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CARDINALS DRAFT
NOTEBOOK

Arizona works trade with Oakland to grab Branch

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The Cardinals considered trading in the first round of Saturday's NFL draft but couldn't. They didn't have that problem in the second round.



Alan Branch

Vice president of football operations Rod Graves said the Cards didn't get any phone calls from teams interested in moving up when Arizona was on the clock with the No. 5 overall pick.

"It was very, very quiet," Graves said, which is why the Cards were forced to take tackle Levi Brown earlier than most pundits predicted he would go.

When the Cards saw defensive tackle Alan Branch falling, however, they got aggressive. They worked the deal with the Raiders to grab Branch.

While an NFL draft-pick value chart said the Cards overpaid a bit — there were only 60 points difference between the Raiders' 33rd overall pick and the Cardinals' No. 38, while the fourth-rounder Arizona surrendered was worth 84 points — "for that type of player, it was worth spending a fourth-round pick," Graves said.

Because of the trade, the Cardinals have two choices left, in the fifth round (142nd overall) and the seventh (215th). They traded their sixth-round pick to New England last season for tackle Brandon Gorin.

BUSTER CAN PLAY

Third-round pick Buster Davis' given name is James, but he pleaded with reporters to call him Buster — a nickname he has had since he was 1.

Davis certainly isn't lacking confidence. He emphasized his abilities to make plays, play fast and adapt to every defense, adding "I don't have any weaknesses, I'll be honest with you."

Cardinals coach Ken Whisenhunt noted Davis' lack of size at 5-foot-9, but added that shorter inside linebackers like Miami's Zach Thomas (generously listed at 5-11) and Washington's London Fletcher-Baker (about 5-10) have been pretty good.

"One thing that resonates with me there is 'football player,'" Whisenhunt said. "That's what we feel Buster is."

Davis won't argue.

"I'm a complete player," he said, before adding, "A shorter version of a complete player."

EXTRA POINTS

Graves said the team had no medical concerns about the top two picks. Brown had knee surgery last year at Penn State, while Branch battled shin splints that were feared to be stress fractures. ...

The selections of Joe Thomas at No. 3 by Cleveland and Brown at No. 5 for the Cardinals was the first time two offensive tackles had been taken in the draft's first five picks since Minnesota took Ron Yary No. 1 and San Diego took Russ Washington No. 4 in 1968.