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TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2013

ALIENS ARE AWESOME: SLEEPERS FOR THE 2013 FANTASY FOOTBALL DRAFT

I'm a big fan of Aliens.



Now, Alien (the first movie in the series, for those who hate awesome classic sci-fi movies and never watched it before) is pretty awesome in its own right. Clearly, Ridley Scott is amazing, as he somehow managed to direct such classic tense thrillers as Alien, Blade Runner and Hannibal and such classic action adventures as Legend and Gladiator, while also directing Thelma & Louise. Perhaps you missed it, but I said Thelma & Louise. For those who don't know, the plot of Thelma & Louise is summarized by IMDB as "An Arkansas waitress and a housewife shoot a rapist and take off in a '66 Thunderbird." Seriously, this guy has range. But I digress.

Aliens is an amazing movie which, if you didn't know, stars an alien that sleeps and slowly grows inside your body until it's ready to strike out on its own by blasting out of your chest. Yeah, it's as gruesome and awesome as it sounds. Sure, Sigourney Weaver also manages to kill as many aliens in that movie as Arnold Schwarzenegger takes out with a single grenade in the movie "Commando" (and if you haven't seen that movie, put down this article right now and go watch it. Seriously. And if you're up to it, try and keep count of how many baddies he takes out in the ending sequence. I wasn't sure if I was going to be able to count that high...), but the real focus is on the alien.

So last time, I took a little hit for being too obvious with my top three picks. OK, I admit, although I still think Doug Martin third overall is a relatively daring pick, it didn't take a degree in rocket science (whatever that is) to say that AD and Arian Foster were one and two. But give a guy a break, what can you do when you have two guys that have been so dominant and so consistent in the past that you just can't look past them? But I'm here to make amends. Just like the sleeping alien that bursts forth from some poor colonial marine's chest, here are three sleepers for the 2013 Fantasy Football season, ready to burst forth on this page (but

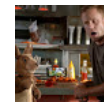
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The Ravens stole one against New England last week. Here's a look at week 4 matchups.



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3-2As the National anthem was sung players, fans, and staff alike let it be known

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hopefully it won't be as painful as the alien bursting through someone's chest – and if so, I apologize in advance).

Ryan Tannehill



So how's this for taking a risk? Quite frankly, I don't think there are any elite quarterbacks past Aaron Rodgers and Drew Brees this year. Sure, there are solid ones like Tom Brady, Peyton Manning and Matt Ryan. And I'm not advocating taking Ryan Tannehill as your starter, but if you're looking to take a chance with a lesser starting quarterback, I certainly can see taking Tannehill as a late round flyer to back him up. For instance, say you take RGIII late due to injury concerns, or bank on a Mathew Stafford or Eli Manning revival or an Andrew Luck repeat? Why not take a flyer on Tannehill as a backup and perhaps even trade bait if he reaches his potential? But I'm sure you want more than just words to back it up. So how about some numbers?

Tannehill only had 19 starts in college as a quarterback, but steadily improved with time. And he was quite well regarded after 19 starts in college (though perhaps not as high as number 8 overall as he was selected by the Dolphins in 2012). However, note that he's now started 15 games in his NFL career. And if you look at his numbers, you'll notice that although he had 13 interceptions over those 15 games, 12 of them were from his first 11 games. He had only one interception in his last 5 games of the season. And of his 12 touchdowns he threw for last year, 5 of them were from his last 4 games of the season. OK, so it doesn't scream "breakout season", but it certainly demonstrates that he's becoming more comfortable in the pocket and being more careful with the ball, similarly to how he progressed in college. And he has had flashes of genius, like his game against the Jaguars where he threw for 220 yards for 2 touchdowns, no interceptions with a 78.6% completion percentage. For a rookie quarterback with pretty much no weapons, being two overtime losses away from a 9-7 season isn't half bad. And now, with the addition of Mike Wallace as a legitimate downfield weapon, and Lamar Miller's recently noted improved pass blocking skills (and potential improvement of the ground game), I think Tannehill has a chance to become a solid every week starter for fantasy (or at a minimum, a solid fill in if your QB1 doesn't pan out).

For 12-team leagues, I'd target him in the 14th round as your second quarterback. And if you do, I'd wait to draft your first quarterback until the 5th round or later.

Eddie Lacy



an Elite 2013 Fantasy Quarterback?

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OK, by now, you know I hate, but still respect the Packers. You also know that I'm a big fan of what they did in the draft at running back. And Eddie Lacy is the guy who should hold the reigns going into the season.

Sure, there's a chance that Johnathan Franklin or DuJuan Harris get into a committee with Lacy, but as I've said before, Lacy can run. And run. And run. It was painful to watch him at Alabama run over and around defensive players against Georgia and Notre Dame near the end of the year, but it's clear that he'll add a versatile dimension that has been missing from Green Bay for quite some time. Defenses won't be able to stack the box with Rodgers at the helm, leaving Lacy plenty of room to operate. Also, according to ESPN, Green Bay found itself inside the 5 last year 23 times, throwing it 15 times and giving it to the running back 8 times. With 231 pound Lacy in the backfield though, I think those numbers are going to be more 50/50 this year. So I wouldn't be surprised if he got all the goal line carries in addition to 20 to 25 touches per game. If Lacy can get a fraction of the 1,322 yards rushing, 17 rushing touchdowns, 189 yards receiving and 2 receiving touchdowns he got in his last year at Alabama, he'll be a top 10 fantasy running back this year for sure.

For 12-team leagues, I'd target him in the late 4th round or early 5th round as a low-end number 2 running back or a high end number 3 running back / offensive flex.

Alshon Jeffery



Marc Trestman's west coast offense might not be the ultimate answer to Chicago's offensive woes (just look at how Mike Martz worked out for Detroit and Chicago), but he sure likes throwing the ball. And having 3 and 4 wide sets will certainly open up second year wide receiver Alshon Jeffery to make some moves after the catch. Clearly, you can't operate a west coast offense on one receiver (i.e. Brandon Marshall). And although Martellus Bennett is nice upgrade at tight end, there's a dearth of receivers after Marshall. Jeffery is sure to pick up the slack. That is, if he stays healthy. After missing six games last year and tallying only 367 yards and 3 touchdowns, it's tough to predict good things for him. But a lot of being a good receiver is having a good connection with your quarterback, something Jeffery didn't have a chance to get with Cutler last year. In addition to more targets under a west coast offense, he's a big target at 6 foot 3 inches and could be a significant red zone threat. Yes, he's starting all over with a new offense, but for all intents and purposes, I think this will be good for him. He ranked eighth in career receptions (134) and fourth in career yards (2,280) at South Carolina after just two seasons, and I think he'll be able to regain those numbers once he's healthy. He could just as easily bust, but you wanted a sleeper, right?

For 12-team leagues, assuming you had two solid starting wide receivers, I'd target him in the 13th round as your third wide receiver or offensive flex.

So there's no telling if any of these guys will turn out, but for the price, it's worth the gamble. Some gambles are worth it, and some aren't, but who

can resist a lottery ticket? Unless of course you're Ridley Scott, in which case you have a bazillion dollars and lottery ticket really isn't that interesting. But then again, if you're Ridley Scott, you've probably already commissioned someone to make sure I never write about you and ... [REDACTED BY ORDER OF RIDLEY SCOTT'S ATTORNEY].



By Ha Kung Wong (Twitter: [@Rhihan](#))

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4 comments:



Anonymous June 26, 2013 at 4:09 PM

Totally agree !

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Hakung Wong June 26, 2013 at 5:18 PM

Why thank you! I totally agree with you too! :-)

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Philip June 29, 2013 at 7:54 AM

No one would argue that Tannehill lacks the physical prowess to become a quarterback who could use the read-option as an element sprinkled into the Dolphins offensive attack

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Hakung Wong July 1, 2013 at 10:59 AM

Agreed! I think Tannehill has the raw physical skills to be an integral part of the offense, but he needs some tuning. He needs to be more careful going through his reads in the pocket. He's shown some poor decision making and poor accuracy under pressure in the pocket. Once he gets that taken care of, absolutely he has potential to add a read-option. Bottom line is that the Dolphins SHOULD be an interesting team to watch this season. Hopefully for them, Wallace is a better fit than Marshall was.

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