2011 S'FELD SCOUTING SERVICES NFL DRAFT PREVIEW

1. Carolina — Cam Newton — QB — Auburn

When you have as many holes to fill as Carolina does, you wonder how the pick could really be Cam Newton as most suspect. The Panthers are operating with the same GM in Marty Hurney that selected Jimmy Clausen last season in the second round. If his belief in Clausen as the potential QB of the future were that high, is he willing to admit he was wrong by selecting Newton? Sources tell me that Carolina is hoping being hope they can get an offer to move down and pick up multiple selections to fill their needs as opposed to selecting a QB in Newton who may have the highest of ceilings among QBs in this draft, but also has the biggest chance of being a complete letdown and setting Carolina back for several years. Again, look for the trade, but expect Carolina to go hard or go home and select Newton.

THE EXTRA POINT *– One thing you always can count on with the S'feld Scouting Services is that we won't pull any punches and will shoot you straight. Folks – if Newton is indeed the player Carolina selects, than this is an awful selection. Newton is custom made for college football and his ability to make the transition to the NFL will be painful. Newton hasn't attempted more than 300 career passes at the Division I level yet he is good enough to be considered #1 overall? He won't be running over linebackers from Vandy and Kentucky anymore. Carolina needs to realize they could go any of a number of different ways with this pick and come out smelling like a rose but if they select Newton, they will only need the smelling salt.*

2. Denver — Marcell Dareus — DT — Alabama

The Broncos are spreading information that the man they want is OLB Von Miller of Texas A&M, but don't be fooled folks – Dareus is the exact prescription necessary for an atrocious Denver defense. Head coach John Fox knows that you build championship defenses from the inside out, and who better to fit the new Bronco 4-3 than Dareus? Denver was 31st in the NFL against the run last year and Dareus can help change that and change that immediately. Not only was he dominant on game film at Alabama, he backed it up with a dominant performance at the combine. After Josh McDaniels helped to single-handedly destroy this proud franchise in two short seasons with miserable trades and draft picks, John Fox gets off on the right foot in Denver by selecting the physical specimen that is Marcell Dareus.

THE EXTRA POINT *– I know many outside of the Broncos organization aren't high on John Elway running the show in Denver, but with John Fox coaching this team, it won't be long before Denver is competing for the AFC West crown soon. Fox is a football man to the core and knows what it takes to right the ship. I am confident this will be the first of several strong picks for the Broncos in the 2011 draft.*

3. Buffalo Von Miller OLB Texas A&M

The Bills are really sitting in a good situation here because it is almost impossible for them to screw this up. One of either Dareus, Miller and Gabbert will be available and any of these three would be a fantastic pick up for the Bills. Gabbert's style actually could play very well in Buffalo, but Miller is a very good pick here too. The Bills are hoping that Miller is everything that 2009 1st round bust Aaron Maybin wasn't. Unfortunately, they have to right a wrong by taking Miller, but chances are very slim that he will go bust like Maybin did. Much like Denver, Buffalo was dreadful against the run, finishing dead last in the NFL and Miller will fit in nicely on the outside of Buffalo's 3-4 defense.

THE EXTRA POINT *– Miller is heads and tails above the rest of the OLBs in this draft so Buffalo is wise to grab him here as conversely, there are several defensive linemen at both DT and DE that rank very close to one another. Buffalo gets the elite OLB with a chance to still grab a very good tackle or end in the next round.*

4. Cincinnati A.J. Green WR Georgia

I know that Carson Palmer has said he is done with Cincy and will never play there again and I know that it is very likely either Gabbert or Newton will be available here. However, without free agency leading into a draft because of the lockout, teams have way more needs this year than in any other season. And because of that you will see more teams draft the best overall player as opposed to biggest need. That is the case here as Cincy will take the best wideout in the draft and will more than likely try to address QB later on with someone along the lines of a Ryan Mallet, Christian Ponder or Ricky Stanzi. It really won't matter who lines up at QB for CIncy if there isn't a big-time playmaker to get the ball to and the Bengals are more than happy to go Green here, especially with the tenuous situation surrounding headcases T.O. and Ocho Cinco.

THE EXTRA POINT *– Another reason to like this pick is Cincy could be honing in on obtaining a veteran QB as well and it will help to have someone on the outside to stretch the field. While Green isn't the caliber of a Calvin Johnson, he will be a very good pro prospect and should be celebrated by Bengals fans.*

5. Arizona Blaine Gabbert QB Missouri

We are hearing that Arizona would like to trade out of this pick and that the Cardinals aren't wild about any of the QBs available, but my hunch tells me that Arizona is playing the misinformation game to steer others off the fact that they want Gabbert. Arizona may have rivaled only Carolina as the most inept QB situation last year and pictures of Larry Fitzgerald running wide open down the field without a QB who could get him the ball lead me to believe there is only one way the Cards can go here and that is Gabbert. While I have mentioned that overall value over need is the storyline of this draft, the need for Arizona is too great at QB to do anything else.

THE EXTRA POINT *– Gabbert threw for over 400 yards in the last game of his collegiate career which was played ironically in Arizona against Iowa in the Insight Bowl. With a decent receiving*

corps already in place in Arizona, it isn't unreasonable to think Gabbert could be carving up defenses in the desert again.

6. Cleveland Julio Jones WR Alabama

Mike Holmgren won't need a lot of time to get his card up to the podium on draft night. Jones is just the playmaker that the Browns need and while he isn't as fast as A.J. Green, he is probably a more complete player and the best blocking wideout in the draft. Jones was willing to fight through several injuries last year at Alabama for the good of the team and don't think that went unnoticed by the Browns. Colt McCoy and Madden cover boy Peyton Hillis will be all smiles when Jones is added to the fold.

***THE EXTRA POINT* –** *This pick is just as much an investment in Colt McCoy as it is in Julio Jones. Head coach Pat Shurmur understands that you can't draft a rookie QB without giving him some tools to build his confidence and aid in his development. The Browns are wise here to let their first pick in 2011 (Jones) be an asset for their first pick from 2010 (McCoy).*

7. San Francisco Patrick Peterson CB LSU

I get the impression that Jim Harbaugh may believe he can work his magic with whatever quarterback he is given and that his ego may allow him to believe he could potentially still salvage something with Alex Smith. Therefore, the 49ers address their pass defense and take a slam dunk in corner Patrick Peterson. Peterson should complement Nate Clements and be an immediate impact player in San Francisco.

***THE EXTRA POINT* –** *San Francisco, like several others, would love to trade out of this pick as well but if they end up with Petersen that will make for a nice consolation prize as they target a QB in Round 2 or 3.*

8. Tennessee Nick Fairley DT Auburn

Several media outlets are reporting that Fairley could slip into the teens but his ceiling is way too high for the Titans to pass up here. QB could be in play for the Titans but with Newton and Gabbert already off the board, the #8 pick is way too high to invest in the third-best QB. The Titans have been missing that defensive swagger since losing Albert Haynesworth to free agency. They can help to get it back with Fairley.

***THE EXTRA POINT* –** *Another reason to like Fairley here is that former Auburn defensive line coach Tracy Rocker now holds the same position with the Titans and will be a big influence on selecting and getting the most out of Fairley day in and day out.*

9. Dallas **Tyron Smith** **OT** **USC**

Questions linger about taking an offensive tackle this high when he has only played right tackle, but for the Cowboys that is the perfect fit as that is exactly where they would play him. Without being able to address offensive line needs through free agency, Dallas is a bit hamstrung here and needs to take line help to address replacing tackle Marc Colombo.

THE EXTRA POINT *– The Cowboys war room will have a hard time looking anywhere other than offensive tackle here as along with trying to find a replacement for Colombo, left tackle Doug Free is also a free agent.*

10. Washington **Robert Quinn** **LB** **North Carolina**

This is potentially the hardest team to project in the entire first round. We know that Mike Shanahan wants to find his next QB through this draft but does he reach to make that selection at #10? The word is that QB could be Jake Locker, but that would be a Raider-like move and I don't want to lump Shanahan into that category. Quinn is very versatile and can wreak havoc whether he is in the 4-3 or the 3-4 and while he hasn't been talked about as much as some of the other players in the top 10, he will be no less effective and could ultimately prove to be a tremendous value pick here.

THE EXTRA POINT *– As much as the Redskins would like to find a franchise QB in this draft, they can't try to force something that isn't there.*

11. Houston **Prince Amukamara** **CB** **Nebraska**

The Texans have two young corners in Glover Quin and Kareem Jackson but in judging by their horrific pass defense last year, they are going to have to address this issue as both of those corners gave up too many big plays last year. With this being a two-corner top-tier draft in Patrick Peterson and Prince Amukamara, the Texans are desperate to get one or the other as the falloff after these two come off the board is steep. Amukamara is the next step in Houston trying to finally overtake Indianapolis for division supremacy.

THE EXTRA POINT *– In all reality, Houston could use safety help even more than they could use corner help, but in picking up Amukamara, they could easily move Glover Quin to safety where he would be better suited.*

12. Minnesota **Cam Jordan** **DE** **California**

I am not sure that there is another player whose stock has risen more in the past month than Cam Jordan. He has definitely made himself more valuable in workouts and pre-draft interviews and scouting and he is an ideal fit for the Vikings 4-3 defense. While the Vikings are yet another team that would love to add a QB, they fall into the same category as Washington and Tennessee as teams that will roll the dice on adding a QB later to get some value at another position now.

THE EXTRA POINT *– It will be interesting to see if Julio Jones would happen to fall to the Vikings at #12 as wide receiver is also a major need and Sidney Rice could potentially be a free agency casualty.*

13. Detroit Anthony Castonzo OT Boston College

It will be very tempting for head coach Jim Schwartz to bypass a defensive line option such as Da'Quan Bowers to team with Ndamukong Suh, but Detroit knows they can't take the next step forward in the NFC North with Matthew Stafford on his back. Castonzo is also the safest of the top 5 offensive tackle options and should have the best chance to pay early dividends.

THE EXTRA POINT *– Detroit started to show signs of being a factor last year and with a pick like this, you can definitely see that the days of ineptitude on draft day in Detroit are officially over.*

14. St. Louis Corey Liuget DT Illinois

The Rams have been targeting Liuget for quite awhile and this is actually a selection where I don't believe the team has been putting up a smoke screen. Liuget is an absolute workhorse with as good of a motor as any of the defensive line prospects. The Rams benefited from a great selection on offense last year with Sam Bradford and they will find a serviceable interior lineman who should be able to contribute for years to come with Liuget.

THE EXTRA POINT *– Steve Spagnuolo built the Giants defense that beat the Patriots in the Super Bowl a few years ago by stockpiling defense line talent. He will apply those same principles in St. Louis.*

15. Miami Mike Pouncey OG/C Florida

Many of the self-proclaimed experts are projecting RB Mark Ingram to the Dolphins at this spot and while running back is a concern for the Dolphins, Pouncey would be a tremendous addition to the Dolphins here. Ingram is a good running back, but Pouncey is a premier player on the inside and would move the Dolphins from a position of weakness to a position of strength immediately while also allowing guard Richie Incognito to move positions if necessary.

THE EXTRA POINT *– What should seal the deal for Pouncey to the Dolphins is that he has tremendous lateral movement and can pull with the best of them. While the RB position is a concern with free agents Ricky Williams and Ronnie Brown, I don't think we can assume that they are both going to be gone from the team and an O-line combination of Jake Long, Vernon Carey and Pouncey would be quite a coup.*

16. Jacksonville Da'Quan Bowers DE Clemson

It is hard to project what effect the knee injury to Da'Quan Bowers will have on his draft day selection and everybody in the world is projecting that GM Gene Smith will take the safe pick here in Ryan Kerrigan, but if you are Jacksonville, what do you really have to lose here in picking Bowers, who at the top of his game is a top-5 pick? Bowers is definitely worth the gamble and while Kerrigan is a nice player, he certainly isn't worth the 16th overall selection.

THE EXTRA POINT *– The Jags wouldn't have needed to draft a DE in this position if their two busts from the 2008 draft (Derrick Harvey, 8th & Quentin Groves, 52nd) would have panned out.*

17. New England (from OAK) J.J. Watt DE Wisconsin

You never quite know if the Patriots are going to keep a pick or trade a pick as they are the kings of stockpiling, but I think they will make their selection at #17 and grab J.J. Watt. Watt will be a good fit in the Patriots 3-4 and he could easily be taken prior to this pick. New England has some concern with their front seven getting pass pressure and Watt can provide relief in that area.

THE EXTRA POINT *– He won't be the next Richard Seymour, but Watt should be able to help this defense over time with his tenaciousness. He plays with the sort of fire that the Patriots covet.*

18. San Diego Aldon Smith DE-LB Missouri

The Chargers are in dire need of a playmaker at DE as starters Luis Castillo and Jacques Cesaire don't exactly strike fear in the hearts of their opponents. At #18 and with several other defensive ends off the board, the Chargers would do well to plug Smith into their scheme and with his versatility, he should help provide the flexibility that the Chargers need.

THE EXTRA POINT *– With DE and LB being the top two needs for the Chargers, they can kill two birds with one stone with Smith and figure out where he can be most effective out of those two positions.*

19. New York Giants Gabe Carimi OT Wisconsin

The Giants will be more than happy to select Carimi and move current LT Dave Diehl inside to guard. Diehl has a clause in his contract that pays him more at tackle than at guard and the Giants need to rectify that situation. Carimi is also built for a team like New York as he is the toughest tackle of this year's crop and without a doubt can be plugged in as the starter seconds after being selected.

THE EXTRA POINT *– The Giants offense revolves around a tough-nosed, hard-hitting power game. To be able to get the OT that best fits your scheme and identity at #19 like the Giants would here is a steal.*

20. Tampa Bay **Ryan Kerrigan** **DE** **Purdue**

While I believe Tampa Bay is hoping that Bowers falls to this spot, they most definitely have to take a DE at this pick and Kerrigan is not a bad fallback. He is solid and steady and won't be an "issue guy" in the least. The Bucs, who can't run the "Tampa 2" the way they want with the abysmal defensive front they currently employ, can start generating some pressure with the addition of Kerrigan.

THE EXTRA POINT *– The secondary in Tampa needs almost as much help as the line, but this year's draft crop for defensive backs isn't strong enough to warrant a pick of that nature here.*

21. Kansas City **Phil Taylor** **NT** **Baylor**

While Taylor does bring some baggage and a foot injury concern, GM Scott Pioli is willing to take on the risk associated with Taylor as prior to his injury he would never have had a chance of slipping to 21st. Taylor also fits the Chiefs scheme and should help complement Tamba Hali.

THE EXTRA POINT *– With current starter at NT Ron Edwards finally starting to break down, the Chiefs youth infusion at this position will help them avoid suffering a drop off at a key position.*

22. Indianapolis **Nate Solder** **OT** **Colorado**

The Colts won't make the same mistake this year that they did last year. GM Bill Polian admitted himself that if he could re-do the 2010 draft, he would have selected OT Rodger Saffold with his first pick instead of actual pick DE Jerry Hughes. It is obvious that the Colts need to solidify the OT spot especially when you have one of the game's all-time best QBs in Peyton Manning.

THE EXTRA POINT *– The Colts are one of the worst run defenses in the league without a quality player at DT, but a player like Solder won't be around when they pick again.*

23. Philadelphia **Jimmy Smith** **CB** **Colorado**

On a team like Philly which relies on blitzes, cornerback has more value than most other teams. Smith is being compared by some to Amukamara, which is quite a compliment, and the Eagles will place him opposite of Asante Samuel to reenergize their defense.

THE EXTRA POINT *– If there is one team that I typically have little faith I will nail their pick on it is Andy Reid. Reid thinks outside the box so while I like this pick for the Eagles, it won't surprise me one bit if Philly ends up taking a player no one considered in this spot.*

24. New Orleans Mark Ingram RB Alabama

S'feld are you crazy?!? Mark Ingram to the Saints? They have major needs at DE, OLB and safety!!! What about Reggie Bush? What about Pierre Thomas? You're right. I hear you. The Saints have bigger needs. But I have a sneaking suspicion that Sean Payton will worry about those needs later and grab a guy who can solidify the running game and give the Saints not only an insurance policy but a workhorse if needed. The Saints are built on offense, not defense and they make sure they stay at the top of the league in terrorizing defenses with this pick.

THE EXTRA POINT *– I don't buy for a second that the Saints are happy with Reggie Bush or that they trust Pierre Thomas to stay healthy. And in this league, two quality backs is becoming the standard to win, not the exception.*

25. Seattle Jake Locker QB Washington

Matt Hasselbeck isn't the answer. Charlie Whitehurst? That's laughable. Pete Carroll needs a QB and he needs him now and I see Carroll wanting to develop a QB more than wanting a veteran. He is a college coach and the development process caters to what he knows best. While Andy Dalton of TCU could also be in play here, I think Seattle will take the guy that looks better coming off the bus (Locker) more than the guy who may be more NFL-ready right now (Dalton)

THE EXTRA POINT *– This is also where we get to the point in the draft where a high-risk, high-reward player like UNC DT Marvin Austin could come into play. Austin didn't play all of last year and has some off the field baggage, but had he played, he would have likely been a top-10 pick.*

26. Baltimore Adrian Clayborn DE Iowa

The Ravens are praying that Jimmy Smith will fall to them in this spot, but with the Eagles already snatching him up, they will address DE with Clayborn. Clayborn would be a terrific fit on a defense like Baltimore where there are so many other players to stop that he would be able to attack without a lot of pressure to perform immediately.

THE EXTRA POINT *– There aren't many teams that understand personnel as well as the Ravens and they know how to keep a strength a strength. This pick only confirms that point.*

27. Atlanta Cameron Heyward DE Ohio State

The Falcons would prefer either of the other two Big Ten defensive ends (Kerrigan, Clayborn), but they will settle for Heyward here. Heyward has better size and strength which will be needed on a Falcon team that relied on John Abraham to have a career year in 2010. I don't see Abraham being able to match his performance from last year at his age and Heyward gets the call at #27.

THE EXTRA POINT *– With OLB also being a concern, the Falcons could take a strong look at Akeem Ayers (UCLA) or Bruce Carter (UNC)*

28. New England **Akeem Ayers** **OLB** **UCLA**

I have a very hard time believing that the Patriots will actually make two 1st round picks and this is probably the one that gets traded out. The value won't be here for Belichick to actually make a selection and with a couple QBs still available and teams passing on them early to get them late, I see a trade at #28 being very likely. If New England does stand pat, they pick up Ayers right around the slot you would expect him.

THE EXTRA POINT *– You can almost bet that the wheeling and dealing will be fast and furious between four or five teams looking to add TCU QB Andy Dalton here.*

29. Chicago **Marvin Austin** **DT** **North Carolina**

This pick is essentially going to come down to two players for Chicago – Derek Sherrod, OT from Mississippi State, who is the safe and reasonable play, or Marvin Austin, the wild card who the Bears project a high ceiling for and who will be a Day 1 starter and replacement for the underachieving and recently released Tommie Harris. Always proceed from a defensive viewpoint when trying to project the Bears, which is what we will do here.

THE EXTRA POINT *– I am sure that Jay Cutler's new fiancé Kristin Cavallari will not be amused with the Bears bypassing a player like Sherrod who could protect her love interest.*

30. New York Jets **Muhammed Wilkerson** **DE** **Temple**

The Jets war room will look like a Charlie Sheen house party if Wilkerson falls this far. There have been some projections of Wilkerson as high as pick #13 but he needs to be the right fit for certain defenses which could lead some teams to pass on him as projected in this draft. The Jets will welcome this gift with open arms as Wilkerson will be all the more dangerous working under the tutelage of Rex Ryan.

THE EXTRA POINT *– With OT Derek Sherrod still on the board the Jets could be tempted to find their replacement for the released Damien Woody, but the Jets are identified first and foremost as a defensive juggernaut and Ryan, much like his father, is only concerned with keeping things that way.*

31. Pittsburgh **Derek Sherrod** **OT** **Mississippi State**

The Steelers will be feeling a lot like the Jets with Sherrod at #31. It isn't always you can get an impact OT this late in the first round and with the run-happy Steelers concerned with free agent OT Willie Colon and Max Starks both coming off injuries, this is just the remedy they need.

THE EXTRA POINT *– The Steelers can afford to bypass on their second-biggest need in cornerback as there are several around the same talent level they can choose from later on.*

32. Green Bay Danny Watkins OG Baylor

Another selection that falls along the lines of "Protect Your Investment" and that investment is QB Aaron Rodgers. The Packers get a pretty good player and safe bet with Watkins. They realize that he can step in right away and why not make a pick along these lines. Rodgers is a bona-fide superstar and doing all you can to keep him upright is proper thinking.

THE EXTRA POINT *– Defensive end has become a major concern with the Packers and with all the injuries they suffered on that side of the ball they may be thinking defense after they pick up Watkins.*