

NBA Draft

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Labaron Philon Jr.



Q. How did your time at Alabama make you into a round one pick?

LABARON PHILON JR.: Definitely just spending two years there just taught me how to play a special way of basketball. Coach Oats, you know that style of basketball Coach Oats teaches. Being able to learn things under him and the coaching staff, I would say everybody in the program was really just looking forward to getting me better. I would say making the decision to go back was important. Being able to experience the first year in the NBA [Draft process in 2025] but come back and hear your name called [in 2026] means everything.

Q. You wore number 0 in college. Now you're a Sixer. Are you even going to have that conversation with Tyrese?

LABARON PHILON JR.: Nah. I mean, you know you've just got to respect the game. Respect is due to the game. I feel like it's going to be another number out there that I can get that's really going to get me a lot of attention. I don't really care about the number 0.

Q. What number are you thinking?

LABARON PHILON JR.: I don't know right now. I don't know.

Q. You're joining an elite group of guards right now. What are you looking forward to learning from these players that you've probably watched all the time?

LABARON PHILON JR.: I would say just learning from VJ [Edgecombe], the transition into the NBA. And then Maxey, really just the work ethic and the way he goes about things, the way he prepare for games, the way he gets ready for practice and stuff like that. It's a learning point for me. Just being a [college] veteran, going back to college and being able to lead guys, and being able to come into the NBA with a fresh start and learn from two great guards. They have got great guards back there.

Adding me, it's a blur. You've got two guys that are really shifty, two guys that know how to handle the ball and a guy that can jump out the roof. That means everything in the

backcourt. I feel like Coach [Nick] Nurse is going to have a fun time with that.

Q. You briefly mentioned it, but what did year two teach you back at Alabama and what did you learn from it?

LABARON PHILON JR.: The two different roads, the ability to adapt. My freshman year playing with a great guard like Mark [Sears], I would say it helped me to get to this point, being able to play well with other great guards. But my second year, being able to be a lead guard and being able to take that role.

Really just the ability to adapt, I would just say. So whatever the situation I'm put in, really just growing in it and being comfortable, really. I would say that's the biggest thing for me.

Q. You were the seventh player drafted under Nate Oats. What does that say about the current state of the program?

LABARON PHILON JR.: Nate Oats is a great coach. I trusted him with my career definitely going back, and definitely just being in my freshman year just trusting that he's going to put in the work and just trusting that he's really smart, and it came true as a dream. It was a dream of mine to go play for Alabama for two years. Just being patient and especially playing for Nate Oats and Preston [Murphy], for sure.

I mean, those guys don't get a lot of credit, but I would say, you know, I credit those guys. I credit all the people they put around me, the players they put around me and just the ability to have that trust with me and I think everybody else in the facility, from a player up to a janitor. So really just being able to be there for two years was really special.

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