

Night one of the 2020 NFL Virtual Draft

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Last night was the first night of the three-day, 2020 virtual NFL Draft hosted in NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell's basement. Due to the circumstances caused by the current Co-Vid19 pandemic, the NFL Draft location this year was changed from its' original location in Las Vegas, to a virtual platform where coaches and general managers drafted from their homes and offices while draft prospects waited at home with their families for that nerve wrecking call. Commissioner Goodell started the draft with a welcoming speech that led to a national anthem performance by Harry Connick Jr. from his home studio. Following the performance, the Bengals were on the clock with the first overall pick for the fourth time in franchise history.

### **1. Cincinnati Bengals (2-14)**

#### **Joe Burrow (23)**

##### **QB/LSU**

As expected by many, the 2019 Heisman Trophy winner was drafted by the Bengals on Thursday night. With only one year left in Andy Dalton's contract, it will only be a matter of time before the first overall pick takes over the reigns of a franchise who hasn't won a playoff game in 30 years. The last time the Bengals had the first overall pick was in 2003 when they drafted former Heisman Trophy winner Carson Palmer. After an amazing season where Burrow threw for over 5,000 yards in his senior year at LSU, the damage he could do with a healthy AJ Green is unfathomable.

### **2. Washington D.C Redskins (3-13)**

#### **Chase Young (22)**

##### **DE/Ohio State**

With a defense ranked 27 overall last year per ESPN, the Redskins used the second overall pick to help address that issue. Joining former Ohio State teammate Dwayne Haskins, Young gets to bring the same intensity onto the other side of the field. On top of his 2019 performance which resulted in 46 total tackles and 16 sacks, Young's physicality, mobility and size (6'5/265lbs) made him a top five draft favorite.

### **3. Detroit Lions (3-12-1)**

#### **Jeffrey Okudah (21)**

##### **DB/Ohio State**

After trading away their star cornerback Darius Slay earlier this offseason to the Philadelphia Eagles, the Lions went on to add veterans Jamie Collins Sr. and Desmond Trufant to improve their defense and have now added Jeffrey Okudah. Following his former teammate Chase Young

in the draft, Okudah comes from a defense ranked number one in 2019. Okudah's junior year was his most impressive as he finished with a career high in total tackles(35) and interceptions(3). While Quarterback Matt Stafford could still use help in his protection, it will be interesting to see if the Lions continue to focus on the defense during the remainder of the draft.

#### **4. NY Giants (4-12)**

**Andrew Thomas (21)**

**OT/Georgia**

With one of the best running backs in the league right now in Saquon Barkley, the Giants helped him immensely adding a strong talent like Thomas to the line. At 6'5 and 320lbs, Thomas is a versatile player with experience at both left and right tackle. Thomas is a college player ready for an instant starting position which should also bring much relief to sophomore quarterback Daniel Jones after being sacked 38 times last year.

#### **5. Miami Dolphins (5-11)**

**Tua Tagovailoa (22)**

**QB/Alabama**

The Dolphins use their first of 14 overall draft picks to pick their quarterback of the future again...again. While 2012 was the last time the Dolphins drafted a quarterback in the first round, insert Ryan Tannehill, they really have not had any luck at that position since Dan Marino. While past injuries were marked as red flags, Tagovailoa's overall productivity in three years can not be overlooked. If the Dolphins can build around Tagovailoa as their centerpiece during this rebuilding stage, Dolphins fans may finally have real hope now more than ever since the Brady era in New England is over.

#### **6. Los Angeles Chargers (5-11)**

**Justin Herbert (22)**

**QB/Oregon**

In what will be a battle for the starting position with Tyrod Taylor, Justin Herbert was added to the fight for Phillip Rivers' previous position. The third overall quarterback to be picked in the first ten rounds, Herbert came into the draft standing tall at 6'6(tallest of the three prospects) with less hype surrounding him compared to Tagovailoa and Burrow. In his four years in Oregon, Herbert finished with a TD:Int ratio of 95:23 while throwing for a total of 10,541 yards. Do not be surprised to see Tyrod start week one just to be benched by week four for Herbert.

#### **7. Carolina Panthers (5-11)**

**Derrick Brown (22)**

**IDL/Auburn**

The last time the Panthers drafted a player from Auburn in the first round was in 2011 when they drafted Cam Newton with the first overall pick. The last time the Panthers drafted a player with a top ten pick was Christian McCaffrey at number eight in 2017. The Panthers seemed to have hit gold again with this year's first round pick as Brown was one of the top favorite defensive players in this year's draft. Alongside Tahir Whitehead, Brown will help create pressure on quarterbacks, something the Panthers did well last year as they ranked 2nd in safeties.

## **8. Arizona Cardinals (5-10-1)**

### **Isaiah Simmons (21)**

#### **LB/Clemson**

With a defense that was rated 31st overall last year, the Cardinals made a splash in drafting a Linebacker early. Not only did the Cardinals draft one of the top LB prospects in this year's draft, but they drafted arguably the most versatile. In his time in Clemson, Simmons played positions at safety, cornerback, and both inside and outside linebacker.

When asked about drafting Simmons, Cardinal's general manager Steve Keim said "...it was a pretty easy decision ...He's sort of a Swiss Army Knife...He does it all. You call that kind of player an 'eraser.'" Hopefully Brown can help fans erase the memory of last season moving forward.

## **9. Jacksonville Jaguars (6-10)**

### **CJ Henderson (21)**

#### **DB/Florida**

A team that had a top defense not so long ago, fell a long way last season. After trading Jalen Ramsey in October and A.J. Bouye in March, the Jaguars cornerback situation was missing a piece in an all ready lackluster defense. Henderson racked up 6 interceptions in his first two seasons in Florida before a minor setback in his junior year. Adding Henderson to the right side in order to match Tre Herdon down the line should help relieve safeties Ronnie Harrison and Jarrod Wilson as the Jaguars look to create a dominant defense once again.

## **10. Cleveland Browns (6-10)**

### **Jedrick Wills Jr. (20)**

#### **OT/Alabama**

The man who spent his time protecting Tua Tagovailoa in Alabama has now been drafted to protect Baker Mayfield after taking a career high 40 sacks last season. With a star receiving core and solid run game, all that is missing is for Mayfield to match his confidence with his game play and Jedrick Wills should help relieve that pressure. After re-signing Kareem Hunt, the

Browns made it very clear in their intentions to fill in the few missing pieces needed on offense, and this pick solidifies that claim.

### **11. NY Jets (7-9)**

#### **Mekhi Becton (21)**

##### **OT/Louisville**

The NY Jets got a huge star, literally and figuratively, in 6'7/365lbs Mekhi Becton on Thursday night. With experience playing on both the left and right side, Mekhi is another example of a versatile mercenary who can help his quarterback breathe before throwing. It will be very enjoyable seeing Becton brush off the NFL's top rushers this season, as long as he can work on his foot placement.

### **12. Las Vegas Raiders (7-9)**

#### **Henry Ruggs III (21)**

##### **WR/Alabama**

Though Raider's Nation doesn't know who will be their starting quarterback between Derek Carr and Marcus Mariota, they can rest tonight knowing Nelson Aghlor won't be the only addition to the receiving core this season. Choosing the first receiver in a deep draft for that position, the Raiders saw something in Ruggs that they preferred over his teammate Jerry Jeudy who was favored to be the first receiver drafted. In his three seasons with Alabama, Ruggs caught 24 TDs (2 less than Jeudy) and had a total of 1,716 receiving yards. If placed in the slot position, Ruggs can open up the field for fellow receiver Tyrell Williams on the outside.

### **13. Tampa Bay Buccaneers (7-9)(From Colts via 49ers)**

#### **Tristan Wirfs (21)**

##### **OT/Iowa**

In an attempt to prevent newly acquired quarterback Tom Brady from the 47 sacks Jameis Winston faced last year, the Buccaneers traded up to boost their offense line. A top ten favorite, there was a slim 2% chance Wirfs would still be available at 13, according to ESPN. After being rumored Brady wasn't getting the appreciation he wanted from coach Belichick in New England, Brady must be ecstatic he has a coach invested in him this season by not only bringing in Brady's best bud Rob Gronkowski, but also adding much needed pass protection.

### **14. San Francisco 49ers (13-3) (From Buccaneers)**

#### **Javon Kinlaw (22)**

##### **DT/South Carolina**

Drafting last year's Defensive Rookie of the Year Nick Bosa wasn't enough for the NFC Champions, as they picked up another defensive force in this year's draft. Kinlaw finished his

junior year with 35 total tackles and six sacks and his South Carolina career with 93 total tackles and 10.5 sacks overall. Adding Kinlaw to a defense that had already been ranked third overall last season under Kyle Shanahan is just scary.

### **15. Denver Broncos (7-9)**

#### **Jerry Jeudy (21)**

##### **WR/Alabama**

Projected to be the first WR drafted this year by NFL analysts, Jeudy had to step aside for his former teammate. In three seasons in Alabama, Jeudy caught 26 touchdowns and had 2,742 yards in receptions overall. The Broncos have moved on from veteran quarterback Joe Flacco and look to invest in sophomore quarterback Drew Lock this off season as they signed running back Melvin Gordon to add depth to the run game as well as drafting a ready to go receiver such as Jeudy.

### **16. Atlanta Falcons (7-9)**

#### **A.J Terrell (21)**

##### **CB/Clemson**

With a team that was already stacked on offense with players such as Julio Jones, Todd Gurley II, Calvin Ridley and Matt Ryan, it only made sense the Falcons would look into improving their 24th ranked defense in the draft. Led by veteran defensive end Dante Fowler jr, the Falcons needed to add depth with a reliable cornerback in which they got in Terrell who totaled 73 solo tackles and 6 interceptions in his three years in Clemson. Far from having a stellar defense, the Falcons are on the right foot with this pick.

### **17. Dallas Cowboys (8-8)**

#### **CeeDee Lamb (21)**

##### **WR/Oklahoma**

Jerry Jones excitement could be felt through the television screen right before commissioner Goodell announced the 17th overall pick this year. Ranked overall third in offense, the Cowboys did not hesitate in giving Dak another weapon. CeeDee had over 3,000 yards and 32 TDs in his three years with Oklahoma with a career high 14 TDs in his junior year. Moving forward the Cowboys can now focus on improving their defense and getting a new contract for Dak, but that is neither here nor there right now.

### **18. Miami Dolphins (5-11) (From Steelers)**

#### **Austin Jackson (20)**

##### **T/USC**

With their 2nd of 14 overall draft picks, the Dolphins decided to focus on protection for their newly acquired rookie quarterback though they could have waited in drafting the young player so

early in the draft. Between the signing of both veteran and young players, the Dolphin's vision of rebuilding is still a little blurry, but fans should be happy with the detail and effort put in the construction this past year.

### **19. Las Vegas Raiders (7-9) (From Bears)**

#### **Damon Arnette (23)**

##### **CB/Ohio State**

After acquiring a weapon on offense with their first pick, the Raiders turned their attention to the other side of the field. The third defensive player to be drafted from Ohio so far, Arnette finished his four seasons with 140 total tackles and 5 interceptions. After being ranked the worst defense in the NFL last year, picking up a cornerback such as Arnette should light a fire underneath this defense, though they are still far from perfect.

### **20. Jacksonville Jaguars (6-10) (From Rams)**

#### **K'Lavon Chaisson (20)**

##### **DE/LSU**

With their second pick in the first round, the Jaguars continued to add water to their dumpster fire defense. A key factor in LSU's championship team, K'Lavon balled out in his last year with 60 total tackles and 6.5 sacks. With quarterbacks such as Phillip Rivers and Deshaun Watson in their division, an intense pass rusher such as K'Lavon will help add the needed pressure. While the investment in defense looks promising, the offense still has much needed work as well if the Jaguars truly want Gardner Minshew to succeed next season.

### **21. Philadelphia Eagles (9-7)**

#### **Jalen Reagor (21)**

##### **WR/TCU**

Goodbye Agholor, hello Reagor. While Carson Wentz showed what his talents can do when left with absolutely nothing, having a young allusive player such as Reagor will help Wentz immensely next season when the majority of his injury-ridden receiver core gets hurt again. In his three years in TCU, Reagor gathered up over 2,000 yards receiving and 22 touchdowns. Though the Eagles just added a new target for Wentz, the remaining focus should be on the defense and offensive line for the rest of their draft. Sneak in a running back in there just in case.

### **22. Minnesota Vikings (10-6) (From Bills)**

#### **Justin Jefferson (21)**

##### **WR/LSU**

After shipping Stefon Diggs off to Buffalo, the Vikings will look to Jefferson as their new WR2 to match Adam Thielen on the opposite side. Jefferson had a stellar final year at LSU as he scored 18 touchdowns and had a career high 1,540 yards in receiving. The second offensive

player to be drafted from LSU so far, Jefferson is coming from a winning mentality environment as he is welcomed by a team that wants to get back to an NFC championship sooner rather than later.

### **23. Los Angeles Chargers (5-11) (From Patriots)**

**Kenneth Murray (21)**

**LB/Oklahoma**

Unlike the Dolphins who added protection to their newly drafted quarterback with their second pick, the Chargers decided to focus on their defense this time around. In three seasons Murray was responsible for an incredible 334 total tackles and 9.5 sacks. Murray most likely should have been drafted a lot earlier in this draft and the Chargers should consider this trade with the Patriots a steal. Then again it is the Patriots and we all know what they can do with a six round pick.

### **24. New Orleans Saints (13-3)**

**Cesar Ruiz (20)**

**OL/Michigan**

With an offense ranked third overall last year and with a quarterback who holds the current career touchdown passing record, the Saints wanted to keep it that way by adding extra protection to their quarterback. The only player to be drafted from Michigan so far, the former Wolverine was drafted as an underclassman for obvious reasons.

Ruiz stated during the combine, "...if you look at the film, if you look at how I dominate people, if you look at my character, how smart I am, I have everything for a first-rounder...I'm very confident in myself that I am a first-rounder" and apparently the Saints agree.

### **25. San Francisco 49ers (13-3) (From Vikings)**

**Brandon Aiyuk (22)**

**WR/Arizona State**

In an effort to return to the Superbowl to right last year's wrong, the 49ers drafted a top ten receiver in Brandon Aiyuk with their second pick after adding to their defense earlier. In his final year in Arizona, Aiyuk caught 65 passes for 1,192 yards and eight touchdowns. At 5'11, Aiyuk will be a great addition in the slot, making it difficult for defenders to focus on both Kittle and himself.

### **26. Green Bay Packers (13-3) (From Texans via Dolphins)**

**Jordan Love (21)**

**QB/Utah State**

In probably the most bizarre and unpredictable pick of the evening, the Packers decided to draft Aaron Rodgers' predecessor. In three years in Utah, Love threw for over 8,000 yards with a

60/29 TD:Int ratio. While Rodgers has plenty left in his tank, it is very interesting the Packers have decided to start planning for a future without him. Then again, it took a few years for Aaron to get the starting position from Favre so the move isn't something we may see this year or even next year. I wouldn't be surprised if the Patriots traded their first round pick thinking they could steal Love in the early second round.

## **27. Seattle Seahawks (11-5)**

### **Jordyn Brooks (22)**

#### **LB/Texas Tech**

A team that has made a complete 180 degree change in their roster since their 2013 SuperBowl caliber team, the Seahawks continue to focus on their defense. By the end of his senior year, Brooks was responsible for 366 total tackles, seven sacks, two interceptions and two forced fumbles. While the addition of Brooks will help veteran Bobby Wagner in the long term, the Seahawks have bigger issues on their offense to worry about that will hopefully be addressed throughout the remainder of the draft and offseason.

## **28. Baltimore Ravens (14-2)**

### **Patrick Queen (20)**

#### **LB/LSU**

After being so close to another Superbowl, coach Harbaugh looked to continue to build his defense and as one of the best defensive minds in the NFL right now, fans can rest comfortably knowing that Harbaugh knows what he is doing. The Louisiana-native finished his junior year with 85 total tackles, three sacks, one interception and a National Champion as he joins a championship ready team in Baltimore.

## **29. Tennessee Titans (9-7)**

### **Isaiah Wilson (21)**

#### **T/Georgia**

The Titans continue to invest in quarterback Ryan Tannehill and running back Derrick Henry by using their first pick on protection. In a deep draft list full of many available tackles, the Titans might have found a sleeper in the 6'6, 360lb right tackle. With only two years under his sleeve, Wilson didn't have as much tape to show for compared to other prospects but it seemed to be enough for the Titans.

## **30. Miami Dolphins (5-11) (From Packers)**

### **Noah Igbinoghene (20)**

#### **CB/Auburn**

After focusing on the offense with their first two picks, the Dolphins focused on adding some youth to their veteran defense. In his short time in Auburn, Igbinoghene gathered 87 total

tackles and 18 pass deflections. While cornerbacks such as Kristian Fulton and Trevon Diggs were still on the board, Brian Flores' defensive mind saw something in Noah worthy of drafting.

### **31. Minnesota Vikings (10-6) (From 49ers)**

**Jeff Gladney (23)**

**CB/TCU**

Speak of the devil and he shall appear. The Vikings did not let the opportunity slip away as they used their second pick to pick up a top defender. Unlike Noah, Gladney played all four years at TCU where he posted 146 total tackles, 38 pass deflections and five interceptions.

### **32. Kansas City Chiefs (12-4)**

**Clyde Edwards-Helaire (21)**

**RB/LSU**

When you have one of the best offenses in the league, are the current super bowl champions, and have the last round pick, what do you do? Yes. And that is what the Chiefs did in adding yet another weapon to an already dangerous arsenal. The fifth player to be chosen from LSU, Edwards is yet another player coming from a winning environment to another. In his junior year, Edwards ran 215-times for 1,414 yards and 16 touchdowns. If that isn't enough to give you reasons to believe, keep in mind coach Andy Reid is also known for drafting great running backs such as Brian Westbrook and Lesean McCoy.

That concludes the first night of the first of its kind, virtual NFL Draft and as always the draft was historical. So far four teams have picked their future quarterbacks, the Dolphins still have 11 draft picks left and five of this year's draft prospects have come from LSU's championship team. Teams like the Patriots and the Steelers will have to wait until round two to draft their first player as the draft continues with round 2 and 3 on Friday at 7pm est, and the remainder of the rounds continuing Saturday afternoon at 12pm est. May the waivers always be in your teams favor!