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June 30, 2007

Living the NBA Draft with Javaris Crittenton

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ATLANTA - Rivals.com has watched, scouted and followed the career of former Georgia Tech point guard [Javaris Crittenton](#) since he was a freshman in high school.

On Thursday night, we were there when he was drafted by the Los Angeles Lakers.

Want to know what it's like to be a prospect on draft night?

Take an inside look at how Crittenton's night evolved.

7:01 p.m. - Crittenton's family and friends gather at the Fox Sports Grill in Atlanta, just north of Alexander Memorial Coliseum – the arena in which Crittenton honed his skills for a season at Georgia Tech. Roughly 50 people have gathered in the restaurant's party room, but Crittenton isn't one of them.

7:08 p.m. - Some members of Georgia Tech's team begin to file into the building. The Jackets' Director of Operations [Willie Reese](#) is in attendance. He was the first coach at Georgia Tech to recruit Crittenton, when Javaris was in ninth grade. Also arriving is [Matt Causey](#), [Brad Sheehan](#) and [Ty Anderson](#). The trio huddles around the food. Smart guys.

7:13 p.m. - News of Boston's potential trade for [Ray Allen](#) of Seattle comes across the screen. The move makes little noise in the room.

7:23 p.m. - Georgia Tech coach [Paul Hewitt](#) arrives at the party.

7:29 p.m. - Dwight Howard, Sr. and Pete Smith arrive. Howard, Sr. is the athletic director of Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy, the school where Crittenton won two state championships. He is also the father of former No. 1 pick Dwight Howard, a longtime friend of Crittenton's. Smith is the father of Atlanta Hawks standout Josh Smith. Crittenton

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Javaris Crittenton celebrated his selection by the LA Lakers with friends and family in Atlanta.

was the point guard of the Atlanta Celtics team that featured Howard, Smith and former Kentucky big man [Randolph Morris](#). Many argue that was one of the best AAU teams of all time.

7:31 p.m. - The room has filled dramatically, looking more like a wedding reception as old friends and family members catch up on old times. Crittenton is not among the 200 or so people in the room.

7:34 p.m. - The chatter around the room is already centered around what direction the Atlanta Hawks will go in the draft. The locals are already getting restless.

7:37 p.m. - NBA commissioner David Stern announces the first pick of the NBA draft. [Greg Oden](#) of Ohio State is selected by the Portland Trailblazers. Silence takes over the room for the first time all night. The hoop heads in the building are already talking about how many championships he'll win with the Blazers. Six was the general consensus. Welcome to lofty expectations Mr. Oden.

7:38 p.m. - The rest of the Georgia Tech basketball teams slides in through the back door, including [Gani Lawal](#), [Maurice Miller](#) and [Lance Storr](#).

7:39 p.m. - Players reminisce about the first time they saw Crittenton play. Causey, who has played with and against Crittenton for years, says he remembers Crittenton as a 12-year-old playing up with the 15-year-old team. "He had a mustache then," Causey said. "We needed to see a birth certificate because he was dominating at that level even as a 12-year-old."

7:42 p.m. - Stern announces [Kevin Durant](#) as the second pick in the draft to the Seattle SuperSonics. "We were in his top five," one Yellow Jackets fans reminded his pocket of friends.

7:43 p.m. - The Hawks are on the clock. Theories fly across the room on what the hometown team does with the third overall pick. Some loyal supporters are holding out that Crittenton is taken with the pick. "Hey, it's the Hawks," they say with a hint of justification. "The Chinese dude," another offers.

7:48 p.m. - Silence comes over the room as Stern approaches the podium in New York. Florida's [Al Horford](#) is the pick. No real surprise, and the response is rather even-keeled.

7:51 p.m. - The main attraction is still not present. Word is Crittenton is at a nearby hotel with his agent - Wallace Prather III - and a few others watching the event. He'll make his move over to the party after he is selected.

8:05 p.m. - A quick escape to the main area of the Fox Sports Grill uncovered sightings of NBA players Nick Van Exel, Jumaine Jones and Dion Glover. Atlanta police chief Richard Pennington also stopped by.

8:19 p.m. - The Charlotte Bobcats select North Carolina forward Brandon Wright. "That's the Tar Heels for ya," one observer said. "They stick together way too much." Wright was later traded to Golden State.

8:33 p.m. - Crittenton's high school coach, Courtney Brooks, shows up to the event.

8:35 p.m. - Former Tech point guard and current Portland Trailblazer [Jarrett Jack](#) arrives. He joins former teammates Anthony McHenry, B.J. Elder and Isma'il Muhammad at the celebration.

8:37 p.m. - The Atlanta Hawks are on the clock at pick 11. A number of attendees are hoping the local team takes Crittenton. Texas A&M point guard [Acie Law](#) is chosen. A lot of subdued faces in the crowd.

8:45 p.m. - A bad storm rolls through the area and knocks out the DirectTV signal at Fox Sports Grill and every establishment downtown. Even in Crittenton's private hotel suite, the crowd is left watching a blue screen. A sense of uneasiness breaks out at the gathering. Crittenton and teammate [Thaddeus Young](#) are both expected to be picked at any moment.

8:47 p.m. - A loud celebratory shout is let out by Georgia Tech senior forward [Jeremis Smith](#). "Thaddeus was just picked by Philly!" Young was taken by the 76ers with the 12th overall pick, surprising nearly everyone in the room. Because of the satellite outage, nearly everyone close to the Tech program has a phone up to their ear or is text messaging others. Hewitt is instantly on the phone with the Philadelphia media.

8:58 p.m. - The Los Angeles Clippers are on the clock. The anticipation is getting stronger. Crittenton worked out for the team, and odds were getting better in terms of hearing his name announced. At this point, everyone (including us) had a phone to their ears trying to get a live play-by-play on the draft. The Clippers selected Florida State's [Al Thornton](#).

9:09 p.m. - The satellite signal is restored just in time for the 16th pick. Washington is on the clock. The Wizards were thought to be a strong contender to pick Crittenton. USC's [Nick Young](#) is selected instead.

9:24 p.m. - The buzz grows as New Jersey and Golden State make their decisions. We learn that the Heat have made contact with Crittenton and his people. Both parties are excited about the potential selection.

9:30 p.m. - David Stern approaches the podium and says, "With the 19th pick of the 2007 NBA Draft, the Los Angeles Lakers select J-J-Javaris Crittenton, point guard from Georgia Tech." A roar of excitement fills the restaurant. Tech assistant Willie Reese, a lifelong Lakers fan, is the most excited in the room. He sprints up and down the dining area and hugs everyone in sight. After the excitement wore off, the reality of playing with Kobe Bryant was one of the biggest topics of discussion in the room. A lot of hugging and high-fives were exchanged.

9:31 p.m. - A text message from Hedio Smith, Crittenton's longtime AAU coach, is sent out to a number of people in the room. "Hollywood it is!!!!!"



With his selection by the Lakers, Crittenton's AAU coach Hedio Smith reported it to family and friends with a "Hollywood it is!!!!" text message



Crittenton was surrounded by fans upon his arrival to the celebration.

9:32 p.m. - Nearly everyone in the room keeps glancing at the front door, waiting for the man of the hour. All of the Tech players are quickly on their phones and shooting text messages.

9:54 p.m. - Crittenton, decked out in a new tailored brown suit, arrives to the party and is immediately swarmed by friends and family. He still has the look of shock and excitement of being drafted.

9:55 p.m. - Crittenton has a long embrace with Brooks, his high school coach and spiritual advisor. Both men have tears in their eyes. Crittenton then finds Hewitt, and they share a moment.

9:59 p.m. - For the next 20 minutes, Crittenton works the crowd, taking pictures, shaking hands, giving hugs to friends and strangers alike.

10:03 p.m. - A father of a recent NBA draft pick says prophetically, "He'll learn real quick who his friends are." A lot of familiar faces are suddenly joined by people that few knew

in the celebration line.

10:38 p.m. - The crowd has died down. A lot of people have left. Those that arrived first are still in attendance. Crittenton finally sits down, has a glass of water and breathes easily.

10:59 p.m. - We pack up our things and fight through the tremendous downpour to head home. Crittenton started the day out as a college student with a really nice suit. He ended the day an instant millionaire. He has the opportunity to head to Hollywood to play with one of the greatest players in the world - and for one of the best coaches of all-time.

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