

1936-37 NFL Draft

The NFL draft has changed many times since the brainchild of former NFL Commissioner and club owner Bert Bell was accepted by the league owners on May 19, 1935.

Bell's idea was to help the weaker teams by allowing them first choice of the top college players. Teams would draft in an inverse order of their finish, with the league champion selecting last, regardless of its record. Prior to that time, players had been able to sign with any club. Open signing tended to make the strong get stronger.

The initial draft was held February 8, 1936, at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Philadelphia. The first player chosen was Heisman Trophy winner Jay Berwanger, a halfback from the University of Chicago. But Berwanger never signed with either the Eagles, who selected him, or the Bears, after they traded for his rights. The first drafted player who did play was the number-two pick, halfback Riley Smith of Alabama, who was selected by the Boston Redskins.

It took only one year for the format of the draft to change. The December 1936 draft had 10 rounds, one more than the first year. In 1939, the draft increased to 20 rounds; at the start of World War II, it was expanded to 30 rounds, the assumption being that many of those drafted also would be drafted by the Armed Forces. During the war, the NFL voted to stop using the term "draft" and referred to players as being on the "preferred negotiations list."

Following World War II, The All-American Football Conference operated for four years, and held drafts prior to three of them, 1947-49. Those drafts are included after the NFL drafts of the same years.

From 1947-1958, the bonus pick rule was in effect. Each year one team received the first pick in the draft, usually in exchange for its thirtieth-round choice. In 1949 and 1950, the bonus pick was a true bonus. In each of those years, the team selecting didn't lose its final-round choice; Philadelphia had a twenty-fifth-round selection in 1949 (when, for one year, the draft dropped to 25 rounds), and Detroit had a thirtieth-round choice in 1950. Each team was eligible for the bonus pick only once, and it was selected by lottery.

When the AFL was founded prior to the 1960 season, the two leagues began drafting many of the same players. That same season the NFL draft was shortened to 20 rounds. After its initial draft, the AFL varied the length of its drafts from 34 to 20 rounds.

Part of the merger agreement between the AFL and the NFL was to hold a combined draft, which started in 1967 and was shortened to 17 rounds.

The draft was further reduced to 12 rounds in 1977, the same year it was moved to late April or May.

The format of the following all-time draft list changes several times. In the early years of the draft, the league kept only scant records, listing each team's order of selection, from first pick to thirtieth. But those picks didn't necessarily correspond to rounds 1 through 30. In several years, the teams that finished in the bottom half of the league standings received either more selections, or more selections higher in the draft, than teams in the top half of the standings. Records from other early years make it difficult to determine the round in which a player was chosen. Thus, from 1936-1947, the numbers before each player generally indicate only the best available information. Numbers after picks names are the order of selection for the draft whenever known.

In the 1930's, it was common for a team to trade an established player for the rights to sign a draftee, who had been selected with that team in mind. Teams also traded actual draft positions for players, as is done today. But for the 1942 draft, rules were passed prohibiting the sale or trading of a team's first two draft positions or of a team's first two selections until one playing season after that selection. Shortly thereafter, the rule involving draft positions was expanded to include all rounds, and in that form remained in effect until 1947, when the Chicago Bears received two draft choices in trades, the Chicago Cardinals' third-round and Philadelphia's fourth-round. Again because of inadequate records, the trading of draft positions isn't always indicated prior to 1947, except in 1939.

Throughout the first four decades of the draft, players occasionally (or in some years frequently) were selected who hadn't completed their college eligibility. These players were divided into two groups -- "future picks" and players ineligible for the draft.

The future pick was based on the old NFL rule that a player could be chosen if his class had graduated even if he hadn't completed his eligibility. Thus, if a player had been redshirted in college, had sat out a year while transferring from one school to another, or otherwise would have completed his four years of eligibility in five years, he could be drafted after his fourth year, and his rights would remain with the team that selected him, even if he didn't sign for a year.

Most early future picks were not recorded as such, but they were made as long ago as 1949. In the 1960s, with the AFL and NFL each trying to get a draft advantage, future picks became more and more frequent; in 1965 and 1966, the AFL actually held separate drafts for futures. At the time of the

THE COFFIN CORNER: Vol. 7, No. 5 (1985)

merger, in 1967, the leagues agreed to eliminate future picks.

Today a player is no longer required to have graduated or to have completed his eligibility before he can be drafted.

In the unusual circumstance that a player loses his eligibility after the draft, a supplemental draft can be held. In the same order as the previous draft, each team has the opportunity to offer its first-round pick of the next year for the athlete. The process continues through the rounds until he is chosen.

In the draft list, a future pick is indicated by an "F" at the end of his entry. No future picks are shown prior to 1949. Those obtainable for the NFL, such as all that were made by San Francisco, are indicated through 1961. All AFL future picks and those of the NFL from 1962-66 are indicated.

Through the years, many players were selected who still had college eligibility remaining but weren't eligible to be drafted as futures. These selections basically were mistakes that were made before scouting became as exact as it is today. Generally, these players were drafted again the next year, sometimes even by the same team. A selection that was voided by the league because the player who was drafted was ineligible is indicated by + at the end of the information about the player.

Notes included with each year refer only to that year, unless otherwise indicated.

* - Played in NFL

1936

Held February 8, 1936

BOSTON 1936

1. *Smith, Riley, B, Alabama, 2
2. Topping, Keith, E, Stanford, 11
3. *Smith, Ed, B, NYU, 20
4. Tangora, Paul, G, Northwestern, 29
5. Groseclose, Wilson, T, TCU, 38
6. Lutz, Larry, T, California, 47
7. *Irwin, Don, B, Colgate, 56
8. *Millner, Wayne, E, Notre Dame, 65
9. Saunders, Marcel, G, Loyola (CA), 74

BROOKLYN 1936

1. *Crayne, Dick, B, Iowa, 4
2. LeVoi, Vernal (Babe), B, Minnesota, 13
3. *Jorgenson, Wagner, C, St. Mary's (CA), 22
4. Bryant, Paul (Bear), E, Alabama, 31
5. *Wilson, Bob, B, SMU, 40
6. *Maniaci, Joe, B, Fordham, 49
7. Schreiber, Herb, B, St. Mary's (CA), 58
8. Hamilton, Bob (Bones), B, Stanford, 67
9. *Moscrip, Jim (Monk), E, Stanford, 76

CHICAGO BEARS 1936

1. *Stydahar, Joe, T, West Virginia, 6
2. *Michaels, Eddie, G, Villanova, 14
3. Roscoe, George, B, Minnesota, 24

4. *Allman, Bob, E, Michigan State, 32
5. *Oech, Vern, T, Minnesota, 42
6. Christofferson, Ted, B, Washington State, 50
7. Smith, Dick, T, Minnesota, 60
8. Sylvester, John, E, Rice, 68
9. *Fortmann, Dan, G, Colgate, 78

CHICAGO CARDINALS 1936

1. *Lawrence, Jim, B, TCU, 5
2. Jones, Gomer, C, Ohio State, 15
3. Erdelaz, Eddie, E, St. Mary's (CA), 23
4. *Brett, Ed, E, Washington State, 33
5. Riordan, Stan, E, Oregon, 41
6. Antonini, Ettore, E, Indiana, 51
7. Dennis, Tack, B, Tulsa, 59
8. *Carter, Ross, G, Oregon, 69
9. Larsen, Niels, T, Stanford, 77

DETROIT 1936

1. *Wagner, Sid, G, Michigan State, 8
2. Cheshire, Chuck, B, UCLA, 17
3. Pilney, Andy, B, Notre Dame, 26
4. Biese, Sheldon, B, Minnesota, 35
5. Francis, Kavanaugh, C, Alabama, 44
6. Mickal, Abe, B, LSU, 53
7. Wasicek, Charlie, T, Colgate, 62
8. Rennebohn, Dale, C, Minnesota, 71
9. Train, Bob (Choo-Choo), E, Yale, 80

GREEN BAY 1936

1. *Letlow, Russ, G, San Francisco, 7
2. Wheeler, J.W., T, Oklahoma, 16
3. *Scherer, Bernie, E, Nebraska, 25
4. Ward, Theron, B, Idaho, 34
5. *Lester, Darrell, C, TCU, 43
6. *Reynolds, Bob, T, Stanford, 52
7. Fromhart, Wally, B, Notre Dame, 61
8. Cruice, Wally, B, Northwestern, 70
9. Wetsel, J.C., G, SMU, 79

NEW YORK GIANTS 1936

1. *Lewis, Art, T, Ohio U., 9
2. *Leemans, Alphonse (Tuffy), B, G.Wash., 18
3. Loeb, Frank (Butch), E, Purdue, 27
4. *Rose, Gene, E, Tennessee, 36
5. Jontos, Ed, G, Syracuse, 45
6. Durner, Gus, T, Duke, 54
7. Peebles, Bob, T, Marquette, 63
8. Heekin, Dick, B, Ohio State, 72
9. Flanagan, Phil, G, Holy Cross, 81

PHILADELPHIA 1936

1. Berwanger, Jay, B, Chicago, 1
2. McCauley, John, B, Rice, 10
3. Muller, Wes, C, Stanford, 19
4. Wallace, Bill, B, Rice, 28
5. Shuford, Harry, B, SMU, 37
6. Barabas, Al, B, Columbia, 46
7. Weller, Jack, G, Princeton, 55
8. Constable, Pepper, B, Princeton, 64
9. Pauk, Paul, B, Princeton, 73

THE COFFIN CORNER: Vol. 7, No. 5 (1985)

PITTSBURGH 1936

1. Shakespeare, Bill, B, Notre Dame, 3
2. *Barnum, Len, B, West Virginia Wesleyan, 12
3. Grayson, Bobby, B, Stanford, 21
4. Spain, Truman, T, SMU, 30
5. *Sandefur, Wayne, B, Purdue, 39
6. Orr, Maurice, T, SMU, 48
7. Peters, Marty, E, Notre Dame, 57
8. *Karpowich, Ed, T, Catholic, 66
9. Meglen, Joe, B, Georgetown (DC), 75

1937

Held December 12, 1936

President Joe Carr stated at the draft meeting that because there was a possibility of adding a tenth franchise to the league prior to the opening of the season, 10 players should be drafted for the new team. It was decided that the league would draft for the new franchise, selecting in last place in each round. It was agreed that if no additional team was admitted, the players selected by the league were to revert to the remaining clubs, with preference for selection being given in the same order as in the regular draft. Before the 1937 season, the Cleveland Rams were admitted as the tenth team in the league.

BOSTON 1937

1. *Baugh, Sammy, B, TCU, 6
2. *Falaschi, Nello, B, Santa Clara, 16
3. Eldar, Maurice, B, Kansas State, 26
4. *Bassi, Dick, G, Santa Clara, 36
5. *Bond, Chuck, T, Washington, 46
6. Cain, Jimmie, B, Washington, 56
7. Holland, Rotta, G, Kansas State, 66
8. Eaves, Joel, E, Auburn, 76
9. Docherty, Bill, T, Temple, 86
10. *Cara, Dom Mac, E, North Carolina State, 96

BROOKLYN 1937

1. *Goddard, Ed, B, Washington State, 2
2. *Parker, Clarence (Ace), B, Duke, 13
3. Starceвич, Max, G, Washington, 22
4. Kurlish, Bill, B, Penn, 33
5. *Johnson, Bert, B, Kentucky, 42
6. *Golemgeske, John, T, Wisconsin, 53
7. Funk, Fred, B, UCLA, 62
8. Reid, Steve, G, Northwestern, 73
9. Nowogrowski, Ed, B, Washington, 82
10. Kuhn, Gil, T, USC, 93

CHICAGO BEARS 1937

1. *McDonald, Les, E, Nebraska, 8
2. Stewart, Marv, C, LSU, 18
3. *Plasman, Dick, E, Vanderbilt, 28
4. *Hammond, Henry, E, Southwestern (KS), 38
5. *Konkright, Bill (Red), C, Oklahoma, 48
6. *Bjork, Del, T, Oregon, 58
7. Friedman, J.W. (Buck), B, Rice, 68
8. Toth, Steve, B, Northwestern, 78

9. Guepe, Al, B, Marquette, 88
10. Wade, Ed (Red), T, Utah State, 98

CHICAGO CARDINALS 1937

1. *Buivid, Ray (Buzz), B, Marquette, 3
2. *Tinsley, Gaynell, E, LSU, 12
3. Guepe, Art, B, Marquette, 23
4. Bryan, H.K. (Bucky), B, Tulane, 32
5. *Harmon, Harn, C, Tulsa, 43
6. Dickens, Phil, B, Tennessee, 52
7. Dickerson, Herm, B, Virginia Tech, 63
8. *Reynolds, John, C, Baylor, 72
9. Hafeli, Dwight, E, Washington (StL), 83
10. Fitzsimmons, Middleton, G, Georgia Tech, 92

DETROIT 1937

1. *Cardwell, Lloyd, B, Nebraska, 7
2. Hamrick, Charley, T, Ohio State, 17
3. *Huffman, Vern, B, Indiana, 27
4. Glassford, Bill, G, Pittsburgh, 37
5. *Patt, Maury, E, Carnegie Mellon, 47
6. Bell, George, G, Purdue, 57
7. Sprague, John, E, SMU, 67
8. Sayre, Elvin, C, Illinois, 77
9. Kelley, Larry, E, Yale, 87
10. *Bell, Kay, T, Washington State, 97

GREEN BAY 1937

1. *Jankowski, Eddie, B, Wisconsin, 9
2. *Daniell, Ave, T, Pittsburgh, 19
3. Wilkinson, Charles (Bud), T, Minnesota, 29
4. *Svendsen, Earl, C, Minnesota, 39
5. Gibson, Dewitt, T, Northwestern, 49
6. Wendt, Merle, E, Ohio State, 59
7. Baldwin, Marv, T, TCU, 69
8. Chapman, Les, T, Tulsa, 79
9. Dahlgren, Gordon, G, Michigan State, 89
10. Gavin, Dave, T, Holy Cross, 99

NEW YORK GIANTS 1937

1. *Widseth, Ed, T, Minnesota, 4
2. *White, Arthur (Tarzan), G, Alabama, 14
3. *Dennerlein, Gerry, T, St. Mary's (CA), 24
4. *Cuff, Ward, B, Marquette, 34
5. *Kobrosky, Mickey, B, Trinity (CT), 44
6. Farley, Jim, G, Virginia Military, 54
7. *Poole, Jim, E, Mississippi, 64
8. Meyers, Gene, G, Kentucky, 74
9. Scheyer, Dwight, T, Washington State, 84
10. *Gelatka, Chuck, E, Mississippi State, 94

PHILADELPHIA 1937

1. *Francis, Sam, B, Nebraska, 1
2. *Murray, Franny, B, Penn, 11
3. *Ellis, Drew, T, TCU, 21
4. Gilbert, Walt, B, Auburn, 31
5. Drobnitch, Alex, G, Denver, 41
6. Guckeyson, Bill, B, Maryland, 51
7. Barna, Herb, E, West Virginia, 61
8. Hennon, Nestor, E, Carnegie-Mellon, 71
9. Fanning, Paul, T, Kansas State, 81

THE COFFIN CORNER: Vol. 7, No. 5 (1985)

10. Antil, Ray, E, Minnesota, 91

PITTSBURGH 1937

1. *Basrak, Mike, C, Duquesne, 5
2. Finley, Bob, B, SMU, 15
3. *Breedon, Bill, E, Oklahoma, 25
4. Hewes, Elmo (Bo), B, Oklahoma, 35
5. Frye, Jack, B, Missouri, 45
6. Roach, Walt, E, TCU, 55
7. *Haines, Byron, E, Washington, 65
8. Kordick, Marty, G, St. Mary's (CA), 75
9. Patanelli, Matt, E, Michigan, 85
10. Nevers, Stan, T, Kentucky, 95

LEAGUE 1937

1. *Drake, Johnny, B, Purdue, 10
2. *Alfonse, Jules, B, Michigan, 20
3. LaRue Bobby, B, Pittsburgh, 30
4. *Wiatrak, John, C, Washington, 40
5. Smith, Inwood, G, Ohio State, 50
6. Del Sasso, Chris, T, Indiana, 60
7. Schoen, Norm, B, Baldwin-Wallace, 70
8. *Schmarr, Herm, E, Catholic, 80
9. *Johnson, Ray, B, Denver, 90
10. Holt, Solon, G, TCU, 100