

SPORTS

Ex-Duck Duarte 13th pick in NBA Draft

By Michael Marot
AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS — First, the Indiana Pacers played it safe. Then they took a big swing Thursday night.

They will soon find out if they hit a home run on draft night 2021.

After selecting the oldest player in the draft, 24-year-old shooting guard Chris Duarte of Oregon with the No. 13 overall pick, Pacers president of basketball operations Kevin Pritchard acquired the rights to 6-foot-11 center Isaiah Jackson after Washington selected the Kentucky star at No. 22.

“Chris is someone who’s really grown the last two years at Oregon. I think he’s got very good versatility, great work ethic, great toughness, got a great story to get to where he’s at tonight,” Pacers general manager Chad Buchanan said. “We think he (Jackson) has a bright future.”

Details of the trade were not immediately available, though The Athletic reported Indiana dealt backup point guard Aaron Holiday and the 31st pick, acquired earlier from the Milwaukee Bucks. Washington acquired the 22nd pick from the Los Angeles Lakers as part of the Russell Westbrook deal.

While Duarte and Jackson are both expected to come off the bench as the Pacers try to make it back to the



Justine Casterlin/Getty Images-TNS

Oregon's Chris Duarte (5) brings the ball up the court against USC during a Sweet Sixteen game in the NCAA Tournament at Bankers Life Fieldhouse in Indianapolis on March 28, 2021.

playoffs, they come from vastly different backgrounds.

Duarte was born in Montreal and moved to the Dominican Republic before heading to rural New York for his final two high school seasons.

Initially, he committed to Western Kentucky but instead wound up starring for two seasons at Northwest Florida State, where he was chosen the National Junior College Athletic Asso-

ciation national player of the year before landing with the Ducks.

“I’m just grateful for those people who helped me to get here, my coach, every coach I played for,” Duarte said. “I’m just grateful for those people and I’m just really excited and happy.”

The Pacers liked his story — and his experience, thinking he could make an immediate impact on a veteran team that already has all five starters under

MASKS

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Students and staff wore masks during the previous school year. But during the Baker School District’s Summer Academy programs, masks were required only on buses and other transportation, and in some indoor settings when students from grades K-6 are present.

The Baker School Board is slated to discuss district protocols when it has a special meeting on Thursday, Aug. 5 at noon.

But Lindsey McDowell, the district’s public information and communications coordinator, wrote in an email to the Baker City Herald on Thursday, July 29 that “We will be following all directives and working closely with the health department, as we’ve done throughout the course of the pandemic. The only protocol we’ve relaxed since the end of the last school year was with regard to face coverings; and with the return to full-time, universal face coverings while indoors at schools, we will simply be returning to the protocols we had at the end of the last school year.”

The school district has had only one COVID-19 case in the Summer Academy program.

“We are fortunate to have had only one new positive COVID-19 case affecting the school district since the end of May,” Superintendent Mark Witty said in a press release on Friday, July 30. “As the more contagious Delta variant spreads and we head into a new school year, we will be working as closely as ever with the Health Department to take into account local conditions.”

Baker County reported 22 new COVID-19 cases on Thursday, July 29 — the second-highest one-day total, following 19 new cases on Tuesday, July 27. The county had 55 new cases in a four-day period, July 26-29.

The one-day record is 25 cases, on Dec. 28, 2020. “We’re seeing an increase in cases, and we need to get a handle on it or we’re going to be in bad shape as a county,” Nancy Staten, director of the Baker County Health Department, said earlier this week.

PROTECTION

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“Wolves remain completely absent from suitable habitats or perilously close to extinction in many western states, and the handful of states surrounding Yellowstone National Park are now driving the larger populations toward extinction — endangered species listing — by ramping up wolf killing and stripping away hunting and trapping regulations in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming,” said Erik Molvar, executive director of Western Watersheds Project.

In May, Idaho Republican Gov. Brad Little signed a measure lawmakers said could lead to killing 90% of the state’s 1,500 wolves through expanded trapping and hunting. It took effect July 1.

Lawmakers pushing the measure, backed by trappers and the powerful ranching sector but heavily criticized by environmental advocates, often said the state can cut the number of wolves to 150 before federal authorities would take over management. They said reducing the population would reduce attacks on livestock and boost deer and elk herds.

A primary change in the new law allows the state to hire private contractors to kill wolves and provides more money for state officials to hire the contractors. The law also expands killing methods to include trapping and snaring wolves on a single hunting tag, using night-vision equipment, chasing wolves on snowmobiles and ATVs and shooting them from helicopters. It also authorizes year-round wolf trapping

on private property.

The state Department of Fish and Game reported in February that the wolf population has held at about 1,500 the past two years. The numbers were derived in part by using remote cameras.

About 500 wolves have been killed in the state in each of the last two years by hunters, trappers and state and federal authorities carrying out wolf control measures.

Wildlife authorities in Montana, following new laws, have been looking at changes such as increasing the number of wolves an individual can hunt to between five and 10. A decision is expected in August.

Authorities said this year they expect the state’s wolf population to decrease from around 1,150 to between 900 and 950 following a particularly successful hunt-

ing season. Over 320 wolves were harvested during the 2020 hunting season — significantly more than the preceding eight-year average of 242 wolves per year, according to a report released by the department in June.

The petition seeks to protect wolves in those two states as well as Wyoming, Utah, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, California, Nevada and northern Arizona. The petition said those states are part of the range of wolves.

“These wolves are at risk of extinction throughout all of their range, and unquestionably are at risk of immediate extinction in significant portions of their range,” the 63-page petition states.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment.

Oregon Effects

Wolves in the eastern third of Oregon — east of Highways 395, 78 and 95 — were removed from federal protection more than a decade ago, with management authority shifting to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

If wolves in Eastern Oregon were returned to federal protection, state officials would no longer be able to issue kill permits to ranchers, as they did on Thursday, July 29 for a Baker County couple whose cattle have been attacked four times this month by wolves from the Lookout Mountain pack.



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