

DRAFT CAMPS AND COMBINES: RELATIONSHIP TO CAREER SUCCESS?

Dawson, B. 1)

1) School of Sport Science, Exercise and Health, The University of Western Australia, Australia

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In many professional sports, rookie Draft Camps or Combines for aspiring young players are held annually. Here, the players may be assessed on a wide variety of anthropometric, physiological, psychological and skill tests, and this information, plus their medical and injury history will be available to club recruiting staff for consideration prior to draft selections being made. Some studies have reported that such test data can successfully predict (for certain player positions) draft order (American football: McGee and Burkett, 2003), and may have a small, but important association with career progression (Australian football: Pyne et al., 2005) but others have found little or no relationship between test performances and being drafted (Ice hockey: Vescovi et al., 2006 and Australian football: Weston et al., 2007).

However, while getting drafted at least provides an opportunity for career progression, overall and long term career success is what recruiting staff are employed to deliver. At present, there is little research evidence available to suggest that any of the common Draft Camp/Combine test data can predict (with any reasonable certainty) future career success. This presentation will review the available research on this topic across the various football codes and attempt to provide some direction for future investigations into the business of recruiting (successful) rookie players.

References

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