Bates-Diop Picked By Timberwolves In Second Round Of 2018 NBA Draft

Former Ohio State forward Keita Bates-Diop was selected by the Minnesota Timberwolves with the 48th overall pick in the 2018 NBA draft on Thursday night.

Bates-Diop becomes the first Buckeye chosen in the draft since D'Angelo Russell was taken second overall by the Los Angeles Lakers in 2015.

A native of Normal, Ill., Bates-Diop was named the 2018 Big Ten Player of the Year as a fourth-year junior last season when he averaged 19.8 points and 8.7 rebounds per game. He also was a first-team All-Big Ten pick by both the coaches and media, along with being a second-team All-America selection by The Sporting News, the National Association of Basketball Coaches and the U.S. Basketball Writers Association.

After sitting out all but nine games in 2016-17 with a stress fracture in his left leg, Bates-Diop scored in double figures in 32 of 34 contests last season while recording 13 double-doubles. He shot 48.0 percent (247 of 515) from the field and 35.9 percent (66 of 184) from three-point range.

"He's a big-time shot-maker," OSU head coach Chris Holtmann said of Bates-Diop, who leaves Ohio State ranked 34th on the program's career scoring list with 1,272 points. "I think he can do it at all different spots. I really give our coaching staff a lot of credit because they did a great job both in skill instruction with him and getting him to his spots on the floor. (Assistant coach) Ryan Pedon has said this multiple times, 'Keita is maybe the best guy I've ever coached in terms of if you get him to his spot and it's over because he's going to make something good happen.' You've just got to get him to his spot. When we struggled at times, it was teams that thought it was a football game and somehow were allowed for it to be a football game and they didn't let him get to his spots. If he struggled, that was part of it. He's unbelievable if you get him to his spots."

Bates-Diop, who measured 6-8½ in shoes (6-7¼ without) with a 7-3¼ wingspan and a lean 224-pound frame at the 2018 NBA Draft Combine in May, said his style of play will translate well to the NBA.

"I'm extremely versatile," he said March 26, when he declared for the draft. "Especially in today's game, so many people play so many different positions and you have to guard most of the positions and

be able to shoot the ball, do so many different things. I've shown – especially this past year – that I can do a lot of those things."

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