

Ram hopefuls in NFL draft From Page B1

All I want is a chance to show what I can do and make an NFL team."

Blaylock has attracted interest from the Atlanta Falcons, Cleveland, Miami, Green Bay, the Colts, the Steelers, the Giants and Tampa Bay.

Three other Rams, Mark Wallace, Barry Turner and Lonnie Pulley, are also eligible for the draft.

Coach Bill Hayes says trying to predict the draft is tough.

"You can never tell what those guys are going to do," said Hayes, who currently has four former players in the NFL.

"Donald Evans snuck by a lot of folks last year before the draft, but the L.A. Rams sure went crazy over him. Derrick Beasley wound up being one of the best defensive backs in the league.

"You never know what can or will happen until they've called the names out on Sunday and Monday. I feel like we have four players who deserve a chance to make an NFL team.

"Whether they get it or not is a different story."

Though Wallace is regarded as the Rams' best hope in the draft, Wallace was one of the most dominating players in the CIAA. His size -- or lack of it -- has scared away a lot of teams, though.

"There are linebackers in the NFL smaller than me," said Wallace, who chimes in at 6-2 and 225 pounds.

The Rams all-time leading tackler said he hopes someone will draft him in the later rounds.

"I don't care if I go early or not," he said. "As long as I go."

Wallace impressed the two dozen NFL scouts who saw him and Rufus Porter eat up running backs in the Freedom Bowl All-Star Classic. But only Atlanta, Seattle, Miami, Cleveland and Houston have asked him to work out for them exclusively.

Wallace has also joined Blaylock in workout sessions when his callers have come to town.

With a firm offer from the Hamilton Tigercats of the Canadian Football League in his back pocket, Wallace will sleep a little easier.



Mark Wallace

"I know I can play in the NFL," he said. "I just hope I get the chance."

Meanwhile, center Barry Turner hopes his good size and Kodak All-America status will convince an NFL squad. He was an All-CIAA performer for three years at the position and provided every snap for the Rams in all but two games

during his four-year career.

Turner's name, however, isn't mentioned among the scouting services as a likely choice in a high round.

"I've had six teams that have asked me to work out for them," said the Rams' gentle giant, who is 6-2 and 270 pounds.

"The Patriots, Houston, Miami, Green Bay, Atlanta and Seattle have been by," he said. "They really didn't tell me much, though."

"You just have to hope something good is going to happen, I guess."

Pulley is rumored to be a pet of the Dallas Cowboys, who liken him to a smaller version of Timmy Newsome. Some say the former Ram could help Pulley land a job with the Cowboys.

All indications point to Pulley and Turner being signed as a free agent, while Blaylock and Wallace should go somewhere in the draft.

The question is, where?

The answer will have to wait until Sunday night -- maybe later.

Second Chance From Page B1

to their training camp. But this was no ordinary training camp -- it was a camp for veterans only and Paul was the only rookie there.

"They put me in a locker right beside one of the guys they were thinking about canning," said Paul.

"The idea of me being there didn't go over too well at first," he said, pausing to chuckle.

"But once I got loose on the football field, they changed their minds."

Paul said he merely tried to pretend it was just another practice like the many fierce ones he had while at WSSU.

"If there's one thing I know now that I didn't know last year, it's that I can play in the NFL," he said.

"I sort of got everyone's attention when I pulled in a pass that was almost in the dirt with one hand. I took a hit and still hung onto the football."

"I blew by Wes Hopkins every day in practice and Andray Walters tried to stick me one day. I juked and jived him right on his butt."

Paul not only had his physical ability to rely on, but his ace in the hole was WSSU assistant coach, Jack Cameron.

"My wide receiver coach (Eagle assistant Ted Plum) had Jack when he was in Chicago," Paul explained.

"That sort of gave me an edge. I already knew half of the stuff they were trying to teach me. The

coach was really impressed."

Paul probably would've signed with the Eagles, but a bothersome hamstring made him return to the WSSU campus where he is now finishing up his degree.

"I was making \$300 a week just to work out," he said. "And the day was usually from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m."

"I was having a great time and getting to see the city. But my legs starting hurting a lot. When I took a computer test, it showed that the front part of my legs were much stronger than my hamstrings."

"So we decided it would be best for me to return home and work on finishing my degree and strengthening up my hams."

Though the Eagles appear

interested enough in signing the former Ram specialist, Paul is hoping to land a job in Pittsburgh.

"I'm supposed to be going to Pittsburgh in a few weeks," he said.

"I hear that Stallworth might be retiring and Louis Lipps' knees are hurting. If that's the case, then I might fit right in. If I had a choice, I'd really like to play for the Steelers."

But for now, Paul is working hard in the classroom and in the newly furnished weight room at WSSU.

And he's thankful.

Thankful that he doesn't have to hang up his cleats just yet.

Thankful to get a second chance.

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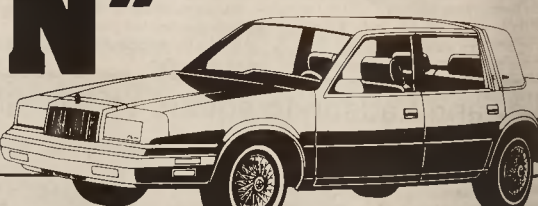
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