

Luther Head Selected in First Round of NBA Draft

Head taken No. 24 by Houston Rockets

June 28, 2005

Champaign, Ill. - It was a milestone evening for the University of Illinois basketball program, as the Fighting Illini had two players selected in the first round of the 2005 NBA Draft.

There was good news for the Orange and Blue when the Houston Rockets selected guard Luther Head (Chicago, Ill./Manley H.S.) with the 24th overall pick in the first round, as Head became the 14th first-round pick in Illini annals.



Luther Head was chosen by the Houston Rockets with the 24th overall pick in the first round of the draft.

Head was a consensus second-team All-American during his senior season and was recognized as one of the nation's most improved players. He started every game and led the Illini in scoring at 15.9 points per game. He reached double figures in 36 of 39 games, with 12 games of 20+ points. Head shined in the postseason, earning Big Ten All-Tournament Team honors and selection to the NCAA Chicago Regional and NCAA Final Four All-Tournament Teams.

Head became a sharpshooter from behind the arc, setting a school record for 3-pointers in a season with a Big Ten-leading 116 treys on 41 percent accuracy. He also showcased his all-around game, ranking second on the Illini in steals and third in assists and rebounds.

Head ends his career ranked 19th on the Illini all-time scoring list with 1,295 points, is fourth on the career 3-point field goals list with 209 treys and ranks ninth on the career steals list with 158 steals.

"We are so proud of both Deron and Luther and all that they have achieved," Illinois Head Coach Bruce Weber said. "In the discussions I had with NBA personnel, one thing I heard from them repeatedly was how impressed they were with how Deron and Luther carried themselves in the workouts and interviews, the charisma that they showed and the poise and businesslike manner in which they approached everything. In looking at the draft, I don't know if you could have asked for better situations for them in terms of the teams they are going to. Deron is just a perfect fit to run the system at Utah, and Luther will be able to compete for time on a playoff team at Houston.

"This was a great night for our program," Weber continued. "Our coaches and players are excited and happy for Deron and Luther, and I know all the Illini fans are as well. We wish them all the best as they begin their NBA careers."

