

FANTASY

NBA Fantasy: 6 Sleeper Picks - Centers in 2025-26

RotoWire breaks down 6 centers to keep tabs on heading into the 2025-26 fantasy basketball season.

Jonas Nader, RotoWire.com

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Donovan Clingan averaged 7.9 points, 10.0 rebounds, 1.6 assists, 0.6 steals and 2.1 blocks in 24.5 minutes per game in 37 starts.



Finding value at center is often the difference between building a balanced fantasy roster and scrambling for rebounds and blocks off the waiver wire. While elite big men come with steep draft-day price tags, the position also offers hidden upside in players who may not be household names but can deliver efficient scoring, boards, and defensive stats when given the opportunity.

Identifying these sleepers requires looking past surface-level box scores and focusing on team context, roster turnover, and playing-time trends. With several frontcourts around the league in transition, there's a clear path for under-the-radar centers to carve out meaningful roles, and potentially swing fantasy matchups in your favor. Here are some of my favorite sleepers at the center position:



Onyeka Okongwu, Hawks

72nd in Top 150 Fantasy Rankings

Everyone seems to be panicking about how the addition of [Kristaps Porziņģis](#) will impact Okongwu, and I understand their frustration. After years of Okongwu battling [Clint Capela](#) for the starting job, the Hawks went out and replaced Capela with an even bigger roadblock for Okongwu. There are plenty of reasons to still be optimistic, however. First of all, Porziņģis has a long injury history, and he couldn't stay on the floor late in the 2024-25 season with Boston. Just how healthy Porziņģis truly is will be something to monitor closely. Next, Okongwu is the only true center on the roster, with Porziņģis preferring to step out on the perimeter. The Hawks will be getting a healthy [Jalen Johnson](#) back this season, who projects to be the No. 2 option on offense behind [Trae Young](#), and it's unclear how the frontcourt rotation will shape up. Okongwu was a fifth-round fantasy talent in standard nine-category leagues in 2024-25 in just 27.8 minutes per game, and I think that is entirely repeatable.



Isaiah Jackson, Pacers



With the Pacers losing out on [Myles Turner](#), the center situation in Indiana is pretty murky right now. Head coach Rick Carlisle has already mentioned using a “center-by-committee” approach, while also indicating that his starting centers could be matchup-dependent. A lot of fantasy managers are eyeing [Jay Huff](#), and while I too like Huff as a flier, I believe that Jackson has the most pure upside among Huff, [James Wiseman](#) and [Tony Bradley](#). Jackson is kind of a forgotten man right now after an Achilles injury limited him to five games in 2024-25. But Carlisle hasn’t forgotten about him, as the head coach has been raving about his defensive abilities. Entering his fifth season, Jackson is just scratching the surface and already holds career per-36 minute averages of 17.3 points, 10.3 rebounds, 1.7 assists, 1.4 steals and 3.2 blocks. So even if his role ends up being modest, his per-minute production will make him a solid addition to any fantasy roster.



[Donovan Clingan, Trail Blazers](#)

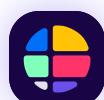
[81st in Top 150 Fantasy Rankings](#)

The Trail Blazers selected [Yang Hansen](#) with the No. 16 overall pick, and he looks like an intriguing talent, but Clingan is set up to be the starter on Opening Night, and likely for the season, for that matter. The Blazers moved on from [Deandre Ayton](#), meaning a ton of minutes are suddenly falling into Clingan’s lap. He nearly cracked the top 150 in nine-category leagues in 2024-25 despite seeing 19.8 minutes per game, but he showcased what he could do in 37 starts with 7.9 points, 10.0 rebounds, 1.6 assists, 0.6 steals and 2.1 blocks in 24.5 minutes per game. When you factor in a possible second-year developmental jump for Clingan, as well as improved guard play with [Jrue Holiday](#) in town, it’s easy to make a bull case for this young center.



[Neemias Queta, Celtics](#)

[137th in Yahoo Fantasy Rankings](#)



Queta profiles as one of the more under-the-radar center sleepers this season, but this one is more about opportunity rather than sheer talent. His per-minute efficiency has always been a strength, and last year he reinforced that by shooting 65.0 percent from the field while providing rebounds and rim protection in a limited role. When asked to step into the starting lineup, he responded with near double-double-level output, showing that his game scales effectively with minutes. In six total starts, he posted 9.8 points, 5.8 rebounds, 1.2 assists and 1.3 blocks in 24.7 minutes. Now, with Boston's frontcourt significantly thinned after the departures of Kristaps Porziņģis and [Luke Kornet](#), Queta has a legitimate path to starting duties with [Chris Boucher](#) and [Luka Garza](#) brought in to compete with him. For fantasy managers, that combination of proven per-minute production and a suddenly expanded opportunity makes him a classic late-round sleeper who could return strong value in categories like FG%, rebounds, and blocks.



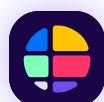
Adem Bona, 76ers

Admittedly, this one is a deep sleeper. Bona has two things going for him. First off, he's actually a sneaky good fantasy producer. Last season in 11 starts, Bona put up 14.8 points, 8.4 rebounds, 2.4 blocks and 1.2 steals in 30.5 minutes. Secondly, the health of [Joel Embiid](#) is a major question mark heading into 2025-26. Not to mention, Embiid has played a total of 58 games over the past two seasons. The 76ers did bring back [Andre Drummond](#) for some frontcourt insurance, but I think it's clear that Bona will enter the season as the No. 2 center on the depth chart. So if you take Bona late in drafts, you could get some mild standalone value with minutes in the teens, and a potential stud if Embiid misses time.



Kel'el Ware, Heat

[80th in Top 150 Fantasy Rankings](#)



Ware enters 2025-26 as one of the more intriguing late-round centers, especially for managers in category formats. Last season, when the Heat moved him into the starting lineup alongside [Bam Adebayo](#), Ware showcased his ability to impact the game in limited minutes, averaging 10.8 points, 10.0 rebounds, 1.3 assists, 1.3 blocks and 0.7 steals while shooting 53.6 percent from the field in 28.4 minutes per game. That combination of rim protection, rebounding, and efficient finishing made him a productive piece alongside a high-usage star. With his size, defensive instincts, and emerging offensive touch, Ware carries strong per-minute upside, and if Miami continues to trust him with starter-level minutes, he could quickly emerge as a fantasy gem capable of swinging blocks, field-goal percentage and boards in fantasy matchups.

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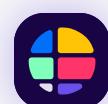


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