

## Local player declared for NBA draft

Aurora native and point guard for the Gonzaga Bulldogs Andrew Nembhard announced over Instagram last week he has declared for the upcoming 2022 NBA Draft.

Nembhard, who was a finalist for the Bob Cousy Award, has entered his name in the draft for the third time in his college career.

In his statement, Nembhard wrote, "Coming to Gonzaga was truly one of the best decisions I have ever made, and I am so grateful for this place. I am thankful and blessed to be a part of teams with so much success and accomplishments but nothing compares to all the relationships I have made over these last two years that will last me a lifetime. With that being said, I have decided to enter my name into the 2022 NBA Draft and fulfill my dream of playing in the league. I'd like to give a special thanks to Coach Few, the rest of the staff, my teammates, my family, everybody at Gonzaga who has helped me get to this point and will continue to do so in the future, and last but not least ZAG NATION!!!!?"

In the same year Nembhard transferred to Gonzaga University, he was also the recipient of Sport Aurora's Athlete of the Year.

Nembhard made the move from the University of Florida in 2020 and, since then, he has had an exceptional two years in Spokane, WA.

In his first season, he helped the Bulldogs reach the national title game, averaging 9.2 points, 1.1 steals and 4.4 assists per game.

After seeing Jalen Suggs and Corey Kispert drafted into the NBA last year, Nembhard led the Bulldogs into this past year's March Madness as the No. 1 seed once again.

Nembhard increased his numbers, averaging 11.8 points, 1.6 steals, 5.8 assists and shooting 87.3 per cent from the line per game.

If drafted this offseason, it will surely be the icing on the cake in what has been a remarkable year for the Nembhard family.

Andrew's younger brother Ryan, just completed his first season in the NCAA with the Creighton Blue Jays. Ryan was exceptional, averaging 11.3 points per game, 1.3 steals, 4.4 assists and 3.1 rebounds per game.

The No. 9 seeded Blue Jays were eliminated in the second round of the NCAA tournament, falling 79-72 to the Kansas Jayhawks. The Jayhawks went on to win the national title.

The NBA Draft is set to take place on Thursday, June 23, in the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, NY.

**By Robert Belardi**