

"He can run. Athletically he's going to hold up. I can say that without reservation. We feel we can bring him along as we see fit." Ambrose's competition will come from Eugene Daniel and Chris Goode.

The Vikings were very impressed with down lineman Harris (6-3 1/2, 285) even though he played just two years of college ball at Southern. The Vikes envision Harris playing defensive end on the left side. "He's a big kid who can run [4.87 in the 40]," said Merrill Johnson, Vikings public relations director. Harris' main competition is expected to be Al Noga and Skip McClendon. Whoever wins the job will team with seasoned vet Chris Doleman who plays on the right side.

Robinson (6-1 1/2, 242) was the Oilers first pick of the '92 draft, so that tells you a lot about the team's needs and Robinson's value to Houston's defensive scheme of things. "We thought he had good speed, we timed him at 4.68 [in the 40]," said Chris Namias, Oilers public relations director. "The primary thing about Eddie is that he dropped into coverages a lot in college. We need a cover linebacker because so many teams played a double and three-tight end alignment against us last year. Before, we had guys who couldn't handle dropping back into coverage. We won't have to make a cover linebacker out of him."

Other notable selections through the fifth round were: Southern University tight end Thomas McLemore (Detroit Lions, third round, 81st pick); North Carolina A&T tight end Craig Thompson (Cincinnati Bengals, fifth round, 115th pick); North Carolina A&T linebacker Kevin Little (San Diego Chargers, fifth round, 131st pick); and Alcorn State wide receiver Torrance Small (New Orleans Saints, fifth round, 138th pick).

McLemore was lost in the shuffle just before draft day, primarily because he didn't make it to the NFL's scouting combine. As a result, most teams knew nothing about him. He also missed his junior season at Southern because he served in the Persian Gulf War that year.

The Lions, however, know all about this tremendous 6-5, 240 pounds physical specimen who clocks an eye-opening 4.4 in the 40. "Based on what we want to do, he can develop a lot," said Charlie Sanders, Lions receivers coach. "We don't want to look at him as an on-line tight end, even though he's probably stronger than our average lineman. We look at him as a movement guy. He's faster than our slot wide receivers. We felt that if he can catch a little bit, he could be dangerous."

Thompson, who finished his career as perhaps the best tight end in Division I-AA last season, will face some stiff competition in Cincinnati. Rodney Holman is the incumbent, while Eric Kattus and Jim Riggs will make strong bids for playing time.

Thompson, 6-2, 244, has the requirements that most NFL teams look for at that position. "We like him because we feel he can get downfield," said Jim Lippincott, Bengals scout and personnel assistant. "We like the way he caught the ball and we like the way he blocks."

The 6-2, 251 pounds-Little will have a solid shot to make the Chargers, who are changing over to a 4-3 defensive alignment for the '92 season. "They're looking for a big guy to play middle linebacker," said Rob Boulware, Chargers public relations director. "That helps Kevin because he played inside

linebacker, outside linebacker and defensive end [in college]." Little's main competition will come from Gary Plummer, Eugene Marve, Galand Thaxton and Andy Katon.

At Alcorn, Small played very big in the SWAC. The Saints coaching staff feel they will know more as they get the opportunity

to see more of him. "He looked fine in mini-camp," said Neal Gulkis, Saints public relations assistant. "But it's kind of early to say [where he will fit in]." Small's competition is Eric Martin, Quinn Early, Wesley Carroll, Floyd Turner and Patrick Newman.

— G.D. Clay

Dallas Cowboys pick six

Was it chance, or was it calculated?

The Dallas Cowboys selected six players from predominantly black schools in the 1992 NFL Draft. That's the most of any one team since this writer has been analyzing the draft, starting in 1985.

The Cowboys selected six include:

- Jackson State wide receiver Jimmy Smith (second round, 36th pick overall);
- Virginia State tackle James Brown (third round, 82nd pick overall);
- Texas Southern safetyman Greg Briggs (fifth round, 120th overall pick);
- Delaware State guard Roderick Milstead (fifth round, 121st pick overall);
- Livingstone College tackle John Terry (10th round, 275th overall pick);
- Florida A&M wide receiver Tim Daniel (11th round, 302nd pick overall).

"I don't think it's a black college thing," said Chris Hall, the Cowboys administrative assistant for scouting. "These are just players from smaller schools who stood out and can bring a dimension to our ballclub."

"Part of it goes back to the fact that a team in our position — a team with 15 draft picks — can take a chance on a small-school player who has a chance to develop."

While most teams have a maximum of 12 picks, the Cowboys had 18 picks last year and chose two players from predominantly black schools — tackle Eric Williams of Central State (Ohio) and defensive end Kevin Harris of Texas Southern.

Hall talked to *BCSR* about his team's black college picks and where they most likely will fit in the Cowboys' plans for the upcoming season.

Jimmy Smith

"He will definitely make our ballclub. He'll probably start off as our fourth receiver. When he was sitting there in the second round, that was a gift for us. He was in the top 10 on our draft board. It was amazing he was there. He should have been a first-round pick. A player of his caliber still sitting there, you can't pass that up."

"He runs excellent routes. The scouts were turned on to his ability to run the routes. A lot of people like Jimmy more than Tim Barnett [former Jackson State wide receiver who plays for the Kansas City Chiefs]."

James Brown

"He's this year's version of Eric Williams. He's a huge man, 6-5 to 6-6 and 330 pounds. He can move for a man his size. He'll probably make our team as a backup, unless he just bottoms out in training camp. He's pretty much a developmental type."

Greg Briggs

"He's a 4.5-4.6 guy, good for a guy his size. The biggest thing coach [Jimmy] Johnson talks about is speed. He says give me a guy who can run and has a dimension

which Milstead could be."

John Terry

"He's another guy from a small school who dominated at his level. He knocked people over. He showed up on



Photo by TLee

John Terry's size (6-5, 295) enabled him to dominate in the trenches as an offensive tackle at Livingstone College.

to hit. Briggs can run and he can hit. Coach Johnson has said that he thinks three rookie defensive backs will make the team."

Roderick Milstead

"We thought we had a pretty good find with Eric Williams last year. Somebody is going to come into your camp and give your camp body. If a guy comes in and gives you a great camp and starts to develop, then you have had a great pick."

film as a dominating player. He also gives you the dimension of a long-snapper. But he's a bit slow at 5.5 in the 40."

Tim Daniel

"With injuries you never know — and this guy has one good dimension — he's a good kickoff returner. He has a big play dimension to him. [Daniel is 5-11, 185 pounds and runs a 4.45 in the 40]."

— G.D. Clay