

Sanders' slide leads to a rare QB double dip by the Browns

By JOSH DUBOW
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Shedeur Sanders' slide down the NFL draft was the dominant story of the weekend with one of college football's most high-profile players lasting until the fifth round.

The fact Sanders was taken by the Browns two rounds after they drafted another quarterback in Dillon Gabriel made the entire situation even more rare.

The Browns were the first team to draft two quarterbacks in the first five rounds of the NFL draft since Washington did it in 2012, when the team traded up to take Robert Griffin III with the second-overall pick and then drafted Kirk Cousins in the fourth round.

There are only a handful of other times in the common draft era beginning in 1967 that a team picked two quarterbacks that high in the draft.

Green Bay drafted Anthony Dilweg in the third round and Jeff Graham in the fourth in 1989. The Packers traded Graham to Washington later in the draft and he never played a game in the NFL despite spending time with several teams. Dilweg started seven games in 1990.

The Colts double-dipped at quarterback in 1982, taking Art Schlichter fourth overall and Mike Pagel in the fourth round. Schlichter played only 13 games because of gambling problems, while Pagel had a long career, mostly as a backup.

The Houston Oilers also did it in 1971, taking Dan Pastorini in the first round and Lynn Dickey in the third. Both had long careers as starters in the NFL.

There were two other times it happened but one of those QBs quickly shifted positions to receiver once joining the NFL.

The Jets took Kellen Clemens in the second round and Brad Smith in the fourth in 2006. Clemens spent 12 seasons in the NFL, mostly as a backup, while Smith had a successful career as a receiver, returner and occasional wildcat quarterback.

The Raiders took quarterbacks with their first two picks in 1968 but first-rounder Eldridge Dickey moved to receiver following his first



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI / AP

Quarterback Shedeur Sanders takes part in passing drills during Colorado's pro day earlier this month in Boulder, Colorado.

training camp and had only five catches in his career. Second-rounder Ken Stabler went on to become the 1974 AP NFL MVP and had a Hall of Fame career as a quarterback.

TRADING UP
Trading up for a top-two pick in the NFL draft isn't that uncommon with it happening five times in the last 13 drafts before this season. Doing it for a non-quarterback was rare.

The deal made by Jacksonville with Cleveland to move up from No. 5 to No. 2 to take Travis Hunter marked the first time since 1997 that a team traded up that high to draft a non-quarterback.

It happened twice in 1997, with the Raiders trading up to No. 2 that year before the Rams jumped them two weeks later to trade for the No. 1 pick. The Rams took Hall of Famer Orlando Pace and the Raiders drafted Darrell Russell.

There hadn't been a receiver taken in the top two since Calvin Johnson went second to Detroit in 2007 and no defensive back had been taken that high since safety Eric Turner went second to Cleveland in 1991.

There were 12 other instances in the common draft era starting in 1967 when a team traded up for a top-two pick and drafted a non-quarterback.

Pace was one of four Hall of Famers acquired that way with the other three all being running backs: Eric Dickerson (1983), Earl Campbell (1978) and Tony Dorsett (1977).

Some of the other trades weren't as successful, like Cincinnati moving up to take running back Ki-Jana Carter first in 1995, the Jets trading up for receiver Lam Jones in 1980 and the Vikings moving up for running back Clint Jones in 1967.

OHIO STATE AND

SEC TOP THE DRAFT LISTS
With the SEC setting a record with 79 players drafted and Ohio State having 14 of the 71 draft picks in the Big Ten, the two most prominent college football conferences dominated draft weekend.

Thanks to the first year of expansion that sent Texas and Oklahoma to the SEC, along with USC, UCLA, Oregon and Washington joining the Big Ten, those conferences accounted for 58% of all draft picks.

Throw in the 42 picks for the ACC and 31 for the Big 12 and the four power conferences had nearly 87% of all draft picks this year, along with six more from Notre Dame.

The Group of Five had just 18 players drafted as many players who began their careers at that level have moved up to power conferences. There were only eight players chosen from non-FBS teams.

There were play-

ers who finished their college careers at 86 schools that got drafted, with the defending champion Buckeyes leading the way with 14 "one off of the record since the start of the seven-round draft era in 1994 set by Georgia in 2022.

The Bulldogs were next with 13, followed Texas with 12, Oregon with 10 and Ole Miss with eight. Five schools had seven players drafted: Alabama, Florida, LSU, Miami and Michigan.

This marked the 87th straight draft with a player from Michigan being taken. USC also has had a player taken in every draft since 1939, tying the Wolverines for the longest active streak.

POSITION BREAKDOWN

There was an even split of offensive and defensive players picked in the draft with 126 players from each side of the ball picked "not

including the two-way player Hunter.

The other four players taken were specialists, including a rare long snapper drafted with Julian Ashby getting taken by New England with the 252nd pick.

The defensive line led the way with 58 players taken, according to Sportradar, followed by 47 exclusive defensive backs and 41 offensive linemen. There were 30 receivers drafted in addition to Hunter, along with 25 running backs, 21 linebackers, 16 tight ends and 14 QBs.

This marked just the fourth time in the common draft era that two tight ends were taken in they top 15, with Chicago taking Colston Loveland 10th and Indianapolis choosing Tyler Warren 14th.

It also happened in 1992 (Derek Brown and Johnny Mitchell), 1973 (Charlie Young and Paul Seymour) and 1972 (Riley Odoms and Jerome Barkum).

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