

# 2023 NBA Draft: Brice Sensabaugh Selected No. 28 Overall By Utah Jazz



Former Ohio State forward Brice Sensabaugh was selected by the Utah Jazz with the No. 28 pick in the 2023 NBA draft on Thursday.

Rated as the nation's 86th-best prospect in 2022 by 247Sports, Sensabaugh came to Ohio State as a four-star recruit from Lake Highland Prep School in Orlando, Fla., where he was named Florida's Gatorade Player of the Year and Mr. Basketball as a senior.

The 6-foot-6, 235-pound forward quickly established himself as a capable scorer at the collegiate level, reaching double-figures in points in each of his first six games. The stretch was highlighted by a 17-point, nine-rebound performance in his Buckeyes debut on Nov. 7 against Robert Morris.

Sensabaugh's hot offensive start garnered the attention of head coach Chris Holtmann, who inserted the freshman into his starting lineup just nine games into the season.

Sensabaugh's breakout performance occurred on one of basketball's biggest stages. In front of a raucous Madison Square Garden crowd, the Orlando, Fla., native nearly propelled the Buckeyes to a statement victory over blue-blood North Carolina on Dec. 17, netting a clutch jumper with three seconds remaining to hand Ohio State a 79-77 lead. Although the Buckeyes would relinquish their lead and eventually fall to the Tar Heels 89-94 in overtime, Sensabaugh finished with a team-high 22 points along with eight rebounds.

From there, Sensabaugh emerged as one of the top freshman scorers in the nation, becoming one of the Buckeyes' lone bright spots during an otherwise disappointing season. Although a period of offensive struggles halted the forward's efficiency towards the end of the regular season, Sensabaugh finished his 2022-23 campaign with a team-high 16.3 points a game, a mark that ranked third among all freshman, and fifth all-time among Ohio State first-years.

The forward also became the first Ohio State freshman to lead their team in scoring since D'Angelo Russell netted 19.3 points a contest in the 2014-2015 season. While Sensabaugh donned the scarlet and grey for just one season, his unique offensive skills and production turned the heads of many, including his head coach.

"He is the most gifted offensive player, at his age, that I've coached," Holtmann told Fox 28's Kellyanne Stitts on Tuesday. "He is a tremendous offensive talent. I believe he's the most gifted scorer, pure scorer, in this draft."

Sensabaugh's elite scoring ability and imposing physical play prompted him to earn two Big Ten accolades in his only Buckeyes season, as he earned All-Freshman and All-Big Ten Third Team honors. His freshman campaign was cut short by a knee injury, forcing him to miss the final two games of the Big Ten Tournament and require surgery during the offseason. The injury also prevented him from participating in NBA pre-draft workouts until he was cleared late in the spring.

Despite the injury, the former Buckeye forward has received some high praise from draft experts across the sports media landscape, with some describing him as a "mini-Carmelo Anthony."

"Brice Sensabaugh is a top-20 player in this class," ESPN NBA Draft analyst Jonathan Givony said on Tuesday. "This guy did it as a freshman in the Big Ten, the highest level of competition. This guy can get buckets."

"I think he's one of the best shooters in this draft," ESPN's Jay Bilas said Thursday after Sensabaugh was drafted. "He's just wired to score, he's born to score."

With Sensabaugh's No. 28 selection, Ohio State has now produced a freshman first-round draft pick in the second straight year, as current San Antonio Spurs forward Malaki Branham was picked with the No. 20 overall pick in 2022.

Now, Sensabaugh will join fellow Jazz first-round picks Taylor Hendricks and Keyonte George on a retooled roster searching for its first playoff series win since 2021.