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Sunday, July 31, 2005

Training Camp Day 3: Myers Steps Up

*** UPDATED 9:39 P.M. MDT ***

By [Andrew Mason](#)
[DenverBroncos.com](#)

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. -- Opportunity knocked early in training camp, and sixth-round pick [Chris Myers](#) was more than willing to answer.

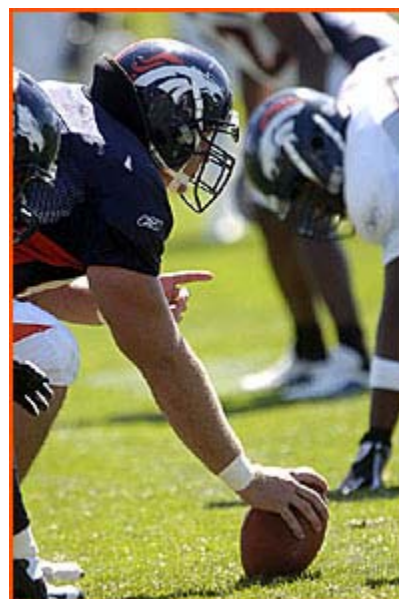
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 [TRAINING CAMP PHOTO GALLERY](#)

With Josh Sewell being placed on the reserve/exempt list early Sunday morning, the former University of Miami standout advanced up a notch, working as the second-team center when the Broncos went into full-team work on Sunday morning.

"I don't think they had a choice; he left," Myers said Sunday afternoon. "They had to have someone be the backup so I'm playing second-string now. (The Broncos) Brought in old [Ben \(Nowland\)](#) in from Washington so he's here with us playing center.



"There's still competition, it's the third day of camp, there's no telling what goes wrong. I'm just going to keep my mind open and do whatever they tell me to do."

For most of the past two-plus months since he arrived for quarterback camp in mid-May, that has revolved around playing center, one of four positions he handled during four seasons with the Hurricanes. He started 13 games at right guard in 2002, 10 games at left guard and three at center in 2003, and 12 at right tackle last fall.

But ever since the Senior Bowl in January, Myers has been a man in the middle.

"I've been playing center whole time I've been (here)," Myers said. "(The Broncos have) got me listed at guard; I jump in wherever they need me to. As long as I'm in there getting some playing time, it doesn't matter to me."

It also doesn't matter whether that playing time comes on offense, either. He'll take long-snapping chores if they're presented to him, and he's spent time working on his skills in that area.

"In camp every day," Myers said. "They've been having me do it since mini-camps. I didn't touch that in college at all. I did it in high school, and I did it with one hand, so that doesn't count; I (just) threw it between my legs.

"I'm doing all right, I guess. I'm sitting behind there and learning and watching right now. [\(Matt\) Lepsis](#) is a third-string (long snapper) and I'm in and out with him. We'll see how that works out."

But he doesn't find it exceptionally difficult, even though he only resumed long-snapping duties at the Senior Bowl out of necessity.

"It's the same as anything," Myers said. "In college when they ask you to play a different position you do it because you need to. It's coming along. I've just been learning; I've just never had to do it before.

"At (the) Senior Bowl, they had me do it because they had absolutely nobody there. I said that I did it in high school and they said, 'It's good enough.'"

What he's done in Denver so far is good enough, as well. It hasn't hurt that Myers has found some common ground between the blocking schemes used in Denver versus the ones favored in Coral Gables.

"At Miami we have sort of the same zone running plays and pulling plays," Myers said. "Our 18 handoff strong here is my 36 slam at Miami. I relate the two plays so it hasn't been that tough. Getting a lot of reps has helped me out a lot. The more time out in the field you get, the easier it is."

And he doesn't care where that time comes.

"Anything I do to make the team," Myers said. "They put me on kickoff return the wedge, I'm doing long snapping, guard, center. If they want me to play tackle, I don't care -- it doesn't matter to me."

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Denver Broncos Sign Three



By [Broncos Update Staff](#)

Date: Jul 29, 2005

The Denver Broncos inked three draft picks on Thursday, Maurice Clarett, Darrent Williams and Chris Myers.

Official Press Release from the [Denver Broncos](#)

The Denver Broncos on Thursday signed three of their selections in the 2005 NFL Draft, Head Coach Mike Shanahan announced. Cornerback [Darrent Williams](#) (second round – 56th overall), running back [Maurice Clarett](#) (third round – 101st overall) and offensive lineman [Chris Myers](#) (sixth round – 200th overall) signed contracts with Denver, which has signed all six of its selections in the 2005 NFL Draft.

As per club policy, terms of the deals were not disclosed.

Williams, 5-8, 188 pounds, was Denver's top draft choice in 2005 and set a Big 12 Conference career record at [Oklahoma State](#) University with five interceptions returned for a touchdown. One of four collegiate players since 1996 to record double-digit career interceptions (11) and score at least five times on those returns, Williams also returned three punts for touchdowns in 41 career games (32 starts).

He was a Jim Thorpe Award semifinalist (best defensive back) and a consensus first-team All-Big 12 choice as a junior in 2003, tying for 13th in the nation with six interceptions (130 yds.). Williams returned two of those interceptions for touchdowns and scored twice that year on punt returns against Louisiana-Lafayette to mark the most punt-return scores in a game by an OSU player in school annals.

Last season, Williams averaged 27.7 yards on nine punt returns, including one returned 59 yards for a touchdown. He started 13 games as a sophomore and returned the first two interceptions of his career for touchdowns (85 and 20 yds.) as a true freshman in a 2001 game against [Baylor](#).

Williams was a three-time all-district selection in football at O.D. Wyatt High School in Fort Worth, Texas, where he was tabbed district 7-4A Defensive Most Valuable Player as a senior. A high school All-American in track (Track and Field News), Darrent Williams was born Sept. 27, 1982, in Fort Worth.

Clarett, 5-11, 234 pounds, played one year at [Ohio State](#) as a true freshman in 2002, setting Buckeyes freshman records for rushing yards

(1,237), touchdown runs (16), 100-yard games (7) and total points (108). Named Big Ten Conference Freshman of the Year and first-team all-conference among many accolades, Claret helped Ohio State capture the national championship with its win against [Miami](#) in the Fiesta Bowl.

The Youngstown, Ohio, native became the first Ohio State true freshman since 1943 to start its season opener, posting 176 rushing yards and three touchdown runs in his college football debut against [Texas Tech](#). Claret averaged 121.9 all-purpose yards per game in 11 contests (9 starts), adding 12 receptions for 104 yards (8.7 avg.) with two touchdowns to 1,237 rushing yards on 222 carries (5.6 avg.) with 16 touchdowns.

Claret, who eclipsed the 100-yard rushing mark in six of his first seven games in 2002, posted the second-best single-game rushing mark by a freshman in school history with a 230-yard effort against Washington State. He ran for two touchdowns in the national championship game against Miami, including a 5-yard scoring run that clinched the Buckeyes' 31-24 double-overtime win against the Hurricanes.

Named USA Today Offensive Player of the Year as a senior at Warren Harding High School in Youngstown, Ohio, Claret finished his prep career with 4,675 rushing yards and 65 touchdowns. Maurice Claret was born Oct. 29, 1983, in Youngstown, Ohio.

Myers, 6-5, 300 pounds, was a versatile three-year starter for the University of Miami who recorded starts at both guard positions, right tackle and center as a two-time all-conference choice. He played 45 games (38 starts) in four seasons with the Hurricanes, closing out his career by starting 38 consecutive games and allowing only 4.5 sacks during that span.

The Miami native started all 12 games at right tackle as a senior in 2004 to earn second-team All-Atlantic Coast Conference recognition. A second-team All-Big East Conference selection in 2003, Myers started 10 games at left guard and three at center that season to help the Hurricanes' offense post 5,134 yards and 42 touchdowns.

Myers emerged as a 13-game starter at right guard during his sophomore season in 2002 as part of a Miami team that played for the national championship in the Fiesta Bowl. He was credited with allowing one sack that season on a Hurricanes offensive line that surrendered only 11 sacks on the year.

At Palmetto High School in Miami, Myers was a Miami Herald Class 6A-5A all-state offensive lineman and was rated the No. 6 offensive lineman in the state by the Florida Times-Union. Chris Myers received a bachelor's degree from Miami and was born Sept. 15, 1981, in Miami.

Printed from www.denverbroncos.com



Monday, July 4, 2005

Chris Myers: Maximizing His Versatility

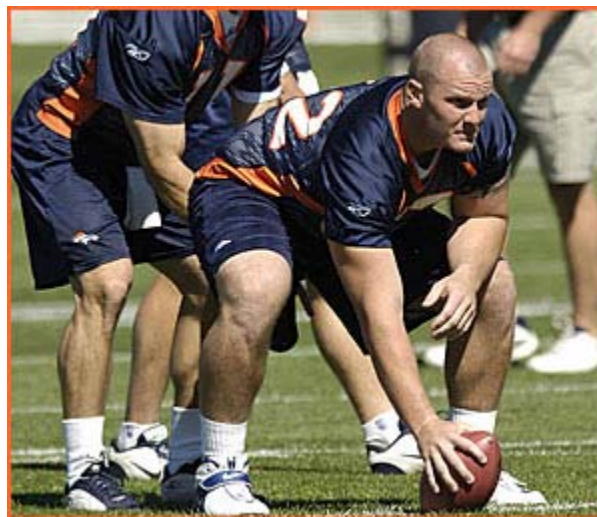
By **Andrew Mason**
DenverBroncos.com

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. -- Rookie center/guard **Chris Myers** began observing the Broncos years ago. But when he watched them, he looked at one man in particular -- a man who is now his teammate, and who has sat atop the depth chart at center for a decade.

That man, of course, is **Tom Nalen**.

"I've been watching him play for years -- ever since before I was in high school," Myers said. "To be able to get a chance to play with him and under him, it's amazing."

Myers' perspective might make the veteran Nalen feel a little grizzled, but it's all out of respect for someone who took a similar path to the one Myers hopes to traverse -- spending part of his college career in the Big East Conference, joining the Broncos as a low-round draft pick, developing into a consistent starter.



A sixth-round pick in the April Draft, Myers believes that his learning curve will be a tad less pronounced than most, thanks mainly to the system in which he played for four collegiate seasons in relation to that of the Broncos.

"It's pretty similar to what we had down in Miami," Myers said. "There's a lot of focus on zone running plays. There's a lot of man protection (schemes) in pass protection. For the most part, it's been explained pretty well, and it's come pretty easy so far."

Myers lined up all along the offensive line in college, but began his Broncos life plunked down in the middle of the line.

"They put me at center," Myers said. "I'm backup center along with Josh Sewell. They're probably going to put me at guard, too."

He'd like to remain in the middle, but is open to anything.

"It's my favorite position," Myers said. "If I had to choose one, it would be center, by far. I love being in the middle of everything, calling out defenses. If I had to play guard, I'd play guard. If I had to play tackle, I'd play tackle. It doesn't matter to me."

His willingness to play anywhere extends to special teams, where he's received work at long snapper -- in spite of never being asked to handle those chores during four seasons at Miami.

"I'm out there every day on special teams," Myers said. "If they need me to be long snapper, I'll work on that too."

Myers didn't take up long snapping until the week of the Senior Bowl in January, when he handled the duties for the South team at that all-star game in Mobile, Ala. It was his first such work since high school.

But unfamiliarity with a task will not stand as justification for shirking a duty. As Myers sees it, he'd rather get into the NFL doing whatever is asked -- and even volunteering for extra -- than go without making it as a pro.

"If need be, I'll do it," he said.

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- **Darrent Williams: The Field Is His Classroom Now**
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Posted on Mon, Apr. 25, 2005

NFL DRAFT | UM FOOTBALL

Broncos pick Myers -- last Cane taken in a lean year

Offensive lineman Chris Myers was taken by the Denver Broncos in the NFL draft's sixth round; the five

Hurricanes players chosen this year were the fewest since 2000.

BY MANNY NAVARRO
mnavarro@herald.com

A year after setting a record with six first-round draft picks, the University of Miami had a relatively quiet finish to the 2005 NFL draft on Sunday.

Offensive lineman Chris Myers, a graduate of Miami Palmetto High, was the only Hurricane to be chosen Sunday. The Denver Broncos took Myers with the 200th overall selection, midway through the sixth round.

The five overall selections for the Hurricanes was the fewest number of players taken in the draft since 2000. That year was also the last time the Hurricanes only had one player taken in the first round.

"It's kind of disappointing, but only because we've gotten used to so many guys getting drafted the last couple of years," said Myers, who spent the day glued to the TV at his home in Kendall with his family.

"I guess you could call it an average year for us. I certainly feel blessed to be one of those guys to get picked."

Myers didn't watch the draft Saturday. He said he figured he wouldn't go in the first three rounds. Sunday, he began the day by getting phone calls from the Dallas Cowboys and Washington Redskins.

"The Cowboys called me and told me they were going to try and take me before the seventh round," Myers said. "I was actually on the phone with them, when Denver called [agent] Drew [Rosenhaus]."

Myers didn't visit any NFL teams but said he spoke with a scout from the Broncos at last month's combine. He said coach Mike Shanahan liked him because of his ability to play anywhere on the offensive line.

"It's kind of funny I ended up going there," Myers said. "Last week, I went to Denver on vacation with Joel [Rodriguez] and some friends. We skied, snowboarded and rode a few snowmobiles. It was pretty cool. I'm really looking forward to going up there and hanging with [former UM linebacker] D.J. Williams."

Former Cowboy ready for new life as Denver Broncos rookie

By Tim Landes Daily O'Collegian

Stillwater, OK (U-WIRE) -- Former Cowboy football player Darrent Williams is sitting at home.

Though a lot of OSU seniors are unaware of what they will be doing after graduation in two weeks, Williams got a job while spending a day with his family watching TV.

On Saturday afternoon, Williams was the 56th overall pick of the NFL Draft when the Denver Broncos selected the cornerback and return specialist in the second round.

"You can't really describe the feelings everybody had at the time they called my name," Williams said. "It was right where I expected to go."

After spending the day talking to friends and family, Williams boarded a plane headed to his new home for his first press conference as a Bronco.

"I was in Denver yesterday," Williams said. "I talked to all the coaches, had a press conference and all that good stuff. It went good - it went real well. I met the others drafted like Maurice Clarett. I had a good time down there."

Williams will join former Cowboy tailback Tatum Bell, who was drafted by the Broncos in last year's draft.

"It makes me feel good to know I already got somebody down there that I know," Williams said. "I'm real tight with him already since we're former teammates, so he can show me the ropes about being a rookie. It's a lot different from college in the pros."

Williams said the trip to Denver also allowed him to talk with his newly reunited Cowboy teammate.

"I talked to him yesterday," Williams said. "He just told me I was gonna like it and that I'm gonna have a good time. He said they treat the players real good there."

"He said it's a good organization to be with."

Bell wasn't the only former OSU tailback he spoke to.

After being drafted by the Houston Texans in the third round Saturday, Williams called Vernand Morency to congratulate his new opponent.

"I talked to Mo," Williams said. "He was mostly excited about playing in Houston. We're supposed to get together in Houston and spend some time together and catch up a lil' bit."

While Williams was the first cornerback taken by the Broncos, he wasn't the only one.

Denver selected Washington State's Karl Paymah and Maryland corner Domonique Foxworth to help fill vacancies left by Denver corners Kenoy Kennedy and Kelly Herndon, who both opted for free agency.

Even with the other corners joining the roster, Williams said he isn't worried about fighting for a starting spot on the depth chart.

"Nah, it just makes it more competitive, which makes everybody better," Williams said. "We're going to come with our best game every day. There's no pressure for me. You recruit new corners in college every year."

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Sunday, April 24, 2005

On Day 2, Broncos Hit the 'U'

Broncos Tap Chris Myers With Sixth-Round Pick

*** UPDATED 3:37 P.M. MDT ***

By Andrew Mason
DenverBroncos.com

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. -- Another lengthy wait faced the Broncos as they began their activities on Day 2 of the NFL Draft.

 **BRONCOS TV: [CHRIS MYERS PROFILE](#) | [DARRENT WILLIAMS PROFILE](#) | [MAURICE CLARETT PROFILE](#)**
 **[CHRIS MYERS AUDIO](#)**

The team waited through 98 picks over four hours and 45 minutes until making University of Miami guard/center Chris Myers its first selection of the draft's second and final day. Thirty-nine picks later, the Broncos closed out proceedings by selecting Northern Arizona punter/kicker Paul Ernster.

Myers, a 6-foot-5, 300-pound guard and center at Miami, also played center and tackle. He started at right guard in 2002, played left guard in 2003 but went to right tackle in his senior season. He also played center during practices leading up to the Senior Bowl three months ago.



"If I had to rank them in order, I had the most fun at center," Myers said. "I loved playing guard as well, and tackle I played last season because of injury. I had the most fun at center."

At 300 pounds, he fits snugly in the traditional mold of Broncos linemen, who collectively represent the lightest line in the AFC.

"Everyone was kind of automatically putting me in that Denver mold," Myers said. "It's kind of like a natural fit for me."

"I was the smallest guy on the line, and they were like, 'Yeah, you should play in Denver when you get to the NFL,'" Myers added. "My first year starting at Miami I weight 265, so I was obviously the smallest guy on the line, so I fit that mold. I've just been watching Denver for a long time. Cecil Sapp went to my high school, so I've been following Denver for a while."

Myers also has the seal of approval from Miami's long-time offensive-line guru, assistant head coach Art Kehoe.

"Chris Myers has the temperament, work ethic and ability to be one of the best linemen I've ever coached," **Kehoe said.**

Myers spent a few days in Denver earlier in the spring.

"I was actually in Denver ... talking about how cool it would be to play there," he said. "It's kind of nice right now."

Ernster, the last of the Broncos' six 2005 picks, comes to Denver off a season in which he averaged 47.8 yards per punt for Northern Arizona, which is located in Flagstaff, Ariz., with an elevation of around 7,000 feet. But he kicked well both at altitude and below, earning Division I-AA All-American honors as a punter. Ernster also was an All-Big Sky selection as a kicker, connecting on nine of 18 field-goal tries and all 27 extra-point attempts.

UM offensive lineman Myes a good fit in Denver

By [Jorge Milian](#)

Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

Monday, April 25, 2005

CORAL GABLES — As an undersized offensive lineman, Chris Myers often has been told he belonged with the Denver Broncos, who traditionally have the NFL's lightest group of blockers.

That became a reality when Myers, who started 38 consecutive games for the University of Miami in the past three seasons, was picked by Denver on Sunday in the sixth round by Denver.

"Everyone was kind of automatically putting me in that Denver mold," Myers said. "It's kind of natural for me."

Myers was the only UM player picked on the second day of the NFL Draft. Four Hurricane first-round selection Antrel Rolle, were taken Saturday. The five UM draftees were the few Hurricanes were taken in 2000.

Among the UM notables not chosen this weekend were quarterback Brock Berlin, defensive end Santonio Thomas and fullback Talib Humphrey. Berlin signed a free-agent contract with the Miami Dolphins.

Myers weighed 265 pounds when he arrived at UM as a freshman. He bulked up his 6-foot-4 frame to 300 pounds but remained one of the Hurricanes' smallest offensive linemen.

The lack of great size did not betray Myers on the field. He started at center, both guard positions and tackle during the past three seasons. Last year, Myers was a second-team All-ACC selection.

Myers said he spent much of Sunday receiving calls from NFL teams and was speaking to a Dallas Cowboys official when the team called to say they were about to pick him. Denver plans on using him at center, where he played in the Senior Bowl, or guard.

"Obviously, it would have been nice to have been picked higher, but it's still awesome," Myers said.



Posted on Mon, Apr. 25, 2005

NFL DRAFT | UM FOOTBALL

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mnavarro@herald.com

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BERLIN GOES UNDRAFTED

Quarterback Brock Berlin, at home with his family in Shreveport, La., was one of four Hurricane hopefuls to go undrafted.

Berlin, who was a second-team All-ACC selection as a senior, however, did sign an undrafted free agent contract late Sunday with the Dolphins, according to his agent David Dunn.

"Miami is a good situation for Brock," Dunn said.

Fullback Talib Humphrey, quarterback Derrick Crudup and center Joel Rodriguez are all expected to sign later this week as free agents.

Rocky Mountain News

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2005 Broncos draft picks

April 25, 2005

Second round, 56th overall

Darrent Williams, CB, Oklahoma State; 5-8 1/2, 176



Paul Ernster

- **Scouting report:** Some teams were concerned about his size and a senior-year clash with coaches, but he was one of the fastest players at the scouting combine in February with a 4.31-second 40-yard dash.

Considered one of the top returners as well, especially in the punt-return game, where he finished with an astounding 17.9-yard average in 2003. Those skills served him well when he intercepted passes as well.

He returned five interceptions for touchdowns with the Cowboys.

Williams missed five games because of a broken right forearm this past season. That injury also put him at odds with coaches about his potential return.

The animosity reached a point where the coaches did not take Williams on the trip to the Alamo Bowl to finish the season.

Williams called it all a "miscommunication," and said he had been advised by a doctor not to play.

He was a track All-American at O.D. Wyatt High School in Fort Worth, Texas.

- **Quotable:** "I've been an elite player at every level. . . . I think I'll come in and contribute right away."

Third round, 76th overall

Karl Paymah, CB, Washington State; 6-0, 204

- **Scouting report:** He was one of the biggest players available at the position and also helped his cause with a 4.35 combine clocking in the 40.

But like many players in this draft, he is a better athlete than player at the moment. Needs attention to his footwork, especially getting out of his backpedal to run with a receiver down the field.

As a result, some teams had projected him as a potential safety.

He also might have slipped on some teams' boards because he tried to play on a sore ankle for much of the past season, which affected his production.

The Broncos see him as a cornerback who will get a look playing on the outside as well as in the slot during training camp to see where he's suited the best.

- **Quotable:** "I'm a focused and an educated corner. I'm going to bring a lot to the table because I'm going to go in hungry and ready to play."

Third round, 97th overall

Domonique Foxworth, CB, Maryland; 5-11 1/8, 184

- **Scouting report:** A refined player in coverage who pushed himself up draft boards with quality workouts after the season.

He was a three-year starter for the Terrapins and finished his career with 40 career starts, including 14 in 2002, 13 in '03, 11 in '04.

Ran a 4.34 and 4.36 in the 40 at the combine. Also, pound for pound, Foxworth was one of the strongest players on the Maryland roster, with a 335-pound bench press to go with a 515-pound squat, numbers more suited to some linebackers.

His coaches vouched to NFL scouts about his extensive work in the video room. Always prepared to play and, as a result, doesn't make too many mistakes in coverage.

As a prep player at Western Tech High School in Baltimore, he set a school record with 43 touchdowns as a running back to go with a school-record 14 interceptions as a senior defensive back.

Graduated college and high school in only 3 1/2 years each.

- **Quotable:** "I think I'm a very smart player. I think I know a lot about the game. And I think that's important for a corner to have, being offenses these days are quite complex. That's one of my main attributes."

Third round, 101st overall

Maurice Clarett, RB, Ohio State; 5-11 5/8, 234

- **Scouting report:** Where to start?

The Broncos have done what no other team in the league was willing to do - use a first-day draft pick to give Clarett a fresh start.

Beyond Clarett's failed legal tussle with the NFL in trying to enter the 2003 draft, and his off-the-field troubles with illegal benefits that got him ruled ineligible at Ohio State, on the field, he will have to rebound from a two-year absence from football.

Never a speed back, he also worked behind a dominant offensive line in his one season at Ohio State that made giant holes for him to run through.

He ran a 4.78 40 at the combine this year to go with a quicker 4.67 at a private workout later. The Broncos are hoping he can play a little closer to that second clocking.

He also has had some shoulder (stinger), knee (arthroscopic surgery to repair cartilage) and ankle problems.

Broncos like his instincts into the line of scrimmage, but he will have to show he has enough speed to get to the open spaces.

- **Quotable:** "I'm in great shape right now, working out every day. I talked to (running backs) coach (Bobby) Turner and said, 'If you need me to lose more weight, I'll lose more weight. If you need me to run more, I'll run more.' Whatever they ask of me, whatever I need to do, is going to happen. I'm just in a hurry to make a contribution. I just can't wait."

Sixth round, 200th overall

Chris Myers, G, Miami (Fla.); 6-4 1/2, 300

- **Scouting report:** Broncos get a solid, versatile player with this pick.

Was three-year starter for the Hurricanes who played at right tackle, guard and center. Also worked at center for the Senior Bowl in January, and some teams believe it might be his best position.

He's more advanced in the running game than in pass protection at the moment but gradually has improved as he has gained strength. He was 265 pounds during his first year as a starter (2001).

Did not run at the scouting combine because of a hamstring injury.

He surrendered only one sack in '03, then moved to right tackle in '04 because of injuries along the offensive line.

Dislocated his left knee during his redshirt season in 2000. He needed surgery to put his kneecap back in its proper position but played the remainder of his career without any extensive knee problems.

He also played part of this past season with a dislocated finger on his right hand.

His uncle Dennis Kelleher played for two Miami national championship teams, and his grandfather Tom Kelleher was an NFL referee.

- **Quotable:** "I was actually in Denver for a week about a month ago with some friends and we were talking about how cool it would be to play there. . . . It's kind of nice right now."

Seventh round 239th overall

Paul Ernster, P/K, Northern Arizona; 6-0, 218

- **Scouting report:** Considered a kickoff specialist by most teams. Did handle punts and placekicks for the Lumberjacks and was named to several All-America teams this past season.

Ernster led the nation this past season at 47.8 yards a punt - his first season as the team's full-time punter - a total that included a 71-yarder. He also put 19 punts inside the 20-yard line.

Has a powerful leg but has been erratic as a placekicker, making 50 percent of his attempts this past season (9-for-18).

Ernster went 18-for-30 in his field-goal attempts in '03 to go with 12-for-17 in '02. That's why most teams see him as a punter/kickoff guy.

The Broncos worked him out on the Northern Arizona campus last month and liked the power he showed in his leg.

His brother Mark is a former Arizona State baseball player who is in the Milwaukee Brewers organization.

- **Quotable:** "Coming from a small school, only punting one year, having limited exposure, it was kind of a long shot for a guy like me to get drafted. I'm just so thankful the Denver Broncos believed in me and they're going to give me a shot to make a contribution on their team."

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Draft Day 2: Versatility Counts

Myers, Ernster Multi-Purpose Talents

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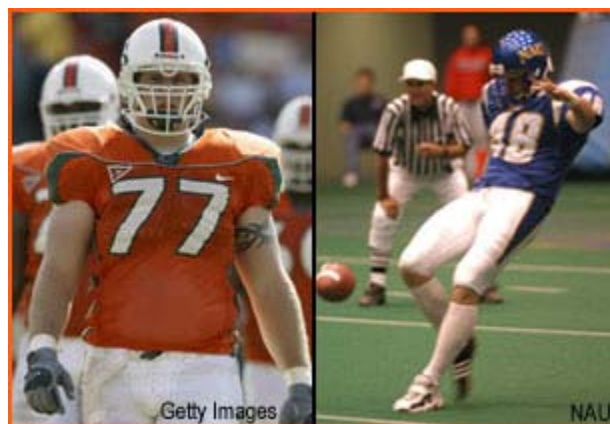
By Andrew Mason
DenverBroncos.com

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. -- You only have two picks over the course of four rounds. How do you make the most of them? Take the most versatile players available, the ones whose skills are the most diversified.

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That was exactly what the Broncos did on the second day of the 2005 NFL Draft. Left with only sixth- and seventh-round picks after trading their fourth- and fifth-round selections, the Broncos found an offensive lineman who started three positions in college and played a fourth in an all-star game and a special-teamer who can handle punts, kickoffs and is willing to learn how to hold on placekicks.



The lineman is the University of Miami's Chris Myers, a 6-foot-5, 300-pounder who started at right guard, left guard and right tackle during his three seasons as a starter for the Hurricanes. Myers then ventured to the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala. and lined up at center.

"He gives us some depth, having played all (offensive line) positions," Head Coach Mike Shanahan said. "He's got some (long) snapping in his background as well."

The specialist is former Northern Arizona punter and kicker Paul Ernster, who earned Division I-AA All-America honors last fall as a punter, averaging 47.8 yards per kick with 19 punts inside the 20-yard-line.

"We worked him out a couple of weeks ago and were very impressed with his leg strength," Shanahan said. "He's a guy that has been very successful, both in punting and kicking the ball deep in the end zone."

Myers worked all around the offensive line, but prefers the position at which he spent time during the Senior Bowl's practices three months ago.

"If I had to rank them in order, I had the most fun at center," Myers said. "I loved playing guard as well, and tackle I played last season because of injury. I had the most fun at center."

At 300 pounds, he fits snugly in the traditional mold of Broncos linemen, who collectively represent the lightest line in the AFC.

"Everyone was kind of automatically putting me in that Denver mold," Myers said. "It's kind of like a natural fit for me."

"I was the smallest guy on the line, and they were like, 'Yeah, you should play in Denver when you get to the NFL,'" Myers added. "My first year starting at Miami I weight 265, so I was obviously the smallest guy on the line, so I fit that mold. I've just

been watching Denver for a long time. Cecil Sapp went to my high school, so I've been following Denver for a while."

Miami's coaches raved about the quick-to-adjust Myers.

"Chris Myers has the temperament, work ethic and ability to be one of the best linemen I've ever coached," said Art Kehoe, the school's long-time line guru and assistant head coach.

Added 'Canes head coach Larry Coker: "Chris Myers brings a lot to the table. He's not a high-maintenance guy. He works hard, and he's very versatile. He started at center, guard and tackle for us. Probably his best position in the NFL is center."

Myers spent a few days in Denver earlier in the spring.

"I was actually in Denver ... talking about how cool it would be to play there," he said. "It's kind of nice right now."

Ernster, meanwhile, worked out for the Broncos.

"I was actually really nervous when I worked out because I had been a really big fan of the Broncos for quiet a while," Ernster said. "All along I'd said the Broncos would be my No. 1 pick as far as playing wise.

"So I was pretty nervous that one of the coaches was actually going to give me a shot and come in and work me out. All I'd hope for out of that workout was that they could see what I could do for them and the contribution I could make."

Denver did.

"Thankfully, I performed well enough for them for them to consider me as a draft pick," Ernster said.

Ernster comes to Denver off a season in which he averaged 47.8 yards per punt for Northern Arizona, where Shanahan coached in 1977. The school is located in Flagstaff, Ariz. -- elevation 7,011 feet, or 1,983 feet higher than Denver.

"It's a great fit for me. We are both at considerable elevation," Ernster said. "I'm used to punting at that elevation in a number of circumstances.

But Ernster doesn't think that punting at lower elevations will be a problem. Last year, the lowest elevation at which he kicked was against Stephen F. Austin in Nacogdoches, Texas, which sits at around 300 feet above sea level. He averaged 38.9 yards on nine punts, but reached the end zone on all four of his kickoffs, with two going for touchbacks. However, that was only Ernster's second game as a punter; he was only the kicker until his senior season last fall.

"I actually had a good mentor in Mark Gould, who was an All-American ahead of me who I took the back seat to for a couple years," Ernster said. "(I) learned from his experiences and was able to make the best out of my senior year."

Ernster also isn't averse to holding on placekicks. He didn't handle that duty at NAU, since he was the team's kicker.

"I've worked on holding a little bit and that's one thing that (special teams) Coach (Ronnie) Bradford has expressed to me, that I need to get with (Jason) Elam and work with him on holding, but I know that in my mind, I'll be able to do it," he said.

Should he do that, he'll become even more versatile -- the most essential quality of the Broncos' Sunday draft duo.

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Got a minutes? Chris Myers, Miami OL

By MICHAEL SNYDER

Published September 14, 2004

Last movie you saw?

Open Water. It was one of the most horrible movies I've ever seen. I feel sorry for the people it was based upon, but it was based on true events. I don't know how you base a movie on a real story and both of them die in the end. How do you know the conversations and the whole movie plot went on? It was based on two people out in the water the whole time who went scuba diving and got lost and were left there. ... Did they have a cameraman out there?

What's in your CD player?

Linkin Park Meteora. They're my favorite band.

Can't miss TV?

It's *Wild Boyz* on MTV. It's not on now because it's the offseason. It's like the show *Jackass*, the same guys.

Dream date?

My girlfriend for 2 1/2 years. I'd probably be in big trouble if I said anything else.

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Miami Hurricane - Sports
Issue: 11/14/03

Myers remains positive

By Dana Strokovsky

Junior offensive lineman Chris Myers had some of his best numbers against Virginia Tech in the 2002 season. Myers excelled in every aspect of the game, totaling seven pancake blocks and 15 metro rails in the victory. This year, however, the Virginia Tech game opened the floodgates to chaos.

After the disturbing 31-7 loss to the Hokies, Myers and the o-line admitted to not reaching their full potential this season.

"We have been there [the national championship game] the last two years, and that's how Miami is, we don't lose," Myers said. "It's a huge disappointment for everyone around here now, because you tend to get a little spoiled. But you got to realize that sometimes you are going to lose, you are going to make mistakes, and other teams might be better at times."

After the loss to the Hokies, the Hurricanes tried to rally against Tennessee at home. Instead, the 'Canes suffered another loss, ending the nation's longest home winning streak at 26. In addition, this was the first time the team has lost two games in a row since 1999.

"We had certain goals in the beginning of the season," Myers said. "The first goal was to win the first game. Then we wanted to win the Florida Cup by beating Florida and Florida State. Then the Big East, and that's still our main goal. So its not really re-focusing, our goal to win the Big East is still there. Only the last goal of going to a national title game is gone."

Perhaps not re-evaluating their goals is the answer after being knocked out of the national championship picture for the first time in four years, however, coming to grips with reality is important. The defense has been providing opportunities for the offense to score, but the offense seems to only gain six yards instead of 60 on running plays. They especially have had trouble in the red zone, scoring only 17 touchdowns in their last 42 trips.

"Once we get down there we seem to have a lack of focus," Myers said. "I don't know if you want to call it soft, but people are coming off blocks too early, and the penalties, I don't know. That's what we've been trying to work on all season. Its been like that for the last three years, but luckily the last two years we had the talent to back it up. This year it has caught up to us and we need to correct that."

This season, the 'Canes have been called for 100 penalties totaling 828 yards while their opponents have had 71 for 545 yards.

"The penalties might show that we don't have discipline, but we are trying to correct that," Myers said. "And when someone puts too much effort correcting something, it sometimes seems to cause another one. It's a disappointment when we have penalties every game when we've been trying to correct them all season."

The offense needs a spark, and the team knows that. They have young talent but many veterans left for the NFL, especially in the offense. Myers is anxious to prove once again that the Hurricanes are an elite team.

"Are we angry or hurting? Of course we are," Myers said. "It's a combination of a bunch of things that have led up to this. Obviously we have a lot of frustration from the last two weeks. And obviously our title hopes are probably shot. But it's our own doing, our own penalties, and our own turnovers. We have three games left, we could still win the Big East and go to a BCS bowl, and that's still an amazing accomplishment."

Miami Hurricane - Sports
Issue: 9/26/03

Football and frats

By Dana Strokovsky

From C-A-N-E-S to P-I-K-E-S. Chris Myers, Eric Winston, and Joel Rodriguez have opted to widen their horizons and add another element to their college experience.

Between the times spent together for games, practices, meetings, and workouts, an everlasting unspoken bond is formed within a football team. However, football player or not, the curiosity of a typical college student prevails sometimes.

"Pledging Pike is an opportunity for us to try something new," Rodriguez said. "Chris and I been here for four years, and have been occupied with football. Even though we go out and mingle with others in The Grove, it'll be nice to see what the other side of college life has to offer."

"For football, the silent agreement is that anyone has anyone's back," Myers said. "We'll do anything for each other, like brothers. Hopefully Pike is the same way."

In each of the last four seasons, the Hurricanes' offensive line has produced one or more first-team All-Americans. Myers, a junior, is a returning starter for the 'Canes at right guard. Rodriguez, also a junior, has replaced Brett Romberg at center this season. Winston, a sophomore, moved up to 290 lbs to switch from tight end to the offensive line.

As important parts of the offense, one must wonder if they have time for anything but football.

With regulation under the appropriate supervision, they are able to balance their schedule.

"There are the athletes, the regular students, and the Greek life," Myers said. "Everyone interacts when they go out, but for the most part each group stays to themselves. I just thought this would be something new to try while I'm still in college, something I won't be able to experience when I leave."

The Preamble of Pi Kappa Alpha states: "We believe in the importance of virtue and commit to living the values of the Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity. We recognize that truth is the foundation of all lasting association, and we will seek wisdom and knowledge while serving others in modesty and dignity."

In ways, there are many similarities between the camaraderie of a football team and the bonds of brotherhood. In different forms, both organizations push the members to be strong in mind and body. Some students, when beginning at a university, are tempted to explore Greek life. Winston, Rodriguez, and Myers chose another path at first, but were not closed minded to the option when it surfaced.

"Eric is 2 years younger than Joel and I," Myers said. "So he's still trying out new things. We are probably the closest with him on the team, and he told us he was thinking about pledging. One of the equipment managers is actually the President of Pike, so he approached us with the offer. We talked about it, and met with some of the guys in the fraternity. They just seemed pretty cool so we thought, why not?"

"Pledging is normally very time consuming," Rodriguez said, "but it helps that the President is involved with our team, as well as understands the fact that football comes first. We don't have as much time as the typical student has to pledge, so they will take that into consideration."

The guys seem to be getting the best of both worlds. They do not need to sacrifice what they love, football, yet are offered the chance to meet new people and balance a new social experience into their schedules.

"I never thought I'd have the time," Myers said. "Then I realized I can work it into my schedule. Basically we've already experienced a lot in college. My sister is in a sorority, and Greek life is just something I haven't experienced. Maybe we will meet people that we will know for the rest of our lives, or people that can help us down the road."

The players will find out who their big brothers are this week.

"Some of the guys on the team were shocked that we decided to do this," Myers said. "Hopefully we are opening new doors for the team at the same time. We get a few wise cracks because it's just out of the ordinary. It should be something new and exciting for all three of us that we are all looking forward to."



Posted on Mon, Aug. 26, 2002

Strong practices help UM's Myers

Right-guard starter elevates game

BY MARISSA SILVERA
msilvera@herald.com

Quietly, Chris Myers has made his mark on the University of Miami offensive line. Patience and hard work have paid off for the former Miami-Palmetto standout, who has earned the starting right-guard position.

The 6-5, 276-pound sophomore will get his first start against Florida A&M on Saturday night in the Hurricanes' season opener at the Orange Bowl.

"I have been waiting to play at the University of Miami my whole life," said Myers, whose uncle, Dennis Kelleher, played on two UM national championship teams.

"All the hard work I put in this past summer and competing with Ed Wilkins paid off. Hopefully, I will get the job done and throughout the whole season keep the spot."

Myers beat out senior Wilkins after intensely competitive two-a-day workout sessions. He also gained an edge during spring workouts when Wilkins, who played seven games last season at left guard, was recovering from right shoulder surgery in January.

The Hurricanes lost three starters to the NFL draft, including right guard Martin Bibla.

Left guard Sherko Haji-Rasouli returned from a torn knee ligament to regain his starting spot, which meant Wilkins, who played in the Rose Bowl, was now fighting to return to the starting line. Carlos Joseph and Vernon Carey are the two tackles.

For now, Wilkins, 6-5, 314 pounds, has conceded the first-round victory to Myers.

"Right now, Chris Myers deserves to play," said Wilkins, who has practiced with the second unit much of the fall. "He has been doing a great job. I was struggling in the beginning, but in time, I feel I will get better. The way things work here, you have to earn your spot each and every week. We will continue to battle it out all year."

Myers and Wilkins are eager to push each other.

"[Myers] has really elevated his game," UM coach Larry Coker said. "He's played extremely hard and practiced extremely well. He had a great spring and fall camp. The fact Ed Wilkins missed spring practice hurts him. I think his shoulder is fine, and he has to play through and earn the position."

Myers, who played in seven games as a reserve offensive lineman, said he bulked up to 285 pounds over the summer and hopes to reach 290.

"I came in here, not the typical offensive lineman, not the big prospect," said Myers, 20. "I worked my way up and worked hard the past three summers. Some might say it is a surprise that I'm starting. I'm

getting the job done so far."

Myers said he tries to keep a level head about his new role.

And if he forgets, offensive-line coach Art Kehoe will remind him.

In his affectionate way, Kehoe has 'called me a little punk from Miami, and I shouldn't be starting. I know he's kidding. He's been the No. 1 motivator for me. He hasn't done positive motivation. He's the one that keeps getting on you. Basically, you know if he keeps getting on you, he wants you to improve. I love that better than just telling me 'good job.' "

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