

The Worst Story Ever Told: Bradford and Clausen Edition

Written by {ga=davekolonich}

Monday, March 29 2010 2:54 PM - Last Updated Monday, March 29 2010 7:49 PM



I'm torn as to which news division this next NFL Draft story comes from. On one hand, the news that the Browns are going to further evaluate both Sam Bradford and Jimmy Clausen, allegedly the top two QB's in the coming draft, along with potentially being Top Ten picks, could arrive via the traditional late March narrative writing housed under the Department of Misinformation.

However, considering the extensive background new team President Mike Holmgren has enjoyed during his previous NFL coaching tenure – which is another narrative all it's own – it may be possible that this story has more substance to it, compared to the usual pre-draft posturing that permeates the run-up to April's big day.

If so, let's call this a story from the Scaring the Living Hell Out of Me Department.

[Browns Will Spend Extra Time with Bradford and Clausen](#)

The Browns will spend some individual pre-draft time with the top two quarterbacks in the NFL Draft — Sam Bradford of Oklahoma and Jimmy Clausen of Notre Dame, a league source told The Plain Dealer.

The two are among a handful of big-name quarterback prospects the Browns will spend extra time with before the draft — either by bringing them to Cleveland or going to them. The others are Texas' Colt McCoy, Florida's Tim Tebow and Cincinnati's Tony Pike.

The Worst Story Ever Told: Bradford and Clausen Edition

Written by {ga=davekolonich}

Monday, March 29 2010 2:54 PM - Last Updated Monday, March 29 2010 7:49 PM

The Browns have the No. 7 overall pick in the draft, and Browns President Mike Holmgren has said he will consider taking a quarterback with that pick — or trading up for one.

First of all, which is scarier? The thought of the Browns meeting with these two incredibly flawed QB candidates, or the idea of spending “extra” time with them?

Just what are Holmgren and company looking for?

Or, how about this instead? Has it really gotten this bad?

Considering that the 2010 draft is being regarded as one of the deepest collections of talent in a long time – at least in terms of projections – it’s become almost bizarre how these two players have been elevated into the upper realms of the league.

After all, we’re still discussing an oft-injured QB in Bradford, one who played in an ultra-successful college spread attack against some of the nation’s worst defenses. This is the same player whose skinny frame was nearly broken in two – who is also still recovering from some serious shoulder surgery – on his throwing arm, of course.

As for Clausen, he is nearly a Brady Quinn double in terms of his size and collegiate experience, playing in Charlie Weis’ incredibly QB-friendly Notre Dame offense. Much like Quinn, Clausen looks the part of a future NFL QB, but “plays small” behind the line, relying on a future rotator-cuff shredding delivery that should sound alarms everywhere in Berea and beyond.

It all sounds so simple when put into perspective. However, the NFL draft being what it is, it was only a matter of time before a QB-starved league and insatiable media blitz developed these two second to third round picks into something that they clearly are not....

...or into something much more sinister – the next soul-crushing selection made by the Browns.

The Worst Story Ever Told: Bradford and Clausen Edition

Written by {ga=davekolonich}

Monday, March 29 2010 2:54 PM - Last Updated Monday, March 29 2010 7:49 PM

Still need convincing? From “those in the know.” You know what I mean?

Bradford, who could go No. 1 overall to the St. Louis Rams, will have his pro day Monday at Oklahoma, the first time he will throw in front of scouts and coaches — including some from the Browns — since undergoing shoulder surgery in October. If his arm looks good, Bradford could be the first player off the board. If he's not No. 1, he probably won't get past the Redskins at No. 4. The Redskins could take Clausen if Bradford is gone.

So, let me get this straight.

If Bradford's arm checks out okay, then the Rams will take him first? Okay. If they do, then my Browns fandom, much like my blood pressure should return to healthy levels. However, if Bradford's arm is not what it should be, he would only fall a few more spots to the Redskins at Number four?

Does this make sense to anybody?

That's not to say that the fallacy is found in such an event occurring. Obviously, because of the prestige associated with taking a QB so high, Bradford could literally be missing his left shoulder and would still draw some serious attention. However, considering all of his other flaws, minus his health, and the inherent risk of both losing some 30 million dollars along with 3-4 years of positive franchise momentum, is this really something a team wants to do?

Let alone the Browns?

Tell me it's not so....

Holmgren has admitted he likes Bradford “a lot” but acknowledged it would be tough for the

The Worst Story Ever Told: Bradford and Clausen Edition

Written by {ga=davekolonich}

Monday, March 29 2010 2:54 PM - Last Updated Monday, March 29 2010 7:49 PM

Browns to get him — despite having 12 draft picks, including five in the first three rounds. Bradford's accuracy — a 67.6 percent career completion rate — is one of his best attributes.

You know what would be really “tough?” Trying to justify taking an overrated college QB with the seventh pick in the draft, especially when he is surrounded by a huge number of defensive playmaker prospects.

Or even “tougher” – how about if the Browns actually gave something up to get him?

Heading into the draft with a dozen picks just seemed to good to be true. After all, the Browns have at least a dozen or more immediate needs to fill around the roster, and truly can't afford to lose picks in the process. Obviously, I'm not suggesting that the Browns are going to find a dozen new starters in next month's draft - but I am saying that quantity can lead to quality....and I'm certainly not referring to Bradford.

Or this guy....

News of Clausen's visit comes during the same week Holmgren said at the NFL owners' meetings that Clausen wasn't really his type of QB.

“I wish I liked him more,” Holmgren told The Plain Dealer. “People like him a lot. He'll go high. But it would be hard for me [to take him].”

Taken at face value, no sweeter words have been uttered in Berea for a long time. However, if you consider the sinister notion that Holmgren is basically engaging in pre-draft President-speak, then some rather ugly writing is on the wall.

For now, all I can do is what the rest of Browns Nation can do - which is take Holmgren at his word. Let's hope that his phrase “it would be hard for me to take him” remains on the level and does not become some cryptic form of clandestine misinformation, which ends with yet another

The Worst Story Ever Told: Bradford and Clausen Edition

Written by {ga=davekolonich}

Monday, March 29 2010 2:54 PM - Last Updated Monday, March 29 2010 7:49 PM

overvalued QB arriving on the lakefront ready to be annoited.

After all, if we're dealing in narratives, we should all agree that the 2010 draft needs to serve as just one part of the blueprint for the future. Under no circumstances should the Browns feel compelled to do what several other teams will do – which is stake their future in a player who is most undeserving of a top pick.

After all, there's always next year for such a move.