Before and during the NFL draft every year, a nation full of supposedly knowledgable football people make small fortunes by predicting future stars. You know their names: (off the top of my head) Mike Mayock, Ozzie Newsome, Mike Lombardi, Mel Kiper Jr., Bill Belichick, Monte Kiffin, and almost every NFL pundit who ever put a mike around his neck or tapped out a column on his laptop.

The problem is that their records are as spotty and inconsistent as any railbird at Northfield with a two-dollar bill burning in his pocket.

As the countdown to this year's draft enters single digits, it's worth remembering all the "can't-miss" players who have missed and all the lower-round draft choices who have become instant sensations after signing their first pro contracts.

The poster boy for the instant sensation crowd is New England quarterback Tom Brady, who wasn't drafted until the sixth round (choice #199) in 2000. Our own Cleveland Browns passed on Brady no less than EIGHT times, choosing instead Courtney Brown, Dennis Northcutt, Travis Prentice, Lewis Sanders, Aaron Shea, Anthony Malbrough, Lamar Chapman and Spurgeon

Wynn (choice #183). Of course, at the time Dwight Clark and Bud Carson thought they had a franchise quarterback in Tim Couch, drafted #1 the year before. That's not an excuse, just fact.

The poster boys for the "can't-miss misses" can be seen on the Browns' Website. Just search "top draft choices since 1999."

To further prove the point of this column, we're listing the roster the Browns could have today if all their draft picks were 100 percent spot-on. At this juncture, coming off a couple meager 5-11 seasons, it's an exercise in futility. But it's interesting to see all the All-Pros that the Browns' so-called "brain trust" have passed on during the last 11 years.

Please understand that it is entirely irrational to expect any team's management to hit on all cylinders. This is just an exercise, like a computer simulation that demonstrates what might happen to the Earth in the event that was hit by an asteroid. It's an impossible scenario, but one that's interesting at its core.

Here, then, is the Browns' dream All-Pro roster (and how the players could have been obtained) if only every draft choice since 1999 had been a dream choice in itself. Following the roster are the Browns' top draft choices and who else was available at the time of their picks.

BROWNS 2009 OFFENSE

Tom Brady, QB; Adrian Peterson, RB; Clinton Portis, RB; Nick Mangold, C; Justin Blaylock, G; Brian Waters, G; David Diehl, T; Marcus McNeill, T; Dallas Clark, TE; Anquan Boldin, WR; Steve Smith, WR

BROWNS 2009 DEFENSE

Shaun Rogers, NT; Richard Seymour, DE; Jevon Kearse, DE; Joey Porter, LB; Brian Urlacher, LB; Larry Foote, LB; DeMarcus Ware, LB; Asante Samuel, CB; Vince Wilfork, CB; Jairus Byrd, S; Ed Reed, S

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

1999

1st Round: Browns draft Tim Couch, pass on Donovan McNabb, Edgerrin James, Ricky Williams, Champ Bailey, Daunte Culpepper and **Jevon Kearse**

3rd Round: Browns draft Daylon McCutcheon, pass on **Joey Porter**, Donald Driver

2000

1st Round: Browns draft Courtney Brown, pass on Jamal Lewis, **Brian Urlacher**

6th Round: Browns draft Spurgeon Wynn, pass on **Tom Brady**

7th Round: Browns draft Eric Chandler, overlook **Brian Waters**

2001

1st Round: Browns draft Gerard Warren, pass on LaDainian Tomlinson, **Richard Seymour**,

Casey Hampton, Todd Heap

2nd Round: Browns draft Quincy Morgan, pass on Chad Ochocinco (nee Johnson), **Shaun Rogers**

3rd Round: Browns draft James Jackson, pass on receiver **Steve Smith**

2002

1st Round: Browns draft William Green, pass on **Ed Reed**

2nd Round: Browns draft Andre Davis, pass on **Clinton Portis**

3rd Round: Browns draft Melvin Fowler, pass on **Brian Westbrook**

4th Round: Browns draft Ben Taylor, pass on Dave Zastudil; draft Darnell Sanders, pass on **Larry Foote**

2003

1st Round: Browns draft Jeff Faine, pass on Willis McGahee, **Dallas Clark**, Larry Johnson

2nd Round: Browns draft Chaun Thompson, pass on **Anquan Boldin**

3rd Round: Browns draft Chris Crocker, pass on **Asante Samuel**

5th Round: Browns draft Michael Lehan, pass on **David Diehl**

2004

1st Round: Browns draft Kellen Winslow Jr., pass on Ben Roethlisberger, Jonathan Vilma, **Vinc e Wilfork**
, Michael Jenkins

2005

1st Round: Browns draft Braylon Edwards, pass on **DeMarcus Ware**, Shawne Merriman, Aaron Rodgers, Logan Mankins

2006

1st Round: Browns draft Kamerion Wimbley, pass on **Nick Mangold**, Joseph Addai

2nd Round: Browns draft D'Qwell Jackson, pass on Devin Hester, **Marcus McNeill**

2007

1st Round: Browns draft Joe Thomas, pass on **Adrian Peterson**; Browns draft Brady Quinn, pass on Anthony Gonzalez, Kevin Kolb, LaMarr Woodley,
Justin Blalock

7th Round: Browns draft Syndric Steptoe, pass on Chansi Stucky

2008

No picks in top rounds

2009

1st Round: Browns draft Alex Mack, pass on Clay Matthews Jr., **Jairus Byrd**

Tomorrow at this time, Browns fans will either be rejoicing over the choices of Tom Heckert and Mike Holmgren or burying their heads in anger and dejection. A few might even take to TheClevelandFan.com's message boards to make their emotions public.

But before going all Bin Laden, it would be advised to keep the entire draft process in perspective. Remember that the true value of the team's draft choices will not be known for at least six to eight months, and quite possibly not for six to eight years.

In the meantime, cross your fingers and pray.