

## Taking a look back at my thoughts on the 2012 Miami draft and how these players have developed

Contributed by Tony Simmons  
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Miami are on their bye week this weekend, so I decided to repost a column I did back in May after the draft had been completed. I gave my thoughts on who I thought would be contributors out of the 2012 draft class for the Dolphins.

In looking at this draft class and how I thought it would pan out, it has been a very productive draft for the Miami Dolphins and Jeff Ireland so far here in the 2012 season. There have been disappointments as well, and 3rd round pick Missouri TE Michael Egnew has to be at the top of that list and WR B.J Cunningham of Michigan State did not make the team. WR Rishard Matthews of Nevada and OLB Josh Kaddu are on the squad, but have yet to make contributions on the offensive or defensive side of the ball.

If the Dolphins are going to continue to be competitive and compete for a possible playoff spot, these young kids will have to continue to play well for the Dolphins. Now let's go back and visit my thoughts on these kids in May.

The Dolphins recently completed rookie camp and we now work our way to a complete summer camp with all of the personnel, rookies and veterans.

The Dolphins have not signed any of the draft picks as of yet, as they continue to work on resigning some of their core key players. Last Sunday, the Dolphins signed OLB Cameron Wake and most believe that OLT Jake Long is next on the list. It makes sense, as Long would provide a nice chunk of salary cap relief and you also keep perhaps the best OLT in the game a Dolphin.

But before we get to the summer camps, we take one last look at the draft class and who I believe can be contributors in 2012.

**Significant Contributors** - ORT Jonathan Martin, Stanford, DE/OLB Olivier Vernon, Miami. Martin will be given every chance to win the ORT position, although I do expect it to be a battle with Lyndon Murtha. Vernon, like Martin, will be given every chance to be the OLB/DE on the opposite side of Cameron Wake and provide the Dolphins with a pass rusher they need. Wake will continue to see double teams, and the person opposite him, Vernon, will have plenty of one on one chances to cause havoc.

**Solid Contributors** - RB Lamar Miller, Miami, TE Michael Egnew, Missouri, DT/DE Kheeston Randle, Texas. When you have the big play ability that Miller has, you find a way to get the ball in his hands. He will be used immediately in the kickoff return game and I can see him being used in 3rd down packages with Reggie Bush. Egnew will give the Dolphins an instant Red Zone threat along with Fasano, and like Clay, he can be lined up in various positions, from the slot to out wide and on the line of scrimmage. Some will be surprised to see Randle here, but the more I watch his clips, the more I think this kid can come in and be part of the DL rotation. With Kendall Langford lost in free agency and Phillip Merling being cut, he has a chance.

**Contributors** - WR B.J Cunningham, Michigan State, WR Rishard Matthews, Nevada, OLB Josh Kaddu, Oregon. Miami traded WR Brandon Marshall to Chicago before the draft, and with that move, a void was opened in the wide receiver corps. You have Davone Bess and Brian Hartline as proven commodities, and the Dolphins hope Edmond Gates will emerge in his 2nd year and also signed Legedu Naanee. After that, it's wide open. Joe Philbin wants to use multiple receivers and does not believe in having one, dominant wide receiver. In Cunningham and Matthews, you have two big wide receivers that were highly productive in college and are what the Dolphins wanted at the "Z" spot. Kaddu is a kid that will come in and be an immediate contributor on special teams and has a chance to be part of the 3rd down package.

**Wild Card** - QB Ryan Tannehill, Texas A & M. While Tannehill will come into camp with a sound knowledge of the West Coast offense that the Dolphins will run, the question is can he handle the speed and every changing defenses of the NFL game. While I expect Matt Moore to be the starting quarterback to begin the season, it would not be a major surprise if Tannehill is the guy. When you look at what Cam Newton and Andy Dalton did last year for the Panthers and Bengals respectively without any type of training camp, I don't rule out Tannehill being the guy.

All of these questions will be answered in the next few months as we work our way to the beginning of the 2012 NFL season.

