With today's installment of the draft series I am looking at a position of dire need for the Cleveland Browns. Wide receiver play has been an issue with the orange and brown for years. Tom Heckert took a step in the right direction last year when they selected Greg Little in the second round but they need much more help if they want to have a passing game that is going to respected around the league.

Greg Little led the team in receiving last year but it was only his second full season playing the position on any level of football so needless to say he still has some growing to do. Cleveland led the league in dropped passes and although Little did his part in dropping passes, he was not the only WR letting the ball hit the grass.

In my book Little is the only WR worth getting excited about on the Browns roster and I think he has an ideal skill set to start as the 'Z' receiver because of his run after the catch ability and the way he can work the middle of the field. Usually the last part of playing receiver that comes for people acclimating themselves to the position is winning battles downfield on the outside of the field and Little is no exception. Playing deeper outside passes is something that comes with repetitions so although you can expect Little to be better after getting a full offseason to work on this I still expect his best position will be flanker instead and not split end.

When it comes to talent in the draft, I think the WR position is where it's at. I think this draft is absolutely filled with players who can help Cleveland's offense move the chains and put points on the board. It was extremely hard for me to narrow my picks for this list and I want people to understand that my list doesn't contain all the players I like and think could help at the position but I can't just put everyone on the list because that is a copout for one and these articles can get long enough as it is.

The players on my list will be a mix of players I think can start at the 'X', combined with players I think can get deep and stretch the field. It will also feature some players I think can make a difference playing in the slot by creating good separation and moving the chains on 3rd down.

I may have more players on this list than normal so let's get right into the players on my list.

Early Rounds (1-2)

Justin Blackmon Oklahoma St. (6-1, 207lbs)

Blackmon is the consensus #1 rated WR for multiple reasons. The first is production. Blackmon has torched college CBs over the last two years to the tune of 230 catches and 3300 yards to go along with 38 TDs. Those are video game stats that were put up against major college programs. Blackmon is a great match for the quick passing game of the west coast offense because he is good after the catch, he gets good releases off the line of scrimmage, he gets in and out of breaks very well, and he fights for ball on the outside. At first I thought Blackmon was more of a flanker than a split end but the more I studied him I realized he lined up on the outside quite a bit and he got excellent releases off the line of scrimmage by using very fast hands and having enough strength to run through jam attempts by CBs.

Blackmon also got the benefit of playing with a NFL caliber QB that put balls in very tight spots which allowed Blackmon to get very comfortable making catches in traffic. He will drop a few balls now and again but for somebody who was targeted as much as he was a few is to be expected, no player gets a perfect grade.

Michael Floyd Notre Dame (6-3, 220lbs)

Floyd is a special WR who tracks balls effortlessly when they are in the air. He has a tremendous ability to judge balls and make adjustments. Floyd is the record holder of all of NDs receiving records and for a player that has lacked a high level of talent at the QB spot that is a pretty remarkable feet. Speed is a question people had about Floyd that he answered at the combine after posting a 4.4 in the forty yard dash. Floyd's biggest problem has never been his

ability it has always been his own demons that have made people question him as he gained weight during his junior year and had multiple alcohol related incidences.

Floyd's strength and quick hands allow him to get consistent releases off of the line of scrimmage. He is a good not great route runner but long arms help look like he gets better separation.

He will need to continue to improve on his routes but when he is disciplined and drops his hips, he can run almost any route effectively and because of his superior ball skills down field if the ball gets thrown his way, he usually finds a way to bring it down.

Kendall Wright Baylor (5-11, 196lbs)

Wright is a dynamic player to have on your team. I knew he would run a good time in his 40 on his pro day after running a slow time at the combine because when you watch the tape you can clearly see him playing faster than almost every player on the field. Wright is a great all around athlete who can be seen doing everything from throwing passes in football games to playing on the Baylor basketball as a freshman.

Those that think Wright is relegated to catching balls out of the slot are wrong in my book. He is cat quick off the line of scrimmage and on tape he shows the lower body strength needed to power through contact. Wright has gotten better every year as a WR and if he continues to put in the work, he should continue to improve. I will be honest the only thing that is a red flag to me when it comes to Kendall Wright is his upper body strength. I simply can't understand how he did 4 reps of 225lbs at the combine. Usually that sets off a red flag of work ethic but no one is really talking about it so maybe there is more to the story that isn't being told but it needs investigated before I would just give it a pass. Based on everything else I can see Wright is going to be a really good WR in the NFL.

Stephen Hill Georgia Tech (6-4, 215lbs)

Like Calvin Johnson and Demaryius Thomas before him Hill is a physical freak playing in a

triple option offense that throws the ball the fewer than any team in college football. Hill only caught 28 balls this year with 5 going for TDs and he averaged a eye popping 29.3 yards a catch.

Hill's size speed numbers are off the charts as he ran a 4.30 in one of his combine forties and ended up with an official time of 4.36. For a player who is 6-4, 215lbs those numbers are insane and he is combining that speed with a 40 inch vertical and a 11 foot broad jump. When you evaluate him as a player in the NFL you will have to work on the route tree with him but if you exam Thomas and Johnson's success in the NFL you will see that ability is ability and a player can't control how his ability is used. If Hill can run routes and catch the ball he has the type of ridiculous god given ability teams will take a chance on.

Alshon Jeffery South Carolina (6-3, 216lbs)

Alshon Jeffery was rumored to be dirt slow and that was far from true when he ran a 4.5 at his pro day so the one glaring weakness Jeffery had is not all the bright after all. I love the way Alshon attacks balls and he is by far the best bad ball catcher of all the top WRs. Over his time at South Carolina Jeffery had horrible QB play and still managed to put up 23 TDs and over 3000 yards to go along with a 16 plus yards per catch average. I agree with NFL.com's Mike Mayock that Jeffery doesn't create much separation but I will also say because of his catch radius and great hands…..he is also always open to a good NFL QB.

In my opinion Alshon Jeffery and Michael Floyd are the two best WRs with the ball in the air and I would probably give the edge to Jeffery because he was dealing with the worst QB situation. I think with an accurate passer in the NFL Alshon Jeffery will put up consistently good numbers in the NFL.

Mid Rounds (3-5)

Joe Adams Arkansas (5-11, 179lbs)

Today Joe Adams is probably a better player with the ball in his hands than he is a really good

WR but he also has grown a ton and has a lot more growth in him. He is a dynamic player with highlight reel returns on special teams and he is also growing as a WR. He proved during Senior Bowl week that he could get open on a regular bases and he performed great on game day.

Joe Adams is a player with natural open field vision once he gets the ball in his hands and great quick twitch reactions to get out of tight areas without getting tackled. As I said Adams is a player who can grow into much more than a gimmick player but right now any team who gets him in the draft will be getting a player who is a instant special teams contributor and slot WR who can put points on the board any time he touches the ball.

A.J. Jenkins Illinois (6-0, 190lbs)

Jenkins is one of my favorite prospects because he can get open without any gimmicks and he has the best pure hands of any WR in the draft. This guy catches virtually every ball that comes his way with his hands. On the film I have seen, I don't even see him trap balls you are supposed to trap. He has the speed (4.37) to get behind any DB and he will keep CBs on their toes because he is cat quick on top of having the deep speed. Jenkins has narrow fluid hips so he runs routes well and he bursts out of breaks. He has a slender build but like I said on greymattersports.com he is already bigger and stronger than his fellow Illinois alum Brandon Lloyd. I am using Lloyd as a comparison because he is often compared to him when people talk about his body type. Jenkins is an instant upgrade at the position and I think he has the ability to be a starting WR in the NFL.

Devon Wylie Fresno St. (5-9, 187lbs)

Wylie is a dynamic punt returner who was also a slot WR at Fresno St. While at the combine this year he blazed up the turf to the tune of 4.39 in his forty which makes him a faster Danny Amendola and this offense could desperately use a player who can move the chains like Amendola did under Browns head coach Pat Shurmur. Wylie is one of those players with elite natural quickness and he as the ability to stop and go quicker than anyone coming out in the draft. I have literally seen Wylie make DBs fall down trying to cover him out of the slot. Out of all the WRs I have profiled, I think Wylie will help consistently move the chains more than any of them.

Greg Childs Arkansas (6-3, 219lbs)

Greg Childs is a WR that has seen his stock take a gigantic hit because of an injury that he appears to finally over. In the 2010 season Childs was having a breakout year catching passes from NFL bound QB Ryan Mallet when his season ended from a patella tendon rupture. In the first 7 games of that season he had already eclipsed his previous season's numbers and he seemed to be gaining even more steam and playing better when he got hurt. He came back for the 2011 but for much of the year you could tell he was moving funny and had no confidence in the repair so he only had 20 catches and was virtually non-existent. He put up some eye popping numbers at his pro day which showed scouts that he is finally close to 100% again. He was timed running a 4.4 forty and he also posted a 41 inch vertical. He has is explosion back and I think he is a perfect candidate to play the 'X' WR in Cleveland's offense.

T.Y. Hilton Florida International (5-10, 183lbs)

Hilton is a thinly built WR with blazing speed (4.33) and just as impressive as the raw speed is his ability to quickly get to his top speed. Hilton is obviously a player that will be pushed around on the outside in the NFL because of his size but there is no question he has the toughness and separation skills to operate out of the slot. Hilton is also a special teams demon when returning kicks and as you can see by his 70 carries and 7 rushing TDs he is also used on plenty of rushing plays. Pure speed and separation skills are the reasons why Hilton made the cut.

Late Rounds (6-7)

Eric Page Toledo (5-9, 187lbs)

Page is a local early entry player that I am giving some ink because he has been a really productive player in his 3 years in college both as a WR and as a return man. He has 5 career TDs on returns and he has produced 1000 yard seasons every year as a starting WR. He doesn't have great speed or the size to play outside in the NFL but he has the type of short area quickness that teams love from a slot player in the NFL. He will be another player who will move the chains and threaten defenses when the ball is in his hands. He will also be an immediate contributor as a return man.

Junior Hemingway Michigan (6-1, 225lbs)

The thing I like about Hemingway the most is his work ethic. He is a bigger WR who is really strong, and blocks with high effort in the running game. Even though he doesn't have a high level of production I think he can be a really good inside receiver in the mold of players like Jason Avant because he has tremendous quickness for a 225lb player.

Of all the WRs at the combine that were tested including the little lightning quick WRs, Hemingway was the quickest of them all in the 3-cone and the short shuttle. He has really quick feet, a strong body, and really good hands….ideal for a WR to work the middle of the field.

Sleeper

Ryan Broyles Oklahoma (5-10, 192lbs) and Brian Quick Appalachian St. (6-4, 220lbs)

These guys are on the sleeper list for different reasons, for Broyles it is because of injury and for Quick it is simply because he is from a small school.

Broyles is a player who holds the FBS career receptions record with 349. His senior season was cut short when he tore his ACL in November with 4 games remaining in the season. I think Broyles has made a great recovery up until this point because he actually was healthy enough to perform a workout for NFL teams. He was far from 100% but the fact he was able to run a 40 and perform some other activities is a testament to his work ethic and drive. Before his injury he was considered a 2nd or 3rd round prospect. He may be taken on the last day of the draft but I wouldn't count him out when you talk about players who will have a long NFL career.

Brian Quick is a big smooth WR that I got to see perform during senior bowl week. I thought he struggled initially adjusting to the level of talent but by the end of the week you could tell the game was starting to slow back down as he began to create some separation on routes. He has good hands and he is also a good athlete with fairly loose hips so once he gets comfortable with

the NFL game I expect him to be a solid WR option for a team. He reminds me of Braylon Edwards without the drops or mega ego.

Projected Pick

As I mentioned in the intro, I think the entire WR core needs revamped and the Browns have 13 picks so I am going with 3 WRs I think would upgrade the Cleveland WR corp. Stephen Hill, A.J. Jenkins, and Devon Wylie.

I love the size and explosive element that Hill brings to the table and he would immediately gain the attention of defenses. Jenkins is a really good all around WR with incredible hands that could fill many roles and I really do think he has the potential to be a full time starter in the NFL. Wylie is a unique player that I think could make a living gaining first downs from the slot and he would also be a valued punt returner and future replacement for Josh Cribbs.

I am pretty confident management saw the same things us fans saw from the WR position and although you can expect them all to be better the second year in the system I still think the only one who will be better and has potential to make a difference is Greg Little so even if it's not the particular group of players I have targeted in this article, I think Cleveland's passing game will get a shot in the arm from the 2012 draft.

All right fellow fans as we did with the RBs, Brian McPeek and I wrote previews on many of the players I previewed and you can take a look at our website http://www.greymattersports.com/for some more analysis and video clips. The draft is fast approaching so it will only be a matter of time before we welcome some new members to the team. Until next time…..Go Browns!