

What About Wimbley?

Written by {ga=davekolonich}
Wednesday, June 10 2009 7:00 PM -

Dave Kolonich checks in with a little Thursday morning Browns update, and today, he's talking Kamerion Wimbley. After a successful rookie year, we thought we had a potential star on our hands. But after disappointing sophomore and junior years with the Browns, the draft day deal that allowed Pro Bowl nose tackle Haloti Ngata to slip to the Ravens now looks like a disaster. Dave talks about Kam, talks about how he may fit into the Mangini defense in his latest piece for us.



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Wimbley's Value

Solid stuff from the always great Steve Doerschuk of the Canton Rep, as he analyzes the 2006 draft day trade that allowed Haloti Ngata to fall to the Ravens, while the Browns grabbed Kamerion Wimbley. On the surface, it's obvious that the Ravens got the better end of the deal, as Ngata is one of the best interior linemen in the league, while Kamerion Wimbley has struggled to become even marginally consistent. However, if you dig a little deeper and truly inspect the inner workings of this deal, you will find that...the Ravens still got the better end of the deal.

Baltimore wound up with Haloti Ngata at No. 12. The Browns jumped on Kamerion Wimbley at No. 13.

'Time flies. It seems like yesterday,' Wimbley says three-plus years later.

What has time revealed? Not enough. Amid the myriad subplots of 4-12, 10-6 and 4-12 finishes, it remains a mystery whether Phil Savage was wise to make the trade that left Ngata there for the Ravens and put Wimbley in an orange helmet.

So what else has time revealed? How about the Browns are heading into 2009 with two athletic, yet undersized defensive ends in C.J. Mosely and Kenyon Coleman as starters instead of the rugged Ngata. Also, time has shown us that Kamerion Wimbley has not developed into an NFL caliber pass rusher, which has been a crushing blow for one the Browns, who have forever struggled to get to opposing quarterbacks. Also, time has dealt a cruel hand to those fans who thought that Babatunde Oshinowo, you know, the other player picked up in the Ngata trade, would be a 6th round steal. By the way, he never saw any regular season action with the Browns.

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Yet, there seems to be only one explanation for new Head Coach Eric Mangini

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choosing Wimbley and Joshua Cribbs to speak to rookies during a post-draft minicamp.

The new regime sees these guys as leaders - and players.

"It means a lot for the staff to think that much of me," Wimbley said as he cooled off after a spring practice.

See, Mangini's not such a bad guy after all. It's obvious he has a heart and probably feels for Wimbley, who after all, had no experience as a linebacker prior to coming to Berea. Even after three years in the NFL, it appears he still doesn't have any real experience playing the role of outside linebacker in a 3-4 defense. Perhaps Mangini is just trying to build up Wimbley's confidence...before eventually replacing him in the lineup with the likes of a 47-year old David Bowens.

The new defensive staff is experimenting with Wimbley, thinking of ways his athleticism can be spotted into alignments opponents can't plan for.

Also, Mangini said a "huge focal point" will be brushing up Wimbley's technique with leverage and hand placement.

Here's an experiment that I would advocate trying with Wimbley: teaching him a second and possibly third pass rush move. Although it is fun to see how quickly Wimbley can be blocked out of the television screen, it does get frustrating when opposing quarterbacks have time to read through their options twice. Granted, Wimbley is still learning a foreign role, based on his college playing experience, but his stalled evolution the past two years is frightening.

It's not as if Wimbley's role in the Romeo Crennel regime will be scrapped. After all, Mangini was Crennel's defensive secondary coach on New England's Super Bowl championship team in 2004, when Crennel was coordinator.

"We've got some really good coaches," Wimbley said. "We're just running what they give us.

"We're watching film. Things that didn't work, we're taking out ... if it works, we'll keep it."

Despite all the negative talk regarding Mangini, which lately has surrounded his

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bus trips and wall paintings, the progress of players such as Wimbley will be a true test of his actual coaching abilities. If Mangini can get Wimbley playing at a higher level, the pass rush should improve, which will help out the secondary, meaning the entire defensive unit should be better than 2008's version. Of course, Wimbley's improvement could vindicate Mangini's actions....which may result in the 2010 rookies having to plant gardens for blind orphans.