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nfl scouting combine

Questionable past follows CU's Jimmy Smith to NFL scouting combine

By Jeff Legwold
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INDIANAPOLIS — There are 32 teams in the NFL, so by the time Jimmy Smith leaves the NFL scouting combine at Lucas Oil Stadium, the cornerback from Colorado expects to be asked some questions at least 32 times.

"I knew they were going to ask me about everything I've done," Smith said. "I'm ready and prepared to answer all the questions. I felt prepared to deal with it. I knew it was coming."

Smith will go through his on-field workout today at the Colts' stadium. The workout includes the 40-yard dash, vertical jump and other drills to measure agility and explosiveness in preparation for the April 28-30 draft.

Most teams have said they have fewer questions about the 6-foot-2 1/4, 211-pound Smith on the

field than they do about his behavior off the field. He had a positive drug test in 2007 and has had two arrests for possession of alcohol as a minor.

Asked what he needs to do to convince teams that he isn't a character risk, Smith said: "Just going in that room and being honest. That's all I can control. Like I said, I went to college and I made some mistakes. But all of them were freshman and sophomore year — actually my redshirt freshman year, so two freshman years."

CU's other cornerback, Jalil Brown often played in Smith's shadow on the Colorado defense. But with his performance at the Senior Bowl in January and with his work at the scouting combine, Brown said he has been able to carve his own path to the NFL.

"I've definitely improved my standing with a lot of time and effort to improve myself as an athlete," Brown said. "I feel it was my opportunity to show I should have been ranked a little bit higher and work with an even playing field with everybody from around the country, to put us all together and we can see who's actually doing what."

"I feel like I did that at the Senior Bowl and have had an opportunity to do it here as well."

Brown's on-field workout is today.

"Jalil is going to shock a lot of people," Smith said. "He's strong, he's fast, he's big."

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"He can press coverage, a very good press coverage corner."

Fame game. Nebraska defensive end Pierre Allen, a graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School in Denver, was hoping to visit with the Broncos during the scouting combine so he could meet John Elway, their executive vice president of football operations.

"I didn't meet Elway," Allen said. "I wish I would have, though. I didn't get to."

Allen, a two-time Mr. Basketball selection during his prep career, said he was "kind of hurt" when the Nuggets traded all-star forward Carmelo Anthony to the New York Knicks.

"I'm a big Nuggets guy," Allen said. "It will be different without him. I think they'll rebound, though."

Footnotes. Defensive linemen and linebackers worked out Monday at the scouting combine. Elway was among the Broncos' personnel in attendance. . . . Auburn defensive tackle Nick Fairley, who may be the top pick of the draft, was asked how he would stay humble if that were to happen. "My momma helps me out. She'll keep me right," he said.

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