



CINCINNATI BENGALS

APRIL 25, 2024

NFL DRAFT — ROUND 1

ZAC TAYLOR

Head coach

Initial comments ...

"I've got Amarius Mims here. I said a lot about him last night. We're really excited. We've had a lot of exposure to him. Not only do we scout Georgia extensively, obviously because of their history of success, the way they develop guys and the players they put in this league. But even in the postseason process as well, we talked to Amarius at the Combine, we brought him in here on one of our 30 visits. We feel like we know the player, we feel like now we know the person. He's a tremendous fit for the types of people and the types of players that we're looking for. He mentioned it last night — we like guys that have won and we like guys that know the expectation of what it takes to win, and the hard work and the discipline that goes into that, and what a team looks and feels like when you're playing for championships. Amarius has had the opportunity to experience that, and our expectation is that he can experience that here as well. We're excited to have him sitting here next to me today, and he's going to fit right in with our team and our locker room, and on the field. We have high expectations for Amarius and we're very fortunate that he was there with the 18th pick."

AMARIUS MIMS

Offensive tackle; Georgia

What's going through your mind right now?

"It's a lot. A lot to be thankful for. I'm blessed to be in the shoes I'm in. Especially like coach said, being the 18th pick to the Cincinnati Bengals — that's a dream come true, honestly. What more can I ask for? Great organization to come in and play, great team. Like I said, I'm just blessed."

What did you take away from your pre-draft meetings with the Bengals?

"I took away a lot. From the Combine to the 30 visits, like I said, just getting familiar with the coaches. Like I said, I have a great relationship with those guys. Me and coach (Frank) Pollack, we were in there talking about plays, talking about where I'm sitting in the room and all that stuff. Like I said, I just feel like it's a good vibe already, just a good fit. I'm ready to get around some of the guys in the O-line room, see how that is too. I'm just ready for the next chapter, honestly."

Who are your favorite offensive linemen to watch?

"I don't really have certain favorites, but I will say I do a lot of watching of Laremy Tunsil. Trent Brown was a guy I watched a lot. Me and him, I feel like, are very similar. We're big guys, we both can play left and right tackle. I watch a lot of Lane Johnson, Penei Sewell, guys like that too."

You had a 3.6 GPA at Georgia. How proud are you of that?

"I'm very proud of it. My mom and dad, they always told me grades are first. I was a three-time SEC academic honor roll student too. Since I was a kid, I always knew I couldn't go to college without the grades, so I always took pride in that."

Have any of your new Bengals teammates reached out to you?

"Yes. I'm not going to really say who, but I've heard from a good bit of them. I'm very thankful they reached out. I'm glad I got to talk to them last night and this morning."

Have you heard from Joe Burrow?

"Not yet. I hope to soon, honestly. That's one I'm waiting on."

How excited are you about being assigned with the job of protecting one of the elite quarterbacks in the NFL?

"Like I said, I feel like a kid. As an O-lineman, you've got guys who you want to protect, and he's one of those guys I said always wanted to protect, and now that's reality. I plan on doing just that."

What do you think is the biggest area of growth in your game?

"I feel like I can (block for) run and pass. Nobody plays a perfect game as an offensive lineman, but it's my job to come in and find

those weaknesses and turn them to strengths. Like I said, me and coach (Frank) Pollack will do a good job together, and whatever he needs me to do, I'll do."

How would you describe your game?

"Honestly, I feel like I play pretty physical and I play patient. In a game, you don't want to get too anxious and try to overdo anything. Especially as an O-lineman and as a tackle too, because I feel like you have pound-for-pound the best athlete on the field. So in my opinion, you've got to be aggressive, and then sometimes you've got to be patient just because you've got to know the guy you're playing against. I feel like those two things describe my game."

How would you describe your mentality on the field? What kind of football player are you?

"I feel like I'm a nasty football player. At O-line, you've got to do that. You've got to be like that, honestly, just because you're playing the hardest position on the field in my opinion. If you have that mentality, I feel like you'll be pretty good, especially when you've got five guys doing it at the same time."

Have you spoken with Trent Brown and Orlando Brown Jr. yet?

"I might as well and say yes I have."

You have a chance to learn a lot from both of those guys who are similar in size. How beneficial is that to kickstart your career here?

"It's great. Like I said, both of those guys are used to winning. Both of those guys have won Super Bowls. I'm looking forward to them taking me under their wing and learning as much from them as possible."

What was the biggest thing the Bengals wanted to find out about you during your pre-draft meetings?

"Honestly, it was a lot of ball talk, but they just wanted to talk about me (and) figure out me as a person. Like, how do I react to this stuff like this, how can I get on the board? Am I a visual person? Like I said, it was football, but (also) outside of football what kind of guy am I. It was like a half and half."

What type of learner are you?

"I feel it starts in the meeting room. Coach gives you a new play, first you see it on the board and then after walk-throughs I feel like I have a pretty good grasp of stuff like that."

What was your response when teams wanted to know about your sample size of playing in college?

"Honestly, last year, this past season, I had a freak accident which made me miss some games. But other than that, honestly just cut on the tape. I don't want to argue back and forth with people about starts and snaps, or how many I got, how many the other person got in front of me. I made the most out of my opportunities and now I'm here."

Do you feel ready to take the next step here with only eight starts in college?

"One hundred percent. I always tell myself I would never put myself in a situation where I was uncomfortable or wasn't ready. When I talked with my head coach, with my agent and my mom and dad, I made a decision and I'm very happy with it."

How comfortable are you in a pass-first offense like the Bengals?

"I feel like I'll definitely enjoy that. I like to pass pro. I like to run block too, but I take pride in one-on-one blocks especially."

What other sports did you play? How did you become such a good athlete?

"Originally, strictly football, but then my older brother got me into basketball. I did not want to do it, but I did to stay in shape. I'm very thankful I did because it kept me in shape, helped with my footwork and all that good stuff. Then, I picked up track. I started throwing shot put and doing disc. So, I picked up those other two sports."

How would you describe the similarities between what Georgia does and what the Bengals do?

"I feel they're two very diverse teams. They do a lot of both run and pass, and I feel like a good pro-style offense. I'm looking forward to being in the system, learning what I've got to learn, going out there and playing."

Coming from Georgia, what's the biggest thing you learned about what it takes to win at a high level?

"Honestly, just week by week, not getting complacent, always finding something in your game to get better at, because like I said, nobody plays a perfect game. As long as you keep that same hunger throughout the season, I feel like that's what we did pretty good at at Georgia, just not being complacent each week, trying to get better."

Which pass rushers impressed you in college?

"I would definitely say Tyler Baron from Tennessee, he was pretty good. I've known him since I was a high school recruit. He hosted me on my official visit to Tennessee. He's going to be a great guy, I feel like, coming out of this next year's draft."

How did you start playing football?

"My dad. Six years old — I didn't think I was going to be an O-lineman. But I was in the yard, I remember he would take a ball and throw it 30 yards and I would run under and catch it. Like I said, he got me started at six years old, an early age playing football. Ever since then, I've just loved the game of football."

What do you remember about your first collegiate start in the College Football Playoff against Ohio State?

"I just remember talking to my mom and dad. They asked me, am I nervous? It wasn't any nerves, it was just more of trying to show the world I'm ready. I feel like that was definitely one of my favorite games, just because it was my first start and I felt like I played pretty good. There were no nerves, just trying to show the world I can start at an SEC powerhouse."

Do you feel like you will carry that attitude to the NFL?

"One hundred percent. Like I said, really my goal now is just come in and learn from the guys ahead of me, and try to be the best teammate and pro I can be every day."

Did you know anything about Cincinnati before you were drafted?

"I knew a little bit. I'm not going to sit up here and say I know everything about it. But like I said, I know a lot about the current players here. In my time here, I plan on doing a lot of research, getting to know a lot of backstories and all that good stuff, and history of guys that came before me."

You could have been drafted by any organization. To be dropped here, where the team is a ready-made contender, what's that like as a young football player to walk into a room where you guys are expected to compete for championships?

"Like I said, honestly it was like that at Georgia. I came in and we were expected to win. I know that's college and this is the NFL, but I feel like going there prepared me, especially for an environment like Cincinnati. I look forward to winning."

What are the benefits of coming to a place where you don't have to come in and be a starter right away?

"I feel it will help me a lot. Like I said, I get to learn from two great guys like Trent Brown and Orlando Brown Jr. Those guys have it figured out. Those guys are veterans. So, I can come in every day and learn from those guys and try to replicate my game like them."

Were your mom and dad both athletes?

"My mom was a cheerleader back in high school. My dad, he was definitely, I'll say, the athlete. My dad played basketball and football."