New Mock Draft

Contributed by Tony Simmons
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We are now 5 days away from the 2011 NFL Draft and teams are doing the finishing touches on their boards and are preparing for Thursday Night. This is as a unique of a draft as we have had in a long time, as we have had no free agency activity due to the lockout, and it has greatly effected how teams will look to draft.

With no free agency, teams are having to draft for NEED more so than they have in the past. With free agency, you could fill some major holes with NFL talent, but with that not being the case and not knowing when we will have any type of free agency, teams are forced to fill holes and needs with guys that can come in and contribute NOW.

With that said, let's get to my final mock draft.

1) Carolina - Cam Newton, QB, Auburn - GM Marty Hurney is apparently the only one on Jimmy Clausen side, and that is probably because he drafted the young man. Clausen really struggled last year and with a new coaching staff in place, QB looks like the position they will address with the 1st pick and Newton seems to be their guy at this moment. The lack of a 2nd round pick is a big factor here as well.

2) Denver - Marcel Dareus, DT, Alabama - Denver begins the John Elway/John Fox era, and they address a defense last in the league in 2010 and switching from a 3-4 to 4-3 defense.

3) Buffalo - Von Miller, OLB, Texas A & M - Buffalo could go in a number of directions, as the need to address there OL and the defense was horrible in 2010. 2009 1st round pick Aaron Maybin has been a huge bust and the Bills really need to improve a horrible defense. The Bills look to get a QB in the top half of the 2nd round to develop behind Ryan Fitzpatrick.

4) Cincinnati - A.J Green, WR, Georgia - Carson Palmer has said he will retire if he is not traded, and he has already sold his house in Cincinnati. IF one of the quarterbacks above drops, they could get very serious consideration. As it is, Terrell Owens will not be back and there is a good chance Chad Ochocinco will be gone as well.

5) Arizona - Blaine Gabbert, QB, Missouri - I believe that if Von Miller is on the board still, they would take him over Gabbert and hope to get a veteran when we finally have free agency. I still think they will look to bring a veteran in. With Miller gone, Gabbert is the pick.

6) Cleveland - Robert Quinn, DE, North Carolina - The Browns are also making the move from a 3-4 defense to a 4-3 defense. I had Da'Quan Bowers pegged here, but his Pro Day only caused more concerns about his knee and Quinn had a outsanding Pro Day.

7) San Francisco - Patrick Peterson, CB, LSU - Possibly the best player in the draft, Peterson comes in and replaces aging, high dollar Nate Clements and adds to an already solid young defense.

8) Tennessee - Nick Fairley, DT, Auburn - The Titans have to answer the quarterback question now that Vince Young has flamed out in Nashville and Kerry Collins is running on fumes. Also, the normally stout Titans defense collapsed down the stretch. The Titans now have Tracy Rocker, Auburn's former DL coach as the new DL coach in Tennessee and they bring in the explosive Fairley to join him.

9) Dallas - Tyron Smith, OLT, Southern Cal - The Cowboys have never used a 1st round pick on an OL in the Jerry Jones regime. I think they should go that way this time around as their OL is getting old and really struggled in 2010. It finally looks like the Cowboys will go this route, although J.J Watt could be a consideration as well as a CB.

10) Washington - Julio Jones, WR, Alabama - The Redskins need a lot and wide receiver is one of those positions. Jones gives them that big playmaker at WR they lack right now.

11) Houston - Aldon Smith, DE/OLB, Missouri - The Texans defense is terrible and now with Wade Phillips coming in to run the defense, they are now switching to a 3-4 scheme. The Texans don't have the talent in place to run a 3-4 and Smith would be a nice piece to add.

12) Minnesota - Da'Quan Bowers, DE, Clemson - Minnesota has a rather large hole at QB now that it finally looks like Brett Farve is now finally retiring and Tavaris Jackson will not be bought back. Rumors are out there that Minnesota are

positioning themselves to acquire Donavan McNabb, as they won't to look to make another run at a championship with their veteran roster. Bowers drops here because of the concerns about the knee after his Pro Day. I

13) Detroit - Prince Amukamara, CB, Nebraska - The Lions add to their defense with a top flight cornerback in Amukamara. They could very easily add an offensive lineman, as they need to provide more protection for their young franchise QB, Matthew Stafford.

14) St. Louis - Cameron Jordan, DE, California - The Rams would be very happy if Julio Jones drops to them at this point in the draft. If not, then they add more talent to a defense that still needs talent. There is talk of the Rams trying to trade up to get Jones.

15) San Diego - Ryan Kerrigan, DE/OLB, Purdue- 2009 1st round draft pick Larry English has been a disappointment at OLB, and the Chargers work with the Dolphins once again in a trade to secure Kerrigan in front of Jacksonville. The Dolphins get the Chargers 3rd round pick, #82.

16) Jacksonville - JJ Watt, DE, Wisconsin - The Jaguars continue to rebuild there defensive line and add a player that can provide them with a much needed pass rusher and a guy with a non stop motor.

17) New England - Mark Ingram, RB, Alabama - New England is in a position to take the best player available, and with Fred Taylor gone, Ingram fits the bill.

18) Miami - Ryan Mallett, QB, Arkansas - The ultimate wildcard in this draft. Mallett has 1st round talent, but has off the field issues and maturity issues that have to be checked throughly, which the Dolphins have done. I have gone back and forth with this pick for Miami, but they seem to be serious about taking a quarterback and with no 2nd round pick, they pull the trigger on the most polarizing player outside of Cam Newton in the draft.

19) New York Giants - Anthony Castonzo, OLT, Boston College - William Beatty has struggled at OLT and Castanzo can come in and compete immediately for the starting OLT position.

20) Tampa Bay - Adrian Clayborn, DE, Iowa - Tampa Bay continues to add talent to a DL in need of talent and add a pass rusher opposite Geral McCoy. Clayborn would have probably been top 10-15 pick on 2009. His play really dropped in 2010 and there are some character issues, but he is a talent and Tampa has shown that they will overlook some character issues, see WR Mike Williams, who turned out to be a very good player for the Bucs this year.

21) Kansas City - Mike Pouncey, OC, Florida - I previously had Phil Taylor, the big NT from Baylor mocked here, but there are concerns about a foot injury. Pouncey fills a need at OC for the Chiefs.

22) Indianapolis - Nate Solder, OLT, Colorado - The Colts OL has been a sore spot for a while now, and they need to protect the franchise, Peyton Manning. Charlie Johnson, the Colts OLT is a free agent and nothing special.

23) Philadelphia - Gabe Carimi, OLT, Wisconsin - Philadelphia gave up 52 sacks last year with Michael Vick as the starter for most of the year.

24) New Orleans - Muhammad Wilkerson, DT, Temple - The Saints added Shaun Rodgers, as he was cut by Cleveland and was available to be picked up before the CBA expired. Still, Rodgers is only a temporary fix and Wilkerson adds a big body with versatility.

25) Seattle - Corey Liuget, DT, Illinois - Seattle could possibly add a CB to address their weak pass defense or add an interior OL like Pouncey. But Brandon Mebane is a free agent and if they cannot resign him, it is a blow to the defense.

26) Baltimore - Jimmy Smith, CB, Colorado - Cornerbacks Josh Wilson, Fabian Washington and Chris Carr are all free agents, and even with that, the Ravens have really struggled at CB. Smith is very talented, and is considered by some to rank behind only Patrick Peterson. That being said, Smith has huge boom/bust potential and has multiple arrest, so character is an issue.

27) Atlanta - Kyle Rudolph, TE, Notre Dame - The Falcons desperately need a pass rusher opposite John Abraham, but Tony Gonzalez may not return and the Falcons will want to have a weapon at TE for Matt Ryan. In a weak TE draft, Rudolph is considered the best one available.

28) New England - Cameron Heyward, DE, Ohio State - The Patriots continue to add young talent to a defensive unit that started to perform better later in the year, but still has to improve.

29) Chicago - Danny Watkins, OG, Baylor - With Tommy Harris gone, the Bears have a need at DT. The offensive line certainly could use help as well, and OG Danny Watkins of Baylor could be a consideration as well. His stock is soaring and he could go higher in the draft.

30) New York Jets - Akeem Ayers, DE/OLB, UCLA - NT could be a consideration as well, but Rex Ryan would like to generate pressure on the quarterback without using as many blitzes as he has had to use.

31) Pittsburgh - Aaron Williams, CB/FS, Texas- One big weaknesses of a very good Steelers defense is cornerback, and it was exposed in the Super Bowl against Green Bay. OL could also be addressed and the Steelers could look to add youth on there DL as well.

Green Bay - Justin Houston, DE.OLB, Georgia - The Packers look to add an explosive option opposite Clay Matthews. The concern with Houston is he has a lot of bad film there have been to many times that he was a non factor.

Miami remaining picks

3) Edmond Gates, WR, Abilene Christian - Tremendous speed, take the top off the defense speed. Very productive with 158 career catches for 2,885 yards and 27 touchdowns. He averaged 18.3 yards per catch. Ran a 4.37 40 at the combine.

3) Taiwan Jones, RB, Eastern Washington - Miami is looking to add speed at the skill positions, and Taiwan fits the bill. He was clocked anywhere between 4.29 and 4.35 at his Pro Day coming off a broken foot. Tremendously productive during his 2 year tenure at RB with 2,995 yard rushing for a 7.7 yard per average and 29 touchdowns. 64 career catches for 903 yards and 7 touchdowns. Jones is an ideal 3rd down back with nice size at 5'11, 194 lbs. Injury concerns push him to this point, but with his pro day, he could go sooner.

4) John Moffitt, OG/OC, Wisconsin - Miami looks to address their problems at OG with Moffitt. He has played all 3 interior line positions and has the ability to pull and get to the 2nd level, something Miami wants in their OG.

5) DJ Williams, TE, Arkansas - Miami is looking for a TE that can provide what David Martin did back in 2008, a TE that can stretch the field. Williams is undersized, but is tenacious as a blocker and very productive and a high character guy as well. One of Ryan Mallett's favorite targets at Arkansas. I know some will think this is a little low, but I have consistently seen DJ in the 4-5th round range. Rob Housler of Florida International could be a consideration along with Julius Thomas of Portland State.

6) Derrick Newton, ORT, Arkansas State - Miami has to be concerned about Vernon Carey and his right knee. Newton is raw, but he has nice athletic ability and talent.

7) Aldrick Robinson, WR/PR, SMU - Another vertical threat with great speed and highly productive in June Jones spread offense at SMU. The Dolphins worked him out recently and had him catch punts also. 181 catches for 3,314 yards, 30 touchdowns and a 18.3 yard per catch average.

7) Byron Maxwell, CB, Clemson - Another big DB from Clemson, and we know the Dolphins like big CB with speed. Similar to 5th round draft pick Nolan Carroll, as Maxwell comes in at 6'0 1/4, 202 lbs and ran a 4.46 40 at the combine.

7) Mario Addison, DE/OLB, Troy - Miami would like to generate more pressure opposite Cameron Wake, who will certainly see many more double teams in 2011 coming off of his Pro Bowl 14.0 sack season. Miami will certainly hope that Koa Misi, coming off a solid first season will improve on his 4.5 sacks in 2010. Still, Addison is a explosive talent with pass rush ability, as his 10.5 sacks in 2010 will attest.

Miami has talked about adding speed to the roster, playmakers with speed. While Tony Sparano will have more input in the draft and personnel, this is Jeff Ireland's draft. My hope is that these guys can and will be on the same page in regards to talent aquisitions. Hopefully, whoever is pulling the trigger for Miami at QB will have an infusion of speedy playmakers on the offensive side of the ball to go along with a solidified interior offensive line.

There could be other trade down opportunities out there, but to get the 2nd round pick back Miami covets, it will either have to be from a team like New Orleans or possibly Atlanta looking to come up and get a kid they like. The way the draft trade down chart works, once you get into the mid 20's in the draft, that is when Miami can look to recoup that 2nd round pick.

I went with only 1 running back because there is interest in Carolina Panther FA RB DeAngelo Williams, and the interest is mutual. I think Miami will target Williams and you can combine him with possibly Ronnie Brown or go with Lex Hillard.

Bring on the draft.

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