In today's addition of 'Feeling a Draft' I am talking defensive line and specifically DT. Most Browns fans know Cleveland has two productive players as starters already but don't count the position out when thinking draft.

If you look at the background of GM Tom Heckert you will see he comes from a team that put a lot of stock in the defensive line and I believe Cleveland won't have any problems taking a tackle if there is one with talent at the top of their draft board when they are on the clock.

As another point of reference about Heckert's time with Philadelphia, the Eagles drafted DTs with their first round draft picks in back to back years (2005/06). Sure it doesn't mean anything in particular I just want it on the record he worked for a team that drafted the position high in back to back years so you don't think it is out of the realm of possibility.

When you evaluate the roster and combine that information with the style of defense Cleveland ran in 2011 you will see that Dick Jauron's defense values big strong tackles that can beat one on one blocking. The starting tackles played left or right DT exclusively instead of having them swap sides based on formations so the profile for the players needed is much different than it would be if a guy only played the nose tackle or the under tackle in the defense. We will get into more about those terms later in the offseason but for now just understand I mean a guy who can be stout at the line of scrimmage while battling double teams(NT) and a player who can win individual battles and make plays in the backfield(UT).

There is a lot of DTs who fit the profile of one or the other and conversely there are not too many who have the ability to do both tasks well and that is the main reason why Cleveland

wouldn't hesitate to draft a tackle in this year's draft if they thought he could excel doing both jobs.

When you examine the roster it is clear that primary backups Scott Paxson and Brian Schaefering are capable backups but not the type of players that you would put in a true rotation to keep everyone fresh. The other thing I notice from the roster is the lack of a player who can excel as a sub-package pass rusher.

For my list of preferred players coming out in the draft I am putting some guys at the top of the list who can probably play either of the two positions like Rubin and Taylor do while the rest of the list is probably going to be players who do one thing well.

Early Rounds

Fletcher Cox Miss St. (6-4, 298lbs)

Cox will be an immediate impact player coming into the NFL. His game isn't perfect but it is perfect for the NFL. Turn on some tapes of this guy and you can't help but to notice him all over the field. He is a player who played DE and DT and made plays from both positions. He is a player that can play in any scheme in the NFL and have success. Early in the offseason process I couldn't believe more people were not talking about him but now, the talk has caught up to his ability. He is quicker than offensive guards and he runs a 4.7 forty so he can easily rush from the outside against tackles. As long as the background checks come back ok Cox is a player who won't make it out of the top ten so Cleveland would probably have to trade back in order to draft Cox but I couldn't leave him off my list…..my conscience wouldn't allow me to.

Michael Brokers LSU (6-5, 322lbs)

Brokers is a coveted player because he is young (redshirt SO.) and talented. He has great athleticism for a player his size and his game as a whole reminds me of Cleveland Brown Phil Taylor because he is stout against the run and although he doesn't have elite pass rush skills per say……the combination of his size and athletic ability creates a player who can collapse the pocket and get QB sacks.

Another tremendous asset of Brockers is his arm length, his arms are 35 inch arms long which is even longer than Phil Taylor's. Needless to say, Brockers had the longest arms from a DT at the combine. Those arms are huge weapons when separating from lineman and as well as getting into passing lanes.

Devon Still Penn St. (6-4, 303lbs)

Devon Still is a player who always had outstanding potential and he finally put it all together this year at Penn St. He wreaked havoc on the BIG TEN all year which earned him defensive player of the year and defensive lineman of the year in the conference.

Still showed this year he could turn the intensity up and play hard for a long period of time. He also showed a high level of power and good athleticism to chase down plays. There were times during games where he was determined not to stay blocked and he didn't.

There will be some concerns about Still maintaining what he did this year in college once he gets into the NFL in addition to GMs that will question whether he will stay motivated in the NFL over the full length of the game but for a team like Cleveland who is looking for a dominant player to put in a rotation with two other dominate players Still may be the perfect match. He isn't overly explosive when it comes to athletic measureables but he proved this year he can have off the charts determination.

Kendell Reyes UConn (6-4, 299)

Reyes is an interesting prospect because he is just getting used to playing in the big man's world of the trenches. He went to UConn after being a 3 sport star in high school and weighing

245lbs and he grew into a 300 pound athletic DT prospect.

He played some at DE during his college career and he will probably be ranked pretty high on the draft board's of teams that run the 3-4 because of his versatility. Reyes was timed at 4.79 in the forty yard dash which is moving for a DT and he is also incredibly strong pumping out 36 reps of 225lbs. I put Reyes on the list because he is strong enough to compete as a DT in Cleveland's scheme and he is definitely a candidate to play in pass rush situations. Reyes is also a versatile player who could play DE in a pinch because of his athleticism.

Mid Rounds (3-5)

Derek Wolfe Cincinnati (6-5, 295lbs)

Derek Wolfe is a player that may not last until the 3rd round like some think he will because he is a player that is strong in all facets of the game. He isn't a player that wows in any single phase of the game but he is solid throughout. Wolfe had 20 tackles for loss and 9.5 sacks so he can be a penetrator who makes plays on the opposing team's side of the field and he has a strong upper body which was on display as he pumped out 33 reps in the bench press.

He doesn't always play with the lower body strength needed to hold off a double team but he always puts up a good fight. He is also a player that may fit a 3-4 better than a 4-3 but these are the type of tweeners that make really good rotational players because being in a rotation allows them to maintain their strength throughout a game.

Mike Martin Michigan (6-1, 306)

Martin is a DT who gets labeled as too small until you have to block him. He is the classic lunch pail player that has a nonstop motor. He also has great upper body strength (36 reps) to go along with really good speed (4.8) for the position. He tested well in the agility drills as well but the Martin is a player you have to see in action to fully respect. He will work harder and longer than anyone on the team and although Martin's stats won't jump off the paper he has played in multiple fronts and played well in all of them. He is the perfect candidate to add to a team if you

have a need for a tough SOB that is going to show up to work every day and give you relentless effort.

Akiem Hicks Regina (6-4, 318lbs)

Akiem Hicks is on my list because he is a small school player who dominated the competition at his level and has potential to be a really good professional. Hicks isn't exactly popping out of nowhere, he was top JUCCO kid a few years back and chose LSU as the place he wanted to playat. When he got to LSU he had to sit out a year because of some type of recruiting violations and later chose to transfer to Regina. The one thing you can easily notice if you get a chance to see Hicks operate is his really active and strong hands which is essential for success in the NFL. Hicks is a solid talent who should blossom under the guidance of an NFL team.

Late Rounds (6-7)

Jaye Howard Florida (6-3, 301lbs)

Howard is a player who may be more of a 4th or 5th round player on NFL draft boards so the Browns may have to actually take him with one of their two 5th round picks instead of waiting until a 6th round compensatory pick but he is worth a pick in my book in. Howard is a very athletic big man that is better suited to play in a penetrating defensive scheme rather than one that plays at the line of scrimmage

I like him for the under tackle position because he could be an excellent sub-package player in passing situations. Howard isn't going to get too much bigger and he struggles against double teams but he is really quick and fast (4.75/40) with good hands so he is ideal for the nickel early in his career and he could eventually improve his technique enough against the run to get in a rotation.

DaJohn Harris USC (6-3, 306lbs)

Harris may not be drafted at all because during the NFL Combine Cleveland Browns doctor found Harris had a condition called PFO which is something dealing with a hole in the flap valve of the heart. Everyone has the condition initially but normally it heals itself. Harris lately has said his personal doctor emailed all the teams clearing him but whenever you are dealing with health issues teams may shy away.

If the condition is something that is a non issue Harris is a player with potential. He is stout against the run and would be an ideal candidate for a backup NT in our 4-3 defense. He is a player who has some stamina issues and needs to improve his pass rush moves but as a late pick he has solid potential to improve the roster depth.

Sleeper

Travian Robertson South Carolina (6-4, 300lbs)

Robertson is a player with over 31 starts in his career. He isn't fast or extremely athletic but he is pretty quick and plays the game with good leverage. Robertson isn't going to be a difference maker in the league but he has solid ability and could be a good addition to the roster. He is a player who could be a nice spell for the starters and he has the potential to be more if he puts in the work to fix his technical flaws.

Projected Pick

I am picking a combination on this one, I think the Browns will end up with Jaye Howard and Akiem Hicks. Howard will immediately be a pass rush option in Cleveland's nickel package and Hicks is a player who can develop into a really good DT given the proper time and coaching. I think the Browns have a really good defensive line coach in Dwaine Board who can develop both of them into good NFL players.

With all that being said I also want to put it out there that if Cleveland does acquire additional 2nd or 3rd round picks I think the Browns will take a DT earlier but for now with the picks the way they are I think these two players will be a good addition to the group and they both have

potential to help the team over the next few years.

Well Browns fans the May is getting closer and the list of positions I have left to preview is getting smaller so it is only a matter of time before we will be on the 3 day journey called the NFL Draft…Until next time….Go Browns!