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SPORTS

Section

Draft is a guessing game at very least

By Dave Goldberg
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

When Keyshawn Johnson was taken by the New York Jets with the first pick in the 1996 NFL draft, it was assumed he would be a superstar.

Keyshawn has had a good career: three Pro Bowls, a Super Bowl ring and nearly 10,000 yards receiving.

But subsequent events have demonstrated he certainly wasn't the best player in that draft and no better than No. 3 among wide-outs. Certainly not as good as three players ahead of him in a mock redraft of 1996: Ray Lewis, Marvin Harrison and Terrell Owens, who for all his off-field notoriety has been a star on it.

But that's the norm. What potential NFL players do in college and then in workouts often has little relationship to what they can do on the field, so at best, the draft is a guessing game. Every team, from top to bottom, has had its duds in high places - the top teams just pick badly less often.

There are a lot of reasons for that, none more than the seeming obsession with what happens OFF the field from January to April, when prospective draftees are poked, prodded, interviewed and Wonderlic-ed.

So even the best scouts often forget what made the players prospects: the way they can play.

"Competitiveness is the most important aspect and that's sometimes hard to test," says Gil Brandt, the longtime personnel director for the Dallas Cowboys and now the NFL's draft adviser. "The only measurement you can use at all is something that's relevant to the position he plays. We spend a lot of time and money measuring things that have no relevance to what a player will do."

Competitiveness? Take linebacker Zach Thomas of the Dolphins, a fifth-rounder in '96 who makes it into the top 10 in the mock redraft, along with safety Brian Dawkins of the Eagles, a second-rounder, and Owens and linebacker Tedy Bruschi, both third-round choices. Thomas went low because he seemed a little slow and certainly was a little short at 5-foot-10, but Brandt says he's the most

Please see **AT BEST/2C**

Lincoln plans to add football, join CIAA

By Herbert L. White
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The CIAA may not wait long to replace Winston-Salem State and N.C. Central.

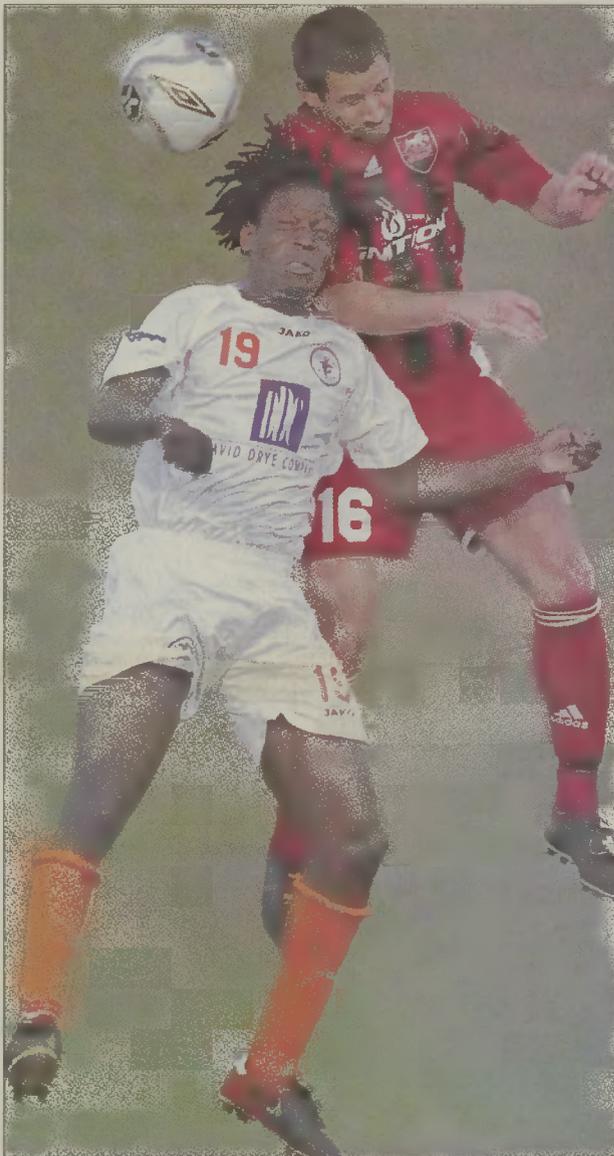
The board of trustees at Division III Lincoln (Pa.) has voted to revive its foot-

ball program after 46 years and apply for membership in the CIAA, where it is a charter member. School officials expect to play a Division II football schedule in 2009 after a club season in 2008. "We recognize that there are challenges ahead, but

we are extremely excited with the board's decision," Lincoln President Ivory Nelson said. "We strongly believe the action of the board will boost school pride for our students, faculty, staff and alumni."

Please see **LINCOLN/3C**

HEADS UP



The Charlotte Eagles' Patrick Daka (19) strikes the ball with his head against Cincinnati's Bret Jones in the Eagles' 1-0 win in their United Soccer League-2 season opener. Charlotte plays Western Massachusetts Friday at Waddell High in a rematch of last year's national championship match, won by Charlotte.

PHOTO/RUSTY BURROUGHS



PHOTO/CURTIS WILSON

More improvement is within reach for the Charlotte Bobcats and forward Jumaine Jones. The Bobcats finished 26-56, eight games better than 2004-05.

Bobcats show room for growth

Despite key injuries to frontcourt, Charlotte boosts victory count

By Eric Bozeman

FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

The Charlotte Bobcats finished eight games better than last season with a record of 26-56.

Capping the year off with a four game winning streak was a positive step forward for the Bobcats, who were bitten by the injury bug this season. Charlotte lost Emeka Okafor (ankle), Sean May (knee), Alan Anderson (shoulder), and Bernard Robinson (finger), but managed to post series victories throughout the year over key eastern conference foes. The Bobcats beat Philadelphia (3-1), Atlanta (3-1), and New York (3-0), while splitting with the L.A. Lakers, Minnesota, Sacramento and Seattle.

"Considering what we did finishing with 26 wins, a four game winning streak, and the injuries we had, it's been an excellent season," said Gerald Wallace, who led the Bobcats with 15.2 points per game and 7.5 rebounds.

Brevin Knight and Raymond Felton were also key in helping the Bobcats overcome the injury riddled year: Knight averaged 12.6 ppg with 8.8 assists, and Felton was superb in his rookie year, posting double figures in 19 consecutive games, while averaging 11.9 ppg.

Knight said the Bobcats meager success is due to the players committing themselves to making the team

Please see **BOBCATS/3C**

DUNCAN, BRYANT LEAD CLASS

The 'real' top 10 players in the NBA

By Eric Williams

BLACK ATHLETE.NET

PHILADELPHIA - I recently read an interesting column the other day in which the writer ranked his top 10 players in the league. Now, I must say, that whenever someone writes an article like this, it is purely the opinion of said writer.

Having said that, since I disagreed vehemently with some of this other scribe's selections, I decided to compile my own list of the 10 best players in the league with a definitive reason to go along with each pick. Now that I've gotten that long-winded explanation out of my system, let's get started.

1. Tim Duncan

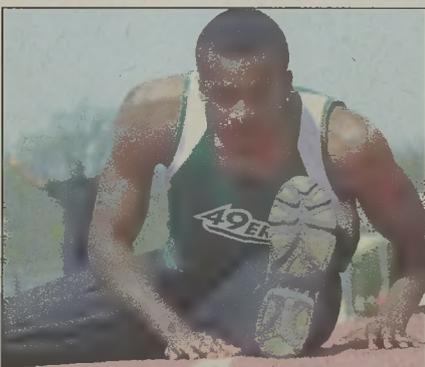
Even with Duncan ailing all season from a nagging injury I know all about from first-hand experience (plantar fasciitis) he is clearly the most important and dominating player in the game. Yes, he has wonderful talent all around him and the game's best coach, but it's his driving presence that has driven San Antonio to three championship titles and a possible fourth.

2. Kobe Bryant

I think Bryant has clearly shown this season that he

See **NBA'S/3C**

Home has advantages for Charlotte 49ers sprinter



PHOTO/CURTIS WILSON

Jason Moore, a standout sprinter at Vance High, has continued his improvement with the Charlotte 49ers.

By Eric Bozeman
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Charlotte 49ers sprinter Jason Moore has found the idea of running at home to his liking.

Moore, a sophomore who specializes in the 100 and 200 meters, was a 400 standout at Vance High. In two years Moore has blossomed into a collegiate sprinter with limitless potential for growth.

Moore ran a 22.3 during the 2005 indoor season, ranking fourth all time at Charlotte, and he has run a 10.8 100. Moore also competes on the 4x400 relay that has turned in a time of 9 minutes, 9 seconds that finished fourth in Conference USA championships last year.

"It's more of an advantage

running at home," he said. "It's still competitive, but you have more of your family here, your coaches from high school to cheer you on, so it's a big plus."

Switching to the Atlantic-10 Conference has not been a major adjustment for Moore, who says he hasn't surpassed his personal goal in the 200, but is proud of his continued improvement in the 100.

Moore was reluctant to share what exact times he wanted to run in the sprints this season.

"I just see it as another group of competitive teams, I don't really put them out there, I just see them as someone else that I have to beat and race against," Moore said. "But as far as the goals that I have set for myself,

See **49ER/2C**

Former Globetrotter keeps busy with mission, basketball

By Mardeio Cannon

THE SACRAMENTO OBSERVER

It is not often that one gets to sit down and have a conversation with a "living legend." I had that privilege recently when I had the opportunity to sit down and talk to the unforgettable basketball great, Meadowlark Lemon.

Lemon is the most well-known name associated with the traveling basketball entertainers, the Harlem Globetrotters.

A great showman and crowd-pleaser during his heyday, Lemon was in town recently as the special guest speaker for the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, at their annual Scholarship Banquet.

Lemon's gift of comedic timing and basketball skills were what set him apart

Please see **GLOBETROTTER/2C**