. Other notables were Boston with two championships, Milwaukee and Seattle with one title and one conference title and the Baltimore/Washington Bullets with a title and two conference titles. In the end, even though the Knicks left few significant footprints in the Seventies after their 1973 championship, they have to go down as the Team of the Decade by beating LA 2-1 in their head-to-head Finals.

^ Boston won NBA titles from 1959-1966 and again in 1968-69, so Team of the Sixties was settled pretty early. The same is largely true of the Minneapolis (!) Lakers, who locked down Team of the Fifties by following up their 1949 crown with more of the same in 1950 and 1952-54 and a conference title in 1959.

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