

SPORTS

Cavs sign Brandon Former Duck gets 7-year deal

CLEVELAND (AP) — Terrell Brandon signed a 7-year contract with the Cleveland Cavaliers and became the highest of this year's NBA draft choices to come to terms.

The signing of Brandon, a point guard out of Oregon and the 11th pick last June, was announced Tuesday at a news conference.

Only nine of the first-round draft choices had come to terms previously, and, before Brandon, the highest-ranked pick who had signed was Chris Gatling, drafted 16th by Golden State.

The logjam has been blamed on the Charlotte Hornets' inability to reach agreement with No. 1 pick Larry Johnson. Agents have said his deal will serve as a benchmark for the others.

"We chose Terrell largely because of his scoring ability, speed, quickness and other attributes, said he'll bring to our team," said Wayne Embry, general manager of the Cavaliers.

The 5-foot-11 Brandon gave up his final year of eligibility after being named Pacific-10 Conference Player of the Year as a junior. He averaged 26.6 points and shot 49 percent from the field last season, and ranks second among Oregon's all-time leaders in steals (114) and in assists (315).

Terms of Brandon's contract were not disclosed, but a media relations representative contacted at the Cavalier office said a release will be sent Monday to the media describing Brandon's contract in more detail.

The Cavaliers are \$2.5 million over the NBA salary cap of \$12.5 million per team. The cap would limit Brandon's pay to \$525,000 in his first year. That amount became available when the Cavaliers released Derrick Chievous.

One of Brandon's agents, Bill Duffy, said the long-term deal insures some security for his client.

Duffy said while the salary cap posed a problem, the contract length allowed Brandon to try and make up later for what he was not able to get up front.

Brandon could start as point guard since Mark Price is recovering from knee surgery.

"We'll make that decision when we get to camp," Coach Lenny Wilkens said. "I'm not going to make decisions before I have a chance to work with people and see what combinations work best for the team."

"He's a natural point guard and certainly I want to increase our depth there. Our depth has not been very good the last couple of years."

Brandon said that as a rookie, he knows he'll have a lot to learn.

"I'm not going into this as an ego thing," he said. "I want to work with the team and hopefully do what I can to help them to the playoffs."

He said one of the most difficult adjustments he will have



Terrell Brandon

to make is with the scheduling of games.

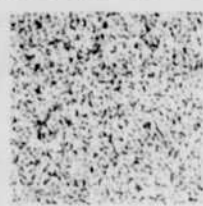
"I'll have to get used to playing more games, and I'll have to get used to the time difference from the West Coast," he said.



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