



TWO MORE FOR LOVE

Wide receivers room gets shot in the arm (and legs) with the first picks

BY JACOB WESTENDORF
Green & Gold Express

The wide receiver room has received some reinforcements. After years of clamoring for a first-round pick at receiver, the fanbase got its wish with Matthew Golden arriving in Green Bay. Not content to just add one receiver to the pass catching group, general manager Brian Gutekunst selected another receiver in the third round, TCU's Savion Williams. Golden and Williams will likely see time on the field this coming season. Whether or not they become starters remains to be seen. The most likely role for Golden will be as the team's speed threat. Does that put him on the field as a starter? Maybe not, but he'll see plenty of snaps with Romeo Doubs, Jayden Reed and Dontayvion Wicks all rotating.

Golden's advantage comes in that he has positional versatility. He played both outside and in the slot while at Texas, which is something Steve Sarkisian lauded him for. The Packers have had a lot of success with receivers that have that versatility as well. Greg Jennings, Donald Driver, Jordy Nelson and Davante Adams are a few players who come to mind.

TWO, CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



In 2025, Jordan Love will enter his third season as QB1. While the Packers have made the playoffs each of his first two years as a starter, this season is considered a pivotal year in his and the Packers progress.

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After years of clamoring for a first-round pick at receiver, the fanbase got its wish with Matthew Golden arriving in Green Bay.

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TCU wide receiver Savion Williams runs the 40-yard dash at the NFL football scouting combine March 1 in Indianapolis.

ASSOCIATED PRESS



Green Bay Packers fans filled the Draft Experience area as they waited for President/CEO Mark Murphy to announce the team's first-round pick. The NFL reported 600,000 non-unique visitors to the draft over the course of its three-day run in late April.

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FROM THE 2025 DRAFT

THE MOMENT

NO. 1 PICK, MATTHEW GOLDEN



The highlight of Thursday evening for Packers fans was Matthew Golden (wide receiver, Texas.) on stage with NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell following Packers President/CEO Mark Murphy announcing for the first time since 2002, the Packers choose a wide receiver in the first round.

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The Green Bay Packers 2025 selections



Matthew Golden, WR, Texas
picked 23 in the 1st round



Anthony Belton, T, NC State
picked 54 in the 2nd round



Savion Williams, WR, TCU
picked 87 in the 3rd round



Barryn Sorrell, Edge, Texas
picked 124 in the 4th round



Collin Oliver, LB, Okalahoma State
picked 159 in the 5th round



Warren Brinson, DL, Georgia
picked 198 in the 6th round



Micah Robinson, DB, Tulane
picked 237 in the 7th round



John Williams, OL, Cincinnati
picked 250 in the 7th round

WILL DRAFT PICKS HELP PACKERS RUN TO DAYLIGHT?

Each rookie brings unique story to Green Bay

BY JACOB WESTENDORF
Green & Gold Express

The 2025 NFL draft is in the books, and the Green Bay Packers have filled some of the needs that plagued them at the end of the 2024 season.

The draft started with a bang with President and CEO Mark Murphy delivering a perfect explanation of Green Bay's first round pick.

It ended with Brad Paisley taking the stage and rocking the Lambeau faithful who stayed for all seven rounds.

Here is a look at the guys Green Bay picked, and how we can expect them to fit in as the Packers chase a championship this fall.

Matthew Golden

Golden was a historic pick, because he was the first pick by the home team in Green Bay. He was also the first receiver drafted in the first round since 2002 as Murphy noted when he announced the selection.

Golden is not just a cute anecdote. He'll be expected to contribute and likely early in his career.

Christian Watson is going to miss some time this season, and the Packers need some speed injected into their lineup.

"You can't teach 4.29," coach Matt LaFleur said giddily in his post draft press conference.

They'll likely start him off slow, as they typically do with their rookies, but Golden is going to play, and they expect enough of him to make him a first round pick.

Expect Golden to get



Packers first-round draft pick Matthew Golden morphs his iconic and flashy introduction to choosing No. 22 in honor of his grandmother.

GREG MELLIS | GREEN & GOLD EXPRESS

some reps as the team's "Z" receiver and also move inside to the slot. He can stretch the field vertically and horizontally.

That positional versatility will give LaFleur plenty of opportunities to stress the opposing defense and make plays down the field.

Anthony Belton

The first surprise of the draft was a big one. Literally.

"Big don't get small," Vice President of Player Personnel Jon-Eric Sullivan said.

There will be no worries about "Big Escalade" getting small. Belton is

6 feet 6 inches and 335 pounds.

The Packers insisted they think he can play tackle after the selection, but the likely scenario is Belton kicking inside to guard as a potential replacement for Sean Ryan, whose contract expires at the end of 2025.

Savion Williams

After a surprise with Belton, general manager Brian Gutekunst pulled another rabbit out of his hat with the selection of Williams.

"I did not expect to be up here talking about two receivers," Gutekunst said

at the conclusion of the third round.

He's right. The Packers likely saw Williams as a luxury. They see him as a traditional receiver first and foremost, but Williams has returned kicks, played in the backfield and taken reps as a wildcat quarterback.

An easy comparison would be to think of the role the Packers once used Tyler Ervin in during his short stint in Green Bay.

Williams should be able to impact the team as a kick returner and someone who gets manufactured touches as he learns the

nuances of the receiver position.

Barryn Sorrell

If there's a better story in the draft, I'm not sure what it is. Sorrell was picked in the fourth round and still in the green room after traveling to Green Bay.

He walked over to the stadium and quickly met his new team and the media. He broke down in tears introducing his family to those at the podium.

On the field? He's not just some cute story. Sorrell is a punishing defensive lineman who should compete for snaps imme-

diately on a group that was inconsistent a season ago.

Collin Oliver

Milt Hendrickson called Oliver a DPR, or designated pass rusher. He does have some positional versatility that could kick him back to linebacker if the Packers need him to do something like that.

Early in his career, however, Oliver is going to be on the field in obvious passing situations to rush the passer. He wins with speed, something the Packers' edge room needs more of.

Warren Brinson

Brinson was the first defensive lineman taken in this class when Green Bay called his name in the sixth round. He'll rotate in on run downs, but the team does believe he has some juice to affect the passing game.

Those are opportunities he'll need to earn.

Micah Robinson

Robinson was the only cornerback taken in this class, leading to some questions about the future of Jaire Alexander.

On the field, Robinson will be in competition to become one of the team's core special teamers.

He has experience doing that in college.

John Williams

Williams probably stuck out like a sore thumb in his college classes as he majored in aerospace engineering.

On the field, he stands out as well. He is another big man at 6-foot-4, 322 pounds. He'll likely compete at the back end of the offensive line room on the interior, where the Packers struggled mightily to finish off the 2024 season.

Shawano County: Wisconsin's Barn Quilt Capital

Draft organizers
commission barn
quilt displayed
at the draft



Shawano County's famed barn quilt project was part of the NFL Experience. The NFL-commissioned barn quilt was on display in the Beer Hall for those attending the three-day event at Lambeau Field. A duplicate of the NFL barn quilt is also on display at the Shawano Country Visitors Center in Shawano.

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Thank you to all who attended. All proceeds benefit Safe Haven.



Packers legend Mason Crosby held a meet-and-greet Friday evening at Twig's Tasting Room in Shawano. The event, sponsored by Twig's Beverage, was a fundraiser for Safe Haven.

Twig's Beverage proudly sponsors Mason Crosby meet-and-greet



Green Bay did the NFL, Wisconsin proud

Draft experience went off without a hitch

BY JACOB WESTENDORF
Green & Gold Express

Take a bow, Green Bay. When it was announced the 2025 NFL draft was going to be held in Green Bay, Wisconsin, I truly did not know what to expect. Sure, I've been to Green Bay a bunch. I lived there for two years while completing my degree at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

I've been to countless Packers games. Bigger events related to the team, but nothing like this.

The detractors were obvious, and they were loud.

Where is everyone going to stay? Where are they going to park? How are we going to get that many people into the NFL's smallest city?

The answer was by doing what they've always done.

The city, led by the stewardship of Mark Murphy and Discover Green Bay's Nick Meisner, did what many thought was impossible.

There was plenty to eat.



Dan Patrick, center, currently hosts "The Dan Patrick Show" on Premiere Radio Networks and Peacock. He and his crew mingled with the fans at the NFL draft in Green Bay.

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There was plenty to do. There was plenty to see. Reviews have been glowing regarding the NFL's smallest city from people who had a positive experience.

My experience was no different. It was my first time covering the draft on site, and it was a special occasion considering the location of one of my favorite events on the NFL calendar.

There were two instances that will stand out to me the most regarding the event.

The first of which, was the aforementioned Murphy.

From an outside appearance, Murphy does not seem like a showman, but he certainly has some type of training.

His announcement of the selection of Matthew Golden was perfectly delivered. He knew how special this pick would be to the fanbase, and the pop of the crowd that followed would not disappoint.

Golden is a driven human after talking to him. I have few doubts he's going

to be a productive player, and that pick will be one we all remember for a long time.

The biggest story, however, was the team's fourth round pick of Barryn Sorrell.

Sorrell was still in the green room on Saturday morning and was picked by Green Bay. He made his way over to the stadium after the selection.

He broke down in tears when he was asked to introduce his family in a way that really struck me.

After the draft was over, coach Matt LaFleur talked about guys who love football as opposed to guys who need it.

It was evident that Sorrell needs football, and his passion is something that should make him an instant fan favorite.

I talked about football, because I had nothing to complain about in terms of the infrastructure of the event.

Everything went off without a hitch.

You should be proud of yourselves, Wisconsin.

We certainly all are.



Exceeding attendance expectations, crowds filled the 2025 NFL Draft Experience, including center stage festivities, for three days. The event kicked off Thursday evening with Round 1 of the 2025 NFL draft. The closing act featured a free Brad Paisley concert on Saturday night. All in all, it was deemed the largest event to be held in Green Bay.

GREG MELLIS | GREEN & GOLD EXPRESS

Pass rush beefed up in Green Bay

Packers add two edge rushers in 2025 NFL draft

BY LUKE REIMER
Green & Gold Express

Addressing a major need in the 2025 NFL draft, the Green Bay Packers doubled up on edge rushers, selecting Barryn Sorrell from the University of Texas and Collin Oliver from Oklahoma State.

After another year of disappointing play from the edge, specifically in the run game, Packers general manager Brian Gutekunst said he felt it necessary to pick up both Sorrell and Oliver to secure the edges.

"I think both of those guys can contribute," said Gutekunst. "But again, we will see. You know, those guys come into the National Football League and it is a whole different ball game, but I think those guys can compete."

Over the past six years in the NFL draft, Green Bay has spent a tremendous amount of capital, as well as free agent signings, on pass rushers. Today, that boils down to a room with names like Rashan Gary, Lukas Van Ness, Kingsley Enagbare, Brenton Cox Jr., Aaron Mosby, Sorrell, Oliver and Deslin Alexandre.

Given the premium capital that was spent on



While the offense was highlighted in the first three Packer picks, defensive additions Barryn Sorrell (edge, Texas) and Collin Oliver (edge, Oklahoma State) are considered key additions to the Packers roster

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Gary and Van Ness, it is foolish to think that those two will not get a majority of the starting snaps when the season comes around.

That does not mean that Sorrell and Oliver will totally be excluded from the game plan, though. With Gutekunst drafting two edge rushers, it is obvious that it is a need that will require immediate production from the two drafted rookies, realistically in a rotational role.

Sorrell seems likely to

be the front-runner to receive those minutes, given that he was drafted first between the two.

During his four seasons at Texas, Sorrell was fairly productive, totaling 15.5 sacks and 132 combined tackles. Standing at 6-3 and weighing 260 pounds, Sorrell, while on the smaller side relative to other edge rushers in the NFL, possesses great speed and the ability to slip and slide around defenders. Given Gary's injury history, it

seems likely that Sorrell will be at the top of the list to spell Gary in rushing situations.

"I am just excited to fit wherever I need to be here," said Sorrell.

Following Sorrell in the draft selection process was Oliver. During his time at Oklahoma State, he totaled 23.5 sacks and 134 combined tackles. His college career was highlighted by his freshman season, in which he led the entire Big 12 in sacks at 11.5. His num-

bers did take a dip, especially in his senior season as a foot injury limited him to just two games.

When looking at Oliver, the first thing that stands out about him is his athleticism. That athleticism has allowed him to use his speed in an unpredictable manner to get after the quarterback.

Standing at 6-2 and weighing 240 pounds, Oliver provides an ability to to stand up in the defensive back field as a

linebacker off of the ball, as well as putting his hand in the ground and getting after the passer.

"I am here to play ball and do whatever the coaches ask of me," said Oliver, on where he will line up. "That is the only reason that I am here, and that is what I am going to do while I am here. Whenever they see me play, I am going to play that position. I don't really care what it is. I don't know what it is, but it is going to be a position and I am going to play it to the best of my ability."

With the improved play of Enagbare since he was drafted, it seems likely that unless Oliver sees a dramatic performance through training camp and the preseason, his minutes as an edge rusher may be limited. With his ability to stand up though, using Oliver as a linebacker should not be out of the question.

With question marks surrounding players like Gary, Van Ness and Quay Walker heading into this season, stocking up on edge certainly gives the Packers a contingency plan, should something dramatic take place between now and the draft in 2026.

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TWO, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Williams will be the chess piece of this group. The Packers say they view him as a traditional receiver, but that would be a waste of the skillset that Williams provides, especially as a rookie who likely will have an adjustment period at the pro level.

Williams lined up all over the place at TCU. He played receiver but also as a running back and wildcat quarterback.

The Packers will likely have a special package of plays in their offense for him, while he will likely be one of the team's primary kick returners.

Deebo Samuel and Cordarrelle Patterson are going to be popular comparisons thrown around, but Williams runs more violently than either of the aforementioned players, which makes his potential as exciting as it is.

From a usage standpoint, the Packers likely would use him in the same manner they once used Tyler Ervin.

Ervin was the team's jet-sweep guy, kickoff returner and occasionally lined up in the backfield.

Ervin was a useful player, especially during the 2020 season, when the Packers were one of the best offenses in football. Aaron Rodgers won the league's MVP that season.

Adding two receivers also likely means there will be some subtractions from the room.

That's true both now and at the conclusion of the 2025 season.

For now, it's hard to envision two of Bo Melton, Malik Heath and Mecole Hardmon making the roster.

After the season is over,



Matthew Golden makes his way to the stage after it was announced he was the first-round pick of the Green Bay Packers. Golden will wear No. 22 for the team.

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Watson and Doubs are set to have their contracts expire.

It's possible that one or both of those players will be playing their final season in Green Bay.

Both have had issues with injuries. Watson will likely miss most of the 2025 season, making his future even cloudier than it would have already been.

Doubs had two concussions last season, including a scary instance where he had to be physically flipped over by the training staff in Philadelphia.

He also was suspended last season for conduct detrimental to the team.

Both players could be on their way out, with Reed and Wicks next on the list of players who have contract decisions coming up.

Regardless of what the Packers decide, they knew they had to bring in some reinforcements.

The draft appears to have done just that, starting with their first round pick.

Javon Walker Golden was a historic selection because of the drought that preceded him. Every year during the draft cycle, we hear the stories how the Packers had not drafted a receiver in the first round since 2002.

That year, then general

manager Mike Sherman traded up to select Javon Walker out of Florida State to give Brett Favre another weapon as they chased a second Super Bowl win with Favre under center.

Walker took a little time but did find his way into a starring role.

Walker caught 63 passes in his first two seasons for just over 1,000 yards.

The leap, however, was foreseeable as he caught nine scoring passes from Favre in 2003.

Without question, Walker's most memorable game came in 2003 when Favre was playing with a heavy heart in Oakland. Favre's father, Irvin, had just died.

Walker and the rest of the receivers made a pact to catch anything Favre put in the air.

They did, with Walker's game being the biggest.

He caught four passes for 124 yards and two touchdowns. One of the scoring strikes from Favre came among three Raider defenders.

Walker coupled that performance with a big wild card game against the Seattle Seahawks, where he had 111 yards receiving.

Walker's breakout year came in 2004.

He caught 89 passes for 1,382 yards and eight touchdowns.

He had begun to blossom into the team's best

receiver.

Unfortunately, Walker tore his ACL in the season opener in 2005.

That was the last time Walker would wear a Packers uniform. After he would threaten to retire rather than play for the Packers again prior to his injury, the Packers decided to move on.

He was traded to Denver during the summer of 2006 for a second round pick.

That pick eventually turned into three more picks, which landed them Darryn Colledge.

The Packers would also draft Walker's replacement, Greg Jennings, in the same draft class.

Ready to make your plans?

The wait is almost over

Complete 2025 NFL schedule will be announced May 14

BY GREEN & GOLD EXPRESS STAFF

The 2025 NFL draft is complete, and the full 2025 schedule will be announced at 7 p.m. May 14.

The dates will be set, primetime matchups will be known, and every game will be revealed on the NFL Network airwaves.

The 2025 NFL season is scheduled to begin Sept. 4 with the Philadelphia Eagles hosting the NFL Kickoff Game.

The regular season concludes Jan. 4, 2026, and the playoffs are scheduled to start Jan. 10, 2026, culminating in Super Bowl LX on Feb. 8, 2026, at Levi's Stadium, home of the San Francisco 49ers.

For next season, the NFC North is matched with the NFC East and

AFC North, so all teams in the NFC North will play all teams in those two divisions.

In addition, the Packers finished third in the NFC North, so they will face the third-place teams in the NFC South, NFC West and AFC West.

Green Bay will host Minnesota, Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore, Cincinnati and Carolina.

They will travel to Minnesota, Detroit, Chicago, Dallas, New York Giants, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Denver and Arizona.

The NFL plans to play eight international games in 2025, with contests slated for Madrid (Spain), Berlin (Germany) and Dublin (Ireland), as well as Mexico City, Brazil and the United Kingdom.

With AFC teams having nine home games in 2025, most international games will have AFC teams moving their home games.

The 2025 season will be 105th year the Packers have been part of the NFL and the team's 107th year overall.

It's the eighth year under the leadership of general manager Brian Gutekunst and seventh with coach Matt LaFleur.

Ed Policy will be the team's president and CEO as he will take over for Mark Murphy, who will retire in July.

The 2025 team will attempt to improve on their 11-6 record from last season, make the playoffs for the third straight year and win the division title for the first time since 2021.





Both a success in attendance and television audience, attracting the event's biggest crowd was Thursday's Round 1 of the 2025 NFL draft. GREG MELLIS | GREEN & GOLD EXPRESS

Reported attendance levels at the 2025 NFL draft in Green Bay surpass expectations

BY STEVE MEGARGEE
Associated Press

Bringing the NFL draft to the league's smallest market was supposed to mean a smaller crowd. Green Bay Packers fans had other ideas. Packers President/CEO Mark Murphy said several days before the draft that the forecast was for a total attendance of 250,000 for all three days. NFL officials announced April 26 that the total attendance ended up at 600,000, more than doubling that forecast.

"Green Bay is kind of that destination where everybody wants to come and see Lambeau Field," Steven Chowanec of Osseo said April 26 as he waited for the final four



rounds to begin. The total attendance is measured by adding the crowd sizes for each of the draft's three days, so a person who attended all three days would be counted three separate

times. Green Bay couldn't match the record announced attendance of more than 775,000 for the 2024 draft in Detroit, but it matched the second-highest total since the NFL moved the draft out of New York and started sending it to various locations in 2015. The 2019 draft in Nashville, Tennessee, also had a reported total attendance of 600,000. The first round of the draft on April 24 drew a reported 205,000. League officials said another 175,000 fans came the night of April 25 for the second and third rounds, even though it had rained for much of the afternoon. The estimated crowd was 220,000 for the final

four rounds on a picture-perfect April 26, many of them staying all the way until the end and then sticking around for a Brad Paisley concert. That three-day total is particularly notable considering Green Bay's size. The city's population is less than 110,000, though the entire metro area includes about 320,000 people. "I'm happy Green Bay turned out," said Paul Cegelski, who lives in Green Bay and is a Packers season-ticket holder and shareholder for the NFL's only publicly owned franchise. "I'm so glad we weren't a black eye." Far from it. Although Packers fans made up a large contingent of the crowd, the fans of other teams who made the trip to Green Bay offered rave reviews. Pati Cream of Houston, who won a league-sponsored contest to determine the Texans' 2024 fan of the year, said she already had attended a handful of previous NFL drafts before making the trip to Green Bay. She marveled at how this relatively small community handled all the logistical challenges that come from hosting such a major event. "We were a little fearful because it's a smaller venue, but it's been amazing," Cream said. "The Packers fans are always so welcoming and great. Getting around has been really easy. Everybody's been very hospitable. It's been an absolute blast."



Packer fans dominated the crowd and anxiously awaited the team's first-round selection in what became the signature and pinnacle moment for the Packers fans in attendance. GREG MELLIS | GREEN & GOLD EXPRESS

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