

2014 WNBA DRAFT RECAP

By: Sheri Sam

1. ~~Connecticut Sun~~-Chiney Ogwumike 6'4 173 F Stanford

The Ogwumike-era at Stanford came to an end when Chiney, like her older sister Nkeka, was drafted number one overall in the WNBA Draft. Chiney is an exceptional player who's long and possesses quick bounce off the floor. While she has few holes in her game, extending her range could make her a perennial WNBA All-Star.

Notable: Her older sister, Nkeka, was the 2012 WNBA Rookie of the Year. In Chiney's WNBA debut against the New York Liberty on May 16th, Chiney scored 13 points and grabbed five rebounds.

2. ~~Tulsa Shock~~-Odyssey Sims 5'8 160 Baylor

No one drafted has the ability to score the ball like Odyssey Sims. A lefty with deft quickness and speed, she came within eight points (28.5 PPG) of breaking the NCAA's single-season scoring record by former collegiate great Jackie Stiles. Believe it or not, she was also named the Big 12's Defensive Player of the Year in 2013-14. Along with last year's No. 3 overall pick, Skyler Diggins, the Shock could have an impressive backcourt tandem for years to come.

Notable: Sims won the 2014 Nancy Lieberman Award and was named a USBWA 1st Team All-American. Sims scored six points and had three rebounds in her WNBA debut.

3. ~~San Antonio Stars~~-Kayla McBride 5'11 174 G Notre Dame

Several general managers had McBride high on their draft boards. She's a scorer with an outstanding mid-range game. While her lateral quickness will hamper her on the defensive end versus the likes of Seimone Augustus or Maya Moore, she was not drafted to defend. A big asset for her could be the tutelage of WNBA All-Star Becky Hammon, who knows a thing or two about scoring.

Notable: McBride ranks third in Notre Dame history with 1,876 points and first all-time in free throw percentage (88.2%). After scoring six points in her season debut, Kayla scored 11 points in the Stars' 80-76 win over the Tulsa Shock.



Kayla McBride
1st Rd, 3rd Overall
San Antonio Stars



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4. New York Liberty (traded this selection along with C Kelsey Bone and a 2015 1st Round pick to the Connecticut Sun for Tina Charles)- Alyssa Thomas 6'2 185 F Maryland

A three-time ACC Player of the Year, her versatility makes her game pro-ready. She'll have plenty of opportunities to play significant minutes for the Sun if she can improve her range. Thomas and Ogwumike could make the Sun rise in the Northeast. She could be a sleeper pick for WNBA Rookie of the Year.

Notable: In Thomas' first two WNBA preseason appearances, she averaged 14.1 rebounds per 40 minutes of action. Her rate of return nearly equaled her professional debut, when she scored nine points and led the Sun with seven rebounds.

5. Indiana Fever-Natasha Howard SF/PF 6'3 169 Florida State

Natasha is a super-athletic forward who has quickness and thrives in an up-tempo pace. She can do the three things Indiana HC Linn Dunn loves: score, defend and rebound. Could Howard be the player who current Olympian and WNBA-great Tamika Catchings one day passes the torch to?

Notable: Howard finished her career as Florida State's all-time leader in double-doubles (41). She became the school's highest-ever draft pick when she went fifth overall.

Teammates once again

6. Washington Mystics-

Stephanie Dolson 6'5 214 C Connecticut

Dolson has size, finds open teammates as a passer and possesses intangibles which are tough to measure. But do you use the sixth pick overall for someone who will be a great role player? Look for her to set imposing screens at or near the top of the key, while playing a role as a rebounder. Her high basketball IQ makes up for underwhelming athleticism.

Notable: She became the second Husky ever to post a triple-double, when she scored 26 points, grabbed 14 rebounds and had 11 assists versus Oregon on 11/20/13.



7. Seattle Storm (traded to Washington Mystics)-

Bria Hartley 5'8 145 PG/SG Connecticut

At first it seemed like a great fit for Seattle....finally a replacement for Sue Bird. On draft night, however, Hartley was traded to the Washington Mystics for former Maryland star Crystal Langhorne. Hartley's quickness and ability to get to the rim will be a plus for her in HC Mike Thibault's system.

Notable: Hartley played the most minutes ever by a Connecticut freshman. In the process, she was named the Big East's Rookie of the Year. Hartley scored four points and dished out four assists in her WNBA debut against the Minnesota Lynx.



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8. **Atlanta Dream**-Shoni Schimmel PG 5'9 155 Louisville

Shoni will team up with former fellow Cardinal Angel McCoughtry in the Peach state. This was a solid pick by GM Angela Taylor, who probably sees Schimmel as an instant scorer off the bench. She could have a problem garnering minutes behind newly-signed French star Celine Dumerc and previously added Matee Ajavon.

Notable: Known for having a flair for the dramatic, Schimmel even defeated the NCAA men's three-point champion, Baylor's Brady Heslip, in the NCAA's State Farm College three-point contest during Final Four weekend.



9. **Indiana Fever**-Natalie Achonwa 6'3 F Notre Dame

International forward who had an excellent career at Notre Dame, helping the team to four Final Fours. She helped lead the team to its first undefeated season in program history. The last time the Fever drafted a player coming off a pre-draft injury (Tamika Catchings), she became the heart and soul of the franchise. Like Catchings, Achonwa plays with a lot of passion.

Notable: As a senior, Achonwa averaged a career-high 14.9 PPG, 7.7 RPG and 2.8 APG. Before tearing her ACL in the NCAA's Elite 8 versus Baylor, she also missed the season's first three games to repair a torn meniscus.

10. **Chicago Sky**-Markeisha Gatling 6'5 240 C/PF NC State

Her ability to back down defenders in the low post creates significant room on the low block. The Sky will now have an intimidating frontcourt presence with 6-foot-6-inch C Sylvia Fowles, the 6-foot-5 Gatling, and 6-foot-5 SF Elena Delle-Donne. While not sure if Gatling will start at power forward, she could be a viable sixth woman coming off the bench.

Notable: Gatling –a physical post player who dominated the ACC- is the Wolfpack's career leader in field goal percentage.

11. **Connecticut Sun**-Chelsea Gray 5'11 PG Duke

One of the top point guards in school history, Chelsea had 15 assists vs. Clemson as junior. Gray's biggest question mark revolves around durability. Her last two seasons at Duke were marred with injuries (dislocated knee cap as a junior, fractured right knee cap as a senior). She's a versatile player who can earn time at the 1, 2 or 3 positions. Teaming her with Ogwumike and Thomas could help shore up the Sun's frontline for the future.

Notable: Despite playing in just 25 games as a junior, Gray was named the 2012-13 ACC's Co-Player of the Year and AP/WBCA 1st Team All-American.

12. **Minnesota Lynx**-Tricia Liston 6'1 181 SG Duke

One of the top three-point shooters in the draft, Liston will make it difficult to teams to double or help off Moore and Augustus. If the Lynx can hide her defensive inadequacy, she helps fill one of their weakest links....a knockdown, spread the floor three-point shooter.

Notable: In 2013-14, Liston averaged 17.2 PPG (52% FG, 48% 3-PT) for the Blue Devils.