

7 round Dolphins mock

Contributed by J.P.
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We're just over two weeks away from the draft and we still have no idea who Miami will be taking with the 12th pick, realistically. In 2010 it was no secret the Dolphins loved Jared Odrick and it was also known how much Miami would love to trade down. In 2011 EVERYBODY had Mike Pouncey mocked to Miami (except this guy), and last year Ryan Tannehill was a Dolphin before Mel Kiper started gelling his hair. This year however, Miami only has one major "need", and it doesn't seem like something realistically capable of being taken care of in the first round. The cost to move up for Lane Johnson is too high, and there's no chance he falls to the Dolphins at number 12. That leaves a plethora of solid options open to Miami. Jeff Ireland could elect to add a dynamic pass rusher opposite Wake; something I've wanted badly for now the 4th straight Off Season. The Dolphins could elect to add another weapon in the passing game for Ryan Tannehill with both Tavon Austin and Tyler Eifert likely to be available. Corner is also a legitimate option, depending on how they feel about Desmond Trufant. Miami has also shown plenty of interest in Safety Kenny Vaccaro. Here is how I feel Miami could attack the draft: *I've written up breakdowns on several players you won't see on the blog, and deleted them because I changed my mind. That's how torn I am and how afraid I am that they'll feel they HAVE TO trade up for Lane Johnson. And via process of elimination, the Dolphins draft...

1) Tyler Eifert, TE, Notre Dame - Eifert has the least going against him. The only real argument against Eifert is value, but even that isn't a strong one given how far ahead he is of every other TE in this class. Rhodes isn't a scheme fit and both him and Trufant aren't far ahead enough of the other CB's for me to take at 12. Fluker isn't what Miami is looking for at 12. No way the Dolphins are getting away with drafting a guard in the first round, so Cooper and Warmack are out. Tavon Austin has a lot going for him, but as of right now a lot going against him as well; need and size. He is #2 on my list though. Werner is a good player, but not special enough to take that high. Jones and Mingo aren't fits given their size, and Carradine is a reach at 12. Eifert adds the size Miami needs at pass catcher, the depth they need at TE, the young TE they need to groom under/with Dustin Keller, and the ultimate weapon in any quick pace offense; a big time, versatile, athletic 2 TE set. I had the pleasure of watching Eifert play in person this past season and he was even more fluid than he looks on tape. Having gotten to see Gronkowski play in Training Camp, Pre Season games and regular season games up here in Foxboro, I can tell you Eifert is as natural catching the football as Gronk, and is probably more athletic in the open field. That said, he doesn't have the strength or utilize his size like Gronkowski is able to in the red zone, in traffic, or as an inline blocker. I think Eifert and Keller could produce a top 5 TE combination in the game immediately, and it gives massive flexibility to your offense. While there are other solid TE options later, none provide the upside that Eifert does. He's an immediate game changer for your offense. ****TRADE**** Miami trades up from the 42nd overall selection into the 30-35 range. They give up a 4th round pick.

2a) Terron Armstead, OT, Arkansas Pine Bluff - The Dolphins need to take care of the offensive tackle position. Period. Whether it be in Free Agency with Eric Winston/Tyson Clabo, through the draft, or a combination of both, the Dolphins will acquire at least one recognizable name. Armstead is one of the best athletes in the draft at any position. He turned down several offers from Division 1 schools in order to go to Arkansas Pine Bluff so that he could run track and field. That track speed showed at the combine as he ran a faster 40 yard time than Anquan Boldin. Armstead has the prototypical height, weight, and long arms for an NFL OT. Combined with his athleticism Armstead has huge upside, and could very well be this draft class' Duane Brown. All of these measurable show up on tape as well. Armstead is physical and violent with his hands, has very quick feet, gets down the line of scrimmage laterally and to the second level effortlessly, shows good strength run blocking and good balance in his pass protection. At the Sr. Bowl Armstead had a couple of slip ups technique wise going up against legitimate NFL competition, but overall showed that he belonged. With some more development, I don't see any reason why Armstead can't become close to, if not as good a lineman as the "big 3" of the class. He's a good player, a great scheme fit, has huge upside and fills Miami's biggest need. He's an easy pick if he gets to 42, but I have a feeling Miami would have to move up for him, which isn't a big issue in my opinion. If for nothing else, I want Armstead in Miami so that we have somebody with the nickname: Terronosaurus Rex.

2b) Alex Okafor, DE, Texas - Probably the most under rated DE in this year's class (at least in my opinion), Okafor consistently got better at Texas. Miami is in need of another pass rusher for a variety of reasons, and Okafor is good value here in the late 2nd round. Here are my quick notes that I found from watching Okafor during the season: Get's off the ball well; very good first step, especially in a 2 point stance. High Motor. Agile. Strong at point of attack against the run and uses long arms well to get off blocks. Over pursues the run game too much though; heads straight up field too often, giving up lanes even on early downs. Relies on first step quickness to get around OT; can he bend/use his hands during initial rush though? Tony Pauline has reported recently that he hears Miami will "draft big" after going for the opposite approach in Free Agency. To me, that signals to DE, OT and TE being of priority for the Dolphins. Coincidentally I gave them those 3 positions with the first 3 picks, but a CB could absolutely slip into one of these spots.

3a) Jordan Poyer, CB, Oregon St. - I think Poyer has some major deficiencies in his game. However, in the slot in a zone defense, I think he would fit in well. Miami is rumored to like Poyer a lot and they can't afford to go through the first two days of the draft having not acquired a corner. The 2nd Day of the draft is filled with similarly grades corners, and Miami should be able to get one they like around this spot, whether it be Poyer or not. Jordan is lacking in vertical speed and needs to get much better as a tackler, but I really like his instincts. Poyer seems to diagnose and react to plays about as well as any CB I've studied in this year's class, so it's not a surprise to hear the Dolphins have a lot of interest in him given they want to run a lot of zone (reportedly).

3b) Brandon McGee, CB, Miami - I expect Miami to double down on the corner position in Day 2. Grimes is potentially a 1 year rental, Richard Marshall is likely in his last season in Miami and both are coming back from serious injuries. Not only that, but you don't have anything reliable behind those two players. The Dolphins need immediate competition and depth at the position, as well as young players to develop for starting roles in 2014. Here is a

scouting report I put together on McGee a few weeks ago for the blog: McGee fits the stereotype of a modern day UM prospect to a T. Very talented, and very raw. McGee was inconsistent throughout his career at Miami, but when I went back and watched a few of his games after the season, I saw an extremely promising corner. To me, he's a slightly longer, stronger version of Sam Shields. I like him a lot. He's fast, has very good closing speed, has smooth hips and light feet, and is physical in both coverage and the run game...He has the makings of a good CB if he's developed well. I had him as a 2nd-3rd round talent back in January when I first started to do work on him; at the time the highest grade I found for him was a 6th-7th round grade. Right now the hype is that he'll be gone in early Day 3 and I'm afraid his "stock" will continue to rise...Or in other words, scouts actually view him the way I did, as a 2nd-3rd round pick, and the public will finally catch on as we get closer to the draft. I think anywhere in Day 3, McGee is a steal.***A couple of notes before I continue to Day 3 that weren't necessarily reflected in my mock. Miami has paid a lot of attention to multiple high round Safety prospects. With a lack of depth at the position and Chris Clemons on a one year deal, I could see Miami attacking safety early on in round 2 or 3. The Dolphins have also shown a lot of interest in some Day 2 RB's, most notably Giovani Bernard, who reminds me a lot of Lamar Miller. A lot of people feel that Miami could add a DT early in the draft, however I think between Jared Odrick likely moving inside (especially if a DE is added), and the continued development of Kheeston Randall, I don't see it taking priority early on.

5) Zac Stacy, RB, Vanderbilt - I have a thing for SEC running backs. To me, if you look like you have good burst, power and are productive in the SEC as a RB, you can be productive in the NFL. Stacy has good power and balance; he always seems to break at least one tackle on every run. Stacy also has really nice acceleration and change of direction, and puts a lot of effort into his pass protection. He runs very hard and downhill, and I think would make a nice scheme, both in terms of how he would compliment Miller as well as how he fits the type of blocking scheme Miami wants to go towards.

5b) Bacarri Rambo, S, Georgia - Miami will absolutely load up on DB's in the draft; both at safety and CB. Rambo reminds me of Reshad Jones in a lot of ways, and I think could fall into the later portion of the draft for much the same reason Jones did. Rambo is immature on and off the field and has many of the same coverage concerns that Reshad did coming out of UGA. However, he was extremely productive in the SEC and has a tremendous amount of talent. I think Miami could go back to Athens to add another DB.

Rambo is also a huge favorite of our draft expert, Tony Simmons.

7) Don Jones, Safety, Arkansas St. - As Tony Simmons pointed out in his mock draft, Miami has shown a lot of interest in Jones. They'll be adding plenty of DB's on draft weekend.

7) Quinn Sharp, Kicker/Punter, Oklahoma St. - YES! A kicker and punter in one. How there aren't more I'll never know, but Sharp is likely exclusively a kicker at the next level. Miami will likely be adding competition for Carpenter.

7) A Defensive Tackle - Who knows who, but Miami will likely add a DT late in the draft, "as usghe". With the potential lack of depth in the recent future at the position, this year makes as much sense as any.