



Former CU cornerback Jalil Brown showed well in the Senior Bowl.

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Brooks: Draft Day Nerves Won't Eat Away At Brown

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(Second Of Four Stories On The Buffs And The 2011 NFL Draft)

BOULDER - Regardless of his status, no prospective NFL draftee is immune to draft day anxiety. Nonetheless, former Colorado cornerback Jalil Brown believes he has a recipe to make the uneasy hours pass more comfortably if not more swiftly.

Said Brown: "I'm just going to hang out with my family . . . and all we're going to do is cook, eat and anticipate."

Call it therapeutic grazing, but the last part of his recipe will be the most difficult to stomach.

Draft projections can go awry, but several of the teams Brown spoke with or worked out for indicated he would be a second- or third-round pick. That would mean his call comes on

Friday, the second day of the NFL's annual talent haul. Round 1 is on Thursday, Rounds 4-7 on Saturday.

Brown, who started all 12 games for the Buffs last season at left cornerback, said he and his family will go into the day "praying for the best and hoping to go as soon as possible."

As the months following his senior season and preceding the draft have passed, Brown reflected on where football has taken him, where it might lead. The looks back have been satisfying and exciting, the looks ahead even more so.

"This has been a childhood dream of mine," he said. "I can look back over my life and see the strides, the checkpoints in where I've been and how far I've come. But now it's almost like I can reach out and touch my goal. I'm enjoying it and my family is enjoying it."

Many of Brown's earliest memories and expectations were built on a future telephone call and a subsequent opportunity from an NFL team. "I've been waiting to see where I'd be for the next several years, waiting to see where I'd live my life," he said.

Brown, who finished his CU career with 167 tackles (89th all-time), six interceptions (28th) and 21 pass deflections (12th), was invited to play in the 2011 Senior Bowl and worked out for and visited several NFL organizations.

In ranking the 2011 draft's Top 100 players, *Denver Post* NFL writer Jeff Legwold - a former *Rocky Mountain News* staffer whose NFL knowledge is comparable with anyone on the national level - rated Brown at No. 98. Wrote Legwold: "Brown showed well at the Senior Bowl and kept that momentum."

Throughout his CU career, Brown was one of the Buffs' most consistent special teams performers, recording the sixth-most special teams points (65) in school history. At corner, his top games in his final season included eight tackles (seven solo), an interception and a third-down stop in CU's 29-27 win against Georgia, and seven tackles (six solo), a pair of third-down stops, a pressure and a pass deflection in the 34-14 victory against Iowa State.

With fellow senior Jimmy Smith manning CU's right corner last season, many Buffs opponents preferred to target Brown's side. So he wound up covering many teams' top receivers.

Returning to his hometown of Phoenix when the Buffs' 2010 season ended, he has been working out under the direction of former Bowling Green cornerback-turned-trainer Will Sullivan, whose clientele at Brown's position includes Pro Bowl participant Darrelle Revis (Jets corner) and several Arizona Cardinals DBs.

"I got a lot of hands-on work with him and really improved my technique," said Brown, whose pre-draft goal was "to keep my DB skills up to par and get better in a lot of things. I didn't want to take too much time off, and working with (Sullivan) was a tremendous help.

"I think I've gotten better overall in knowing what to do and how to do it. Physically, I think I'm pretty much up to par, but I'm working on the mental part of it to make an impact on the next level."

The 6-01/2 Brown's weight lifting achievements (he had three of the four top lifts at this position) won him last spring's Iron Buffalo Award among the DBs. He said he has maintained that strength as well as his weight (204-207 pounds) during a beneficial four-month period of non-stop football.

Said Brown: "It's been all football, no school, and I think players make the most progress during that time because you reach the point where you know it's going to be your job, your future. So your work is very concentrated."

Perhaps his biggest surprise of the pre-draft routine was the thoroughness of interested NFL teams in potential draftees. Brown might have come away believing the CIA has nothing on the NFL.

"It seems like they know everything there is to know about you," he said. "They pull out a piece of paper that's a page long and it includes things like character, skills, questions about your whole life - stuff from high school even. It all kind of takes you aback when you talk with them. Almost everything you've done, everything you've said, it comes to their knowledge . . . they're telling you things that maybe your close friends don't even know.

"It's nerve-wracking, but you realize it's part of it. They're investing thousands, maybe millions of dollars in you. If it was me investing that kind of money, I'd like to know everything, too."

(Wednesday: Jimmy Smith Projected As First-Round Selection)

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