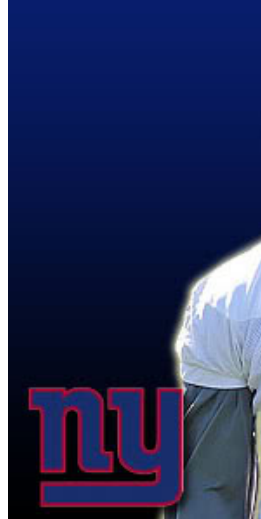


It's the column you've been waiting all week for. The Hiko Draft Spectacular. In it, we get Hiko's thoughts on a Braylon trade, his dream about the Browns taking Mark Sanchez, how likely he feels a trade down is, his opinion on the Browns drafting a quarterback and potentially trading one, and his prediction and preference for the #5 overall pick. Hiko also takes in depth looks at all the players rumored to be potential options for the team at #5. Come join me, Hiko, and hundreds of others at the Winking Lizard in Lakewood this Saturday for the draft.



A View From The Cheap Seats

Draft Primer

I had a dream last night that the Browns drafted Mark Sanchez.

The room I was in was filled with Browns fans, eagerly waiting in tense silence for the announcement of the next player to spawn countless jersey sales. Then up came Roger Goodell, clearing his throat and saying, "

With the 5

th

pick in the 2009 draft, the Cleveland Browns select Mark Sanchez

."

The only sound that could be heard after that was as if air were being sucked out of the room, creating a vacuum. This lasted for a full 5 seconds before the screaming began.

Tables were overturned. Beer mugs shattered against the wall. The guy sitting next to me pulled out a samurai sword and performed hari kari.

Someone in the corner shrieked, "

Let's storm Berea

!" and started handing out pitchforks, but the fans just turned the weapons on each other.

Then all Hell broke loose:

Flames, blood, severed heads, infected tonsils, zombie lawyers, and 24 year old Audrey Hepburn sitting on my lap running her fingers through my hair.

Let's hope that dream never comes to fruition. Except maybe that last part.

On Trading Braylon

Trade the dude already. I'm tired of hearing about him. You know he's gone. I know he's gone.

So get rid of him already so we can debate if the Browns got enough value in return and listen to the bitching and moaning from the 6 people

that think we should've kept him.

My value chart for Braylon says a 1st Round pick and a viable WR like Steve Smith or Domenik Hixon, or a 1st

Round pick and a 3rd

or 4th

Round pic.

The Browns need to get close to that in order for me not to say they gave it up too easy.

If I were another team, I wouldn't give that up for a WR with the dropsies that wants a new contract that will run about \$10 mil a year. No way in HELL would I give that up for Braylon Freakin' Edwards.

But there are desperate teams out there, teams that feel they are just a WR away from contending for a championship, teams that feel that the window is closing, and fast. And desperation comes with a price.

Just ask the Cowboys and the King's Ransom they had to cough up for Roy WR Williams.

On Trading Down

When proclaiming their draft preferences, there is a contingent of people that always shout out "The Browns should trade down."

Well, no shit.

If trading down were as simple as going to the store for a 6 pack of beer, then everyone would do it, especially in this age of holdouts and ridiculous contracts for the Top 10 players. With the washout rate of the "top players" at about the same as that of those taken later in the 1

st

or 2

nd

Round, a Top 10 pick is a curse, not an advantage.

Thus, trading out of the Top 10 for any kind of value is

more difficult than dialing 911 with your ass. It can be done, but it ain't easy.

And therefore shouldn't be thought of as a viable option.

On Taking a Quarterback

That being said, it seems that Kokinis and Mangini are doing a damn fine job trying. The rumors persist that they are unsatisfied with Brady Quinn and are willing to trade him. And then there are rumors that they are infatuated with Mark Sanchez, USC QB.

There's two ways to look at this:

1. They are unsatisfied with Brady Quinn and would like to draft Mark Sanchez.

2. They are making noise like they are unsatisfied with Brady Quinn and would like to draft Mark Sanchez to force teams that want Sanchez to either trade with us or trade ahead of #5, thus allowing a player the Browns really do want (like Curry) to drop.

If it's #1, I'm not sure what they've seen, because I saw 2 games of Brady Quinn's play in 2 years (I discount the broken finger game). You're basically trading an unproven but potential-laden QB who is under a reasonable contract and has 2 years NFL training for another unproven but potential-laden who will need to have an unreasonable contract and learn for a couple years (under Derek Anderson, no less).

I don't like it.

But since the body of Quinn's work is so limited, and the

2 games he did play were anything but bad, I have to think that this is all one big fat smokescreen - and everybody's buying it.

Mock drafts across the country are now giving us Mark Sanchez, and teams out there that really want Sanchez are now rumored to be nervous that he won't get past 5. Here's an excerpt from Peter King's

[Monday Morning QB](#)

:

"[Daniel] Snyder, the Washington [Redskins] owner, has one pick in the top 75, the 13th overall. He was willing to trade that pick plus next year's first-round pick and something else to get Jay Cutler from Denver to replace Jason Campbell at quarterback. That failed, but I'm told Snyder is beyond smitten with Sanchez and will likely pursue him this week. How can he do that? He's going to have to part with either his next two first-round picks, or a slew of picks, including this year's one.

Sanchez, the in-demand quarterback, has visited nine teams between one (Detroit) and 19 (Tampa Bay) in the first round. The excitement level on him around the league is ratcheting up."

King goes on to mention the Browns as one of the suitors, although he is of the mind that the Skins will try to make the deal with Kansas City at # 3, since both Seattle and Cleveland are rumored to want Sanchez.

I can actually see this happening, since Snyder is an NFL idiot that runs his franchise like a fantasy team. Young talent? Who needs that when you can have really expensive brand names that you'll cut in a year or two?

This trade up helps the Browns since KC is the team rumored to be taking Aaron Curry at # 3. If they trade out of that spot with Washington, then Curry very well could fall to # 5.

And if the Skins can't get a deal with KC or SEA, then the Browns could be sitting on Sanchez at # 5, just waiting for the highest offer.

Le Prediction

I still ain't holding my breath on the trade down scenario, however. Here's what I expect to happen:

The Browns trade Braylon to the NYG for the #29 pick and a 4th Round pick.

The Browns do not trade Brady Quinn or Derek Anderson. If they could get anything for Derek Anderson, they would trade him, but DA's value is at an all-time low.

The Lions take Matt Stafford, the beginning of a mediocre career.

The Rams take Jason Smith, because if you don't

have a franchise Left Tackle, you need one.

The Chiefs take Aaron Curry, because (note to Phil Savage) Linebackers are important in a 3-4.

The Seahawks take Mark Sanchez, because they're not a Crabtree away from getting back to elite status.

The Browns select Brian Orakpo at # 5, defying my will (as they know full well that I disapprove).

The #29, #36, and #50 picks go towards a Safety, a Wide Receiver, and a Center (in no particular order).

Le Preference

But since I'm all about Reality, let's stay there for a while. Here's what we know: The Browns have the 5th pick in the Draft. They have more holes than a 6 foot flute.

Almost anyone they get there will be a welcome addition to the team.

Really, the 2nd Round picks are just as important (if not more so) than the # 5 overall.

But I won't spend much time discussing them because there's no way of predicting who will fall, who will get picked early, what positions will have a run of draft picks, etc. etc. etc.

All I can tell you is the positions the Browns sorely need to address (

**Center, Right Tackle, Wide Receiver,
Running Back, Inside Linebacker, Outside
Linebacker, Safety**

) and give you a list of players that might be considered and available starting with pick # 29.

Center - Max Unger (Oregon), Alex Mack (Cal), Eric Wood (Louisville).

Right Tackle - Eben Britton (Arizona), William Beatty (Conn), Jamon Meredith (SC), Philip Loadholt (Oklahoma).

Wide Receiver - Percy Harvin (Fla), Brian Robiskie (OSU), Kenny Britt (Rutgers), Hakeem Nicks (NC), Mohamed Massaquoi

(Georgia).

Running Back - Donald Brown (Conn), LeSean McCoy (Pitt), Andre Brown (NC State), Shonn Greene (Iowa), Javon Ringer (Mich St).

ILB - James Laurinaitis (OSU), Jasper Brinkley (SC), Darry Beckwith (LSU).

OLB - Clay Matthews (USC), Connor Barwin (Cincy), Larry English (N. Illinois), Clint Sintim (Virginia), Marcus Freeman (OSU).

Safety - Patrick Chung (Oregon), William Moore (Missouri), Louis Delmas (W. Mich), Rashad Johnson (Alabama), Chip Vaughn (Wake Forest).

There is lots of talent in that list.

Back to the # 5 overall. Here is my personal preference order of realistic options with that choice.

And, yes, I have had my list delivered by courier to the Berea complex, Cleveland Browns Stadium, George Kokinis' home, Eric Mangini's home, and Randy Lerner's chateau in Monte Carlo.

If Braylon is traded:

1. Michael Crabtree

2. Aaron Curry

3. B.J. Raji

4. Rey Mauualuga

5. Andre Smith

6. Eugene Monroe

7. Tyson Jackson

8. Jason Smith

9. Brian Orakpo

10. Mark Sanchez

If Braylon is not traded:

1. Aaron Curry

2. B.J. Raji

3. Rey Maualuga

4. Michael Crabtree

5. Andre Smith

6. Eugene Monroe

7. Tyson Jackson

8. Jason Smith

9. Brian Orakpo

10. Mark Sanchez

If you would like to read more about these candidates and my reasons for ranking them thus, you may read on below. It is long, however, so I listed them last.

Not all of you have an endless obsession

with the football machine.

Les Candidates

I pulled these scouting reports from [NFLDraftScout](#), which is associated with CBS Sportsline.

They did an insane job with their player reviews - each MUCH longer than the excerpts I have provided.

Click the links to see.

I have listed them here in order of their Overall Player Grade, which NFLDraftScout determined by assessing Body Structure, Athletic Ability, Football Sense, Character, Competitiveness, Work Habits, and a slew of positional factors. My take is listed below each NFLDraftScout analysis.

[Michael Crabtree](#)

In just 26 games at the university, Crabtree rewrote school and Big 12 Conference records, while also etching his name in the NCAA books. His success on the football

field saw him receive Fred Biletnikoff Award honors in each of his two college seasons. A model of consistency, he put together a string of 13 consecutive games with at least one touchdown and five receptions, tying an NCAA mark.

Crabtree's 231 receptions in his first two seasons topped the old college record of 227 catches over a two-year span that was previously held by Nevada's Alex Van Dyke (1994-95). He ranks tied for sixth in NCAA annals with 41 touchdown catches, an average of 1.58 scores per game. That total also set a collegiate record for most touchdowns during a two-year span, surpassing the previous mark of 34 scoring catches by Larry Fitzgerald of Pittsburgh (2002-03).

Being a featured receiver was something new for Crabtree when he arrived at Texas Tech. During his prep days at Carter High School, he competed as a quarterback, where he was ranked as the nation's 16th-best overall athlete and received a four-star rating from Rivals.com. The member of the Lubbock Avalanche-Journal Fab 44 team, he also earned All-Area accolades from the Dallas Morning News.

Crabtree threw for 870 yards and 11 touchdowns on 45 of 100 passing in his final season. That year, he also ran for 646 yards and nine touchdowns on 100 carries. As a junior, he completed 30 of 67 passes for 897 yards and eight touchdowns with just one interception.

In addition to excelling in football, Crabtree was also a nationally-ranked basketball player at Carter High. He was rated among the top 50 hoops prospects in the state and received several scholarship offers in that sport from major colleges.

However, Crabtree was determined to play football, accepting a scholarship from Texas Tech while bypassing offers from Baylor, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas State, Oklahoma and Kansas. He spent the 2006 season performing on the scout team, acclimating to life as a wide receiver. He was on a two-sport scholarship, but dropped basketball due to the grueling football schedule.

Texas Tech featured three seniors ahead of Crabtree on its 2006 depth chart entering fall drills, but the redshirt freshman beat out Joel Filani for the "Z" receiver position, starting every game. He earned Biletnikoff Award honors, given to the nation's top receiver, the first time a freshman ever captured that award. The unanimous All-American and All-Big 12 Conference first-team choice set NCAA freshman records, leading the nation with 134 receptions for 1,962 yards (14.6 avg) and 22 touchdowns, as he also led the major college ranks with an average of 10.31 receptions and 150.92 yards receiving per game.

While Crabtree did not match his lofty 2007 totals in 2008, he still had a banner

sophomore campaign. He was again the Biletnikoff Award recipient, in addition to garnering first-team All-American and All-Big 12 recognition. He ranked sixth in the nation with a team-high 97 receptions, good for 1,165 yards and 19 touchdowns, despite battling late season ankle issues.

Compares To: ANQUAN BOLDIN, Arizona -- Like Boldin, Crabtree is a bit of a long strider, but has good field savvy to gain separation. He is a bit slower in his release than one would like, but uses his body well to break tackles. He is used mostly on slants, but has the ability to gain lots of real estate after the catch. His recent foot surgery is going to be a concern, but without that problem, is there any doubt that he would have been the best draft prospect

in 2009?

OVERALL GRADE: 7.69

My Take: Normally, I hate taking Receivers this high. Their impact on a game is less than most other positions; they're one of the few players that aren't in on every play. Plus, the list of WR's taken in the Top 10 is littered with flat-out busts.

But there are certain Receivers that have a unique blend of speed, power, body control, and hands. They are rare. And I believe that Crabtree is one.

Lots of WR's come into the draft with tons of potential, but lots of times those prospects are boom-or-bust. I see Crabtree as safe, or as safe as you can get in the Top 10.

He has the potential to be in the Larry Fitzgerald/Calvin Johnson realm - and he's really still learning the position.

When you have the hands and the raw athletic ability that Crabtree does, you're more than likely to succeed.

Detractors have pointed out that he amassed his numbers in a gimmicky Spread Offense, and normally I would agree, but I've seen the way he plays, and his TD numbers are particularly noteworthy.

It's no fluke that the guy that held the NCAA record for most TD's in 2 years before Crabtree was Fitzgerald.

And, no, I am not worried at all about the stress fracture in his foot. He played a whole season at a high level with it.

It's been dealt with.

I don't give a damn that he didn't run a 40 - I don't care what his 40 is.

I don't care that he's only 6'1, not 6'3.

I know a player when I see one, and Crabtree is a player.

Eugene Monroe

From a family of 16 children that included 10 brothers, Monroe and his siblings could have fielded a team of their own.

Monroe overcame knee problems that slowed him during the 2006 and '07 seasons, and was one of the most dominating linemen in the college game during his final campaign. The Cavaliers struggled, but their offensive line leader excelled, producing 16 touchdown-resulting blocks for an offense that scored only 23

times in 2008.

Many scouting departments labeled Monroe as a certain early first-round draft selection, especially based on his 2008 performance and ability to remain healthy throughout his senior year. Many of those experts feel that his strength, technique and hand placement is superior to former Virginia first-round offensive linemen, D'Brickashaw Ferguson (New York Jets) and Branden Albert (Kansas City).

At Plainfield High School, Monroe was rated the best offensive lineman in the country by numerous recruiting services. The U.S. Army, USA Today, Parade, EA Sports and

Super Prep All-American choice received a five-star prospect rating from both Scout.com and Rivals.com. He was the third-rated overall prospect, according to Rivals.com and Scout.com, and ranked second overall among high school football players, by College Football News.

The top-rated player of Super Prep's Elite 50 list, Monroe added Scout.com East Hot 100 list honors. He was named Super Prep's Northeast Offensive Player of the Year as a senior, adding top player in New Jersey recognition by Super Prep, Scout.com and Rivals.com. He was a first-team All-State pick by the Newark Star-Ledger as a senior and a first-team All-State selection as a junior. The offensive lineman did not allow any quarterback

sacks during his final three seasons as a starter.

As a true freshman, Monroe appeared in 12 games for Virginia in 2005. He lined up mostly behind All-American D'Brickashaw Ferguson at left offensive tackle, but also saw action at right guard and on the placement-kick unit. He played briefly in two games as a defensive tackle in short-yardage situations, but did not record a tackle.

Primed to replace Ferguson at left tackle in 2006, Monroe suffered a dislocated kneecap in April camp and underwent surgery. He was slow to recover, but

showed his "true warrior" attitude by playing in all 12 games, including six starts (seven total) at left tackle. He posted 39 knockdowns with eight touchdown-resulting blocks and graded 84.43% for blocking consistency (81.2% overall) in the contests he started while allowing just four quarterback pressures and no sacks on 345 pass plays.

Monroe missed two games in 2007 after injuring his knee late in the Georgia Tech clash, but still earned All-Atlantic Coast Conference recognition. He led the team with an 87.09% grade for blocking consistency, playing on a line that featured All-American offensive guard Branden Albert (Albert graded 83.5% in 2007). The left tackle registered 55 knockdowns and

led ACC linemen with 15 touchdown-resulting blocks, as he did not allow any sacks and gave up just one pressure on 428 pass plays.

A consensus All-American and All-Atlantic Coast Conference preseason selection entering his senior season, Monroe was one of the few bright spots, as the Cavaliers struggled on offense throughout the 2008 campaign. He was the recipient of the Jacobs Blocking Trophy, the highest honor to be bestowed on an Atlantic Coast Conference lineman. He set school single-season records with 16 touchdown-resulting blocks and was the first Cavalier to register over 100 knockdowns/key blocks (105) in a season.

Compares To: WALTER JONES, Seattle -- Both players are blessed with excellent athleticism and agility, along with the quick feet to mirror speedy edge rushers. Monroe is a solid run blocker, plays on his feet with very good balance and has excellent body control. He has the strength to gain position when working in-line and creates and widens rush lanes. He is capable of staying on his feet and sustaining blocks, using his hand strength well to lock on and control his man. He competes until the whistle and plays with good aggression. His field vision and awareness are evident by his ability to pick up line games and blitzes. His body control lets him readjust and deliver crunching blocks in the second level. With his fluid body flexibility, he has no problem sinking his hips and anchoring to protect the pocket. By remaining healthy as a senior, he has the athletic ability and pedigree to be

the first offensive lineman taken in the 2009 NFL Draft.

OVERALL GRADE: 7.53

My Take: Offensive Linemen are probably the safest positional pick in the Top 10 of any draft, and who wouldn't like a bookend to Joe Thomas for the next 10 years?

Many view drafting an Offensive Lineman this high a luxury the Browns cannot afford.

I'm not so sure.

What the Browns need more than anything is to hit on their picks.

I've heard that Jason Smith and Eugene Monroe are decidedly the Top 2 Tackle prospects, and, of the two, Monroe would make the better Right Tackle. However, his knee issues scare me a bit.

Several teams reportedly failed him on his physical.

I'm sure that he'll turn out to be just fine, but, all things being equal otherwise, I'd take Smith.

And, looking for a Right Tackle, I'd take Andre Smith before either of them.

PS - 16 kids? What the hell were his

parents thinking?
trying to re-populate the Earth?

Were they

Dag.

Andre Smith

An impressive physical specimen who compares to Dallas Cowboys' guard Leonard Davis, Smith possesses outstanding agility and quickness for his size. Regarded as a premier offensive line prospect out of high school and one of the

standouts of the 2005 recruiting class, he went on to establish himself as the elite at the college level, as evidenced by being named the recipient of the 2008 Outland Trophy.

Even at 343 pounds, Smith displays excellent foot speed and agility. He started every game (38) in which he played for the Crimson Tide, missing the 2009 Sugar Bowl when he was ruled ineligible for direct contact with an agent. In addition to earning the Outland Trophy in 2008, he was won Alabama's Paul Crane Offensive Lineman Award, shared the Southeastern Conference's Jacobs Blocking Trophy with Arkansas' Jonathan Luigs, was twice chosen an All-SEC first-team pick and added consensus All-American first-team

notice in 2008.

Smith was a three-year starter at Huffman High School. He was the consensus top-rated offensive lineman in the country as a senior. The first-team All-American choice by USA Today and the U.S. Army, he was also a two-time All-State selection. In 2005, he was the recipient of the Bobby Dodd Award and named Alabama's Mr. Football by the Alabama Sports Writers Association, becoming the only offensive lineman to ever win the honor.

Smith was also named Mr. Football and the state's best prospect by The Birmingham News. The Rivals.com Alabama Offensive

Lineman of the Year recorded 88 knockdown blocks and was named the Class 6A Lineman of the Year in 2005. He was one of four finalists for the Walter Payton Award, given to the best prep player in the nation.

Smith enrolled at Alabama in 2005, taking over at left tackle. He became the seventh true freshman in school history to start in his first career game since 1972, joining Larry Rose (1985), Jon Stevenson (1991), Terry Jones, Jr. (1988), Dante Ellington (1999), Saleem Rasheed (1999) and Tim Castille (2003). He delivered 70 knockdown blocks as he led the team by being on the field for 831 offensive and special teams plays.

Smith garnered team Player of the Week honors four times during his sophomore season, when he shed over 25 pounds from his once 370-pound frame prior to the season opener.

He started all 13 games, as he was named All-SEC and earned the league's Jacobs Blocking Trophy. He led the conference down linemen with 116 knockdowns and had fifteen touchdown-resulting blocks while allowing only 1.5 quarterback sacks on 472 pass plays. He was penalized five times and played the second part of the season with a left ankle sprain suffered vs. Tennessee and a right ankle sprain incurred the next week in the Louisiana State clash.

As a junior, Smith was a consensus All-American and unanimous All-SEC first-team pick. The Outland Trophy and Jacobs Blocking Trophy recipient saw his campaign get off to a rough start. He suffered a knee sprain in the season opener vs. Clemson that forced him to sit out the following week vs. Tulane and play just two quarters upon his return, vs. Western Kentucky. He also sprained his elbow in the season's sixth contest vs. Kentucky, but still delivered 103 knockdowns while pacing SEC blockers with seventeen touchdown-resulting blocks.

Compares To: LEONARD DAVIS, Dallas -- Davis is at least two inches taller, but both could be better lined up inside. Davis proved to be a better interior performer after

trying to play on the edge. While Smith might be a good fit at right tackle, some prefer him better as an interior lineman, feeling his lack of lateral range (especially moving to his left) is a big concern for a player that must protect the quarterback's blindside. To date, he has made a nice living vs. smaller opponents (average weight of his main blocking assignment over the last two years is 262.4 pounds, more than 80 pounds lighter than Smith), but in the NFL, he will face much bigger and much quicker defensive ends and his excellent straight-line explosiveness will compensate for his lateral mobility problems.

OVERALL GRADE: 7.28

My Take: OK, Andre's got some character issues. He was suspended for the 2009 Sugar Bowl due to rules violations, which involved contact with an agent.

And everyone made a big deal about his leaving the Scouting Combine so suddenly.

Then scouts and NFL personnel types felt slighted and got huffy, and somehow his stock "dropped";.

It doesn't make much sense to me. His talent didn't change, but his stock dropped, solely because he in essence mooned the establishment, and that translates (in their minds) to a character issue.

I don't disregard character issues, but I

suppose my definition of "character issue" might be different than the Mockers.

In the grand scheme of things, his "red flags" are very small. I think that his talent outweighs his "character issues", but, then again, a guy that big outweighs almost everything.

I would not be afraid to take a leap of faith with Andre at 5.

[Rey Maualuga](#)

The three-year starter was called by the coaching staff the "most menacing" linebacker of the Pete Carroll era. By the time he finished playing for USC, Mauualuga was the most decorated linebacker to wear a Trojans uniform since Junior Seau roamed the fields for Southern California in the late 1980s. In each of his three seasons as a starter, Mauualuga garnered All-American and All-Pac 10 Conference recognition.

During his freshman season as a reserve, the Trojans ranked 31st in the nation in rush defense (130.54 ypg), 48th in total defense (360.92 ypg) and 35th in scoring defense (22.85 ppg). In Mauualuga's first year as a starter, Southern California improved to ninth in the nation vs. the run (91.08 ypg),

20th in total defense (295.85 ypg) and 11th in scoring defense (15.15 ppg).

As a junior, USC continued to move up the national charts, finishing fourth vs. the run (84.15 ypg), second in total defense (273.15 ypg) and second in scoring defense (16.0 ppg) in 2007. In his final season, the Trojans allowed just 87.38 yards per game on the ground (fifth in the NCAA), ranking second in the country in total defense (221.77 ypg) while leading the major colleges in scoring defense (9.0 ppg).

"I want to become the player that the offense game-plans around, that the offense fears coming into the game,"

Mauualuga recently stated. The inspiration he draws from his late father, Talatonu, who died just before the 2006 Rose Bowl BCS championship game: "It doesn't hit me as much now as it did, but I use it as inspiration. He's out there in my heart playing with me. Even though he's not here, he's with me spiritually. I've matured a lot lately. That childish player, that person that I was, is long gone. I feel like I've developed a sense of leadership on the team. I've learned the do's and don'ts, and I've realized what's important."

In an article by Steve Dilbeck of the Los Angeles Daily News, he wrote: "Have you seen the play of USC linebacker Rey Mauualuga? If you watched the Trojans play, could your eyes possibly avoid him? Does

this look like Superman in cardinal and gold or what? He flies to the ball and then hits like a locomotive. Isn't this obviously USC's next superstar? He has given every indication of becoming the ideal middle linebacker. He has the natural size. He has incredible burst. He is powerful and aggressive and uncommonly fast. More than all that, he is also amazingly athletic. He can be a sledgehammer or a ballerina. Dazzle with power or agility. Play with fury and control."

Hall of Fame coach and ESPN's Lou Holtz chimed in, "He's the next great Trojans linebacker, very physical, always lining up big hits. He reminds me of (ex-Ohio State All-American) A.J. Hawk. His athletic ability is similar to Hawk's, but the

infectiousness of his free spirit makes him even more valuable to his team."

Mauualuga earned Parade, Super Prep, Prep Football Report, Scout.com and EA Sports All-American honors at Eureka High School as a senior in 2004. He was named USA Today All-USA first- team, Super Prep Elite 50, Prep Star Top 100 Dream Team, Student Sports Top 100, Rivals 100, Super Prep All-Farwest, Prep Star All-West, Long Beach Press-Telegram Best in the West, Tacoma News Tribune Western 100, Orange County Register Fab 15 first team and Cal-Hi Sports All-State first team honors that season.

In 2004, Maualuga recorded 96 tackles, including 37 stops for loss, four interceptions, including two that he returned for touchdowns, a pair of fumble recoveries and had one kickoff return for a touchdown. As a junior in 2003, he was a Student Sports Junior All-American and Cal-Hi Sports All-State Underclass first-team pick while posting 146 tackles, 43 for loss, 11 sacks and one interception. Eureka went 20-2-1 during his junior and senior seasons. He spent his 2001 freshman year at St. Bonaventure High in Ventura (Calif.).

Maualuga made an immediate impact as a true freshman. Even though he played behind Oscar Lua at middle linebacker, he was named Freshman All-American first-team by the Football Writers

Association and Scout.com. He received the team's John McKay Award, given to the player that shows the most competitive spirit. He finished with 37 tackles (26 solos), a sack, 4.5 stops for losses and an interception.

Mauualuga earned All-American honorable mention and All-Pac 10 Conference first-team honors in 2006. He started 10 of the 13 games he played in at middle linebacker, going on to register 78 tackles (45 solos), ranking second on the team. He had two sacks among his five stops for loss, as he also deflected three passes and picked off another.

As a junior, Maualuga received All-American third-team and All-Pac 10 Conference first-team accolades. He started all but the Notre Dame game, as he was nursing a hip pointer before that contest, leading the team with a career-high 79 tackles (41 solos). He placed third on the squad with six sacks and 10.5 stops behind the line of scrimmage. He also knocked down three passes while intercepting another.

Maualuga was a unanimous first-team All-American and All-Pac 10 Conference choice in 2008. He was a finalist for the Lombardi Award, Bronko Nagurski Award and the Butkus Award, in addition to being named the league's Defensive Player of the Year. He matched his career-high with 79

tackles (51 solos), as he returned one of his two interceptions for a touchdown and deflected four other throws in 12 games. He sat out the Oregon clash after he sprained his knee in the Oregon State game.

Compares To: BILL ROMANOWSKI, ex-Oakland -- Alright, Romanowski played on the outside, but there are a lot of similarities in their games, especially with both being violent tacklers. Maualuga is fun to watch because he plays so physically. He is big, strong, fast and explosive, displaying the perfect middle linebacker temperament. He is the type of player that can set the tempo of the game and makes players around him better. His teammates know that if they let up, he is going to get all over them. He plays very close to the line of

scrimmage, right up in the "A" gap, and will not hesitate to attack and be physical with blockers. If he maintains his recent maturity off the field, he is the type of playmaker to build a defense around.

OVERALL GRADE: 7.24

My Take: I keep hearing all the excuses why this guy has dropped - he's immature, overruns plays, might not be a 3 Down LB, did not stand out at the Senior Bowl, lacks foot speed, etc.

Horsefeces.

Whether or not his success was aided by the stellar talent surrounding him (including 2 other Linebackers that will likely go in the 1st Round), Mauualuga made plays all the time at USC. When you watch him, you know you're watching a *Football Player*.

And with all the comparison being made between Mauualuga and NLF greats - Romanowski, Ray Lewis, Junior Seau - why has this guy's stock dropped to the point where he is now considered a back half of the 1st prospect?

It's one of the things that drives me nuts about the Pre-Draft process: Thousands of experts - NFL employed or no - come out of the woodwork, talk to each other, read each other's takes, become inundated with the common perception, and become victims of Groupthink.

If you ask 95% of these guys what the issue is that makes a guy like Mauualuga fall from grace, they will parrot exactly what you read from some other guy 10 minutes ago. Ay Caramba!

Hey, they might be right - they're the experts, not me. I can just go by what I see on TV, and that limited data has led me to conclude that Mauualuga will be just fine at the NFL, and he'll make some team in the 15-25 range very happy, since that's where Groupthink has him going, and that probably means that the Browns won't even consider him at # 5.

Mark Sanchez

Sanchez started just one season at Southern Cal, but etched his name in the school record books alongside Carson Palmer and Matt Leinhardt, other blue-chip passers who came into their own during Pete Carroll's tenure as the team's head coach.

The junior hopes that NFL teams will overlook his inexperience and regard him in the same class as other former Trojans quarterbacks.

Sanchez started 16 games and completed 64.27% of his passes at

Southern California. His 313 pass completions rank ninth in school history and 3,998 yards in total offense rank 12th. He registered 41 touchdown passes in only 27 games, including at least two scoring tosses in 13 of those contests (including seven games with at least three scores, four with four TDs and one with five). He totaled at least 200 passing yards nine times in 2008.

Sanchez received excellent tutoring as the heralded quarterback at Mission Viejo High School, where his coach was Bob Johnson, the father of

former USC and NFL quarterback Rob Johnson. He was named 2004 Parade All-American Player of the Year, Super Prep All-American Player of the Year, EA Sports All-American first-team, Super Prep Elite 50, Prep Star Top 100 Dream Team, Student Sports Top 100, Rivals 100, Prep Star All-American, Tom Lemming All-American and Scout.com All-American first-team as a senior.

Sanchez also added Super Prep All-Farwest, Prep Star All-West, Long Beach Press-Telegram Best in the West first-team, Tacoma News

Tribune Western 100, Orange County Register Fab 15 first-team, Gatorade California Player of the Year, Cal-Hi Sports All-State first team, All-CIF Southern Section, All-CIF Division II Co-Offensive Player of the Year and Los Angeles Times All-Star honors. The Los Angeles Times All-Orange County Back of the Year was also named Orange County Register All-Orange County.

The All-South Coast League Co-Offensive MVP completed 151-of-245 (61.6%) passes for 2,441 yards with 24 touchdowns and four

interceptions in 2004, despite sitting out the equivalent of four games (eight halves), because Mission Viejo was winning handily on the way to capturing the CIF Division II championship. He would finish his career with a 27-1 record as a starter.

As a junior in 2003, he made the Cal-Hi Sports All-State Underclass second-team, All-CIF Division II, Orange County Register All-Orange County first-team and All-South Coast League first-team. That year, he connected on 161-of-211 passes (76.3%) for 2,460 yards with 29

touchdowns and seven interceptions. He also ran for 90 yards and caught a touchdown pass in 2003. In one game, he was 12-of-12 for 326 yards and four scores.

Sanchez also played basketball and baseball at Mission Viejo. He spent his freshman and sophomore years at Santa Margarita High in Rancho Santa Margarita, where his first varsity pass as a 2002 sophomore went 55 yards for the game-winning touchdown.

Sanchez enrolled at Southern California in 2005, redshirting as a freshman. He won the Service Team Offensive Player of the Year Award. In 2006, he took over starting chores for an injured John David Booty throughout the preseason, but was relegated to six games of reserve action once the schedule began. He was limited to 3-of-7 passes for 63 yards and one interception, but drew praise from Booty, who stated, "Mark is going to have an awesome career at USC. I promise you, Mark is going to do well at USC. Waiting a while to play is not necessarily a bad thing."

Sanchez served as the second-string quarterback in 2007. He appeared in eight games, including replacing an injured Booty in the Arizona, Notre Dame and Oregon clashes. He went on to gain 695 yards with seven touchdowns and five interceptions, completing 69-of-114 attempts (60.53%), proving that he has the high-caliber arm to attract pro interest.

Sanchez worked hard during the 2008 offseason, beating out highly regarded Arkansas transfer Mitch Mustain for the starting job. He

suffered a dislocated left knee cap prior to the season opener, affecting his mobility, but proved to be capable of handling the team's high-powered offense.

He was a finalist for the Manning Award (nation's top passer) and semifinalist for both the Davey O'Brien Award and Maxwell Award (nation's top player). He led the Pac-10 Conference in total offense (247.92 yards per game) and passing efficiency (164.64), with 34 touchdown passes ranking second among quarterbacks (Matt Leinart had

38 in 2003) during the Pete Carroll era.

Sanchez generated 3,207 yards with 10 interceptions on 241-of-366 attempts (65.85%), adding three more scores on the ground. Sanchez surprised everyone, including family and his head coach, when he announced that he would forgo his senior season and enter the 2009 NFL Draft. Carroll tried to convince his quarterback that another year of college experience would help him in the pro game, but Sanchez said he had carefully weighed all the

considerations before deciding to leave.

Heisman Trophy winners Carson Palmer and Matt Leinart, along with John David Booty, all returned for their final year of eligibility with the Trojans. Palmer was the first overall pick in the 2002 NFL draft and Leinart was selected 10th in 2005. Carroll, who said he considers Sanchez as talented as any of those three, discussed the pros and cons with him. "We've talked at great depth and great length. We've covered this from A to Z ... going until late last

night," Carroll said. "We don't see this decision the same. (But) I'm thrilled for Mark. For any of our kids to live the dream and do what they want to do with their football career, this is a great place to do this."

Compares To: TRENT EDWARDS, Buffalo -- Sanchez, just beginning to come into his own after he was groomed in a pro-style offense since his prep days, might lack the game experience or incredible arm strength of Matthew Stafford, he does show a lot of moxie on the field, along with

good patience and excellent timing and touch. He needs to be in a strong vertical attack, as he's best throwing downfield and does a great job of anticipating his receivers before they come out of their breaks.

OVERALL GRADE: 7.06

My Take: Nick Allburn and I spoke with Scott Wright of [DraftC](#) [ountdown.com](#) on Tuesday night, and one of the questions I asked him was why he felt that the Browns had a viable interest

in Sanchez, why his visit to Cleveland wasn't viewed as just a smokescreen.

Scott replied that, when Sanchez visited, Mangini sat down with him and they broke down film for 4 hours, and you don't do that with a player that you're just having in as a smokescreen.

I counter that you do if you really want the smokescreen to work.

I'm not saying that the film study was purely for deceptive purposes. You've got the guy all the way out here; why not spend a little time with him to see what makes him tick?

At the very least, you don't want to give HIM the impression that the visit was a smokescreen, because that would get around very quickly.

As I said before, I see Sanchez as a lateral move from Quinn. Really, with the added price tag, it's a step backwards.

Nothing against Sanchez - I think he's a good QB.

But the success rate is much higher for QB's that started 30 + games in college, and Mark has only started 16 (Quinn started 46).

That's not much of a track record.

On top of that, nothing that Sanchez does excites me any more than what Quinn does.

Sanchez's arm isn't noticeably

stronger. The urban legend that Quinn has a noodle arm is ludicrous.

Quinn's arm strength is plenty adequate.

It's certainly stronger than, say, Chad Pennington's, and I'd bet that Mangini was desperately wishing he had Chad back at the end of last year rather than the strong-armed Brett Favre.

Sanchez and Quinn are about the same size, have about the same type of mobility. They both are intelligent and came out of a Pro-style offense.

So, all circumstances being equal,
can someone please tell me why
Sanchez would succeed where Quinn
would not?

You'd better be the Johnny Cochrane
of scouts if you're going to win me
over.

Aaron Curry

The 2008 Butkus Award winner, given

to the nation's top linebacker, Curry so impressed the award's namesake that Dick Butkus surprised him in early December when he arrived on campus to personally hand the award to its recipient.

Curry started 49 of the 51 games he appeared in, going on to rank third in school annals with 45.5 tackles behind the line of scrimmage. The All-American defender also finished ninth on Wake Forest's all-time record list with 332 total tackles.

Curry outstanding field vision and ball awareness skills saw him not only wreak havoc in the opposition's backfield on the blitz, but also excel in pass coverage. He returned three of his four interceptions for touchdowns as a junior, tying the NCAA single-season record for linebackers that was first set by Malcolm Postell of Pittsburgh, who also had three in 2004. Only cornerback Deltha O'Neal of California scored more on interception returns in a season (four in 1999) in major college annals.

Curry gained a total of 226 yards on

those interception returns in 2007, setting the school and Atlantic Coast Conference single-season records. He was just the third player in league annals to gain more than 200 yards on interception returns in a season. His 226 yards placed fifth in NCAA history, becoming the 10th college player to gain more than 200 yards.

At E.E. Smith High School, Curry was a standout outside linebacker and tight end. He was named Conference Defensive Player of the Year and also earned All-Conference and All-Region honors after registering 123 tackles

during his senior year. He was selected to the North Carolina-South Carolina Shrine Bowl as a tight end.

Curry was the prize recruit from Wake Forest's 2004 class, but spent the season performing on the scout team. He entered 2005 fall camp behind Caron Bracy and James Adams at strong-side outside linebacker, but emerged as the starter at that position for 10 games, earning Freshman All-American second-team honors. He collected 45 tackles (28 solos) with a 15-yard sack and 7.5 stops for losses. He also blocked a punt that he

recovered for a 13-yard return.

Curry started all 14 games at strong-side linebacker in 2006. He finished second on the squad with 83 tackles (52 solos), including 8.5 stops behind the line of scrimmage and three sacks. His first career interception came vs. Georgia Tech in the Atlantic Coast Conference title game, returning the ball 30 yards to set up a scoring drive.

Curry was named second-team All-American in 2007, twice receiving

ACC Player of the Week honors. The strong-side linebacker started 12 games, snapping a sting of 30 consecutive starts when he came off the bench vs. Navy (was punished by the coaching staff for missing class prior to that contest). He delivered 99 tackles (61 solos) with three sacks and led the team with 13.5 stops for loss. His 226 yards via four interception returns set the school single-season record, as his 84-yard run back vs. Army was the fifth-longest interception return in Demon Deacon history.

The All-American and All-Atlantic Coast Conference first-team choice led the team with a career-high 105 tackles (66 solos). The Butkus Award winner also paced the defense with 16 tackles behind the line of scrimmage, adding 2.5 sacks with an interception, as he also recovered three fumbles, caused another and broke up three passes.

Compares To: DERRICK JOHNSON, Kansas City -- Like the Chiefs finally

realized with Johnson, hopefully the NFL team that drafts Curry will do likewise and play him in the middle. He has very good athleticism making plays in front of him, but bites often on play-action, lacks good depth playing in the zone and is a bit too stiff to generate the sideline-to-sideline range to make impact plays on the outside, where he struggles to stop the runner's forward momentum. He can clog the rush lanes when he stays low in his pads. Put him inside in a 3-4 alignment and he can be equally productive getting to the quarterback as he did in college. Play him on the outside and he will be exposed in a quick and deep passing game.

OVERALL GRADE: 6.98

My Take: The 411 on Curry is that he's solid, safe, but unspectacular.

He's not a big time pass rusher, and therefore might not be a good pick for the Top 5, where you expect your selection to have a higher ceiling.

Here's my baseball analogy - You're down 3 runs in the 9th (because the Browns are certainly down 3 runs to the elite NFL teams).

You're given the choice between leading off with a guy that has a 30% chance of hitting a Home Run, or a guy that has a 70% chance of hitting a Double.

Who do you choose?

Personally, as nice as the Home Run would be, I'd have to take the higher percentage of having a guy on base to start a rally.

Curry would likely play Middle Linebacker in a 3-4, and there is an argument that the Browns don't have a pressing need at MLB due to the acquisition of Eric Barton. I have 2 counter-arguments to that:

1. Eric Barton is not a long term solution.

2. The Browns' Linebacking play (or lack thereof) has **KILLED** them over the last 10 years.

If you're telling me that Aaron Curry has a very good chance of coming into the league and providing a solid, safe, highly productive presence at the most important position on the Defense, then I have no clue why you wouldn't want that.

Most likely, we're not the only ones that feel that way, and he'll be gone come Numero Cinco.

Brian Orakpo

Orakpo, a product of the Texas training program, came to the university as a lanky basketball player, but is leaving the school as a rock-solid defensive end.

He worked his way up the depth chart to earn a starting job as a

junior. Despite lost time in each of his last two years due to knee injuries, he filled his mantelpiece this winter, capturing Big Twelve Conference Defensive Player of the Year honors. He also claimed the Lombardi Award (best lineman), Nagurski Trophy (best defensive player) and Hendricks Award (best defensive end).

When Orakpo arrived on campus as a freshman, he weighed 210 pounds. He has added over 50 pounds of muscle to his frame, yet

still maintains a body fat level of just eight percent. Teammate and fellow defensive lineman Roy Miller says that Orakpo transformed from Steve Urkel into Arnold Schwarzenegger over the past five years. One of the strongest members of the team, he was named the nation's top workout warrior by ESPN. In a recent workout exhibition, he bench pressed 515 pounds, with a 600-pound squat and a 380-pound power clean.

At Lamar High School, Orakpo lettered three times in football as a defensive end. He was a two-time first-team All-District selection and helped his team to a 29-8 mark in those three seasons. He also saw action at tight end. In his final season, he was tabbed second-team All-Greater Houston and All-District 18-5A, despite missing one-third of his year with an injury.

Orakpo managed to register 36 tackles, nine quarterback sacks and

12 stops for loss in 2003, helping the team compile an 11-2 record to reach the state quarterfinals. As a junior, the All-District and All-Greater Houston choice was credited with 10 sacks as his team went to the regional finals. He also lettered in basketball during his freshman through junior years.

Orakpo suited up for the first two games of the 2004 season for Texas, but the coaches decided it was best to redshirt their lanky first-year player. The following

season, he appeared in 13 games, starting the Baylor clash at "quick" defensive end, a position manned by Brian Robison. Orakpo posted 19 tackles (11 solo) with a sack, three stops for losses and nine pressures in 2005.

Robison still held on to the defensive end job in 2006, but eventually shared time with Orakpo. An intense offseason weight-training program helped Orakpo return to fall drills as a 248-pounder. He started vs. Ohio

State and played in reserve the rest of the season, but registered 17 tackles (13 solo) to go with five sacks and five pressures.

With both starting ends having departed, Orakpo laid claim to the quick end position, starting eight of the nine games he appeared in. A right knee sprain vs. Arkansas State sidelined the junior for four contests. He would collect 27 tackles (19 solos) to go with 5.5 sacks and seven pressures, but the best was yet to come.

The consensus All-American ranked sixth in the nation with 11.5 sacks, as Texas paced the NCAA in that category, as the defense averaged 3.62 sacks per game. He delivered 40 tackles (32 solo) with 17.5 stops for losses and 15 pressures in 12 games, sitting out vs. Baylor after spraining his left knee in the third quarter vs. Texas Tech, doing what he does best -- chasing down the quarterback.

Compares To: LEONARD LITTLE, St. Louis -- Don't get fooled by all

the awards he won in 2008, as Texas did a great job of publicizing him with " padded " statistics (they claimed he recorded 30 pressures in 2008, but the NCAA recognized just 15; his profile reports 62 pressures for his career, but verified totals are 36). Still, he is a quality edge rusher that some teams are looking at as a potential linebacker, but whether he has the range to play there is a big question. Use him as a rush end, much like the Rams do with Little, and he will get a good piece of the quarterback. Put him in a stand-up position and you run the risk of

seeing him struggle like former Houston Texan Jason Babin.

OVERALL GRADE: 6.72

My Take: I've seen Orakpo play several times this year, and I don't get the hype. I think he's got some skills, but I don't think he's a Top 10 prospect - and that's before you ask him to play a new position in the 3-4.

Honestly, I'd feel a lot safer taking him if the Browns ran a 4-3... and I still wouldn't take him at # 5.

These DE-turned-3-4-OLB types are just too scary boom-or-bust for my liking, even with a player that I liked more than Orakpo. I understand that for every Kam Wimbley there's a DeMarcus Ware or Terrell Suggs, but projecting which is which is so arbitrary since there's no data to compute about who will successfully make the positional change and who won't.

These are the kind of players that you take at #15 or #20, not at the huge guaranteed contract/huge pressure slot of # 5.

Call me a coward, but the Browns have made me gunshy, and I don't feel at all comfortable taking a player that isn't a safer bet than Mr. Orakpo.

Jason Smith

A converted tight end with three years as a starter on a veteran-laden offensive line that featured four returning starters in 2008. It proved to be a season of redemption for the fifth-year senior, who was limited to seven games as a junior due to a MCL sprain in his right knee.

Known for his pass-protection skills, Smith displayed solid drive-blocking technique in 2008. The team gained more than 65% of its rushing yardage on running plays to

the left. With Smith leading the way, the Bears finished 21st in the nation and third in the Big Twelve Conference with an average of 195.75 yards per game on the ground. With their left tackle hobbled in 2007, Baylor ranked 113th nationally with 77.83 yards per game rushing.

Smith earned All-American honors in 2008 and became the school's first non-special teams All-American since safety Adrian Robinson in 1995. He also became

the Bears' first All-American offensive lineman since Mark Adickes in 1975 to receive national postseason honors. Only seven other offensive linemen since Barton Koch in 1930 have been able to claim All-American recognition in school history.

Smith was a standout performer at W.T. White High School, where he was named to The Dallas Morning News Top 100 Area List (No. 95) as a senior. After earning first-team All-District honors as a sophomore

and junior at offensive tackle, he moved to tight end, serving as team captain during his senior season.

That year, he caught seven passes for 101 yards and one touchdown en route to 2003 All-District 10-5A honors. The two-time team Most Valuable Player also competed in the 2004 Coca-Cola High School Football All-Star Game.

Smith enrolled at Baylor in 2004,

spending the season performing on the scout team as a tight end. He would be named that squad's MVP after the schedule was concluded. He was chosen Baylor's Most Improved Player in 2005, starting eight games at tight end. He made six of the thirteen receptions by Baylor tight ends that year, gaining 70 yards (11.7-yard average) that included a 2-yard touchdown vs. Oklahoma State.

Smith shifted from tight end to right offensive tackle in 2006, starting all

12 games. He delivered 71 knockdowns and six touchdown-resulting blocks, leading the offense by appearing in 789 plays. A right knee sprain in the 2007 season opener vs. Texas Christian put Smith on the shelf for the next three contests. He returned, but re-injured the same knee vs. Colorado and missed two more games.

Played 436 of the team's 859 offensive snaps, but managed to pace the Bears with 47

knockdowns and six touchdown-resulting blocks. In four of the seven games he appeared in, he did not allow his main coverage assignment to record a tackle. Based on that impressive showing, he was named All-Big Twelve Conference honorable mention by the Associated Press.

Nicknamed "Smooth," for his ability to easily slide out and lead on the sweep, Smith was an All-American and unanimous All-Big Twelve Conference

first-team choice. The Bears' co-MVP delivered 96 knockdowns and led conference down linemen with 17 touchdown-resulting blocks. The team's 29 scoring runs rank third on the school's single-season list and were the most by a Bears' squad since 1994.

Compares To: ERIC STEINBACH, Cleveland -- Steinbach is an offensive guard, but both have the initial quickness and outstanding athleticism to excel in a zone-blocking scheme as an

interior lineman. Smith needs to add at least another 20 pounds of bulk to handle the rigors of playing left tackle at the next level. His lack of great footwork and need to improve his stance could be covered up better playing inside for a year or two because he's still a neophyte at the left tackle position (19 starts). Once his body matures, his athletic skills will make him a quality left tackle in the mold of another former college tight end, Jason Peters (Buffalo).

OVERALL GRADE: 6.69

My Take: You can sort of paste what I wrote about Eugene Monroe right into this spot, pausing just to delete the part about the gimpy knee. And the part about the 16 kids.

B.J. Raji

Raji made a successful return to the field in 2008 after sitting out the previous season due to academic issues. He re-joined teammate Ron Brace in the middle of the front wall, as they proved to be one of the most feared defensive tackle tandems in college football.

With those two anchored in the middle of the line, they combined for 11 of the team's 35 sacks (31.43 percent) and 27 of the Eagles' 108 tackles behind the line of scrimmage (25.0 percent). Raji led a unit that led the Atlantic Coast Conference in rush defense (91.21 ypg, seventh in the NCAA) and total defense (268.14 ypg, ranked fifth nationally).

At Westwood Regional High School, Raji earned All-State, All-North Jersey and All-County

honors as a senior. The three-time starter was a two-time All-Bergen County Scholastic League choice, as he played on both the offensive and defensive lines.

As a senior, Raji recorded 75 tackles, 7.5 sacks and four forced fumbles in 2003. He was selected to play in the 2004 Governor's Bowl, which pits the top high-school seniors in New Jersey vs. their New York counterparts. He also played on Westwood's basketball team as a freshman and sophomore.

Raji enrolled at Boston College in 2004, seeing action in 11 games behind Tim Bulman at right defensive tackle. He collected 13 tackles (6 solos) with 1.5 stops behind the line of scrimmage. Having bulked up to 320 pounds in a rigorous offseason program, he captured the right tackle starting position in 2005, posting 27 tackles (15 solos) with 6.5 stops behind the line of scrimmage, including 1.5 sacks his sophomore campaign.

Raji saw constant double-team

blocking in 2006, as he started 12 games at right tackle. He garnered All-Atlantic Coast Conference second-team honors, as he delivered 23 tackles (16 solos) with three sacks and 8.5 stops for losses. Two of his three pass breakups came on third-down plays.

Primed for a banner senior season, Raji had to wait another year for that to occur, as he was ruled academically ineligible to play in 2007. He came back with renewed

hunger, going on to register a career-high 42 tackles (22 solos), including a team-high eight sacks and 16.0 stops behind the line of scrimmage. He also became the first Eagle defensive tackle since Mike Ruth in 1985 to lead the team in sacks. He added three pressures and deflected five passes at the line of scrimmage.

Compares To: SHAUN ROGERS, Cleveland -- Rogers is about three inches bigger than Raji, but both have the awesome ability to change

the tide of a game on the field and frustrate coaches by their lack of work ethic away from it. Raji had a good senior campaign, but it was not earth-shattering. You have to look at the whole picture here. Is your team going to get a player motivated and hungry to prove his doubters wrong, or a player his former coaching staff had to constantly monitor. That's a lot of money to gamble on someone that can either dominate for you or get a general manager fired.

OVERALL GRADE: 6.50:

My Take: If he compares to Shaun Rogers, then why not pair him with Shaun Rogers? You can call them the Wonder Bread Twins, or Fatman and Goblin'.

The arguments against taking Raji this high are the facts that the Browns already have a lot of dough invested in the Defensive Line, and that they already have a Nose Tackle.

In my opinion, either/both Raji or Rogers would be effective in a rotation between Nose Tackle and 3-4 Defensive End. Imagine both of those guys in there at the same time, clogging up the middle like you just tried to flush a cat.

Plus, Raji offers protection should Rogers go into full Pout Mode

TM

because someone didn't send him flowers on his birthday.

Games are won in the trenches,

ladies and gentlemen. You can't have too many good Defensive Linemen.

Tyson Jackson

Jackson's decision to return to school for his senior season in 2008 seems to have paid off.

With more NFL teams expected to convert to a 3-4 defensive alignment in 2009, Jackson has the frame, strength and run-stuffing ability to fit the mold of the type of defensive end used in that system. In a classic 4-3 setup, most scouts felt he would be better suited playing inside at defensive tackle.

A three-year starter at left defensive end, Jackson proved to be a capable, yet unspectacular pass rusher, managing just eight quarterback sacks over his last two seasons -- compared to 8.5 as a sophomore. His forte was flushing the quarterback out of the pocket, as he boasts 30 pressures for his career, along with his run-containment skills, ranking 11th in school history with 27 tackles behind the line of scrimmage.

Jackson was regarded as the best defensive end in the state of Louisiana during his senior season at West St. John High School. The two-way lineman was named Class 2A Defensive Player of the Year after capping off a torrid senior season with 84 tackles, 16 sacks and 17 pressures, leading his team to the state championship.

Jackson was a member of the Baton Rouge Advocate Super

Dozen and the New Orleans Times-Picayune's Top 20 Blue-Chip list in 2003. He was named All-District and All-Parish on the gridiron and also lettered in basketball.

After spending the 2004 season on Louisiana State's scout team, Jackson earned Freshman All-Southeastern Conference honors in 2005. He alternated between defensive end positions as the team's top reserve, posting

13 tackles (eight solo) with a pair of sacks and five quarterback pressures.

Jackson was named All-Southeastern Conference second-team as a sophomore, after he wrested away the starting left defensive end position. He collected 8.5 sacks with 10 stops behind the line of scrimmage and 37 tackles (13 solo). He also picked off a pass and deflected four others.

As a junior, he continued to excel as a disruptor for the opposing aerial attack, as his 10 pass deflections ranked second in the nation among down linemen. He again lined up at left end, posting 36 tackles (15 solo) to go with 3.5 sacks and ranked second on the squad with 12 pressures.

Jackson was selected to the All-SEC second-team in 2008. He started all season at left end, coming up with 36 tackles (17

solo) for the second straight year. He had 4.5 sacks, 10.5 stops for losses and seven pressures. He rumbled 18 yards with a fumble recovery and blocked four pass attempts at the line of scrimmage.

Compares To: MARCUS SPEARS, Dallas -- Jackson shows flashes of brilliance but you can see an overall lack of consistency in his game. He is probably a better fit as a

defensive tackle, where his adequate burst and change-of-direction agility will not be exposed as they would on the edge. That versatility will likely make him more inviting to a team that will utilize a 3-4 alignment.

OVERALL GRADE: 6.14

My Take: I'm suspicious of this guy. Yes, I think he's

a decent player, but the rise of his stock makes me think the following:

1. He's the prototypical size for a 3-4 Defensive End.

2. Most college Defensive Ends are too small to play DE in an NFL 3-4.

3. Lots of NFL teams run a 3-4 these days.

So, basically, he's overvalued because he happens to fit the criteria for a position that's in demand. That's not to say he'll excel in that position, but at least he'll look appropriately sized in his uniform. I mean, the guy wasn't even First Team All-SEC, for cripes sakes.

The Mysterious Rise of Tyson Jackson has led me to believe that a major college program could get a lot of Blue Chip recruits if they switched to a 3-4 and advertised themselves as such. *Hey, come to Oklahoma, we're on TV a lot, and we run a 3-4, so all y'all are guaranteed to go in the 1st Round since the NFL people will actually have tape of you playing the position they're projecting you to play* !

I guess that theory all depends on if the 3-4 can stop that stupid Spread.

Anyhoo, I guess what I'm saying is that I wouldn't be excited if we picked Jackson (a longshot at # 5 anyway), but, like I mentioned before, you can't have too many good Defensive Linemen.

That's all, folks. Enjoy the Draft.