

Possibilities for Miami at #12

Contributed by Tony Simmons
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With the NFL well into free agency and the Dolphins being very active during the free agency period, some voids for the Dolphins have been filled while other voids have now been opened.

The Dolphins rebuilt the WR core with the additions of WR Mike Wallace and Brandon Gibson, and the re-signing of Brian Hartline. TE Anthony Fasano signed with Kansas City, but the Dolphins addressed that lost and then some with the signing of New York Jet TE Dustin Keller. Keller gives Miami that threat down the seam of the defense they so desperately needed to add. And finally, the saga of OLT Jake Long is finally over as he signed with the St. Louis Rams. And despite what Jake said about the Rams going in the right direction, this was about the Rams putting the most money on the table.

With the decision by Long to move to the Rams, it has triggered the Dolphins to take a long look at signing former Kansas City OLT Eric Winston, as the Dolphins will look to move OLT Jonathan Martin to OLT, his natural position. Martin improvement will be a key factor to Miami taking the next step, but I do believe the Dolphins are committed to giving Martin the chance to prove he can handle the position.

Miami also has hosted New York OG Brandon Moore and will possibly look to add a veteran pass rusher before free agency is over. With that being said, let take a look at the possible candidates for the #12 pick in the first round for the Dolphins as we move closer to the NFL Draft in April.

Cornerback - The Dolphins lost CB Sean Smith to Kansas City, and have had CB Brent Grimes in for a visit and are interested in signing Grimes. With that said, the Dolphins still need to add personnel. Two cornerbacks to keep your eye on at #12 for the Dolphins are Xavier Rhodes of Florida State and Desmond Trufant of Washington. The feeling is Trufant fits the mode of the type of cornerback the Dolphins like, while Rhodes is a big, physical press cornerback that has also played in zone coverage, but is strong bump and run corner. A lot of mocks I have seen recently have the Dolphins selecting Rhodes, and I don't think the Dolphins can go wrong with either cornerback.

Defensive End/Outside Linebacker - The Dolphins would like to add a pass rusher opposite of Cameron Wake. Miami drafted Olivier Vernon last year and he showed some promise last year, but he is still a developmental type of player and had only 2.5 sacks last year, with 2 of those coming against St.Louis. Florida State DE Bjoern Werner and now, possibly Georgia OLB Jarvis Jones are potential targets. Werner had 23.5 career sacks at FSU, 13.0 coming in 2012. Jones had 28.0 sacks in his 3 years at Georgia, with 14.5 of those sacks coming in 2012. The thought was that Jones would not get out of the top 10, but his medical has been key and Georgia had their Pro Day this past week and Jones ran a couple of 4.90 and over 40's, and that has raised some additional red flags. Even with those concerns, his production in the best conference in America, the SEC is hard to ignore. If he get's to the Dolphins at #12, he has to be a consideration.

Offensive Lineman - As I said earlier, I expect Jonathan Martin to be given the chance to take over at OLT, his natural position coming out of Stanford. But if the Dolphins do decide to possibly get one of the top 3 OLT in this draft, they will need to trade up, with the likely target being OLT Lane Johnson of Oklahoma. Johnson has tremendous athletic ability and is a natural for the zone blocking scheme the Dolphins employ. There are a couple of Offensive Guards that are special players in Jonathan Cooper of North Carolina and Chance Warmack of Alabama. Cooper could be a better fit because of his movement ability, but Mike Mayock of the NFL Network considers Warmack to be the BEST football player in this draft.

Wide Receiver - Some may be surprised to see wide receiver on this list, but I believe it still could be a possibility, with the player of choice being WR Tavon Austin of West Virginia. WR Davone Bess is in his final year and there are rumors of the Dolphins possibly looking to trade Bess. The Dolphins added much needed speed with the addition of Mike Wallace, but adding Austin would give the Dolphins another very dangerous weapon. Austin versatility is a huge plus for any offense as well and he can be a potential matchup nightmare. The Dolphins were supposedly very interested in trading for Percy Harvin. I don't think you can discount the Dolphins interest still in Tavon Austin.

I will be working to have my mock draft out for the entire NFL by the end of this week, so check in to see who I have the Dolphins taking along with the rest of the NFL.

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