

By Paul Vozzella
NEFJ Staff

MOBILE, AL – Another day is in the books at the Senior Bowl. More standouts emerged while others are struggling to rise to the occasion.

Following practice, Media Day was held at Mobile Convention Center where NEFJ had the chance to speak with several standouts so far.

The National roster's practice continued to be a lot more tantalizing than the American in terms of the talent and how the practice was run by the head coaches. National head coach Mike Kafka spent little time on positional warm-ups and stretching before getting into contact drills while American head coach Bubba Ventrone, Cleveland Browns Assistant Head Coach and Special Teams Coordinator, spent close to thirty minutes on non-contact special teams drills and stretching to open his practice.

Players with ties back to the region continued to stand out from the pack. Edge rusher Donovan Ezeiruaku flashed his skillset, once again, in one-on-one drills and in live team drills. He also had an early one-on-one repetition against teammate Ozzy Trapilo.

"I definitely didn't want to because I go against him every single day, you know, playing at Boston College, but it was good," said Ezeiruaku with a smile on his face. "I know what kind of player he is, he understands what kind of player I am, so it's always competition amongst us."

Trapilo spent his starting days in college mostly as a right tackle; however, Wednesday he was among several linemen who worked from both sides of the ball. His battle against Ezeiruaku came at left tackle. The Norwell native looked right at home from the left side of the ball, showing he is capable of being a versatile professional.

"My career started at guard," said Trapilo. "I got a couple starts at guard – not very many. I knew I would play tackle eventually, [so] I kind of focused on that,

but I started at guard for a few games – both left and right... so I've played a bit of everywhere, so I think that's something that's helped my game, as well."

Another New England native in Minnesota edge rusher Jah Joyner had his second good day at practice, but did not look as dominant as Tuesday. Still, measuring in at 6'4" and weighing over 260 lbs. with plenty of athletic ability, Joyner has to be catching the eyes of nearly every NFL team after he's shown a good mixture of pass rush moves thus far.

Other interesting standouts who haven't garnered a bunch of attention prior to this week were Marshall edge rusher Mike Green and Louisville cornerback Quincy Riley. Green bulldozed projected first round pick Oregon left tackle Josh Conerly Jr. in a one-on-one drill and Riley clamped up multiple receivers today. He made some impressive pass breakups Tuesday and after coming into this week as a late day three draft selection, he is making a lot of noise.

Added to the list of high intrigue wide receivers were Jayden Higgins and Jaylin Noel out of Iowa State, along with pass-catcher Tai Felton from Maryland, who caught the attention of many.

Felton does not have the prototypical build for an outside receiver, but makes up for it in other ways.

"I feel like I play a little bit bigger than, well, what people say I do," said Felton. "I feel like it's all about what's in the heart, man, and what you're willing to do in your mindset about the game and how you go about things."

Noel's on-field abilities are clear but he has a personable demeanor that teammates can gravitate towards.

"I feel like I'm a connector," said Noel, a two-time team captain. "I'm a consistent person. I'm gonna come in with a positive attitude each day and allow guys to feed off my positive energy."

On the downtrend were Conerly Jr., Arkansas edge rusher Landon Jackson and Georgia wide receiver Arian Smith. Smith has now had back-to-back days of tripping over his own feet while running routes and struggling to catch the ball when an accurate throw comes his way.

Thursday marks the final day of practice before Saturday's game.