

Local boys do well again

Written by Scott Unash

Tuesday, 10 May 2011 14:46 - Last Updated Wednesday, 11 May 2011 19:24



It seems like a broken record, but a good one at that. More and more Metro athletes have succeeded and exceeded at their chosen craft.

Today, let's examine the recently held NFL draft and the, hopefully, upcoming free agent signing period for recently graduated college senior players.

Again our fair city can stand proud at the possibility that three young men with ties to the area may play in the NFL next year.

Let's start with the one player that is assured of making an NFL roster and that is Aldon Smith out of Missouri, drafted seventh by the San Francisco 49ers.

Yes, I know Smith didn't graduate from here, but he does have ties to the city. Aldon attended Washington High School through his sophomore year and in that brief stay showed flashes of the brilliance and athletic skill that sent him to the University of Missouri to play defense for the Tigers. Even at that age he was a chiseled, angular athlete that had unlimited potential at whichever sport he chose to pursue (he also played basketball at Wash).

Some draft experts say he may have gone too early, but if he continues to develop as a defensive end or outside linebacker like he did the last several seasons, he will be a steal for the Niners. Not to put too much pressure on the young man, but Smith reminds me of another very fine athlete ... Kennedy's Christian French who will be playing at Oregon next fall.

The other two players will have to go the free agent route, but as soon as the lockout ends they will be in an NFL camp very quickly with, I believe, a chance to stick with a team.

Allan Reisner is a tight end out of Iowa and Ben Lamaak is a center from Iowa State. Both of

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these individuals share many of the same traits that made them team leaders and terrific players at their respective schools. They each possess a good work ethic and the willingness to go that extra mile.

Reisner played as a true freshman at Iowa for Kirk Ferentz and made some big-time catches to help the Hawks win games. Any time you play one year out of high school for the Hawkeyes you are doing something. And with the track record for Iowa tight ends over the years in the NFL, I see Reisner making a team and being the third Marion Indian to play in the NFL.

Lamaak has all of the above plus versatility. He played all three offensive line positions while in Ames and was the undisputed leader at center for the Cyclones for a pair of seasons. (How many people remember he played quarterback his senior year at Kennedy!) An NFL team during this age of economic constraints would love to have a lineman who possibly can play all three line positions when needed.

Three more players to possibly join the great list of names of Metro football players over the years to have a shot at playing at the highest level of their sport.

It's pretty rare, but here in the Metro area it seems to be more common year after year, no matter what sport you're looking at.

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