

# Detroit Lions

## 2005

### NFL Draft Board

#### NEEDS BY POSITION:

##### **Quarterback:**

With 2004 starter Joey Harrington the only likely returning QB from last year the Lions will likely pick up both a veteran backup and a rookie in the draft. The veteran will most likely be Jeff Garcia of Cleveland Browns because of his history with head coach Steve Mariucci in San Francisco. Other veteran candidates include Kurt Warner, Jon Kitna, and Brad Johnson. If the Lions do pick up a QB in the draft don't expect them to pull the trigger until the 3rd or 4th round at the earliest. Some quarterbacks that may be available in those rounds include Kyle Orton of Purdue, Dan Orlovsky of Connecticut, Derek Anderson of Oregon State, and Stefon Lefors of Louisville.

*What I would do:*

Sign Jeff Garcia as both a backup and a mentor for Joey Harrington because of his knowledge of the system. Draft Stefon Lefors in the 4th or 5th round because of his quick feet and pin point accuracy.

##### **Running Back:**

Running back is possibly the most solid position on the Lions roster. With 1000+ yard rookie Kevin Jones breakthrough second half last season he comes into the season poised to be the answer the Lions have been looking for at running back since the departure of Barry Sanders. Artose Pinner and Shawn Bryson are both capable backups. Cory Schlesinger remains a solid starter at fullback.

*What I would do:*

To use a blackjack analogy; I would stand. No point on hitting when you've found your new #20.

**Wide Receiver:**

Last years 7th overall pick Roy Williams showed the Lions the spark they had hoped for. Despite a couple nagging injuries through the season Roy put up good numbers for a rookie and made several highlight reel grabs. The hope is that Charles Rogers, who's first two season were ended early by injuries, will come back and live up to his potential that made him the 2nd overall in the 2003 draft. The Lions stand to lose Az Hakim, Reggie Swinton, and Tai Streets from last year's roster and will need to find at least two replacements. Free agent possibilities include Corey Bradford, Troy Edwards, Andre King, and Curtis Conway. Expect the Lions to draft a receiver for the third year in a row but not in the first round again. Look to about round three for names such as Fred Gibson of Georgia, Terrance Murphy of Texas A&M, Vincent Jackson of N. Colorado, or Taylor Stubblefield or Purdue.

*What I would do:*

Through the draft and free agency add whatever talent possible but keep in mind the team has bigger holes at other positions which need more attention.

**Tight End:**

The Lions will look to resign veteran TE Stephen Alexander who caught 41 passes last year. Second year player Casey Fitzsimmons dropped from 23 catches in his rookie campaign to just 10 in his sophomore season. The Lions hope to get Fitzsimmons back on track but could draft as TE as early as the 1st round.

*What I would do:*

Get Alexander resigned and save the 1st round pick for a safety then look for a TE in the 2nd or 3rd round. Alex Smith of Stanford or Garrett Cross of California could be good pickups in the 2nd round.

**Offensive Line:**

With Center Dominic Raiola resigned the only project left is the right tackle position. Stockar McDougle will likely land somewhere else so a replacement for him will be needed at RT. Expect the Lions to look for that replacement through free agency and not in the draft.

*What I would do:*

Continue the recent tradition of addressing offensive line issues through free agency and not through the draft.

### **Defensive Line:**

The only major issue on the d-line is the end position. Kalimba Edwards has not lived up to expectations and could be replaced. His replacement could come from within the organization in the form of third year player Cory Redding who showed hints of good things last season in limited action.

*What I would do:*

Give Redding and Edwards one more season to prove themselves before looking for replacements.

### **Linebacker:**

The Lions are loaded with young talent at all three Linebacker positions. With Boss Bailey returns from an injury that kept him out the entire season to start along Teddy Lehman and James Davis to form one of the youngest and fastest LB cores in the league.

*What I would do:*

Along with there young trio the Lions also have the veteran Earl Holmes and second year player Alex Lewis to add depth. No more is needed at this position.

### **Cornerback:**

The last two off seasons the Lions have added talent at the cornerback position with Dre Bly and Fernando Bryant. Chris Cash, Andre Goodman, Keith Smith, and Rod Babers are all young, talented, and add great depth.

*What I would do:*

Leave well enough alone. This group may not be the best in the league but they certainly are adequate.

**Safety:**

The Lions have run through a series of veterans at the safety position over the years trying to find a solution. Last years attempt was Brock Marion and again the Lions are looking to improve the position.

*What I would do:*

Three words: first round pick. The best safety in the draft Thomas Davis of Georgia should be there when the Lions pick at number 10 overall.