

NFL Network Media Conference

Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Daniel Jeremiah

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us today on the NFL Network media availability with NFL Network analyst Daniel Jeremiah to preview the 2021 NFL Draft.

Before I turn it over to Daniel, I wanted to highlight a couple of NFL Network programming notes. NFL Network provides live coverage of the 2021 NFL Draft from Cleveland April 28 through May 1. First round coverage begins on Thursday April 29 at 8:00 p.m. eastern time with Daniel, Rich Eisen, Charles Davis, Stanford head David Shaw, Kurt Warner, Joel Klatt, Ian Rapoport, and Melissa Stark.

NFL's draft coverage continues Friday April 30th at 7:00 p.m. eastern time with rounds 2 and 3 and concludes Saturday May 1st at 12:00 noon eastern with rounds 4 through 7.

Daniel releases his final mock draft of the year on Wednesday April 28th at 8:00 p.m. eastern on NFL Network. And please follow @NFLmedia on Twitter for additional information and updates. I'll now turn it over to Daniel for some opening comments.

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, thank you guys for hopping on here today. It feels like this has been the longest run-up to a draft that I can remember, but it's finally here, so I'm excited about it. It's a unique draft with all the quarterbacks potentially going in the top 10. Creates a lot of excitement, and we've already had some trades. I think we're going to see more.

It's going to be a fun draft. I'm looking forward to getting out to Cleveland on Sunday and really taking it all in there for the whole week. Should be an exciting time for everyone.

With that, I'm ready to go. Just fire away.

Q. Daniel, I noticed that you have Mac Jones as your 32nd ranked prospect but yet you have him going No. 3 overall to the 49ers. Can you walk us through that process of where the disparity is between your feelings and then what you believe the 49ers' feelings are? And maybe as specific as you can get, why do



NETWORK

you think the 49ers are so high on Mac Jones whereas you surely are not?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Sure. First of all, thanks for not mentioning that the Giants are ahead of the Padres right now.

Look, to me that's the difference. That's the difference between creating your own list, how you stack the players, how you rank them, how you view them versus a mock draft, which is projecting where you think these guys are going to go.

The challenge that I have is that I'm not scouting for a team. I don't have coaches coming in and saying, This is what we value, this is what we -- if we could tailor our team to what we really want to do here, this is going to help us rank our board.

So I'm scouting for a generic team that doesn't exist. So I'm going to be a little more inclined to take the guys with more upside that I think fits in more places that can do more things.

I don't think Mac Jones fits all 32 teams. I don't think he fits all the teams that are in the quarterback market. But I understand why the 49ers value what he does, because this is really an opportunity for San Francisco to duplicate what Mac Jones had at Alabama, which is you have a really good offensive line, you've got guys that can win one-on-one match-ups all over the field, and you've got a very creative play caller that's going to find those match-ups and then rely on an accurate, efficient quarterback to function in that system.

Well, that's not -- every other team doesn't have all those things in place, so they're not going to value Mac the way Kyle Shanahan and John Lynch might value him. That's a little bit where that disconnect is.

Look, if he goes to the 49ers, he's going to play well, he's going to be a really good player there. To me I just have him behind those other quarterbacks when I rank them in terms of their ability.

Personally I always like to interject there, this is what I think is going to happen, it looks like it points towards Mac



Jones, but if I was there even with knowing how much they value the things that Mac is good at, I would still take Trey Lance because I think Trey is going to eventually get to the point where he can deliver all the things that Mac can deliver in terms of being able to process very quickly, make great decisions, and you're going to be able to do more with him in terms of getting him on the move.

Accuracy-wise he trails Mac Jones, but I think there are some mechanical things you can fix with him, much like we saw with Josh Allen, and I think you could see Trey Lance get to that level.

So that's what I would do, but what I believe they will do is Mac Jones.

Q. The Eagles obviously need corner help in this draft; they've hired a new defensive coordinator, who assuming Indianapolis has rubbed off on him, is going to use a lot of zone coverage, much more than Schwartz did last year. As a former scout, how does that influence the way that you evaluate the corner class, and might it influence their view of the top corners in this class with respect to maybe Newsome and Samuel go up higher on their board than they would if somebody else was their defensive coordinator?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, I think it's a great point. Obviously your scheme is going to inform how you stack the players and what they'll do for you.

I think Assante Samuel is one of those guys who a lot of teams are high on and maybe he hasn't got as much buzz. He doesn't fit everyone. But again, if you want to play off and just let him see the field, see through the receiver to the quarterback and drive and make plays, he's going coveted.

I think it's a good point to me, when you look at that defense with the Colts and you kind of go back through that scheme and trace it back through Marinelli, that scheme was more front dependent than coverage dependent.

That's why to me I could see them going with an edge rusher. If the Eagles were going to move around, which with Howie you always know that's an opportunity, even when he's at 12, I don't know if he's going to stay there; he's going to go up or down again.

If he goes up you could make a case for somebody like a Pitts on the offensive side. But to me if they slide down in the draft, it's going to point more towards the edge rush and trying to get some more young guys in there.

I like Sweat, he's going to be a good player, but Brandon is getting a little bit older and so finding another guy there-- I think that defense is more front-to-back driven than back-to-front driven.

Q. It seems like teams are maybe moving on quicker than ever from quarterbacks. I don't know if you sense that, too, but what is your theory for maybe why that is? And also, what do you think that means for a team's appetite for risk in taking a quarterback as in like if it's easy to move on from a guy after three years or whatever, if it's more acceptable, are GMs more apt to roll the dice on a guy in round 1?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, to me it's not as cost prohibitive as it used to be, so you don't have these monster rookie contracts that you're committed to the long-term. You have a lot more turnover in terms of head coaches and GMs. That cycle has been shrunk. So teams have been, Okay, we're not married to a guy -- it used to be you had the GM, the head coach, and the quarterback in place for a long period of time, and whatever their warts were, these are our guys and we're going to roll with them and try to build around them.

And now when you have so much turnover, these coaches and GMs are not married to these quarterbacks. They walk into the room and they're like, This wasn't my guy. I want to go get my guy. So that's part of it.

You're not going to have the penalties financially that you would have in years past, and I think to me like the -- kind of the turning point was with Arizona, when you could say, Man, we just took Josh Rosen, and one year later we just said, Nope, we're cutting it and running and we're going to upgrade the position, and if we feel like there's an opportunity to upgrade, we would do it at every other position, but forever we wouldn't do it at quarterback. You'd say, Well, he's good enough. But man, you're always trying to get better at the other positions. It only makes more sense you try and get better at that one.

I think it's just been a total shift over the last couple years, and I don't think it's going away. That's why to me, I think we identify who the teams are that are in the quarterback market, but when you really look at it and you say, well, if you think you can just get this much better, then there might be more teams in the quarterback market than we all know.

Q. If you're Denver, how do you weigh Drew Lock's potential versus these quarterback prospects? And out of Lance, Fields, and Jones, which do you think would constitute an upgrade there?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, I would have Lance and Fields just based off kind of the evaluation process. I would have Lance and Fields ahead of where Drew Lock was coming in.

I would have Drew Lock over Mac Jones personally. And look, that's when they were coming through the draft process.

I know Drew has had some ups and downs, but you see the flashes of what he can do. He's got a ton of ability.

So if you're asking me if they're sticking and picking and they're picking there at No. 9 and either Lance or Fields were there, even though you have some other areas and even though you can make a case, let's give Drew Lock a little more time, I couldn't pass up either of those guys if they were to get there to No. 9 personally.

That's where he would stack in for me. If it was him versus Mac Jones, I think Mac has been a little more accurate and maybe a little bit more consistent. I think I would still dream on what Drew Lock can be and probably stick with him if that were to be the decision.

Q. Just curious, the Jets' second first-round pick at No. 23, wanted to get your thoughts on where you see them going there, and I would think you'd put cornerback as a possibility there. Are there any corners that fit Robert Saleh's defense than others?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, that's a good question. I think you could say Greg Newsome would make some sense there at 23 out of Northwestern, who's somebody that's just long and rangy and can really play the football, which is going to help pretty much any scheme.

But that is what Saleh is accustomed to, having those bigger guys. So he would make sense there.

You kind of look at three places in my opinion. You've got the corners you can look at. You might be kind of an in between spot there, so that could be a trade back a little bit and maybe you look at somebody like that.

You've got the edge rushers, which I think that's a pretty good spot for an edge rusher if you're interested in one. I think you'll see that between 15 and 25 I think via teams moving around, I think that's what you're going to see a bunch of these edge rushers go. So they're going to be right in the mix of the edge rusher, whether that's a guy like Ojulari, Greg Rousseau, see what happens with Phillips. Those would be opportunities there.

But I mean, those are the defensive opportunities.

For me if you're trying to put yourself in that situation, this whole draft would be about Zach Wilson for me, at least early on. We're going to devote as many resources as we can to give him the opportunity that Sam didn't have, which is to have some good people in front of him and a lot of options of where to go with the football.

You look at pick 23 offensive line-wise. If somehow Vera-Tucker were to get there, that's the home run of all home run picks. Darrisaw is somebody that's interesting.

They've got a bunch of different ways they can go. It's a good news bad news. The bad news is you've got a bunch of needs. The good news is you've got a bunch of picks, so they're going to be able to go in different directions, depending on how it falls.

Q. My question is about Christian Barmore. I think in the latest mock you didn't have him going in the first round. What do you think about the range where you expect him to get picked, pros and cons for him, and then did the Browns releasing Sheldon Richardson do anything for you as a potential landing spot?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: No, I think he goes -- he could sneak into the back end of one. I think more than likely he goes in round 2. He fits the profile of what traditionally are the second-round guys in that he's a little bit of a boom-bust player where you have high highs and then you've got some inconsistent lower lows.

At Alabama, some of the stuff that you had to do at Alabama, I don't know if that suited him, as well. To me he's more of an up-field guy, let him use his athleticism to attack an edge and work up field.

Asking him to kind of play blocks and hang in there, that's really not his style even though he's a big guy at 6'4", 310. So to me he's a 3 technique who has got some real athleticism to jump in gaps, get up field, and go.

That to me kind of -- it puts him for me in the second round mix. I think he's my 42nd player. So that's kind of where I have him.

Would I be shocked if he were to go -- Browns are what, 26? Is that a big reach? I don't think that's a big reach. If you feel like he fits what you do.

But I think there is some risk involved. There's some games where he just kind of disappears. So the ability is there, but that's kind of where I have him.

Q. Was that a ho-hum move for you or did that raise your eyebrows at all when they cut Richardson?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: No, it didn't register as a big-time move there. The challenge is in this draft, which is so light at defensive tackle -- I mean, it is what it is. It's the worst defensive tackle group that I've seen since I started in 2003.

I mean, I've got two guys really -- when you talk about Barmore and Onwuzurike, whatever order you want to put those in, I have Onwuzurike, but those are the only two guys I would be fired up in the first 75, 80 picks.

It's just a really thin, thin year. Maybe it was eye-raising just from that standpoint knowing that there's not a lot of reinforcements coming.

Q. Concentrating on the Eagles, if Smith, Waddle, and Surtain are there at 12, who would you take, and who do you think the Eagles will take? And I have a quarterback question right after that.

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, that's a good question. I don't know that there's a bad pick. I don't know that you make a pick there and say, this player wasn't worthy of that pick. Now selfishly just how I would stack them, I know they took a receiver last year with Reagor, and I know you don't want to keep going back to those types of positions in the first round. You want to build at the more premier positions, which corner would out rank wide receiver.

But I would sake Waddle. He's too intriguing to me with what he can do, and in a league where you need explosive plays, he gives those to you. He's going to take a lot of pressure off the quarterback. He's going to have an influence on the run game, as well.

Anything that you might have liked about Jalen Reagor, Jaylen Waddle does all those things infinitely better. To me at least you put him out there, you hope Reagor continues to grow and now you've got a track team with those two guys out there because they can both fly.

That would be the way I go. Again, I like Devonta Smith. He is ranked right behind him, 5 and 6 on my list, and Surtain is my top corner. It come down to guessing what they want to do. I would say if I am guessing what they would do in that situation, I would say it would be hard for them to go receiver in back to back years. I would guess they would go corner. I would take Waddle.

Q. Today at their pre-draft meeting, Nick Sirianni wouldn't commit to Jalen Hurts as his quarterback. Is that just lip service by Nick Sirianni, or would you have

questions about Jalen Hurts?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, I mean, Jalen hasn't proven a lot, so I don't know that it's insulting or something like that that he's not named the starting quarterback. I think the other thing you know about Jalen if you talk to the people at Alabama, you talk to the people at Oklahoma, and you talk to everybody in Philadelphia last year, he's incredibly competitive.

I have no problem with lighting a little bit of a fire there and saying you don't have anything right now. You've got to come in, you've got to earn it. It's a new coaching staff. I don't think that's out of the ordinary.

Q. As we get to the end of this process, obviously it's the second straight year that the whole pre-draft process has been conducted under some very unusual circumstances with the pandemic, how do you think the comfort level and the confidence in the evaluations and the medical information compares this year to last year and then versus a normal year?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: I think the biggest deal is the medical, is the medical information. Last year, as weird as it was, we got the combine in, so you had 330 plus guys that had good medical.

This year you only end up having 150 guys go to Indy and several players with COVID or other reasons you had some key players that didn't make it there.

You've got incomplete medical information on these guys, and nothing scares a general manager more than not having the medical, to the point where you're scrambling -- you might have a guy that kind of pops up out of nowhere late in the process and you would save some of your 30 minutes, right -- you can bring 30 guys in the building. You would save a couple of those for these quote-unquote pop-up guys that had great pro days so you could bring them in and get your physicals on him, because you weren't going to pick them. You wouldn't pick them if you didn't have a physical on a player.

Well, the math doesn't work out. When you look at the number of picks and you look at the number of physicals, there's going to be a lot of guys that get picked this year that teams are not comfortable with medically, and that's why I think you're going to see teams very willing to part with late picks in this draft to move up in rounds 3 and 4 and all the way up into round 2, and you're going to see teams comfortable with trading some picks this year for picks next year just because once we get to the back half of the draft you're literally flying blind on these kids medically.

Q. And what about the non-medical side? Do you think the confidence is down considerably on the football evaluations?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, I think with the opt-out guys it's different. That's all unique. But for the most part, most of the opt-out guys did really well with their pro days, showed up in shape, and I think teams have got to the point outside of a few where they're pretty comfortable with that.

The rest of it, even though it was a shortened season, you got a chance to see these guys run around a little bit. At least the D1 guys. So the people that it would impact are the opt-outs and then some of the non-Division I players that didn't have a season this year.

Even some of those key guys, like Ellerson and Spencer Brown from Northern Iowa. Those guys didn't have a season but they went to the Senior Bowl, so we've seen them on the field relatively recently in pads and seen them move around.

To me the football side of it, people aren't freaked out about the football side of the evaluation. People are majorly freaked out about the medical stuff.

Q. I wanted to ask you about Trey Lance. You mentioned him off the top of the call when I think you were asked about Mac Jones. Could you tell us what you understand were some of the responsibilities that were put on his shoulders in that offense at North Dakota State, how rare maybe some of those responsibilities were, and up here in Boston we're wondering if he's a fit for the Patriots, so could you tell us how you envision that match?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, he had responsibility in terms of protections. He had responsibility in terms of checks. So he had a lot more on his plate than most guys, especially in his first year as a starter they put a lot more on those guys.

And then just the variety of offense that they ran, being under center a lot for one thing, which you just don't see much anymore in college football. A lot of play action back to the defense, those things, full progression reads.

So he's played in a complex, complicated system where he had a good amount of responsibility on his shoulders, and so even though the starts are what they are, you've got 17 starts to work off of, the guy is -- what we know like is irrefutable. He's built like a brick house, so he's going to be durable. He's going to add to your running game because you can use some designed quarterback run

game, which he's built to handle.

He's incredibly intelligent, and that's -- I've spent time with him, and I've talked to a bunch of teams that have spent time with him and have been kind of blown away through the interview process with him. The character, the work ethic, all that stuff is exceptional from everybody that you talk to there at North Dakota State.

So all those things like we know going in he's got all that stuff. Now there's some mechanical things he can work on, like he bounces on his toes a little bit when he gets to the top of his drop and then he'll sink before he throws and you'll see it impact his accuracy. That stuff is all fixable. John Beck and those guys have been working on that. He's going to be able to clean that stuff up.

Everything you have you love, and the things that aren't maybe where you want them, are all correctable. That's why, yeah, I'm in. I know the limited number of games. I get all that. But when you have a guy with this skill set and then you match the skill set with the intelligence that he has, he's going to figure it out. I firmly believe it.

So would he be a fit for the Patriots? Heck yes.

Q. You mentioned Greg Newsome earlier briefly. You have him I believe in your latest mock draft going to the Bears. What do you like about him as a player? You also mentioned that they may go offensive tackle, so who would be some of the offensive tackles that would be available in that first spot at No. 20?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, for Newsome we'll start there. He's a really loose, fluid athlete so you start there. His movement stuff is phenomenal. He's got incredible ball skills. He can find and play the ball, which to me is like the number one non-negotiable for me at that position. You've got to be able to find and play the ball. He does that really well.

The only knock when you watched him on tape was like, okay, I questioned just how much pure juice does he have, how much top speed. He wasn't really challenged vertically in any of the games I studied, so I was curious about that and he goes and runs 4.38. So he answered the bell on that one.

The one thing in talking to teams, they have concerned about, you put it in the negative column, he's missed a lot of games. He's missed some games in just about every year, so from a durability standpoint he gets dinged a little bit.

But everything else checks out. Everything I've heard

about the kid, he's a great kid. You're in good shape there.

When you get to the tackles that could be there, it's an interesting group of guys. You're talking about probably Darrisaw would be one that you would be staring out there.

One that I think I have -- I'm going to move him up in my final ranking; he's at 41 for me; he'll probably end up in the early 30s -- but Dillon Radunz from North Dakota State. When you go to this part of the process, I go back, I'm trying to get organized for the draft, so I'm just plugging in all my notes and making sure I have it all dialed in and ready to go.

You kind of go back through it and you're like, Man, this guy reads really well, the way he moves, he's really smart and instinctive. He's tough. He's good in the run game. He had a great Senior Bowl week.

Dillon Radunz from North Dakota State is one of those guys, I could see him maybe going up there a little bit higher than we had initially expected.

Now, is that a little bit early maybe where the Bears are? Yeah, maybe. Maybe trade back a little bit. But he's an intriguing player.

Q. You talked about Mac Jones and his fit with the 49ers and how he could succeed there, but given Kyle Shanahan's ability to hand pick his own quarterback, what's your thoughts on the 49ers being able to look for that perfect fit for their offense compared to maybe what we've seen with the Chiefs and Patrick Mahomes being able to adjust your offense to the quarterback?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, I think that's a great question. I think that's the decision that they have to make.

The thing that's interesting is Kyle has that recent history of saying, I've been in two Super Bowls, probably should have won two Super Bowls, running this offense and operating it with this style of quarterback, and if not for -- if Garoppolo doesn't miss a throw, if Matt Ryan doesn't take a sack, then maybe he's got two Super Bowl rings to verify that this is the right type of guy, the right type of player to run this offense and I think we can win the ultimate prize.

I think with Andy Reid, Andy had had so much success and hadn't been able to finish the deal, and the one Super Bowl experience he did have was with Favre, so I think in the back of his mind, as good as this offense is with an efficient, accurate quarterback, man, if I can get somebody with that next level of ability, this can go to a whole new level.

So I always thought the Favre thing was in the back of

Andy's mind, and he found that, obviously, maybe more with Patrick Mahomes.

That's why I'm intrigued to see what Kyle could do with somebody like a Trey Lance or a Justin Fields, but he's had so much recent success and come so close to winning Super Bowls with his regular style of quarterback that Mac Jones fits into that perfectly.

That to me is the decision; do you want to try and believe in what you've always done and continue down that path, or do you want to try and see where this can go from here, which does come with some risk, but that's the ultimate decision they have to make.

Q. Bills at 30, I know in your last mock you had them with Joe Tryon. Do you think the edge rusher run could miss them or could end before their pick, and who do you like at 30 for Buffalo? How do you see that?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, that's a good one. I think that's, again, that's kind of where that edge rush group is. There's some intrigue with that. You kind of have that group with Kwity Paye up there. Jaelan Phillips is always going to be dependent on where teams are with him, the stuff off the field because on the field he's a top 10 pick.

So that will determine where he goes. He's got a wide range of where he could come off the board. You've got Ojulari, that first group there; Rousseau took on a little bit of water after his pro day. I'm sticking with him. I still believe in him. I really like him.

But around the league I think he's somebody that's going to fall towards the back of one and maybe into the top of two. So he could be there in the mix for Buffalo.

The other thing for Buffalo I would not rule out with them, go on the defensive side of the ball and just continue to work around the edges, continue to add talent in the secondary. That wouldn't surprise me. You can't have too many corners.

But Tryon to me is like that -- he's right in the fairway. I think he'll be there when they pick. I think he fits. I think he's a really good player. If you wanted to trade back and still go defense and you wanted to find an edge rusher I think Payton Turner probably goes off early in the second round from Houston who's another one who would give them some intriguing edge rush opportunities there.

I think they'll get at tight end at some point in time, but I don't think there's going to be one that they're going to take there at 30.

Q. What would your pitch be to Vikings fans of why they're in a good spot at 14 with I guess the run on quarterbacks, receivers, some corners and Pitts and a couple offensive linemen? Why are they in a prime spot at 14?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, I mean, look, they're going to have potentially an opportunity to get the best edge rusher in the draft, if that's what they're looking to do. They could get at least who they have as the highest rated edge rusher. That's going to be an opportunity for them right there.

You look at the linebacker position, if they wanted to reinforce that, you get the best linebacker in the draft at that point in time. There's a chance that Parsons could be there if you wanted to go there.

So there's going to be really good defensive options. I also think along the offensive line, man, I mentioned his name a little bit, but Vera-Tucker, he's one of my favorite players in the whole draft. He can play darned near anywhere. I think he's going to be an all pro guard. He can hold up at tackle if you wanted him to. But you want to get better along that offensive line, I think he's just one of the cleanest, safest picks in the whole draft.

Those are just some examples of the Vikings are going to have the pick of the litter at some of these positions, and they're in a really good spot.

Q. More specific about Shanahan's personality, he's obviously very confident. Would you view the Mac Jones pick there as Kyle being confident and bordering on arrogant, that I just need someone to follow instructions and run the offense, and he's that, and that's all we need? Would it be kind of a stubbornness of no, I'm not going -- I don't need to join the trend with these other type of quarterbacks, I don't need to expand the offense, I don't need to add these various wrinkles. I know that comes off as something negative the way I've couched it, but do you think there's anything to that, or is that a little bit much?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: No, look, I think if you talk to some people around the league, they would say if they take Mac Jones, that's an arrogant decision, that's just believing so much in your system that it is -- I've used the line, you always hear it's about the Jimmies and Joes, not the Xs and Os. It is I believe so much in the Xs and Os, I need somebody that can just see the game through my eyes and make those decisions.

I don't call it arrogance because I don't know how you

argue with them. You watch the tape every week of these teams and Kyle gets guys more open than anybody else in the league and there's a reason why so many teams are picking off guys from his tree to run that offense, because it's the best offense there is.

My thing that -- I didn't mention this earlier, and I give my move to 6, Bucky Brooks, a lot of credit on this because he's brought up the fact that if you take Mac Jones for the Niners, and we agree he's going to be a fit and play well there, but I don't know you can make a case that you don't have the fourth-best quarterback in that division and it's going to be that way for the foreseeable future.

I've added on to that to say you've got the Rams who will be running the same exact offense with Matthew Stafford whose ability to make some -- he just can make plays that Mac is not going to be able to make.

So you're going to have to be better at all these other positions. And they are. They're in a good spot. But that's where I struggle with it, is do I think whoever -- whoever the 49ers pick, is he going to be successful? Yes, because Kyle is so good, the roster is so good, they're going to plug him in and they're going to be good.

But I just look at it and say, Man, Trey Lance or Justin Fields could do what we saw -- when Aaron Rodgers and you saw him plugged into that system and you saw him and go, Okay, Aaron has always been good, but now we have a great offense with an elite player at that position.

I think you're going to see it with Stafford in a great system with an elite quarterback. You've seen it with Mahomes with Andy Reid. When you pair those up -- an elite play caller and a good quarterback, you can win a Super Bowl. An elite player and an elite play caller, you can become a dynasty, and that's why I would lean in the other direction.

Q. Touching on the Falcons' situation, but after the quarterbacks go, Jones, are you inclined to take Fields at that point or do you take the tight end or the big tackle?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, again, this is like a Trey Lance pep rally, but if Mac Jones goes 3 and I'm the Falcons, personally I would take Trey Lance. I'd be okay if they took the tight end. You take Pitts, I think he's the second best player in the draft. He'll be dynamic, and I think for the next couple years with Matt Ryan you'll have a lot of success.

I don't know that that roster is ready to win a Super Bowl right now, but to me if I'm looking at the long-term for the organization, what's the best decision, for my money it

would be to take Trey Lance or Justin Fields and have that next guy.

Now, he might not get on the field much for two years with Matt Ryan and I'm sure Matt would be frustrated about bringing in another quarterback, and I do hear from a lot of folks that Arthur Smith is rightfully so very high on Matt Ryan for the next few years, but if they make the decision for next year and the year after, you take Pitts.

If you're making the decision for the future of the franchise which extends beyond a decade, to me I think the smart thing to do would be able to get that next quarterback and have him in the pipeline and ready to go.

Those are the things there. And then the other option is, man, I think you're going to get a lot of opportunities -- I would expect, because everybody I talk to outside the top 10 always is curious where Pitts is going to go, and usually that means they'd be interested in moving up for him if they did have an opportunity.

I'm sure they'll have opportunities to get out of there if they'd like.

Q. How are you stacking the safeties? It's a pretty interesting group, and how is LeCount from Georgia fitting in there after his injury this year?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: I just did this this last weekend, and I have my top 150 will come out next week. But I went through and stacked all the positions. So my safeties, I have Moehrig from TCU, Jevon Holland from Oregon, Richie Grant from UCF. Then I have Divine Deablo from Virginia Tech and Andre Cisco from Syracuse, Cisco coming of an injury.

I have LeCount right after Cisco. When you look at LeCount and you look at him on paper, you see the pro day he ran a 4.76 and you're like, Oh, my -- no way he's going to be the sixth safety off the board.

But his tape is really good, and in talking to a bunch of teams that have all the GPS data, he plays like if you were going to do the equivalent, he plays like a 4.4 safety. That's how he plays on the field. He had the accident which we mentioned. I don't think he's fully recovered from that yet. Did not run well at his pro day, but most of the teams I've talked to are forgiving the workout and believing in what they saw in the player on tape. I still think he factors into that. Probably the fourth round will probably be where he ends up going.

Q. Factoring in some of the safety protocols and the league things that happened in light of the pandemic

the last couple off seasons, how do you see scouting departments adjust or maybe change their evaluation processes and what are some of the long-term changes you see that might stick with these guys in the future?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Sure, so me the Zoom stuff, while they were a little bit reluctant at first, everybody I've talked to from the coaching side and the personnel side has really enjoyed the Zoom interviews because with the technology, the ability to share your screen, the ability to have five different one-hour interviews with these guys, so instead of meeting with them for 15 minutes at the combine, you only had 30 visits where you could bring players in, so you might only bring -- depending on what your needs are, you might only bring in four or five linebackers that come in for your 30 visit where you can spend the whole day with them and get a feel for them.

Now you can have 30 linebackers which you've had three or four different one-hour Zooms with where you've gone over video with them, you've asked them what they see, what their checks were. You can learn so much about their knowledge as a football player over those Zoom meetings. So that's here to stay. They enjoyed that process.

Other things, I did hear the biggest issue with the scouts was just not getting physically on the campus during the fall. I'll give you a great example. I was talking to somebody that was at a quarterback pro day the other day, and they said they ran into an assistant trainer on the training staff, which you're not going to talk to him on the phone but you just happen to bump into him, and he happened to have been around this quarterback a lot over the last two to three years. He said, I got more good information from this assistant trainer than I got from any of my calls or Zooms with my coordinators, coaches, strength coaches, head strength coach. So it's kind of those bump interviews, right. Whoever you bump into on the school visit, you might get some really good information.

That to me not being on the campus in the fall, that was definitely something that they missed in talking to the scouts.

Q. With sort of these major waves of data that are going to be coming available to all teams here in the future, how do you think scouting departments are preparing for that because some teams are beefing up analytics departments but in terms of that marriage, that partnership between the two, are you seeing certain changes start to trickle through?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Oh, yeah. It's happening, and it's happening fast. What you're seeing -- to me you're getting

guys that can get the information, then what I've seen really kind of develop is you've had the information then would be a part of the personnel department, and now what you're seeing is you've got the information, you've got the coaching staff and the personnel department, but then they're bringing in the training staff to be able to say, Okay, when we look at all this data and we look at the physical data, not just like the production and all that stuff but the physical data, the GPS stuff, and to be able to say, Okay, this designates a problem, this is something that we can actually improve on, it's really become collaborative between that.

I think the days of having kind of your data folks off in a corner kind of just punching up some numbers and passing it off to people is over. The smart teams are bringing all these people in together and really kind of helping settle all this stuff up.

I think there was a good article on the Rams the other day about that, about some of the things they've been doing. That's not unique to them. There's teams all over the league that have really incorporated all this stuff.

Q. Some of the top corners in the draft had dads who played in the league at a high level. Do you think that matters at all to GMs? Is there any kind of comfort level there?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, no, yeah, it does. I think you're seeing it in a lot of sports right now. It's interesting. I'm a baseball fan and you can't turn on the TV without seeing Vlad Guerrero, Jr., or Tatis or Bichette and Biggio; it seems like all these kids are coming up, and they've grown up around the game. The transition is not going to be a big deal to those guys in any of these sports. They're comfortable. They grew up around teams and locker rooms and they've learned kind of to stay -- most of the once I've talked to are more even keel. They don't get carried away with the highs or the lows because they've seen their dad experience all that stuff and he's been able to kind of guide them through that.

Yeah, I think it's very helpful. We used to always have the arguments in draft rooms about brothers. I think personally it's more valuable if you've had a father that's been through it and you've kind of grown up with it your whole life as opposed to maybe an older brother who is a couple years ahead of you that went through it. I just remember one draft meeting where we had a sibling who one scout really liked and another scout didn't.

So one scout trumpeted the genes and how great the genes were, and I remember the line I think was this guy is more Ozzie Canseco than he is José Canseco was the

response there. There's examples and times where it didn't work out, but I think the father-son thing, and this year is unique with all these guys -- I mean, gosh, it's Surtain, Horn, Samuel, Molden. I've never seen anything like where we've had this many guys at one position. I think it's pretty cool.

Q. With the Jets at No. 2, you mentioned a little bit earlier how Justin Fields would be such a great fit for the 49er offense. Obviously the Jets are running the same exact scheme, so what makes you think that -- you have Zach going over Justin. Why do you think Zach is a better fit than Justin?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, look, to me it's not -- they're not that far off with those top guys. To me there's Trevor, there's a little bit of a gap, and then to me I end up going with Zach as my No. 2 quarterback.

Some of those things I would say the difference, I think Zach plays with a little bit more urgency than Justin, just in terms of how quick his hands are, how quick the ball gets out, how quick he'll make decisions when he has to.

When he decides he wants to go, he goes.

I just thought the overall urgency he played with was a little bit of a differentiator between him and Trey and Justin.

I think he's a more gifted thrower. You can make a case just as a thrower that some people would take him over Trevor just as a pure thrower from every -- as you guys have all seen from every platform, from every arm angle. He can just do some unique things.

That to me is why I have him up there at No. 2. Do I wish he was a little bit bigger and sturdier? Sure. That's definitely a feather in the cap for the other three guys, but this kid's throwing ability is pretty unique. There's not many guys that can make some of the throws that you see Zach make, and I think that's kind of where the game has gone, and I think he fits in beautifully into that system.

I think Justin and Trey, I think that would add a little twist to that offense. I think what Zach can do in here is going to be pretty remarkable. It is a -- he was built to kind of be playing this system with the stretch boot and all that stuff, and again, just sitting back there -- some of the quickest hands I've seen from a quarterback prospect. When the ball separates from his left hand, just look at the time between when it separates from his left hand and when the ball is out. It's pretty impressive.

Q. Two areas for the New York Giants that are under real consideration: Wide receiver and edge rusher,

whether they go edge late in round 2 or whatever. When you look at wide receiver, you see Waddle or Smith as a better fit for the Giants, and which edge guys do you really see fit that Patrick Graham's scheme?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: So for me, when you start with the wide outs of who would fit better there, it's splitting hairs. I have Waddle over Devonta Smith, but you could say, okay, well, they've got -- with Slaton he can kind of stretch the field a little bit. I think Devonta Smith would give you that pure route runner that's going to be able to uncover and win on 3rd downs and be kind of Daniel Jones' best friend.

I love Waddle. I could make a case for Smith. To me, again, you're really kind of just splitting hairs there. I don't think there's a bad decision to be made.

I would probably just stick with the way that I have them stacked, which is I have Waddle over Devonta Smith, and then when you look at edge rushers, guys that can kind of fit there and what they do, gosh, I mean, to me Kwity Paye would give them a little bit more juice and kind of a fast ball off the edge, kind of complement the guys that they have; Greg Rousseau with his length and size could do a lot of things.

I think with him you're going to be able to let him sub rush inside and do some unique things. But just as a pure edge guy, yeah, I would probably be looking at Kwity as a really good fit there.

It might be too early for some teams to do that. Maybe that's a trade back, which I saw Gettleman did say the other day that was a possibility. I'm not buying it.

I think we'll see a right turn in a NASCAR race before we see Dave Gettleman trade back, so I don't see that happening.

Q. You already talked about the Broncos and the quarterback situation that they're in right now, but let's say they don't take a quarterback or maybe the one they want isn't there at No. 9. It looks like they would maybe target an offensive tackle, a linebacker or a corner. Which of those three positions if you were in the Broncos' shoes would you target and who's a guy at each of those spots that you think would fit well in Denver?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: I would love to get one of the tackles. I have Slater over Sewell, but I really like both of them. Again, I feel like there's some of these -- it would be easy to just say, This guy is going to be great and this guy is going to stink. This like black and white universe where

you can say only take this player, he's the only one that's going to work.

I think Slater and Sewell are both going to be really good and I think both of them would fit with just about any team. Slater gives you the versatility where he could probably play any of the five spots. Sewell is going to be -- I saw he's doing on work on the right side to get comfortable taking some sets over there. I would imagine with bowls kind of coming around and playing the way he did last year that Sewell just plugs right in at right tackle and off you go.

But those would be -- if you're not comfortable with one of those quarterbacks being an upgrade, that would be a place that I would look. I know they've added to the corner position, but to me I think there's going to be a good player there, as well.

Q. Just wondering if you were still working for the Browns, and I saw that you had in your mock, I saw that you had Davis at No. 26, knowing that the Browns just added Jadeveon Clowney, who would you go with at No. 26 in the event you had some good edge rushers, some good cornerbacks and some good wide receivers still available, maybe one at each of those positions ranked equally?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, to me I'm excited about Clowney coming there. Obviously his career has been defined by more disruption than production, but with the injury history being what it has been, his presence is not going to stop me from taking an edge rusher. If you feel like you have an edge rusher there that's an upgrade, do it. You can't have too many.

Again, Joe Tryon is probably one that will be in that range for me. I think he'd be a great fit there.

I've mentioned Rousseau who could slide a little bit. I think he would be a great fit there, as well. Linebacker-wise there are in a sweet spot. Jamin Davis is one of my favorite players in the draft.

I think when you look at the Tulsa linebacker he's probably going to be gone. He's getting some buzz as we are kind of coming down through the process. He reminds me of Anthony Barr. I think Zaven Collins is probably gone. But Bolton from Missouri worthy of going there who can really run, is a good player.

So those are like some really good options. I don't know if that's a bad one.

And then receiver-wise, I think unfortunately Terrence Marshall has had some medical stuff that popped at the

combine so I think that could cause him to slide a little bit. I think Rashod Bateman is probably going to be that guy that goes in that range, late one, early two.

A different style receiver is Elijah Moore who is undersized but one of my favorite guys because he can do so many different things. He's exciting.

But I was just talking about this the other day -- I know I am supposed to be answering questions but I'm going to ask you one -- because we were just talking -- I was talking with a team the other day and we brought up the Julio Jones trade, and I think the Falcons were picking right around where the Browns were picking when they made that bold move. They thought they were close and they went all the way up, and I was just thinking, if the Cleveland Browns were going to do something like that and kind of try and put the finishing touch on this roster, who would that be.

I know they paid Hopper, but, man, if Kyle Pitts was there at 7 and you're the Cleveland Browns and you want to mortgage a bunch of stuff to go get somebody, he would be fun.

I would be curious to know who you would target on that or who you think the Browns, what position they could look at if they wanted to be bold in this draft.

Q. Oh, boy, that's interesting. I could see the receiver position just because they have to start planning ahead for life after Odell and Jarvis, so that is one way they could go. But I don't see a big bold move up into the top 10 or anything like that.

DANIEL JEREMIAH: All right, you didn't want to play the game, that's fine. I want some excitement on draft night. I need somebody to make some bold, crazy moves. Maybe it won't be the Browns. That's okay.

Q. I have another quarterback question kind of a big picture thing. As Justin Fields began to sort of drift farther down the projections, there was some analysis that leaked out that questioned his work ethic and dedication. Coaches and teammates have kind of come out to refute those takes pretty harshly here. Do you have any suspicion as to where those sorts of opinions come from, and what would you say to the people who believe that Black quarterbacks are still held to a different standard either by the NFL or maybe just by the analysis industry?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, I mean, I think, look, there's a couple different aspects to this whole thing.

I always feel like in my job, all the information you get, you take it all in, right, and that can inform how you stack players, how you rank players, but you have to consider the sources of where it's coming from and put that kind of through the sifter to see, okay, what does this really mean considering who it's coming from.

I've always made a point -- this is not just about Justin but any player in general, there's no upside in ever saying anything publicly that you got negative on a player like that because you might get one negative source who had a bad experience with an individual player and you might get five other sources that come in and refute everything from that one person. I don't know what went on in their relationship, I don't know what their issue was, so I don't know what informed that opinion.

I always just as a practice have avoided any of that stuff with any player.

You don't want to see it because it detracts from the fact that this kid is incredibly talented. Everything that you hear in terms of his teammates, his coaches, everything has been very positive. And he's getting ready to embark on the biggest day of his life.

That's just kind of a personal choice on my end.

Look, in the draft rooms I was in, maybe there's something that -- I don't know the right way to put it, but I'm sure there's -- I'd be naïve to think that there weren't some racial influences on how maybe people would have viewed quarterbacks.

I just can't recall in my eight years it ever being spoken or questioned in that regard. It was equal. You'd have a White quarterback that had an issue, a Black quarterback had the issue. It was never really -- I don't know how to word that properly. I never noticed it in my time there, but I guarantee you that it exists and I'm sure it still exists with teams today.

But I hope we get to the point where we don't have this stuff happening anymore because it distracts from the fact of evaluating these players, and that's what this is all about.

Q. I actually have a non-quarterback question for the 49ers. They have the 43rd pick in the second round. They do need a defensive back. Who do you think will be available there that would fit into their system?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: For the 49ers at 43, some of the different areas I looked at for them -- let's see here, what did I have for the Niners? Yeah, you're looking at corners,

any type of D-linemen, to me when you're looking agent corners in the second round, you're going to see both the Georgia cornerbacks come off the board right around then.

That's kind of the sweet spot for them. When you talk about Tyson Campbell and Eric Stokes, I think both those guys kind of fit what they do in terms of their size and length and play making ability.

So those would be two that I would keep an eye on at that position.

When you're looking at defensive linemen, again, I don't think it's a great interior group, so when you're looking at some of the edge rushers, Payton Turner, Ronnie Perkins, those guys kind of in that mix.

We'll see if one of those bigger guys were to slide. I don't think they would get all the way down there, but Tryon, Payton Turner, Ronnie Perkins, those would be kind of three names I would keep an eye on.

Q. I'm wondering if three of the top Canadians in this class helped themselves at their pro days with some pretty impressive numbers. If I can go starting with Jevon Holland. He had a 4.46 40 and 10.6 broad jump.

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, he's my second safety and he think he goes in the top 50, so yeah, that definitely helped his cause at 207 pounds to run 4.46. He can play as the high safety, he can play as a nickel. He can do a lot of different things. So yeah, he helped himself.

Q. How about Minnesota corner Benjamin St. Juste with that 3.96 shuttle and 6.63 three-cone?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, another one who's kind of everybody's mid-round favorite big corner. We have a couple of those guys this year. To me in talking to teams around the league, him and Melifonwu were kind of the interesting one. Melifonwu from Syracuse. Again, I think St. Juste probably goes in the third or fourth round.

Q. Finally, did Oklahoma State running back Chuba Hubbard help himself with that 4.48 40, or was that just expected?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: He was a little bit faster than I thought, so yeah, no, I think he did help himself. For him I ended up with Hubbard -- where is he on here? Hubbard ended up being my eighth running back.

Again, that probably puts him in the third, fourth round range, right around there.

Q. If you're the Cardinals at 16 and the top three

receivers are off the board, probably as expected, and the top two corners are gone, can you see somebody falling there unexpectedly, and if so or if not, who would you take if you're the Cardinals then?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, to me you look at Aljiah Vera-Tucker would be another one I've talked about earlier. If all those guys end up going ahead, then he could be somebody that could be in play there, which I think would be a great fit for them to just plug in.

Safety, to me, Moehrig from TCU is the best safety in the draft. That's right about where I have him. Maybe he's a little bit lower than that. I'll pull up my list here and see where I ended up with him. He is my 19th player. So that's right around range.

He's like a double off the wall. Ozzie Newsome used to always say that. You get carried away in the first round trying to hit home runs and swing for the fences. There's nothing wrong with a double. Moehrig to me, if you got wiped out at wide out, that's not a bad way to go.

Q. Would you consider Caleb Farley that high?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, that's all purely medical. He's had a couple back procedures. If you are comfortable with him medically -- he was like my fifth or sixth player in the draft. He's a freak show. I was around Chris McAlister. That's who he reminded me of, so he is a big time, big time talent. That just comes down to your doctors and what their comfort level is with him physically. If they give you the okay and he passes, shoot, that would be a home run pick if he shows up and he's healthy.

Q. On Farley, I know you had him high. I think it was as high as fifth on the previous board. You had him dropping to 17. I'm sure the back surgery has a lot to do with it. Is it simply just about the back surgery or do you think timing also kind of plays into it, that teams really haven't gotten the best look at him, that he didn't work out, and maybe if he had it two months earlier or if he was able to have it earlier maybe it wouldn't have affected his stock. And two, if he slides to 17, 18, 19 before the Bears, before the Colts, before the Titans, if you're the Browns would you be willing to gamble and move up to get a player like him?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, I mean, it's a good question. It just is purely medical. In terms of the background on it, the timing wasn't ideal. Obviously you wish you could have had that procedure done a little bit earlier so that they could watch you move around and confirm that you were kind of back to what we've seen on the video, which is outstanding. He's got rare movement skills for a big corner

like that.

So the timing doesn't help.

But if you're the Browns and your medical staff has done their work and they give you the clean bill of health and there's not a long-term risk and they give you the thumbs up, absolutely he's somebody you go move up for. Yeah, again, I think he's the most talented corner in the whole draft. That's one of those decisions that's really not going to be made by general managers, it's going to be made by your doctor.

Q. Considering the problems the Bengals had last year protecting Joe Burrow, conventional wisdom says they take Penei Sewell with the fifth pick. Why wouldn't they do that?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, here's why, because I think if you look at it and this is one of the exercises you do in the draft room is you'll take the two combinations, right. So if he say the Bengals want to come out of the first two rounds with an offensive lineman and a playmaker, right, so on one side of the white board you write up Penei Sewell or Rashawn Slater, whoever you prefer at 5, and then you turn around in the second round and you say, okay, what receivers are there, maybe it's Kadarius Toney. Maybe he gets there. Maybe it's Elijah Moore.

So you're looking at that combination and then you flip it around and you say, Well, there is actually a pretty good group of tackles in this year's draft and we could get Ja'Marr Chase with the fifth pick and we could turn around and get Liam Eichenberg who we feel is going to be an upgrade over what we have right now and has some tackle guard versatility there. They could easily look at that and say, Well, we think we are still going to help him with the offensive line with Eichenberg, and now we've added a premier weapon in Ja'Marr Chase.

So we like the combination of Chase/Eichenberg better than the combination of Sewell and Elijah Moore and whoever else you could get there. That's why you can't just look at it in a vacuum and say, They don't take a lineman at 5 then they don't help Joe Burrow stay protected. You can still do that at pick I believe 38 is the pick.

There's going to be good offensive linemen there, as well. That's what goes into the decision.

Q. The Dolphins made the move from 3 to 12, then came back up to 6. I'm curious your take on the thinking there to go down, then to come back up in that position, and if it was for one of the top skill guys,

Chase, Pitts, Smith, Waddle, who do you think meshes the best with Tagovailoa's skill set?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: I don't think any of those guys would have any trouble meshing with his skill set. To me Pitts would be -- if he was there, I know -- talk about wide outs, but he would be the first choice for me just because he'll give him so many easy throws. You can just be in 12 personnel with him and Gesicki and just let those guys fly.

In terms of the wide outs, Ja'Marr Chase would be the best fit in my opinion. I know he has history with the Alabama guys, but Chase with his strength to be able to run after the catch, to break tackles and his ability to kind of play above the rim even as a six-foot guy, he's just an all-around complete dude.

I think, gosh, he's got to be 30 pounds heavier than Devonta Smith, so you're just talking about the sturdier, stronger dude; and he's a more complete route runner at this time than Waddle is.

Again, I think that's kind of -- I think you're right on why they positioned themselves back up there, because it doesn't point in any direction but that. That has to be what they're thinking is to get one of those dudes.

Q. I know we've been talking a lot about what we're kind of expecting out of the players in this draft, but I'm just curious looking back at the last couple drafts, if you could kind of put the Jeff Ireland picks on a page, what jumps out to you about the selections he's made or he's helped make, the process he has, just kind of what you think about him as an evaluator?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, Jeff is as respected as there is. I mean, he's been doing it for a very long time. He's kind of a scout's scout. He's somebody that -- I don't get a chance to visit with him on the phone, but I see him at pro days or else in years past I've seen him for years and years, we always catch up at the Senior Bowl or at the combine. But he's somebody that's always been just widely respected around the league.

He's going to value instincts over measurables. I think that's served him well. When you look at their drafts over the last couple years, I think it's some TBDs. Obviously they've had some big picks.

I think when you look at kind of what the future holds for guys like Tre'Quan Smith and some of those guys, I think there's more to come. But that would be kind of the way I would describe it is traditionally he's at his best when they kind of go off of the instincts as opposed to some of the measurables.

Q. I know you have Oweh from Penn State going to the Ravens in your latest mock. If one of those edge rushers, other edge rushers fell a little bit, whether it would be a Jaelan Phillips or I guess Ojulari, would you say them taking those guys over Oweh or how do you think that would sort out for them?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, it's fascinating because Oweh doesn't have the sacks and Baltimore has always preached production. So the fact that he doesn't have any production I would say, oh, he's not going to Baltimore. But I think from how hard he plays, and I think that kind of matches the DNA a little bit with the Ravens and I think he did get a little bit of disruption even though he didn't have the production.

I would guess Ojulari would be somebody because of -- having played in the SEC, having production there, having some explosive numbers, I would say that would be somebody that they would probably take over Oweh if he were to get there.

So that would be kind of the order I would have those guys. Phillips is a wild card. If teams are comfortable with Phillips with some of the medical stuff in the past, then he'd jump right to the front of the line.

Q. As you know with the Ravens, the one position where they have failed to kind of hit on that Pro Bowl player is at wide receiver. Overall when you're looking and trying to project wide receivers, how tough compared to the other positions is that to projected at the NFL level?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: I think it's gotten easier. I think as the NFL game mirrors more the college game it's gotten easier to project what these guys are going to do and get them on the field and get them productive.

In years past you didn't know how they were going to function with all the stuff that was going to be asked of them in terms of sight adjustments and those things, but they've taken a lot of that stuff and simplified it. I think it's easier now than it's ever been. Yeah, it's just one of those positions. The Ravens have not had trouble anywhere else, but that's been a little bit of the bugaboo. I think it is, for them and everybody else, it's getting easier.

Q. Titans picking at 22, they've got four picks in the top 100. What's maybe best case scenario for them in the first round and maybe would you how attack some of those other picks moving to 100?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, I mean, when you get to the

first round, gosh, I mean, the perfect pick would be to me if somehow in a miraculous fashion that Jaycee Horn were to slide a little bit and you could scoop him up and plug him in. Maybe it's something where you can trade up for somebody like that.

When you look at some of their other needs along their team, to me offensive line is the way they could go. I think trying to find somebody to give them a weapon after losing Corey Davis and Jonnu Smith, I think they're in a position where they're going to miss out on those top dudes.

They might be in a position where they've got such a good team and they're pretty close that maybe it is in their best interest to move up a little bit, maybe use some of those other picks to get that accomplished.

That would be something to keep in mind with them. Sometimes where you're picking doesn't necessarily match up exactly with where your needs are, and I think they find themselves a little bit in that spot.

Other needs for them going forward throughout the draft, finding a tight end later on. I'm really intrigued by Tommy Tremble from Notre Dame. I think he's my third tight end, and he's somebody that can bring some physicality, which they would appreciate with the way they run the football, and I think he's got a lot of upsides a pass catcher.

That's just one other name I would keep an eye on that fits them.

Q. I was curious for Washington at No. 19; you have them going offensive line over linebacker. Is that an opportunity cost thing? And if they wanted to jump to the top 10, what do you think the cost would be to move up to 7, 8, that sort of range?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, I don't have any trade chart right in front of me right now, but that would -- that won't be cheap to go all the way up there. It's probably going to cost you a one next year to do that.

I don't know if they're that close to making that type of move. Obviously the quarterback -- Trey Lance would be the one. If he started to drift I would say, Okay, I get it. Be bold and go do it. Outside of that I would say probably stay back there.

Offensive line or linebacker, it's a really good off-the-ball linebacker draft, so I think take a quality offensive lineman there and you're going to still have linebackers in the third, fourth round that come in and help you. So there's good players out there.

So that would be kind of my reasoning there on maybe looking at that offensive line. They've got to get better there.

Q. I saw in your mock draft you have the Packers taking Dickerson at 29. I was wondering they traded out of their original spot in the first round three straight years. What options might be available to them at that spot, or do you think they'll just be on the move again this time?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, I would bet they'll be on the move again. Just to me when you look at where they are and what they need and you look at kind of those early second-round corners that could be there, you look at some offensive line depth, to me that kind of screams getting out of one and getting some extra picks. They're a prime candidate to me to slide back a little bit.

When you look at some of the players, I've mentioned as we've gone through this, I've mentioned some of the corners that -- those Georgia corners are going to go early in the second round.

I love Assante Samuel, Jr. I think he's just a playmaker. They're going to be playing with a lead, I want corners with ball skills can make plays on the ball, and him and Jaire Alexander, be fun to watch those guys, they both play the ball so well. That would be some names to keep an eye on there.

Q. I have a question about the fewer than 700 SRAs that were signed this year. Next year I'm sure that number will go back up near like 2000. What are the practical implications of that thin class, so to speak, this year and then going into next year's draft?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Maybe I'm just tired or brain cramped again. Refresh me on SRAs.

Q. The standard representation agreement, just the one measurement that -- to see kind of what the pool of candidates is like this year, so far down from normal years.

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, we had so many kids go back to school. That's what's going to impact the bottom half of the draft. That's why everybody that I talk to around the league just says, we don't know what the heck we're going to do with out sixth and seventh round picks. If I can get rid of them I'm going to get rid of them just because next year's class, those sixth and seventh round picks are going to be really valuable.

A lot of those kids went back, so it's going to make next

year's draft really, really deep. That's one of the weird parts of this whole process is how that all factors in. Yeah, I didn't know that number. That's interesting. Not surprising, though.

Q. I think it's 657 right now and I think last year it was 1932 or something. Quite a big difference because of the NCAA letting them go back for that year.

DANIEL JEREMIAH: A bunch of them did, so that's why, again, you're going to see a bunch of teams trying to -- you'll see teams I think be aggressive in rounds two and three and they'll be parting with these day three picks like nothing.

Q. If I could, I want to take you back to the 2017 draft class for the Chiefs. Everybody remembers it obviously for Mahomes, but nobody else of that draft class, like Kareem Hunt, Jehu Chesson aren't on the roster anymore. How rare is that to look back four years later and say a draft class can be whittled down to one player obviously producing at a very high level to start the class and the rest of the class being a disappointment? What do you remember if you could about that draft class from a few years ago?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, well, what I remember more than anything else is, dang, I was way off and way too low on Patrick Mahomes. More than anything else that was my biggest takeaway from that. I'd like to have a do-over on that one.

Look, the goal every year, the teams I worked with was like three to four starters. Your goal was to get three to four starters out of every draft. So if you look back three years after the fact, those guys need to be starting football players.

Some of those, like they gambled on some upside there with Kpassagnon. The Kareem Hunt situation, that was unique. He's a really talented football player who's playing really well for the Cleveland Browns. But Kpassagnon which is kind of an upside pick, and then after that now you're talking about picks 139 and beyond where that's a crapshoot. They went all in to go get Mahomes, and that draft will be viewed as probably the best draft in Chiefs' history.

Q. I'm just curious with what your take is with regard to the quarterbacks, not just this class this year but just in general it seems like it's intensified with the rising stock of these quarterbacks where certain guys -- we weren't really talking about Zach Wilson not a long number of months ago and now he's a lock at 2, for example. Mac Jones, all these guys kind of

jumping up and the top of the draft is going to be all cornerbacks. Is there a worry about overrating these guys because of the position and obviously the importance of it?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, I think that's always the thought, right. You go back to kind of the Gabbert year with Ponder and that group. I think everybody points to that draft. That's been a long time. To me the way the college game has changed and you've had these transfers and we've had a bunch of guys kind of emerge out of nowhere. When you look at Baker Mayfield, Kyler Murray, Joe Burrow, these guys were all kind of -- no one thought they would be the first overall pick the year before it ended up happening. That's the era in which we're living.

But when I think you evaluate the skill sets of these players, and I put Zach in there. He was injured in 2019 so that's why his tape wasn't as good coming off of a shoulder and having a thumb.

But when you watch the tape this year, like those are legit traits. Those are definitely worthy of being Top 5 pick traits. With that group that everybody looks back on, Ponder, I had evaluated him in that year and he gave him like a third, fourth round great. Gabbert, those guys were elevated beyond their ability.

I don't think that's been the case over the last few years. It's just what college football given us, which is a lot of these kind of pop-ups later on in their careers.

Q. If I could follow up quickly, is it at all possible in your mind that one or two of these guys after Trevor might end up being better than Trevor?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, I did an exercise and went through it. If you look going back to like 2011, the only slam dunks in my opinion of the guys that were the first quarterback who went on to be the best quarterback in their draft you'd say were Kyler Murray and Cam Newton.

But you go back through the rest of those drafts, even last year. Like Herbert, he stayed healthy, obviously, but he played at a higher level than even Joe did.

Josh Allen has played better than Baker Mayfield.

Mahomes played better than Trubisky.

Dak has played in my opinion better than Goff.

You've got Mariota-Winston, which is a debate.

Carl is better than Bortles.

You know, the Geno Smith-E.J. Manuel year is what it is.

And then you can have a conversation with Russell Wilson and Andrew Luck.

It's never -- it's not a slam dunk the first quarterback picked is going to be the best guy. It just hasn't been the case.

Q. I was curious for the Colts, they have such clear needs at edge and at tackle and they're picking at 21. I was wondering, just given the talent and the depth at those two positions, are they kind of maybe better off trading back, and then what would be the difference in talent between a guy they got 10, 15 picks later versus like sticking at 21?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: I think the edge rusher to me would make a lot of sense if that's what you're going to do is go edge rusher. I think you can slide back because there is a clump of guys all in there together. You're probably going to still get one of them, so that would make sense from a trade-back standpoint.

I would say on the offensive tackle, yeah, probably similarly. It's a similar situation.

If for some reason Rashawn Slater started to drift a little bit, I could make a case that that's somebody that you'd go up there. For outside of that, you get into that next tier of tackles and it's a flavor thing between Tevin Jenkins, Darrisaw, Radunz, Eichenberg, all that group.

Teams have them all over the map. Yeah, I think that is a fair point. If that is the direction they want to go on two picks, it makes sense to slide down.

Q. Kind of a big picture question for you. Obviously the Ravens are set to give Lamar a big deal. We see the same thing probably happening in Cleveland and in Buffalo. As you go from paying a quarterback just a couple million dollars a year to \$35, \$40 million a year, what kind of impact does that have on the front office and the draft as kind of this life source for keeping the roster well maintained and a contender?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, the Ravens under Ozzie and Eric over the years have kind of figured it out in terms of volume, right, having a lot of picks every year, which they've been able to do, and you hit on your mid-round picks, and you don't pay everybody so you end up getting the comp picks.

That's going to be even more important for them is to be deadly accurate in those middle-round picks because it

gives you the cheap starters to offset the money you're now investing in the quarterback position.

That's usually a bigger challenge for other teams. The Ravens have been hitting on mid-round picks for 20 years, so they're probably more well equipped and positioned to handle a quarterback contract than any other team in the league because they're so darned good in those middle rounds.

Q. The Texans need defensive reinforcements but obviously won't be picking until 67. What do you see as the best fit for Lovie Smith's defense, or given the situation surrounding Deshaun Watson and the uncertainty there, if someone like Kellen Mond or Kyle Trask are still on the board at 67, should they be in the market at QB instead?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Ooh, that is interesting. Yeah, I mean, it's hard to figure out what they would do at the quarterback position, just there's so much uncertainty there. I would probably -- gosh, yeah, I would consider -- Kellen Mond, Davis Mills would be the two that I would consider with that pick, but I think you can look at some of their other needs, which there are plenty across the board for them on their roster. I could see them looking at the wide receiver position. You look at the entire defense really needing some help.

I'll give you a name. 67, a corner, that would make some sense for them? Let me throw one out there for you. Look, Zech McPhearson from Texas Tech, who's somebody that's probably going to end up being a nickel but has played outside, he's a really good football player who's got a lot of ball production, instincts and just a real physical kid. To me he kind of fits that profile of what the Patriots used to love when Nick was there and would fit them, as well.

Q. Another one sort of late in the draft, but the Seahawks at 56, kind of the only pick they have in the first 129. Any thoughts of a couple of guys that they could maybe get there, especially in a draft like this, what they could do to help themselves?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, 56, I mean, I guess Russell would be happy if you went back to the offensive line, right, and continued to invest there. To me I just love Quinn Meinerz from Wisconsin Whitewater. He's so fun to watch. His Senior Bowl tape was as good as any that we've seen from an offensive lineman, so he's someone that can plug into any of those three interior spots, would be an upgrade for them.

I think Creed Humphrey is probably off the board from

Oklahoma, Josh Myers from Ohio State, somebody again that could play all three of those interior spots. So those guys make sense, and if they want to go with the big corners where they're picking, I know he's got some stuff you've got to sort through from his time at LSU, but Kelvin Joseph, the corner from Kentucky. He's an incredible athlete. He's an interesting one.

Q. Just talk about the 49ers in there at No. 43 overall pick. There's a lot of opt-outs, whether it's Paulson Adebo from Stanford or Joe Tryon from Washington. How do you think the league feels about these opt out guys and do you think they're going to go higher than we think?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: I mean, gosh, we're going to have several opt-out guys go in the top 10. When you look at Ja'Marr Chase and the two tackles, those guys are all going. I haven't heard anybody that's really been overly punished for that in draft meetings. Teams haven't viewed it -- it's obviously a unique situation. They understand it. They get it. I don't think it has any impact. I think the majority of them showed up at their pro days and worked out extremely well, so yeah, teams that I've talked to have been very comfortable with the opt-out situation.

Adebo I would have just selfishly liked to have seen because he was up and down inconsistent at Stanford that last year. Everybody points to the UCF game; Gabriel Davis got him pretty good in that game. He would have been one I think could have helped himself by getting another year if we could have seen more of him, but I don't think he's going to fall anywhere below what he put on tape his last year.

Q. You may have been asked this a few questions ago, but I'm curious, I saw you had Rashawn Slater at No. 8 to the Panthers. If the Panthers were to pick there, how do you view that as a pick considering what they could possibly do at 8 whether that's trade back or possibly another player?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Yeah, I think he's really good. I think, again, he's a high-ceiling, high-floor pick. You're not going to miss on Rashawn Slater. He gave me kind of the same vibes as when I watched Zack Martin at Notre Dame where I was like, okay, this kid can play tackle and probably play it at a pretty high level, but man, he could ben an all-pro guard, and I think Slater feels the same way to me. So he allows you to get your best five on the field because of his versatility, and they've got to get better on the offensive line, so that to me just makes a lot of sense. Him or Sewell would be home run picks.

I also think they're in a position where with some of the



offensive line depth in this draft, if that's what they're locked in on, maybe it's a situation where they can trade back, get some extra picks to address some other needs, but they've got to come out of this draft with a couple offensive linemen that can be starters in my opinion.

Q. The Giants obviously invested pretty heavily on the offensive line last year, they picked three different guys. They didn't really make any moves on the offensive line this off-season. They're talking about letting these young guys develop. They didn't grade out that well last year, but what do you think of the idea of letting these young guys develop as opposed to forcing it by adding reinforcements every year or whatever?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Well, obviously you're not going to replace Andrew Thomas. You're going to let him roll. I thought Gates played pretty well last year at center. Hernandez is still young.

To me, Matt Peart, he's like a swing tackle to me, like that's kind of where his value is, and I know Solder is back in the mix, but I'm not going to rely on that all that much.

If Slater is there I would pick him. If Sewell was somehow there I would take him. Outside of that I don't think it's something they need to force, and I get letting some of those young guys develop, but if you can get better, get better. That would be my kind of philosophy there.

They've got to identify who and what their quarterback is this year, so with Daniel Jones, to me that first pick, even though they have some defensive needs, I still think at the end of the day they do something to help him, whether it's the offensive line or one of those big receivers.

Q. I know when I asked you last month who your dream scenario for Miami would be at 6, you mentioned Pitts. Who would it be at 18 among anyone who you think could realistically be available at 18?

DANIEL JEREMIAH: Ooh, okay, at 18 for Miami, gosh, I would say Kwity Paye, and I know maybe I like Kwity Paye more than some others, but to me I think that would be a home run pick for them, and just the energy and effort to go along with the explosiveness that he brings, I think that would be a home run pick to pair up with what they do at 6.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports