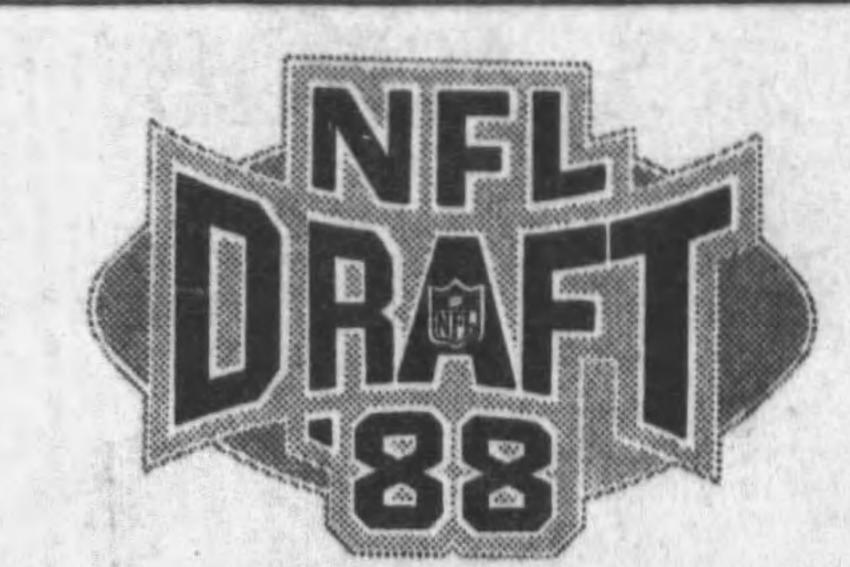
This is the third in a series of position-by-position analyses of the National Football League draft that will be conducted Sunday and Monday. Today: Offensive linemen.

Thursday: Defensive linemen.



Gruber rates best on offensive line

Wisconsin tackle shines as skilled pass blocker

By Chris Mortensen Staff Writer

NFL teams have different perspectives concerning offensive linemen. Los Angeles Raiders boss Al Davis won't hesitate to use a firstround draft pick on one. Tampa Bay Buccaneers coach Ray Perkins, even with \$8-million quarterback Vinny Testaverde to protect, wouldn't even think of taking one in the first round.

The best of the class in 1988 is Wisconsin tackle Paul Gruber, and the debate over his value is lively. With Aundray Bruce signed as the No. 1 pick of the Atlanta Falcons, the Detroit Lions are wrestling within their front office about whether to use their No. 2 pick on Gruber or a high-profile player such as Notre Dame receiver Tim Brown or Miami safety Bennie Blades.

The last offensive lineman to go second in the NFL draft was Pittsburgh's Bill Fralic, to the Falcons in 1985. But as good as Fralic has become — a two-time Pro Bowl player — he has not taken his team to paradise with him. Not even

For teams close to contending but lacking some muscle up front, the '88 draft does have its linemen. Because tackles are consistently in demand over guards and centers, Gruber leads the pack.

Gruber is not the bruising warrior Fralic is, but he is a more skilled pass blocker coming out of college than Fralic. With young pass protectors at a premium, the Lions, the Raiders (picking sixth), the New York Jets (eighth) and the New

York Giants (10th) each have Gruber high on their shopping lists.

Few college linemen can step in and play left tackle, where they often are isolated against the oppos-, ing team's best pass rusher. Gruber

"Gruber's got great feet, and that's what you need on pass protection," said Tampa Bay offensive line coach Larry Beightol. "He reminds me of Mike Kenn (of the Falcons) in his All-Pro years, and that's as high a compliment as I can give a lineman coming into the NFL."

There is one clearly superior guard this season — Arizona State's Randall McDaniel, a superb athlete at 6-foot-334, 268 pounds. Some teams see a potential All-Pro center in McDaniel because of his arm length and big hands. He also has unusual speed for a lineman, 4.58 seconds in the 40-yard dash.

Six tackles could go in the first round this year: Gruber, Dave Cadigan of Southern Cal, Eric Moore of Indiana, Greg Johnson of Oklahoma, John Elliott of Michigan and Gerald Perry of Southern University (La.).

Cadigan is yet another top tackle produced by Southern Cal. He has strength, having pumped a 225pound weight 32 times, more than any other linemen at the NFL scouting workouts in February. He also ran the fastest 40 yards of any tackle at 4.86 seconds. He has discombativeness confidence.

"I wasn't sure where I stood against the others, but now I know I'm better than most of them," Cadigan said after the workouts. "Some of those guys who had reputations weren't in the same ballpark. I wanted to show the scouts who the real men are, and I did."

The tackle who improved his

Rating the offensive linemen

TACKLES

Player, school	Ht.	Wt.	40	Nat	Bis	PR
Paul Gruber, Wisconsin	6-41/8	290	4.91	7.12	8.20	1
Dave Cadigan, Southern Cal	6-41/8	281	4.86	6.50	8.10	1
Eric Moore, Indiana	6-47/8	290	5.05	6.10	7.80	1
Greg Johnson, Oklahoma	6-4	311	5.03	7.11	6.60	1-2
John Elliott, Michigan	6-61/8	305	5.44	7.10	7.80	1-2
Gerald Perry, Southern U.	6-5	305	5.06	5.40	6.60	1-2
Stacy Searels, Auburn	6-53/8	270	5.13	7.00	7.10	3
Dave Widell, Boston College	6-63/8	297	5.34	6.00	5.70	3-4
Tim Borcky, Memphis St.	6-71/4	294	5.28	6.00	7.10	3-4
Tom Rehder, Notre Dame	6-61/4	270	4.79	6.00	6.60	3-4
Todd Irvin, Mississippi	6-53/8	299	5.15	5.51	4.80	4-5
GUARDS						
Player, school	Ht.	Wt.	40	Nat	Bls	PR
Randall McDaniel, Ariz. St.	6-33/4	268	4.58	6.50	7.90	1
Mark Hutson, Oklahoma	6-3	289	5.12	7.00	7.50	1
John Bruhin, Tennessee	6-31/4	276	5.08	5.30	5.20	3-4
Bob Sims, Florida	6-31/2	269	5.09	5.80	6.10	3-4
Eric Andolsek, LSU	6-13/4	281	5.02	5.60	5.80	3-4
Joel Porter, Baylor	6-33/4	269	5.00	6.00	6.50	3-5
Scott Dill, Memphis St.	6-43/4	271	5.24	4.92	6.30	4-5
Paul Jetton, Texas	6-43/8	288	5.31	6.00	6.20	4-5
Stephen Hegdale, Tulsa	6-43/4	283	4.94	6.80	6.02	4-5
Harry Galbreath, Tennessee	6-11/8	271	5.02	6.80	6.02	5
The second secon				-		-
CENTERS						

5.20 Rodney Lasso, Wisconsin 6-21/2 273 4.97 KEY: 40 - Best-recorded 40-yard dash times; most were clocked at NFL scouting workouts in February. Nat, Bls - Ratings established by the National Football Scouting service and Blesto scouting service (Blesto ratings have been converted to National figures). Ratings are based on grades given in December; adjustments were made based on conversations with NFL general managers, scouts and coaches. PR - Projected round player will be

dialied.		
Draft status		
Superstar; first-year starter, except at quarterback.		
First-year starter; first-round pick, potential All-Pro player.		
Should start, could develop into Pro Bowl player.		
Good prospect, eventual starter.		
Above-average ability, should make team, but questions persist.		

2.0-2.9 Poor ability, but redeeming quality such as height, weight, speed.

4.5-5.4 Average player, but bring to camp; needs development.

Below average; sign as a free agent.

standing most in the postseason was Southern's Perry, who reminds some scouts of Los Angeles Rams

Pro Bowl selection Jackie Slater.

Perry may have a rough rookie sea-

Dermontti Dawson, Kentucky

Chuck Lanza, Notre Dame

Matt Wilson, Texas A&M

Ed Miller, Pittsburgh

son, but he could develop into a bigtimer, scouts say.

"Perry probably has as much athletic ability as any offensive lineman out there," said Philadelphia Eagles scouting director Joe Woolley. "He's a little lazy, but if he makes up his mind to work hard, he's going to be a real good one."

If any lineman's standing dropped in the postseason, it was Auburn tackle Stacy Searels, who played poorly in all-star games, particularly on pass protection. "He got beat a lot," said one NFL scout.

6.30

6.50

4.50

6.80

McDaniel has company in Oklahoma's Mark Hutson among guards who could go in the first or second

Teams looking for a center have a slightly better choice this season. Demonotti Dawson of Kentucky is the top candidate.

Bloom may not show for pretrial hearing, according to attorney

By Chris Mortensen Staff Writer

Sports agent Lloyd Bloom, who. drew the wrath of Alabama state officials last month for his absence at an arraignment, might renege on a promise to appear for his pretrial hearing Thursday in Tuscaloosa,

m's Los Angeles-based attorney, M.L. "Mike" Trope, said Tuesday that Bloom will await the outcome of dismissal motions made Thursday by former associate Walters before making a decision on his own case.

"If the judge decides to throw out the case on the same motions we would file, why should Ll waste what little money he has by spending it on a trip across country?" asked Trope.

Bloom failed to appear at the Lloyd Bloom March 16 arraignment on charges stemming from payments by Wal- they're up to." ters and himself to former University of Alabama basketball players Derrick McKey and Terry Coner.

Alabama Assistant Attorney General Donald Valeska vowed to extradite Bloom and "track him to all ends of the world." Trope responded by saying Bloom would appear for arraignment no later than Thursday's pretrial hearing. The trial is set for May 9.

"I have a letter from his attorney, M.L. Trope, saying he will be here by Thursday," said Valeska. "If he doesn't show, I will have something to say."

Bloom and Walters are charged with three misdemeanor crimes tampering with a sports contest, commercial bribery and deceptive trade practices. Each count on each player carries a maximum one-year jail sentence and \$2,000

The pretrial hearing Thursday could have a surprise. Walters' attorneys, Donald Stewart of Anniston, Ala., and Robert Gold of New York, have subpoenaed Alabama athletic director Steve Sloan and basketball coach Wimp Sanderson, as well as several documents.

"I was surprised by the subpoena," said Sloan. "I don't know what



Stewart and Gold could not be reached Tuesday for comment. Walters will not be present at the pretrial hearing, but he did appear for the March 16 arraignment and entered a plea of not guilty to all

Alabama Attorney General Don Siegelman has said that if W and Bloom are convicted, the state will seek a victim's restitution of \$250,000 to the university, which forfeited that amount in NCAA Tournament revenue because of the players' involvement with the

Walters' attorneys are basing their motions to dismiss the charges largely on their opinion that the indictments are vague and that none of the laws applies to the agent's actions.

Attorneys for former Atlanta sports agent Jim Abernethy argued the same motions in Auburn, Ala., earlier this year, but Circuit Court Judge Robert M. Harper sent all three cases to a jury trial in Lee County. Abernethy was convicted on the sports-tampering count and was sentenced to one year in jail and fined \$2,000 for making payments to former Auburn football player Kevin Porter.

OUESTIONING OTHORITES



Kids, want to be a part of the excitement of campaign year '88? CHILDREN'S EXPRESS, the news service reported and edited by children and teens, invites students ages 9 to 13 to submit an essay of 200 words or less on "Why I want to be a reporter at the Democratic Convention."

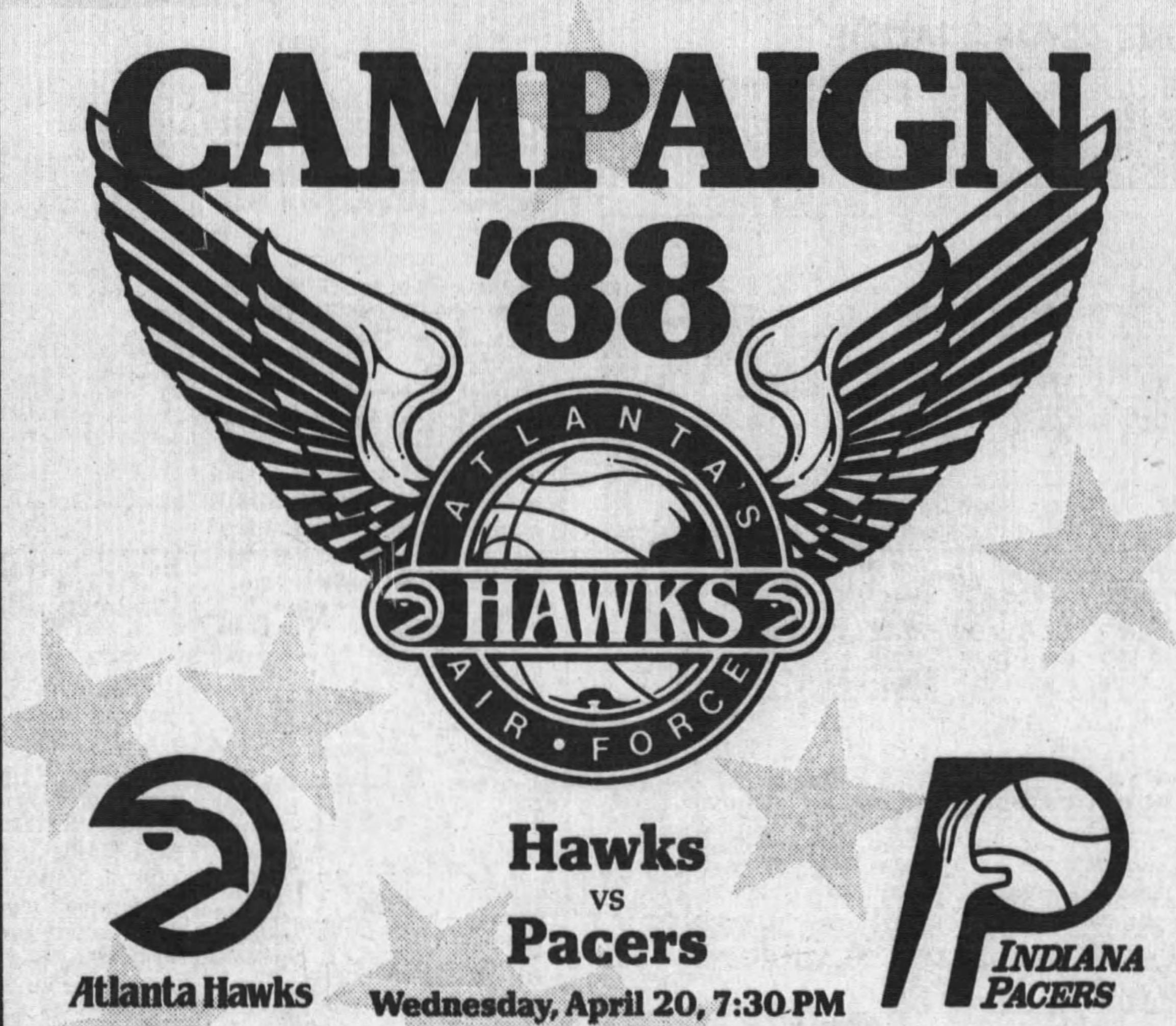
Essays will be judged by a selection panel chaired by Mrs. Jean Young, wife of Mayor Andrew Young, and Journal-Constitution publisher Jay Smith. Students will join 50 other CE reporters covering the exciting action at the Democratic Convention in Atlanta this July.

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