

49ers Clips – April 4, 2017

Local Media

49ers' best draft fits: three technique

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/sports/nfl/san-francisco-49ers/article142514124.html>

Trade down among many scenarios 49ers exploring with second pick

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/_id/24310/trade-down-among-many-scenarios-49ers-exploring-with-second-pick

National Media

Will Richard Sherman's uncertain Seahawks future make cornerback even more of a priority in the NFL Draft?

By Bob Condotta, The Seattle Times

<http://www.seattletimes.com/sports/seahawks/will-richard-shermans-uncertain-seahawks-future-make-cornerback-even-more-of-a-priority-in-the-nfl-draft/>

Sources: Tony Romo heading into broadcasting

By Todd Archer and Adam Schefter, ESPN.com

http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_/id/19073822/dallas-cowboys-qb-tony-romo-leaving-football-broadcast-career

Packers claim former second-rounder Ego Ferguson from Bears

By Patrick Finley, Chicago Sun-Times

<http://chicago.suntimes.com/sports/packers-claim-former-second-rounder-ego-ferguson-from-bears/>

Redskins agree to terms with inside linebacker Zach Brown

By Liz Clarke and Master Tesfatsion, Washington Post

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/football-insider/wp/2017/04/03/redskins-agree-to-terms-with-inside-linebacker-zach-brown/?utm_term=.292d91518405

Top tailbacks Fournette, Cook, Mixon to visit Jaguars this week

By Ryan O'Halloran, The Florida Times-Union

<http://jacksonville.com/sports/jaguars/2017-04-03/top-tailbacks-fournette-cook-mixon-visit-jaguars-week>

Local Clips – Full Version

49ers' best draft fits: three technique

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

This item is part of a series on the positions the 49ers will look to fill in the upcoming draft and the players that are the best fits at those spots. Today's position:

Defensive tackle or three technique

Description: This player lines up on the weak side of the formation and is responsible for the B gap (between the guard and tackle). Because of his alignment on the guard's outside shoulder, the three technique doesn't see very many double teams and therefore has an opportunity to make plays on the ball carrier or quarterback. In an increasingly pass-centric NFL, some teams have begun placing greater value on this position because, being essentially in the quarterback's face, he can be harder to avoid on a pass rush than a player coming off the edge. Quickness is a must for the position, perhaps more so than size. One of the best three technique players in the NFL is the Rams' Aaron Donald, who is listed as 6-1, 285 pounds.

Who's there now: The 49ers have penciled in last year's first-round pick DeForest Buckner at the spot. As a rookie, Buckner tied for the team lead (with Ahmad Brooks) with six sacks but was perhaps most impressive for his stamina: He played more snaps last year than any NFL interior defensive lineman. Chris Jones also could line up here. Arik Armstead also might end up being a good fit.

Need level: 5.0

Perfect fit: Jonathan Allen, Alabama. He was extremely productive and disruptive (16 tackles for loss, 10 1/2 sacks) on the Crimson Tide defense. If the league is moving toward Aaron-Donald-like defensive tackles, Allen is part of that mold. Stanford's Solomon Thomas lined up at this spot a lot with the Cardinal. At 272 pounds, he is lighter than even Donald and the concern is that he will not be able to get much bigger (which is why he might be a better fit at the five technique spot). Others: Caleb Brantley, Florida; Carlos Watkins, Clemson.

Trade down among many scenarios 49ers exploring with second pick

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- By this time last year, the Los Angeles Rams and Tennessee Titans were deep in talks for the Rams to move up from No. 15 to No. 1 in the 2016 NFL draft. That deal was consummated in mid-April and the Cleveland Browns and Philadelphia Eagles followed soon after with the Browns surrendering the No. 2 pick.

That draft featured two clear-cut top options at quarterback, and even though Jared Goff and Carson Wentz weren't seen as a sure thing, they were considered a notch above the other signal callers in the draft.

This year, it's the Browns and the San Francisco 49ers holding the draft's top two selections. To this point, there doesn't seem to be much of a market forming for teams to make bold moves like the Rams and Eagles.

The reason? A lack of certainty with this draft's top quarterback prospects. North Carolina's Mitchell Trubisky and Clemson's Deshaun Watson are generally regarded as the top two, but opinions vary on both, as well as the rest of the quarterback class. And if either were considered a sure thing, it's a safe bet the Browns and Niners wouldn't have much interest in trading away the chance to land them.

All of which makes attempting to peg what the Niners plan to do at No. 2 more difficult. Without a readily apparent franchise quarterback set to be there at No. 2, a trade down would certainly seem an ideal scenario for new coach Kyle Shanahan and general manager John Lynch. But without that quarterback there to draft themselves or dangle as trade bait, it figures to be difficult for the Niners to find a trade partner.

"Getting more draft picks is always more intriguing. the more players you can get, the better," Shanahan said. "The main thing is you've got to get good players, though. There's a fine line in how to balance that. Everybody wants more players but you also want the best players so you've got to do the best thing that's available."

From the Niners' perspective, this draft isn't just about landing quantity. Lynch noted the team's need for game-changing players at last week's owners meetings and star power will be a priority no matter who the Niners select in the first round.

While San Francisco has done its diligence on Trubisky, Watson and other top quarterbacks, it's far from a guarantee that the Niners will draft a quarterback second overall and then wish and hope Shanahan can work his magic to turn him into the franchise player the team needs.

"The quarterback position is always the most important, everybody knows that," Shanahan said. "But an OK quarterback usually doesn't make it in the league. Everyone's trying to find that guy so you always want to take a guy who has a chance to be that guy. You don't want to reach on that just because of the position, you've got to feel very good about it, and if you do, then you don't hesitate and it's an easy decision, go for the quarterback, but there's good players out there. Great quarterbacks aren't there just year in and year out. It's a tough process."

The consensus on this draft is that it's particularly strong in pass rushers, defensive backs, tight ends and running backs. The Niners aren't so loaded at any position that they would ignore players at any of those spots. That's why the mock draft community has connected them to players like Trubisky, Watson, Stanford defensive end Solomon Thomas, Alabama linebacker Reuben Foster, LSU safety Jamal Adams and running back Leonard Fournette, among others. Lynch said last week the Niners haven't yet zeroed in on a group of players, though he estimated there are about a half-dozen scenarios that have been up for discussion.

Since those are the players the Niners will likely have to sift through (Texas A&M pass rusher Myles Garrett is expected to go No. 1), those are also the prospects that teams considering a trade up will be evaluating. Rumors have already surfaced that the Carolina Panthers might be interested in moving up from No. 8 and the common expectation of Garrett going No. 1 at least gives potential trade partners some level of certainty they would have their pick of remaining players if they did strike a deal with the Niners.

Undoubtedly, Lynch and Shanahan have a lot of work to do to rebuild the roster. A trade down could help them speed things up by bolstering multiple positions. If other teams do come calling, the ultimate decision will come down to whether the Niners can still get the star power they seek while adding to their draft ammunition.

"Would we want to improve on (depth) at multiple positions? Yes," Lynch said. "I would also say that depth and competition brings out the best in everyone so you improve the depth and the back end of your roster for a lot of reasons, because you just want overall quality but also to bring out the best in everyone. We want to continue to push the envelope there and look at every avenue to improve as a team and that's how you do it."