



Photo by Dan Wheeler
Chris Miller will take his act into the NFL as Atlanta's first-round draft choice.

Atlanta takes Miller in 1st round: 'He's a guy we wanted all along'

By Dennis Fernandes
Of the Emerald

The waiting and wondering finally ended early Tuesday morning when the Atlanta Falcons made Oregon quarterback Chris Miller their first-round choice in the National Football League draft.

Miller was the 13th player selected overall. Cliff Hicks, the Oregon cornerback, was taken by the Los Angeles Rams in the third round, the 74th pick overall.

According to Miller's mother, Jane Miller, the small gathering at the Stadium Club at Autzen Stadium erupted into a chorus of "whooping, hollering, shaking and shouting" when the Eugene product was the third quarterback selected behind

Heisman Trophy winner Vinny Testaverde and Kelly Stouffer of Colorado State University. St. Louis' pick at the number-six spot.

Things went pretty much as projected. Although he didn't get his wish to stay on the West Coast, Miller was not showing any disappointment. "I'm pleased," he said in an interview at Mahlon Sweet Airport, just before catching a plane to meet with team officials in Atlanta. "It's a team that's on the uprise. They have a grass field and a pretty good climate there."

"The West Coast was getting kind of thin anyway," he shrugged. "San Diego traded its pick for Chip Banks, and he'll help them a lot. The Raiders are try-

ing to get Lomax (Neil, the St. Louis quarterback). Seattle picked way up there at 18th, and the 49ers traded for Steve Young."

"It's the same old story — he's a guy we wanted all along," said Atlanta head coach Marion Campbell. "He's got everything you covet in a quarterback. He plays with a lot of poise, and he's a good athlete."

Atlanta finished at 7-8-1 last season, good for third in the National Football Conference's Western Division. Campbell, the former head coach at Philadelphia, replaced Leeman Bennett as the Falcons' head coach at the conclusion of last season. David Archer quarterbacked the club most of last year until a shoulder separation ended his season, when Turk Schonert took over.

"They had a younger quarterback (Archer) that did pretty well early in the season last year, but obviously they aren't 100 percent happy with that situation," said Oregon head coach Rich Brooks. "Otherwise, they would not have taken a quarterback in the first round."

"He's got a great opportunity there with a new program and a new coaching staff," Miller's former mentor added. "He's going to be in the thick of it."

Miller appears to be happy with the direction he's headed for in Atlanta. "I was real impressed with Coach Dodhower (Rod, the offensive coordinator) and Coach Campbell when they came out and worked with me," he commented.

"I'm just going to play to the best of my ability," he added. "If that puts me in the backup spot or in the third spot, then that's where the chips will fall."

Miller owns 13 passing records at Oregon, including the career marks for touchdown passes, total offense and passing yards. The two-time all-Pacific 10 Conference performer started as Oregon's field general 32 consecutive times. Miller also enjoyed a brief professional baseball career, playing for Seattle Mariners farm teams at Bellingham, Wash., and Salinas, Calif., this past summer.

Miller becomes the highest player drafted in Brooks' 10-year coaching tenure at Oregon. Mike Walter, now a linebacker for San Francisco, was selected as the 50th player overall by the Dallas Cowboys in 1983.

"He certainly gave Oregon fans exciting football to watch, and he prepared himself very well for the NFL," Brooks said.

It sounds like the end of one romance, and the beginning of another.



Memo

To: All interested sales representatives
From: Oregon Daily Emerald Sales Department
Date: April 29, 1987
Re: Advertising Sales Representative recruitment open house.

The ODE Advertising Sales Department is looking for dedicated, sharp, and energetic advertising sales personnel for fall term. All students interested in the positions are encouraged to attend our open house Thursday, April 30 at 7:00 p.m. Room 337 EMU. Refreshments will be served. Pick-up an advance application in Room 300 EMU.



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