

Former Buff Jimmy Smith shows he belongs with Ravens

Cornerback shines in first NFL practice

McClatchy Newspapers
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:07/29/2011 11:50:21 PM MDT

BALTIMORE -- What stood out from Jimmy Smith's first NFL practice is that it didn't look like it was the cornerback's first NFL practice.

The Ravens' 2011 first-round pick from Colorado jammed wide receivers at the line of scrimmage. He ripped a pass away over the middle. And he picked up the Ravens' defense in a few meetings.

Only hours after signing a four-year, \$7.4 million contract (which includes a \$3.9 million signing bonus), Smith showed no signs of being intimidated. In fact, he already seemed like he belonged.

That's why Smith can envision himself covering Hines Ward and Mike Wallace as the Week 1 starter against the Pittsburgh Steelers. He'll need to unseat either Domonique Foxworth or Lardarius Webb, both of whom are running with the first team, to do so.

"I've got a lot of work to do, but I definitely feel I can be a starter," Smith said. "I totally think so."

Making an immediate impact has become a tradition for the Ravens' top draft selections. Since 2002, seven of the eight first-round picks by the Ravens have started at least half the season as a rookie.

Smith's challenge is greater than any other first-rounder in Ravens history. The NFL lockout eliminated weeks of offseason minicamps, which serve as an initiation to players, especially inexperienced ones.

The first time Smith stepped onto an NFL practice field comes 45 days before the regular season begins.

Smith contends there's no confusion. He picked up the Ravens' playbook when he was drafted in April and flipped through it for three weeks. There was a comfort zone because the defense was similar to the one he played in at Colorado.

"The schemes, to me, are simple," Smith said. "In meeting rooms, we're going through the defense fairly rapid. I see it and I just get it."

Smith wasn't overwhelmed on the field, either. Many rookies are surprised by the increase speed of the game at the NFL level.

"I don't know if everybody was tired, but it was not fast for me," he said.

The biggest adjustment was the physical play. In college, receivers will try to juke defenders to get free off the line.

In his first NFL practice, he learned it was a much different game.

"These receivers run right into you and throw you off them," Smith said. "For me, I like it. I like the physicality."

It shouldn't be a problem for the 6-foot-1, 210-pound Smith, who really stands a helmet taller than anyone else in the Ravens' secondary. He even went toe-to-toe with Anquan Boldin a few times.

The one complaint about Smith's practice debut was not at the start of plays but at the end of them. When a receiver would catch the ball against him, he would stop instead of chasing after them and going after the ball. New defensive coordinator Chuck Pagano ripped into him for that.

"I think he's got a ways to go," Ravens coach John Harbaugh said. "We have a lot of work in front of us with camp."

Panthers cut Brayton

SPARTANBURG, S.C. -- There had to be some balance to offset all the checks the Carolina Panthers were writing this week.

It came Friday with the release of defensive end and former Buff Tyler Brayton.

Brayton was one of six players let go as the Panthers continued to reshape their roster. Brayton, an eight-year veteran who was due to make \$3.5 million this year, started 14 games last season and did not record a sack.

Close Window

Send To Printer

First-and-Orange — Blogs — The Denver Post

JULY 30, 2011, 10:09 AM

Broncos may have interest in DE Tyler Brayton

By **MIKE KLIS** |  No Comments

The Carolina Panthers released veteran defensive end Tyler Brayton on Friday. Brayton, a former University of Colorado slatwart, could be a fit with the Broncos as a versatile lineman who could back up Robert Ayers at left defensive end and play inside on passing downs.

The 6-foot-6, 280-pound Brayton played the past three years for Broncos coach John Fox in Carolina. Brayton had a combined 9 1/2 sacks in 2008-09.

ARTICLE PRINTED FROM FIRST-AND-ORANGE

<http://blogs.denverpost.com/broncos/2011/07/30/broncos-may-have-interest-in-de-tyler-brayton/8439/>

Click [here](#) to print.

All contents [Copyright © 2011 The Denver Post](#) or other copyright holders. All rights reserved. | [Privacy Policy](#) | This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed for any commercial purpose.

Panthers cut veteran DE Brayton

By Ron Green Jr. and Joseph Person
PUBLISHED IN: CAROLINA PANTHERS

SPARTANBURG There had to be some balance to offset all the checks the Panthers were writing this week.

It came Friday with the release of defensive end Tyler Brayton.

Brayton was one of six players let go as the Panthers continued to reshape their roster. Brayton, an eight-year veteran who was due to make \$3.5 million this year, started 14 games last season and did not record a sack.

"When you're aggressive, there's a structure in place that you have. We've been extremely aggressive the last few days and we have some other players at the position," general manager Marty Hurney said.

"We have Charles (Johnson), we have Greg Hardy, Everette Brown and Eric Norwood and some young guys. We just felt like it was something if we were going to do, which we probably would, that this was the time to do it."

The Panthers also officially cut ties with 41-year-old kicker John Kasay, two days after agreeing to terms with free agent Olindo Mare. Defensive end Hilee Taylor was released, and the team withdrew offers to quarterback Keith Null, defensive tackle Ed Johnson and linebacker Nic Harris.

The Panthers signed linebacker Omar Gaither, who played for Philadelphia under Panthers defensive coordinator Sean McDermott. Gaither, a Charlotte native entering his sixth NFL season, played at Myers Park High and Tennessee.

BIG MONEY: Having agreed this week to a \$72 million contract, Johnson already is hearing about it from teammates.

"Big Money, that's what they all say," Johnson said with a shrug after reporting to training camp. "I tell them I'm broke."

He's not broke.

But Johnson is still a little surprised by the deal the Panthers gave him to anchor their defensive line.

"They were telling me they were going to come hard. I was still surprised, but they told me it was going to happen," Johnson said. "The Panthers told me the whole time they weren't going to let me go, but I didn't believe it. ..."

What did Johnson think when he heard the offer, which immediately ended any chance of him signing with the Atlanta Falcons?

Related Stories

[NFL: Eagles sign Asomugha for \\$60M](#)
[Cam Newton in fold, with a \\$22 million deal](#)
[Steve Smith goes really deep](#)
[With big money, comes big expectations for Panthers](#)
[5 stories to watch at Panthers training camp](#)

Related Images



Irwin Among Leaders After Shooting His Age

By Dave Shedloski

July 30, 2011



Hale Irwin shot a 66 Saturday, carding seven birdies. (Fred Vuich/USGA)

Toledo, Ohio – Hale Irwin didn't shoot the lowest round Saturday at the 32nd U.S. Senior Open, but his 5-under-par 66 at Inverness Club was by far the most notable score among the contenders.

Raining, uh, Hale on a venerable layout that he first conquered 32 years ago, Irwin managed to equal his age with that 66, a feat not often achieved in a major championship.

"I shot my age, let's put it that way," Irwin began in assessing his round on a steamy afternoon in the northwest corner of the Buckeye State. "Any time you can do that when you're at any age, it's pretty nice to do. I didn't even realize it until I was reminded after we finished the round. I was more intent on trying to make that putt at the last hole than I was anything else."

Yes, Irwin still has plenty of competitive fire, even if it has been a few years since the last of his record 45 Champions Tour titles. A two-time U.S. Senior Open champion, in 1998 and 2000, Irwin stands at 7-under 206 through 54 holes and has put himself in the picture for his first win since the 2007 MasterCard Championship at Hualalai.

His age-equaling 66 is the lowest in U.S. Senior Open history. Bob Charles shot 70 in the 2006 championship at Prairie Dunes Country Club in Hutchinson, Kan. Jim Colbert is believed to hold the record with a 62 at the 2003 Senior British Open at Turnberry, Scotland.

Irwin conjured memories of his 1979 performance here at Inverness, when he won the second of his three U.S. Open titles. That year, he moved to the front with a third-round 67. Of course, those memories are kind of sketchy on the details.

"I can't remember. Somebody might be able to tell me. I opened with kind of a 74-ish, 75-ish kind of a round [74 actually], and then I just really played well in the middle rounds," said Irwin, a Missouri native who now lives in Paradise Valley, Ariz. "I don't remember specifically, it could have been like a couple of 67s or something like that [he shot 68-67]. But I do remember playing very crisply, and that's kind of the way today was. I hit a lot of good shots."

Indeed, Irwin made seven birdies against a pair of bogeys, and several of them were of the stress-free, tap-in variety of 2 feet or less. His longest birdie putt, from 14 feet, came at the par-4 13th. He nearly aced the par-3 15th with a 3-iron, and at 17, the one that got him to his age, Irwin laced a 4-iron to within 1 foot of the hole.

"If it's a nicely defined target then I'm better, and that's what this kind of course does for me," he said. "I'm better off when it's tighter. The iron game for me seems to be better suited when the greens are small and the targets are well defined."

He has his sights set on a well-defined target Sunday, and that's the top of the leaderboard. Irwin, who hasn't finished in the top-10 in the U.S. Senior Open since finishing runner-up in 2004, intends to remain aggressive, put up a score, and see where that leads him.

"I have to shoot this or better probably tomorrow to have even an outside chance," Irwin said. "I've got to go out and really play exceptionally well tomorrow. All those shots I hit well today, I've got to do it again, and then hit more good shots and make more putts."

"Regardless of your age, doing this kind of thing is always fun; I don't care at what level, if it's at the club level, if it's at the amateur level. When you go out and you post this kind of a score in whatever competition you're in, it's always great fun. It was really nice to kind of experience that once again."

Dave Shedloski is an Ohio-based freelance writer whose work has previously appeared on USGA websites.

Copyright 2010 United States Golf Association. All rights reserved.

TOLEDO FREE★PRESS



Back 9: Hale Irwin Shoots His Age 66

Written by Fred Altvater | | BackNine@toledofreepress.com



Fred Altvater

Hale Irwin won the U. S. Open at Inverness in 1979. Thirty age, 66.

“Any time you can do that at any age, it’s pretty nice to do,’ shots. I played very well. I missed a few putts that I could ha what I had very well, and I feel very good about tomorrow.”

When asked about his overall putting on the day, Irwin said you’re not going to have a long putt. So what I was trying to the flag out, I was just trying to put it in the bowl in the sec reading the greens particularly well this week. They’re a littl were anticipating and they’re a little soft, so the pace is not quite where they wa trying to get the ball close, I’m just trying to put it in the area, and that was pre can have a game plan in golf, put it in the fairways and just put it in those areas

Irwin was in contention at the PGA Senior Open at Valhalla but took a “Senior holes and let the title slip away. He feels that is the state of his game right now. intense concentration that it takes on every shot for a five hour round of golf.

“There’s just other interests,” he said. “Your life evolves and changes and ebbs a raising a family, I’m worried about spending more time with grandchildren, an

Irwin was asked if he still had the confidence to win an event such as the U. S. I would be foolish for me to stand up here and say there’s not an element of doubt in 1979 when I stood on that first hole with a five-shot lead. How in the I wasn’t even worried about winning. Of course, there’s always that. There is al up your leg and get inside your shirt and inside your head, and in my era I’ve p that have ever played this game. You learn from that, and see it’s there in everyl

way of overcoming that doubt. That anxiousness they turn into a positive, and it's there, but you acknowledge it and you move on and you say I'm just not go

Irwin has had a story book career and has been a class act. He had 20 PGA win. round today was another jewel in an already stellar career.

This entry was posted on Saturday, July 30th, 2011 at 8:31 pm and is filed under [Sports](#), [The](#)
You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed.
You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.



Jets bring back cornerback Donald Strickland

Published: Saturday, July 30, 2011, 11:14 AM Updated: Saturday, July 30, 2011, 8:41 PM



Jenny Vrentas/The Star-Ledger
By

UPDATE 3:30 p.m.

Cornerback Donald Strickland is returning to the Jets, according to a person with knowledge of the move. That person requested anonymity because the team has not yet announced it.

Strickland has agreed to terms on a deal with the Jets. Those terms are not immediately available.

Strickland was with the Jets in 2009, Rex Ryan's first season as head coach. He played for the San Diego Chargers last season and was released on Thursday.



Andrew Mills/The Star-Ledger

Donald Strickland, who was with the Jets in 2009, is coming back to the team.

The Jets **lost out on the Nnamdi Asomugha sweepstakes** on Friday but are now assembling the other pieces in their secondary. Early this morning, they agreed to terms on a **three-year deal with safety Eric Smith**.

They still need a starting cornerback opposite Darrelle Revis. Now that the Asomugha chase is over, the Jets are turning their attention to bringing back Antonio Cromartie. Members of the coaching staff have been in touch with him all week and after Asomugha chose the Philadelphia Eagles, per a person informed of the communication between the sides. That person requested anonymity because negotiations are supposed to be kept private.

The Jets had shown some interest in cornerback Chris Carr, but he reportedly **re-signed with the Baltimore Ravens on a three-year deal today**.

More coverage:

- **Complete Jets coverage on NJ.com**

Former Washington Redskins defensive back Phillip Buchanon **wrote on his Twitter account** this morning that he has talked with the Redskins, Jets and Arizona Cardinals.

Drew Coleman, who played well as a sub corner for the Jets last season, **is headed to the Jacksonville Jaguars on a three-year deal.**

* * *

Offensive lineman Rob Turner signed a one-year deal with the Jets, according to CBS Sports. Turner, who signed with the Jets as an undrafted free agent in 2007, was a restricted free agent and was tendered in March.

For more Jets coverage, follow Jenny Vrentas on Twitter at

*Jenny Vrentas: **jvrentas@starledger.com[twitter.com / Jennyvrentas](https://twitter.com/Jennyvrentas)***

© 2011 NJ.com. All rights reserved.



Packers kicker Crosby in search of place to practice

3:01 PM, Jul. 30, 2011



Written by
Mike

Vandermause

FILED UNDER

Packers kicker Mason Crosby signed a lucrative new five-year contract this week that will pay him nearly \$3 million per year. Now all he needs is a place to practice his craft.

Due to the new collective bargaining agreement (CBA), unrestricted free agents aren't allowed to practice with their teams until Aug. 4. Crosby is allowed on the Packers premises, can hang out in the locker room and attend meetings. But what he can't do is any physical activity.

"I can't lift (weights), I can't do anything physically I guess," said Crosby in the locker room Saturday afternoon. "Right now it's just kind of go to meetings, do that whole process and just kind of be around. Once the CBA gets ratified, that's when I can get back to work."

Crosby was dead serious when he said, "Technically they say you can't break a sweat."

But the new CBA doesn't prevent Crosby from working out on his own, as long as it's not at the team facility.

Thus, Crosby said he was going to search for a place to do that in the greater Green Bay area on Saturday afternoon.

"I might go try to kick a little bit, just try to do my own thing so I stay in a rhythm. So whenever I get back on the field I can go right into it."

So where was Crosby planning to go?

"I'll probably try to go to St. Norbert, go try to find a high school," he said.

YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN

Three Packers listed as free agency bargains (Insiders Blog)
Blackmon switches to safety (Insiders Blog)
Packers GM Ted Thompson speaks (Insiders Blog)
Packers sign final draft choice (Insiders Blog)
Mike McCarthy press conference highlights (Insiders Blog)

SPONSORED LINKS

Playmate Pilar Lastra dishes on SiriusXM fantasy draft (ESPN)
Sidney Rice signing with Seattle Seahawks hurts his value, makes Percy Harvin the No. 1 receiver in for Vikings (ESPN)
Kris LeTang of the Pittsburgh Penguins: Migraine Sufferer (MyMigraineConnection.com)
"Fake It So Real" Observes the Truth and False Fronts of Pro Wrestling and Macho Men (indieWire)
The Kardashian/Old Navy Suit: Whaaa? (Fuel the Future)

[?]

Comments | Share your thoughts »

