

Former Ohio State Guards Aaron Craft, D'Angelo Russell Named To Big Ten All-Decade Third Team



Ohio State guards Aaron Craft and D'Angelo Russell, one of men's basketball's fan favorites and a highly acclaimed freshman, were each honored for their on-court success by the Big Ten Network as members of the Big Ten All-Decade third team.

And it begins ...

□ #BTNAllDecade 3rd Team □

Player: Aaron Craft (@ACraft4)

Team: @OhioStateHoops

Why: ↓

More: <https://t.co/tJBP1RwfsM> pic.twitter.com/WML5b5SajR

— Big Ten Network (@BigTenNetwork) June 22, 2020

Craft played for the Buckeyes from 2010-14 and finished his Ohio State career averaging 8.9 points, 3.3 rebounds and 4.7 assists per game across 148 contests. He also shot 45.9 percent from the field and 33.3 percent from three.

"It doesn't feel real," Craft said in his interview with the Big Ten Network about the honor. "I really, truly believe the Big Ten was the best conference in the country when I was in school, and that's because we had great coaches, but we had really great players, so to be able to be mentioned and honored with the other guys that are on these teams is a tremendous blessing for me, and something that I appreciate and will cherish."

Where Craft really shined was on defense, finishing as a four-time member of the Big Ten All-Defense team thanks in part to leading the conference three straight seasons in steals. His 337 steals across a four-year career is by far and away the Ohio State program record, with Shannon Scott's 211 being a

distant second place.

“Defensively for me, it was frustrate the other guy, honestly that’s as simple as it came down to,” Craft said. “We studied a lot of film, I liked to know my opponent, so any way I could frustrate them, get them out of their game, that was my goal.”

Craft was a part of four Ohio State teams that combined for 119 wins, two Big Ten regular season and tournament titles, three trips to the Sweet 16, two to the Elite Eight and one to the Final Four in 2012.

□ #BTNAIIDecade 3rd Team □

Player: D'Angelo Russell (@Dloading)

Team: @OhioStateHoops

Why: ↓

More: <https://t.co/tJBP1RNQRm> pic.twitter.com/9HvgZrFCO7

— Big Ten Network (@BigTenNetwork) June 22, 2020

Unlike Craft, Russell was at Ohio State just one season before being selected second overall by the Los Angeles Lakers in the 2015 NBA Draft, but his impact was seen almost immediately.

Russell averaged 19.3 points, 5.7 rebounds and 5.0 assists per game in his lone season with the Buckeyes, and shot 47.9 percent from the field and 41.1 percent from deep.

“When he played for the Ohio State Buckeyes, you knew you had your hands full, and why? Because he was electric,” Brian Butch, Big Ten Network analyst, said when explaining why Russell made the all-decade third team. “That’s what you do in a year, you make a statement. Not many players can make a statement in one year and that’s what he did.”

Russell’s 675 points in the 2014-15 season were the most by a freshman and the ninth-most by any player in program history, while his 95 three-pointers also is tops among first-year players, and is fifth-most all time.

Ohio State went 24-11 in Russell’s only season with the team and made it to the Round of 32 after an overtime victory over VCU that was led by a 28-point, six-rebound effort from Russell.

The 6-5 guard from Kentucky was named a consensus All-American and was a member of the All-Big Ten team, along with being named Big Ten Freshman of the Year.

Photo Credit: Courtesy of Ohio State Athletics

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