

Former Ohio State Forward E.J. Liddell Traded To Atlanta Hawks



Former Ohio State forward E.J. Liddell was traded on Friday from the New Orleans Pelicans to the Atlanta Hawks as part of a major deal that sent all-star guard Dejounte Murray to New Orleans. The trade also had New Orleans send two first-round picks along with forward Larry Nance Jr. and guard Dyson Daniels to Atlanta in exchange for Murray.

Pelicans are also sending EJ Liddell to Atlanta as a part of the deal, source says.

<https://t.co/PNAexcCHEp>

— Andrew Lopez (@_Andrew_Lopez) June 29, 2024

Liddell, who was selected by the Pelicans with the 41st overall pick in the second round of the 2022 NBA draft, has experienced a rocky start to his career, one which has been significantly slowed by injury. Just two days after making his rookie debut for New Orleans in a 2022 NBA Summer League game, Liddell suffered a torn ACL on July 11, 2022, causing him to undergo reconstructive surgery later that month and miss his entire rookie season.

Liddell made a full recovery from his injury over the course of that season, eventually returning to the floor as a full participant this past summer for the Pelicans Summer League squad. His successful recovery helped earn him a three-year, \$6.2 million deal with the franchise on July 4, 2023.

“I’m blessed, man,” Liddell said one day after signing his deal. “Just how far I’ve come. Like last month, I wasn’t able to play five-on-five, but now I can. It’s about to be one year now since the last time I’ve played, so there are a little nerves, but I’m excited.”

Despite earning his new deal and serving as one of the Pelicans' top Summer League contributors, Liddell was unable to see the floor much in his first healthy NBA season. He appeared in just eight games for the franchise as he spent most of his time with the Pelicans' G-League affiliate Birmingham Squadron, totaling just four points, five rebounds, two blocks, two steals and an assist in 23 minutes of NBA action.

Liddell did appear in 26 games for the Squadron and made 18 starts, averaging 17.6 points, 7.9 rebounds, 1.5 assists and 1.8 blocks per game.

Liddell, who was a two-time All-Big Ten player for Ohio State who averaged 14.1 points, 6.1 rebounds and 1.6 assists for the program from 2019-22, will now look to rejuvenate his NBA career and carve out a reserve role on the Hawks' 2024-25 regular season roster. Atlanta is stacked with young talent at the forward position for next year, however, with starters Saddiq Bay, De'Andre Hunter and Jalen Johnson all likely set to return.