

# Torretta goes in seventh

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (AP) — The last thing the Minnesota Vikings needed was another quarterback. Yet every time they looked at their draft board, Heisman Trophy-winner Gino Torretta was the best player there.

The Vikings reviewed Torretta's statistics, especially his 26-2 record at Miami, and couldn't resist using their seventh-round pick to take him Monday in the NFL draft.

"At one point, you say, 'Who's your highest-rated player, regardless of what position he plays?' That's why we went with Torretta," said Minnesota coach Dennis Green, who added Torretta to a quarterback mix that includes free-agent acquisition Jim McMahon, 1992 starter Sean Salisbury and Rich Gannon and second-year pro Brad Johnson.

"There are a lot of things said about Gino, mostly negative, and we don't really deal in the negative," Green said. "We deal in the positive. We look at what a guy does. And what he does is complete a lot of passes, break a lot of records, win a lot of football games and show leadership at one of the toughest programs in the country."

"I think that would qualify a guy to be drafted. In the seventh round, it was a great bargain for us."

Torretta, whose mechanics, arm strength and mobility have been questioned by scouts, was the fifth quarterback and 192nd player chosen.

## DAVE

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•The Phoenix Suns are everyone's favorite to win it all this season. Making it through the Western Conference should be no problem for Phoenix; my problem is with point guard Kevin Johnson.

This little weasel has had a season plagued with injuries and will miss the first round of the playoffs because of a knee injury. The funny thing is, he didn't get this injury on a tough drive to the hoop. He injured it while dry-humping Charles Barkley after Barkley hit a last-second shot to beat Portland last week.

When he's not nursing idiotic injuries, Johnson is beginning to take over for Isaiah Thomas as the biggest little cheap-shot artist in the NBA. Against Portland last week, he could be seen attempting such manly maneuvers as trying to trip

players from behind and throwing flagrant elbows. I even heard he was trying to put Kevin Duckworth's hand in a bowl of warm water while he was asleep at the end of Portland's bench.

And who can forget the world-class fighting abilities Johnson demonstrated earlier this season when he tried to clothesline the Knicks' Doc Rivers and then took off running down the court. Johnson didn't exactly look like Clubber Lang when Rivers chased him down and popped him solidly in the melon.

Nine words: Don't hit the punk if he can't even dunk.

•On a serious note, my pick is Cleveland and Phoenix in the finals; Cleveland in six, like you really care. I know I don't. All I care about is Bryant getting his own Dairy Queen glass next season.

One word: Guuuuys!

Dave Charbonneau is sports editor of the Emerald.



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