

# NFL Network Is Ready for Some Football (Draft)

By: [Ken Kerschbaumer](#), Editorial Director | Published: April 25, 2011

On Thursday night, the NFL will be front and center for the 2011 NFL Draft, and this year's coverage by the NFL Network will feature a number of firsts and some potential innovations. NFL fans can expect to see HD feeds from team draft rooms around the country, courtesy of Azzurro Group, and maybe even the debut of the Inertia Phantom high-speed camera.

"We don't know what it will get us, but we would love a Field of Dreams look," says Rod Conti, director of remote studio operations for NFL Network. That look includes super-slow-motion coverage of players walking amidst flashing camera bulbs. The only wildcard at this point is whether Radio City Music Hall is too dark.

The Complex Iridium truck will be at the center of NFL Network's production, which begins Wednesday with some prerecorded packages from Radio City. The NFL Draft is always an interesting mix of production philosophies; the NFL is on hand to produce the live event (and in-house video for fans) while ESPN and NFL Network tackle coverage for viewers across the country.

"There are a lot of moving parts, not only for TV but also for the draft itself," says Conti, "and the NFL does an incredible job of keeping the teams and fans satisfied."

The NFL Network and ESPN will share some resources, such as podium cameras, the jib, and beauty shots. "We work closely together on the technical side," says Conti. NFL.com will also be on hand, with ENG crews creating packages and feeding footage back to Los Angeles.

Five Robovision pan-and-tilt cameras in the green room and press room and strategically located to cover NFL Commissioner Roger Gödel and the team tables will also be on-site at Radio City.

But it's live camera systems in 10 NFL-team "war rooms" around the country that may make the biggest difference for viewers.

"They will be integrated into the truck where [the production] team can have a look into the draft rooms," Conti says, noting the Sony DCR-vx700 camcorders that will have signals delivered via Azzurro's IP network. Player families will also be integrated into the broadcast via Skype and satellite trucks.

"We're also trying to work with LiveU to see how much range we can get with the system [around New York City]," says Conti. The LiveU system streams video over cellular towers and will be used to deliver signals from the NFL Players Association.

"It's more news-based but is helpful when you want cameras everywhere," says Conti.

Other innovations include the possibility of getting players to wear a small tie-clip camera providing a first-person perspective of the walk to the podium.

"It's a small SD wireless camera," Conti points out. "The hard part is getting it small enough for the players to wear."