

What I would do if I were GM with \$50 million plus in cap space

Contributed by Rich Rodriguez
Wednesday, 12 December 2012

On offense in order of priority.

1. Sign Mike Wallace:

He fits best with this group. Bess is a slot/possession guy who is good at getting open in short spaces and gaining a couple of extra yards after the catch. Hartline is a good short to intermediate possession receiver that can beat the secondary deep once in a while, but is not a gamebreaker. They have 2 touchdowns between them. Wallace has 8 touchdowns this season and 32 for his career (he averages 8 TDs a year so he is consistent).

You need that guy to compliment those skillsets and that guy is Wallace. He's the fastest receiver in the NFL. He can blow the top off a defense. Defenses will no longer be able to stack eight in the box with Wallace in the game.

If defenses want to box 8 and play one on one outside, he will burn them deep. If they want to play off and prevent the big play, that will create room for Bess and Hartline underneath.

Bottom line: Wallace adds a dynamic this offense is sorely lacking: speed. He is a deep threat and is young at 26 years of age. He is worth the big bucks.

2. Resign Brian Hartline:

He has had a breakout year and seems to improve each season. As mentioned before, he is a nice short to intermediate threat and three weapons are better than two.

3A. Try to resign Jake Long at a fair deal:

I know there is a lot of talk about Jake Long declining and seeing what Jonathan Martin can do. Whether Martin plays better the rest of the way or not, I still try to bring Long back. I mentioned parameters of a contract in another thread, around the neighborhood of 5 years, \$45 million and \$10 million in guarantees. I would incentivize the contract based on his health to offer some protection and offer incentives based on games played etc. If he balks, here is plan B:

3B. Look at other top tackles in free agency:

Go after either Ryan Clady, Branden Albert or Sebastian Vollmer and draft a tackle anywhere in rounds 2-4 to develop for the future while Martin and the big free agent acquisition hold the fort. This way we have three options for the two positions in case Martin doesn't develop. I think Vollmer would be the best option from a price versus quality perspective as Clady is probably looking for Joe Thomas-type money.

4. Upgrade at least one guard position:

Here is another opportunity to address a need with both a free agent veteran and a rookie. Brandon Moore and Andy Levitre are two free agent options that would immediately be an upgrade over John Jerry. I'd also look at guards late in the draft.

5. Sign a young, athletic tight end that can work the middle:

I'd start with Dustin Keller, who also brings speed and can line up at WR in certain sets. Fred Davis and Jared Cook are also options worth looking at in free agency. Delanie Walker is a sleeper.

6. Resign Reggie Bush at a fair price, try to move Daniel Thomas:

Daniel Thomas has shown very little at running back. I would move him and try to resign Bush and let Lamar Miller be the back up.

With these moves, we've now added deep speed at wide receiver, kept one of our best receivers, upgraded the offensive line, added a viable receiving option at tight end and keep speed and playmaking ability at the running back position.

On defense in order of priority:

The draft is deep at corner and defensive end, so the focus for the first two rounds should be there. The defense does not need a lot of help. I am happy with our linebackers, especially Koa Misi and the improvement he has shown. Our defensive line is strong but we need to put more pressure on the QB. The back-end of the defense is where I have concerns both at corner and free safety.

1. Acquire a playmaker at cornerback:

There isn't a lot in free agency. The only names that intrigue me are Dominique Rodgers Cromartie, Derek Cox and Brent Grimes. All of these players come with question marks (i.e. health, consistency), so buyer beware. Our best bet is to look for a corner in the 1st or 2nd round. There may be as many as 9 viable first/second round talents at corner this year with good size and measurables.

DeMarcus Milliner, CB, Alabama
Height: 6-1. Weight: 182.
Projected 40 Time: 4.45

Xavier Rhodes, CB, Florida State
Height: 6-2. Weight: 215.
Projected 40 Time: 4.44

Johnthan Banks, CB, Mississippi State
Height: 6-2. Weight: 185.
Projected 40 Time: 4.44

David Amerson, CB, North Carolina State
Height: 6-3. Weight: 194.
Projected 40 Time: 4.46

Jordan Poyer, CB, Oregon State
Height: 6-0. Weight: 190.
Projected 40 Time: 4.45

Logan Ryan, CB, Rutgers
Height: 6-0. Weight: 190.
Projected 40 Time: 4.49

Kyle Fuller, CB, Virginia Tech
Height: 6-0. Weight: 193.
Projected 40 Time: 4.47

Desmond Trufant, CB, Washington
Height: 6-0. Weight: 184.
Projected 40 Time: 4.42

Bradley Roby, CB, Ohio State
Height: 5-11. Weight: 190.
Projected 40 Time: 4.46

2. Acquire a pass rusher, even if it is a situational pass rusher:

The draft also offers up some good options here.

Damontre Moore, DE/OLB, Texas A&M
Height: 6-4. Weight: 250.
Projected 40 Time: 4.70

Sam Montgomery, DE/OLB, LSU
Height: 6-5. Weight: 260.
Projected 40 Time: 4.61

Barkevious Mingo*, DE/OLB, LSU
Height: 6-5. Weight: 240.
Projected 40 Time: 4.60

Bjoern Werner, DE, Florida State

Height: 6-4. Weight: 255.
Projected 40 Time: 4.74

Alex Okafor, DE, Texas
Height: 6-4. Weight: 265.
Projected 40 Time: 4.73

Dion Jordan, DE/OLB, Oregon
Height: 6-7. Weight: 243.
Projected 40 Time: 4.70

Corey Lemonier*, DE/OLB, Auburn
Height: 6-4. Weight: 246.
Projected 40 Time: 4.60

Ezekiel Ansah, DE, BYU
Height: 6-6. Weight: 270.
Projected 40 Time: 4.69

3. Resign Randy Starks:

He can be had at a premium cost and is our most versatile defensive lineman. Can play end or tackle, can stuff the run or rush the passer.

4. Bring in a safety to compete with Chris Clemons, either at a bargain price in free agency or as a mid to late round pick.

With these moves we significantly upgrade speed and athleticism on offense so now it is up to the QB to make it happen.

We also fortify the secondary and improve the pass rush, which have been the two main problem spots for this defense.

Download the Free Phinfever Browser Toolbar