



## Hawks look for talent in second round

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By [Chris Vivlamore](#) - The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

As the influence of the San Antonio Spurs continues to permeate the Hawks, they now search for their own Manu Ginobili.

In 1999, the Spurs landed the 11-year veteran and two-time All-Star in the second round of the NBA Draft. Taken with the 57th overall selection, Ginobili has been part of three of the four Spurs' championships.

The Hawks have two second-round selections (Nos. 47 and 50 overall) to go with two in the first round (Nos. 17 and 18) in Thursday's draft. In the inexact science that is the draft process, finding such a diamond would go a long way in building the roster. Player development after the draft could go further.

Ginobili, who waited three years before joining the NBA from Argentina, is on the list of recent second-round gems such as Kyle Korver, Carlos Boozer, Marc Gasol and Monta Ellis who carved out effective NBA careers. Go back to 1983 and the Hawks make quite a second-round selection with Doc Rivers.

"I don't think there is an exact answer other than we will look for talented players that will fit the values that we want to have," general manager Danny Ferry said of the type of player he hopes to get late in the draft. "(We want) guys who compete, who are high-level competitors, who can be part of a team and who can function well in a team concept."

Of the 30 second-round selections in last year's draft, just 19 played in the NBA. Of those, 14 played in the NBA Development League at some point. That included Mike Scott, who played 40 games with the Hawks and seven with the Bakersfield (Calif.) Jam in two stints. The list of those who did not immediately play in the NBA included seven foreign-born players.

Scott, who averaged 4.6 points and 2.8 rebounds, was only the second second-round pick of the Hawks in the past seven drafts to earn a roster spot. Pape Sy, the 53rd player taken in 2010, played three games in an Atlanta uniform.

Ferry spent two stints with the Spurs front office before joining the Hawks last season. Recently hired head coach Mike Budenholzer was a long-time assistant with the organization before officially joining the Hawks days before the draft. Each has stated that one of the keys to the franchise will be player development.

“You have to draft well and you have to draft talent that fits the character that you want and the identity that you want your organization to have,” Ferry said. “The draft is only part of the equation.

“Player development is hugely important to the success of your team, to the success of your draft. Also, opportunity is. At some point, players have to get an opportunity to play to succeed. You don’t draft a guy and all of a sudden, it’s going to work or not. There is a lot of work to do the next day to make sure you are putting them in a position to succeed from a player development standpoint and from their opportunity.”

The Hawks had Nick Van Exel, who joined former head coach Larry Drew with the Bucks, as a player development instructor last season. They also had Kenny Atkinson, who will return under Budenholzer, as an assistant coach/player development. Atkinson and strength and conditioning coach Jeff Watkinson spent a great deal of time last season working with rookies John Jenkins and Scott, especially after practices. Each did stints in the D-League when playing time with the Hawks was limited.

There are number of players in this year’s draft who could be considered projects, including the center position where the Hawks have a need. Although Ferry took established collegiate players last season, with four selections there is room for a gamble this year.

“No matter what position they play, no matter where they are in their development level, if they are talented, can compete and can be part of a group, we’ll hopefully do a good job of looking at those guys more closely,” Ferry said.