



## CINCINNATI BENGALS

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NFL DRAFT — ROUND 6a

### **TROY WALTERS**

#### **Wide receivers coach**

#### **How much did his athleticism just pop out on tape?**

"A lot. He's a phenomenal athlete — an All-American in track in college. So to get him in the sixth round, man, we're excited. A lot of tools to work with and a lot of upside, so I can't wait to get started with him."

#### **You were obviously able to meet with him. What was that like and how important was that?**

"Very important. Great visit. He flew in, we had dinner together, just talked about life, talked about his goals, what he wanted to achieve in the NFL. He asked me a lot of questions, which for a prospect, that raises your antenna — like, 'Man, this guy is dialed in.' And he was asking me questions ... how could I make him better, and so forth. That visit — it really showed (me) the type of person he is, and the type of player he is. Just to get to know the guy, it was a good visit. And to get him in the sixth round, we're excited."

#### **Were you surprised that he was still there?**

"Yeah, very surprised. We had him a lot higher, just based on his athleticism and his traits. For him to fall, we're glad."

#### **He was voted a team captain. That speaks volumes about his character ...**

"Team captain, went to Princeton. So (he's) smart, intelligent, and can process well. I think he can learn all three positions — X, Z and the slot. Obviously, with his body type, he'll be able to add some reps on special teams as well. We are happy to have him, and we think he'll do a good job here."

#### **You talked about him being a track and field athlete, and being a heptathlon athlete. How much did that really factor into just how much he stood out to you guys?**

"It just shows his overall athleticism and he's able to handle it. That's a tough sport and a tough event. So, for him to be able to do that just shows his toughness — mental toughness. He can run for days, and you have to be a competitor to compete in those types of events. All those things just make him a great prospect."

#### **How raw is he as a receiver?**

"(Just needs) more reps going against elite competition. He played in the Senior Bowl, so he got those reps. He got the feel of going against elite competition at the Senior Bowl, and did a good job. You don't see a lot of press (coverage) in the league he was in, especially to the caliber here in the NFL. So, (there are) just little things that will take time for him to get used to. But I believe he's going to be a quick learner, a quick study. He wants to be great. That's what you ask for in a young man."

#### **He doesn't practice year-round football, right? Is that a guy where you can see improvement early on, since you know now he's going to be dedicated?**

"Definitely. That's where the upside comes into play, and when he has a full offseason as a football player and goes through the weight program and solely focuses on football, the sky is the limit for him."

#### **What made you guys want to add more speed, specifically this offseason with him and Charlie Jones?**

"Just depth. We played in the AFC Championship Game and T.B. (Tyler Boyd) got hurt, and Trenton (Irwin) stepped in, and then you look back and if something happens to him, who else do you have? So you just want to add depth and competition, and those guys will come in and compete and make our room better. And then we wanted guys that have versatility who could play outside, could play inside, and could help on special teams. The more you can do in this league, the better. We feel like those two guys can play multiple positions."

#### **Is there a biggest difference, maybe something Losivas brings that could compliment Jones in his game?**

"He's a little bigger, but they're both good football players. Both catch the ball well, so just get them in, work with them and throw a lot at them. I'm going to throw the whole playbook at them. Make sure they learn X, Z and F. Then, as we get going, just see what they excel best at in this first year and go from there."

### **How do you judge his processing?**

"I go through an install. I'll install some of our formations, some of our plays, give him a couple of minutes to look over his notes. And then I'll quiz him, and just see how well — how fast — he processes. And the one thing I told all the guys, and I met with most of the receiver prospects, was that if we take you, if we draft you or we sign you as a free agent, the first thing I'm going to do is you're going to get in that playbook and you're going to learn the playbook, so that when you get on the field, you can play. If you don't know the plays — if you don't know what to do — you're not going to be able to play fast. I've already installed to both of those guys — I've already installed some of the playbook to them. They've got it in their notes, and they can go back and look at it over the next few days. And then Monday, we're going to hit the ground running with the playbook, so they know what to do."

### **One of the knocks on him is that he traps and uses his body. Are you satisfied that he uses his hands well enough?**

"I am. You can always improve on different things, and that's one of the things he can improve on. But to me, you need to catch the ball. There are times when you need a body catch, and we work on that as receivers. There are times when it's more advantageous to use your body. We'll get him in here, and I'll see exactly the areas of weakness and what I need to work on, and we'll go to work."

### **Is he somebody that can go up at the apex and compete for a ball?**

"Is he somebody that can go up at the apex and compete for a ball? Definitely. That's what he does well. If you watch the Senior Bowl practices, that's what he did well in one-on-one's, and that's kind of what we do. Tee Higgins and Ja'Marr Chase, they win those one-on-one's — the contested, outside throws — and they use their size and their height to their advantage. And I feel like he can do the same."

### **Aside from the height difference between him and Charlie Jones, what do you feel like is the one trait or multiple traits that both of them have in common together?**

"I think they're both explosive. They're explosive receivers, and they can they can put pressure on a secondary, on a corner. They come off the ball well, and so anytime you have that type of speed and an ability to threaten defenders, then you should be able to create some separation."

### **How fun is it for you to get somebody with these athletic skills that you can mold? Do you have experience with somebody in the past you've kind of done something similar with?**

"That's my job. My job is to develop. Whether it's a first-round pick, a sixth-round pick or a free agent, I treat them all the same. When they get here, they will learn the playbook, and we're going to go out there to work, and to learn and develop fundamentals. The expectations don't change. I expect him to come in — both of those guys, him and Charlie — and learn the playbook, then they get on the field to produce. It's a challenge, but you want a guy that's willing to put in the work. He knows how good he wants to be, and that's always fun to have a guy that is ready to work."

### **How many receivers come in on a visit like this?**

"We had about four or five."

### **Do you typically do the full-length dinner experience? Is that pretty standard?**

"Pretty standard. You'd have some type of dinner with them. And then they'll come up in the office during the day, and you'll meet with them, talk ball, talk life, get to know them, see how they process, see how well they do on the board — if they can handle this offense, so to speak. You just try to get a feel. It's kind of like speed dating ... as fast as you can, you try to get to know him as much as you can. It was a good process."

### **For a guy like him from Princeton and seeing him at that practice week, was that important for you guys to see how he could do?**

"For a guy like him, from Princeton and seeing him at that practice week, was that important for us to see how he could do? Yeah, it was. You want to see how those guys compete against the best of the best. He had some good moments, he had some not-so-good moments, but the thing I took from it was that he competed, and that's what you want. You want a guy that's going to put in the work and the effort and compete. And that's what he did."

### **You mentioned his explosiveness. He puts his foot in the ground with burst. Can he sink his hips? Can he get on the cusp pretty well?**

"Yes. Those are some of the things we're going to work on — just changing direction, getting in and out of his brakes ... just the techniques of being a polished route runner. In college, in a lot of programs, you're not asked to run the entire NFL route tree. So, that's always an adjustment for a rookie coming in. We'll get to work as soon as we can, clean up some of those issues, and get them ready to go."

### **You mentioned him raising your antenna with the questions. Was it the volume of the questions, or was it the specific things he was asking?**

“Both. He wanted to know how I (could help him) get better, how I saw him, what were some of the strengths, what were some of his weaknesses, how I can help those weaknesses, how I can strengthen those weaknesses. Just to have that mindset to ask the coach some questions was pretty impressive.”

**Zac said before that he likes those depth receivers with one or two really interesting traits to focus in on as a strength. What does that do for you when you have guys who have options with those strengths? And why do you like that approach?**

“Man, the more depth you have, then you’re less worried about the guys ahead (in the depth chart). We have the three best (starting) receivers in the league, but if something happens ... It’s a long season. To go through a whole season without any injuries is not very common. You want to make sure you have guys that, if something does happen, we have other guys that can step in and produce at the high level that the starters do. That’s the mindset of a coach. When you develop a guy, you’re not developing your No. 4, your No. 5. No, they’re all starters, so that when their number is called, they’re able to step in, and Joe (Burrow) doesn’t have to worry about, ‘Well, is this guy going to catch the ball? Is he going to run the right route?’ If you’re in and in you’re playing, then we have confidence you’re going to get the job done.”

**What makes you like a guy with a very specific strength? The guys you have in those roles. What do you like about that approach of getting someone who’s really good at not one thing, but really has something that’s tough on their startup like that?**

“You’re going to put them in that situation. So, if a guy has good hands, you’re going to put them in situations to catch the ball. If he’s a good route runner, explosive, if he’s a vertical threat, you’re going to highlight their strengths. To play in this league, you have to have some traits, you have to have some strengths. If you don’t have any strengths, you’re not going to play. So we try to highlight those guys’ strengths and when they get in the game — put them in situations where they can go be successful.”

**For Charlie, did he run a full route tree?**

“He did at Purdue. (With head coach Jeff) Brohm, they ran an NFL-style offense, so we’re excited that he’ll be able to come in (and do that here). He probably won’t miss a beat in terms of route running.”

**Between playing in the Ivy League and training on the pole vault, the shot put and the events that are in the heptathlon, how much of this is a lottery ticket, where you can bring out the best in a guy and really have someone?**

“Yeah, it really is. That’s why we’re excited upstairs to have a guy like this, with so much upside, with the traits and the physical tools. And then, he’s a good kid and a hard worker. The sky is the limit, and we’re going to bring it out of him. I think we’ve got a special player.”

**Is there anybody that Andrei reminds you of?**

“Not right off the top of my head. Give me a couple of days to think about it. But I know he’s got all the traits and measurables, and so we’re excited about that.”

**What’s your favorite pre-draft dinner spot where you take all of these receivers?**

“We go to Ruth’s Chris. You can get a little fat going there all the time, (so you have to) work out and stay in shape. But Ruth’s Chris is our go-to.”

## **ANDREI IOSIVAS**

### **Wide receiver; Princeton**

*(First name is pronounced as “Andre,” and last name is pronounced “YO-see-vahsh”)*

**Describe this accomplishment for you, going from the Ivy League to being an NFL draft pick ...**

“It was surreal. Once I heard the phone call, I couldn’t stop myself from holding back my tears. I had a bunch of people around me and I couldn’t help myself from tearing up. It’s just a culmination of all the work that I’ve put in on the football field, on the track, and especially in the classroom. I’m just a hard worker, and I’m glad it’s all paying off right now.”

**How cool is it knowing Joe Burrow will be throwing to you in practice?**

“That’s probably the most ideal situation that I can think of getting drafted to the NFL, so I’m pretty happy about that.”

**You wanted to be in Cincinnati more than anywhere else?**

“Yeah, because I went on a 30 visit with the Bengals and I met everybody from the owner to the coaches, and they showed me the most love and it felt like home. People make a home, not a place, so it felt really good when I met with them.”

**When did you think of the NFL as a possibility?**

“I kind of felt like that after my junior season. I would say before my junior season, I started working really hard so that I could be in a position to be in the NFL. But after my junior season is when I really realized that it could be true.”

**Your head coach at Princeton, Bob Surace, coached for the Bengals for almost 10 years. Has he talked to you about the**

**Bengals?**

“That was one of the things before — everybody knows coach Surace was with the Bengals, so that was already a relationship that we knew. We’re always in contact, so obviously he was really ecstatic that I had a visit with the Bengals, and I can bet he’s ecstatic right now.”

**Have you heard from him since being drafted?**

“My phone is blowing up with hundreds of messages right now, so I need to get back to everybody eventually, but I obviously haven’t checked.”

**Did you have other 30 visits?**

“No. I had local days with the Jets, Giants and Eagles, but the Bengals were my only 30 visit, so that meant a lot to me.”

**I’m sure your speed is your biggest strength. What is your second biggest strength?**

“I would say my big-play ability. With the ball in my hands, I’m super quick and I’m super dynamic. So, I think being a playmaker along with that speed just helps in all aspects of football.”

**How does your track background translate to football?**

“Just being an athlete. Making acrobatic catches, twirling around — pole vault helps me in the air when I jump around and make catches. Being an all-around athlete doesn’t hurt you on any playing field.”

**What position did you play in high school basketball?**

“That was only my JV year. I was a shooting guard. After that, I was like, ‘Maybe I should stick to football and track.’”

**What is your favorite event in the heptathlon?**

“I would say the sprints, the jumps and the pole vault.”

**How would you rank your favorite sports?**

“Football is the first, and then track I like a lot. I don’t know if you consider this a sport, but I body surf a lot, so I guess you can consider that my third favorite sport.”

**Between your head coach being a former Bengals assistant, having a 30 visit, the owner here is an Ivy Leaguer — did the Bengals make sense to you?**

“Yeah. Literally after my 30 visit, once I met with everybody, I had a gut feeling that this was the spot that I wanted to be home, and now it’s reality so I couldn’t be happier.”

**What do you like about Joe Burrow?**

“Everything. He puts the ball in spots that only the receiver can catch it. He throws you open and he understands the game at a very high level, so not only can he make good plays, but I can also learn from him.”

**How do you feel like you can get better?**

“As a young receiver, I think I can get better at everything. Obviously, I know what my strengths are, but being more polished as a route runner, blocking, just being lower — just everything a receiver needs to be great, I can always get better at.”

**What is your major?**

“I was a politician major.”

**What did you take away from playing for Bob Surace?**

“Just trust the process. Princeton obviously is a rigorous academic school, and they put you through the ringer academically and through football. We’re a very good program, so it’s all about trusting the process, working hard and everything will work out eventually.”

**What do you think you’d be doing for a career if not football? Obviously you are a politics major...**

“The politics wasn’t for that reason. I did politics just because I was good at writing papers and I played to my strengths. I went to Princeton kind of as a backup in case I didn’t go to the NFL. The NFL was always the plan and I honestly haven’t thought about what I would do if I didn’t play football.”

**Are you a pretty good debater?**

“No, I have not debated. You don’t have to do debates in politics, thank god. I think I could be good if I tried.”