

# Rashad Johnson

## 2009 Arizona Cardinals Draft Selection

### Round 3, Selection 31 – 95th overall

#### FS – Alabama - 5-11, 203

#### **OVERVIEW:**

An unknown commodity coming out of high school, Johnson was grateful that former Tide head coach Mike Shula let him try out for the team when he arrived on campus as a freshman in 2004. Now, after completing his final season, the team captain leaves the college game regarded as the premier safety in the SEC.

When Johnson came to Tuscaloosa, he was a running back out of Sulligent, Alabama, a small town about an hour from Jasper and home to a tiny 1-A high school. After a redshirt season, Johnson made the move to defense in 2005, but saw no action short of special teams work. In 2006, he finally got a chance to start four times, seeing limited action at safety. After a coaching change and a tireless spring, he earned a starting job in the defensive secondary, and he did little to disappoint during his stellar junior and senior campaigns.

Now, the Tide will look to replace his 224 tackles and more importantly, his senior leadership. Even the coaching staff admits that Alabama will be hard pressed to find someone who can replicate Johnson's sense of awareness and overall ball-hawking skills that led to a combined eleven interceptions over the past two seasons for the former walk on from Sulligent, Alabama.

"Rashad did all those things," head coach Nick Saban said. "He played the deep part of the field all the time. He was good in sub (nickel or dime formations), in passing downs with his range, ball skills, ball judgment in the deep part of the field."

As a special teams performer in 2005, Johnson totaled eight tackles (five solos) and caused one fumble in 12 contests. He forced his way into the starting lineup for four games at free safety in 2006. He finished with 33 tackles (22 solos) and two forced fumbles, as he also tried his hand at kickoff returns, gaining 64 yards on three chances.

With Nick Saban taking over the coaching reigns, Johnson's career began to take off. The junior free safety not only earned a starting job, but was named team captain. He collected a team-high 94 tackles (57 solos) with a sack and 5.5 stops for loss in 2007, picking up All-Southeastern Conference first-team honors. His six interceptions rank seventh on the school season-record list and he also broke up eight throws and caused one fumble.

Johnson was a unanimous All-SEC first-team choice in 2008. He received SEC Defensive Player of the Year honors, as he delivered 89 tackles (60 solos), ranking second on the team. He had five stops behind the line of scrimmage and caused a fumble for the fifth time in his career. The safety led the Tide with five interceptions and eleven pass break-ups, as he guided a squad that ranked third in the nation in total defense (263.5 ypg.).

#### **CAREER NOTES:**

Johnson started 31 of 50 games he played in at Alabama, including his final 27 contests at free safety...Recorded 224 tackles (144 solos) with two sacks for minus 8 yards, 12 stops for losses of 28 yards and two quarterback pressures...Recovered one fumble and caused five others...Deflected 19 passes and had 11 interceptions for 189 yards (17.2 avg) and a pair of touchdowns...Gained 64 yards on three kickoff returns (21.3 avg.)...Johnson's six interceptions in 2007 rank seventh on the school season-record list...Gained 125 yards on those interception returns in 2007...Returned two interceptions for touchdowns in 2007, tying the school season-record.

#### **2008 SEASON:**

Unanimous All-SEC first-team selection...Named the SEC Defensive Player of the Year by the Little Rock Touchdown Club...Shared the Mal Moore Leadership Award with center Antoine Caldwell...Earned Walter Camp and Football Writers Association National Defensive Player of the Week honors vs. Louisiana State...Was on the Bronko Nagurski Trophy (nation's top defensive player) and Jim Thorpe Award (top defensive back) Watch Lists...Named the team's Defensive Player of the Year...Given the President's Award for perseverance in making outstanding contributions to the team's success...Became just the eighth player in school history to serve as team captain twice...Started all 14 games at free safety, ranking second on the team and 15th in the league with 89 tackles (60 solos), including a seven-yard sack and five stops for losses of 15 yards...Caused and recovered a fumble...Deflected 11 passes and ranked sixth in the SEC with five interceptions for 125 yards (fifth-best season total in Tide annals) and tied the school season-record by returning two of those INTs for touchdowns...His stellar play saw the team improve its ranking from 31st (345.5 ypg) in total defense in 2007 to third (263.5) in the nation in 2008.

**2007 SEASON:**

Earned All-SEC first-team honors from the league's coaches...Named team captain, Johnson was chosen co-Defensive Player of the Year...Started all 13 games at free safety, leading the team with a career-high 94 tackles (57 solos), an average of 7.2 hits per game...Had a one-yard sack, 5.5 stops for minus 9 yards and two pressures...Caused a fumble and deflected eight passes...Ranked second in the conference and tied for 18th in the nation with six interceptions (seventh-best season total by a Tide player) for 64 yards in returns (10.7 avg.)...Named Alabama Defensive Co-Player of the Week after the Georgia, Florida State, Houston, Mississippi and Louisiana State contests and earned Special Teams Player of Week accolades vs. Western Carolina, more than any other player on the squad this season.

**2006 SEASON:**

Johnson played in 11 games, sharing free safety duties with Marcus Carter...Started vs. Hawaii, Tennessee, Florida International and Louisiana State...Made 33 tackles (22 solos), which ranked eighth on the team...Had 1.5 stops for minus four yards and caused two fumbles...Also returned three kickoffs for 64 yards (21.3 avg.).

**2005 SEASON:**

Appeared in 12 games, playing strictly on special teams...Recorded eight tackles (five solos) and caused one fumble (Auburn).

**2004 SEASON:**

Redshirted as a freshman.

**HIGH SCHOOL:**

Lettered as a running back at Sulligent (Ala.) High School.

**PERSONAL:**

Computer Science major...Son of Gloria and Randy Johnson...Born Julian Rashad Johnson on 1/02/86...Resides in Sulligent, AL.

**PLAYER STATISTICS:**

DEFENSIVE STATISTICS												
STATS	GP	GS	TK	SO	AS	FR	FC	INT	TFL	PBU	SACK	PRES
2005	12	00	8	5	3	0	1	0	0.0- 0	0	0.0-0	0
2006	11	04	33	22	11	0	2	0	1.5- 4	0	0.0-0	0
2007	13	13	94	57	37	0	1	6	5.5- 9	8	1.0-1	2
2008	14	14	89	60	29	1	1	5	5.0-15	11	1.0-7	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12.0-28</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2.0-8</b>	<b>2</b>

INTERCEPTION RETURNS						KICKOFF RETURNS				
STATS	NO	YARDS	AVG	TD	LONG	NO	YARDS	AVG	TD	LONG
2006						3	64	21.3	0	24
2007	6	64	10.7	0	28					
2008	5	125	25.0	2	54					
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>17.18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>54</b>					