

## The NFL Combine begins Saturday

Contributed by Tony Simmons  
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Beginning Saturday, Feb 23-26, the NFL Combine will take place in Indianapolis. This is another big step for both NFL teams and the prospects leading up to the NFL Draft on April 25-27.

Teams will get a chance to see the prospect do many drills, from running the 40 to doing cone drills to various agility drills and bench pressing 225 lbs. While the drills do help the scouts and coaches see how well the prospects bend their knees and drop their hips, or how they come out of their back pedal and see how explosive they can be, still the most important thing for the prospects is game film in my opinion. That said, a kid that maybe does not have the best of film that blows up at the combine will make coaches and scout go back and look at film again. The kids certainly want to perform well.

What is very important is the interviews that the prospects will go thru along with the physical examinations. For a kid like Southern Cal QB Matt Barkley, the combine will be huge. Coming off a shoulder injury in their rivalry game against UCLA, he missed both the Notre Dame game, the bowl game and the Senior Bowl. His medical exam will be key and he does plan on throwing at the Combine.

That is what will make this combine very unique. Most of the time the top quarterbacks don't throw at the combine, but this year most of the top quarterbacks will throw. This is not a particularly strong crop of quarterbacks, and they all have something to prove. QB Geno Smith of West Virginia is considered by most to be the best of this group followed by NC State QB Mike Glennon, SC QB Matt Barkley and Syracuse QB Ryan Nassib. A kid I would keep an eye on is Florida State QB E.J. Manual. Big, fast, talented, but inconsistent in his play, with the advent of the pistol formation, he could see his stock rise and he is coming off a Senior Bowl MVP performance.

Dolphin fans may want to keep an eye on a few guys. WR Cordarrelle Patterson of Tennessee, DeAndre Hopkins of Clemson, Tavon Austin of West Virginia, Keenan Allen of Cal, Justin Hunter of Tennessee and Terrance Williams of Baylor just to name a few.

If the Dolphins do let Jake Long go and move Jonathan Martin to OLT, some OLT to keep an eye on are Menelik Watson of Florida State, Brennan Williams of North Carolina along with Kyle Long of Oregon, who has played both OG & OT. At OG, Larry Warford of Kentucky, Johnathan Cooper of North Carolina and Alvin Bailey of Arkansas are a few to keep an eye on.

Miami definitely will be looking at cornerbacks and keep an eye on David Amerson of NC State, Sanders Cummings of Georgia, Jordan Poyer of Oregon State, Xavier Rhodes of Florida State, Blidi Wreh-Wilson of Connecticut, BW Webb of William & Mary, Dee Millner of Alabama and Desmond Trufant of Washington, just to name a few.

WR Cordarrelle Patterson of Tennessee, DE Enkezial Ansa of BYU & S Kenny Vaccaro of Texas have been the kids I have seen mocked to Miami the most with Patterson gaining a lot of steam. Of course, a lot of this depends on what happens with Free Agency.

Looking forward to next Saturday.

P.S As you guys have probably already seen, Southern Cal QB Matt Barkley will not throw at the Combine. The shoulder is still an issue and he is hoping to be able to throw at his Pro Day.