

ALUMNI

What's in a name? Just ask Weinberg

The strange looks don't faze Joachim Weinberg anymore. In the summers, for example, he would apply for jobs, his name would be on the interviewers' list, he'd show up and . . .

"I walk in and they go, 'Oh, OK,'" Weinberg says. "They see that name and they're expecting to see a white guy, especially a Jewish guy."

The startled looks occur because Weinberg is black (and he's Baptist). Yes, he knows what's in a name. His first name is pronounced "Jo-a-Kim," although it's often written erroneously as Joaquim, such as on the draft list when he was selected by the San Diego Chargers in the annual draft in April.

"Sometimes people use the Hispanic spelling," he says. As a result, Weinberg simplifies things by abbreviating his first name — just call him Joe. At this point, Weinberg, an 11th round pick from Johnson C. Smith, is hoping to avoid summer interviews by making the Chargers roster as a wide receiver.

Weinberg's late father, Joachim Sr., who was Jewish, was born in Berlin. His mother, Eve, is black and Baptist. Weinberg's presence in the Chargers mini-camp is part of San Diego's star search efforts to discover a second wide receiver to help take some of the heat off of stand-out receiver Anthony Miller.

It's interesting that the three wide-outs the Chargers drafted in '91 all went to predominantly black schools. Aside from Weinberg, San Diego selected Yancey Thigpen of Winston-Salem State in the fourth round and David Jones of Delaware State in the seventh round.

"The thing I like about Joe is his hustle, his enthusiasm, his stamina," says Charlie Joiner, Chargers receivers coach. "He has good hands. He has speed. I liked a lot about him in the short period of time we were in mini-camp. He's a bright kid."

"And yes, I was surprised by that name."

Weinberg, 6-1, 190 lbs., has been timed at 4.4 in the 40, which is a good size-speed ratio. But one negative for him is that he didn't attend the scouting combine in Indianapolis in February. Coming from a small grid program wasn't a big help either.

"I didn't get the exposure, especially coming from a small, black school," Weinberg says. "I'm thankful that I was drafted at all."

Weinberg's performance in mini-camp had its good moments, he explains. "It went fairly well. I think I did some things pretty well. They give you a lot of stuff. But I wasn't pleased because I bruised my ribs."

In case Weinberg doesn't make it in the NFL, he plans to utilize his degree in marketing to pursue a career in advertising.

But when it comes to his genealogy, Weinberg is sensitive. He goes as far as expressing his inner feelings through art. He writes poetry "centering around how whites treat blacks, how blacks treat each other and

how blacks treat whites." He's also an accomplished painter, creating figures ranging from clowns to landscapes to "weird things like the Twilight Zone."

"I've sold a few," he points out.

In terms of racial genealogy, Weinberg and Nebraska linebacker Mike Croel (who was selected fourth overall by the Denver Broncos) may be the most interesting players in this year's draft. Croel, who is black, was

adopted by white parents and lived in several cities before attending high school in Sudbury, Mass. near Boston.

Says Weinberg, "I'm pretty sure if a white guy with the name Muhammad was drafted, that would be an interesting story too. Wouldn't it?"

More post-draft notes

Here are some comments concerning

black collegians who were not mentioned in detail in *Black College Sports Review's* May issue.

- Franklin Thomas, 6-3, 255 lbs. tight end from Grambling was the Detroit Lions' seventh round pick.

"The scouts were impressed with his blocking ability, his size and strength," says James Petrylka, Lions assistant public relations director. "We made some changes in the run-and-shoot. We have a new offensive coordinator and the run-and-shoot will be our basic offense. But we'll add some formations for short yardage, running out the clock, that kind of thing."

- Todd Woulard, a 6-1, 230 lbs. linebacker from Alabama A&M was chosen by the Los Angeles Raiders in the eighth round. "He's a young man who played outside linebacker," says Art Shell, Raiders head coach. "He'll have an opportunity to make our team as either an inside or outside linebacker. He's a tough guy who can run."

- Darryl Milburn, a 6-3, 285 lbs. defensive end from Grambling was selected by the Lions in the ninth round. "Our pass rushing defense has been one of our biggest needs the past few years," Petrylka says. "We felt Darryl might help us in rushing the passer. He could be a situation substitution." As a college senior, Milburn had six sacks.

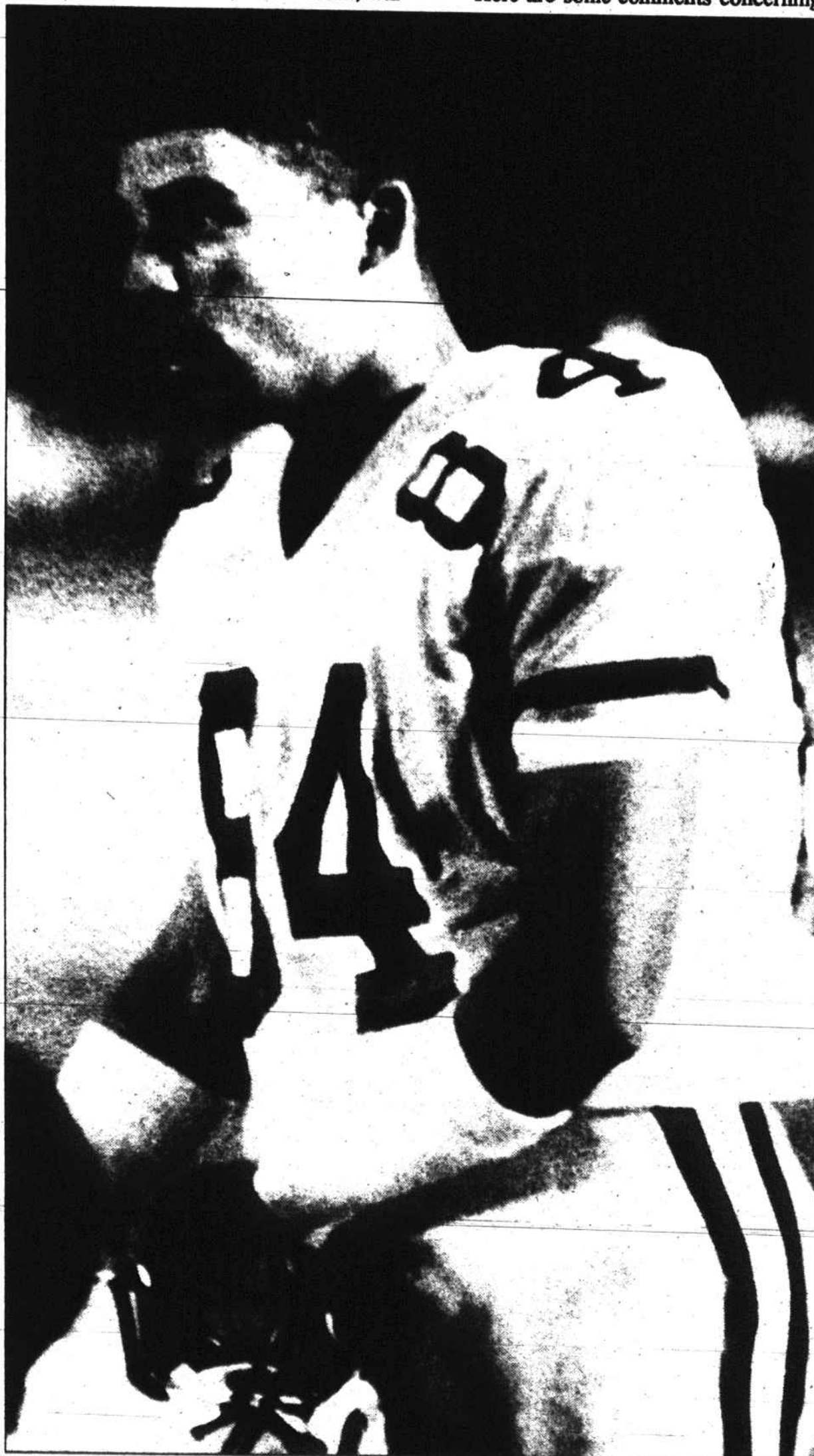
- Rapier Porter, 6-3, 275 lbs. tight end from Arkansas Pine-Bluff was selected by the Green Bay Packers in the 10th round. Considered a good blocker, Porter is battling Ed West, Jackie Harris, Keith Neubert, William Harris and Brian Kinchen for playing time.

- Andrew Glover, 6-6, 225-lbs. tight end from Grambling was chosen by the Raiders in the 10th round. "He's a big, tall, rangy guy," says Shell. "We feel he can possibly put more weight on. He runs pretty good patterns."

- Antoine Bennett, Florida A&M cornerback was picked by the Cincinnati Bengals in the 12th round. "He's one of the fastest kids we've ever brought in," says Frank Smouse, Bengals assistant director of player personnel.

"He's fast, fast. In his first three years at Florida A&M, veterans played in front of him. He only played as a regular for one year. He's very quick-footed and he's got the coverage mobility people are looking for. If he has ball awareness and can support on the run, play off tackles and play off blocks, he has a chance. He's as fast as anyone coming into the league."

- Dennis Johnson, 6-1, 200 lbs. defensive back from Winston-Salem State was taken by the Raiders in the 12th round. The Raiders like his speed (had 40 times of 4.30, 4.32 in work-outs). Johnson impressed the Raiders staff with his speed and cover ability in mini-camp. He'll get his shot at being a bump-and-run cornerback in LA's defensive set.



Weinberg, formerly of Johnson C. Smith, was taken by the Chargers in the 11th round of the pro draft.

BCSR staff photo

— G.D. Clay