

# Pryor still waiting on decision from NFL

Attorney confident that his client will be eligible for supplemental draft

**By AJ Mazzolini**

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Former Ohio State quarterback Terrelle Pryor's eligibility for the NFL supplemental draft might be in doubt as the league continues to review the player's application. But Pryor's unique circumstances at OSU should quell all questions surrounding his eligibility, according to his attorney, Larry James.

James said the quarterback should be allowed to enter the supplemental draft because an NCAA

investigation — completed after the Jan. 15 deadline for underclassmen to declare for the annual NFL draft — determined that he would not have been allowed to play in any games in the 2011 season.

"There was just no way that the circumstances with the review would have allowed him to compete in the games past the five he was already suspended," James said. "When (Pryor) signed with an agent, that was a straight-up sign, not to avoid the original draft," James said. "That is simply

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not the case."

A player evading the annual draft to manipulate where he might be picked is the key scenario that brought about the NFL's strict rules on supplemental draft eligibility.

"The intent of that rule is for those students who are trying to dupe the system to avoid the original draft," James said. "That is clearly

not the case with Terrelle."

NFL spokesman Greg Aiello wrote in an email to FOXSports.com yesterday that the supplemental draft "is for players whose circumstances have changed in an unforeseen way after the regular draft. It is not a mechanism for simply bypassing the regular (draft)."

The question the league must answer now: Does

Pryor fall in this classification?

Joel Bussert, vice president of player personnel/football operations for the league, will rule on Pryor's status.

Pryor was suspended for the first five games of what would have been his senior season for a scandal involving improper benefits that included cash and discounted tattoos for merchandise. He announced his intention to leave school and enter the supplemental draft on June 7. A week later, he signed with agent Drew Rosenhaus.

If ruled ineligible for the supplemental draft, Pryor would have to wait until

next year's regular draft to play in the NFL, although he could consider other professional organizations such as the Canadian Football League.

Since the NFL supplemental draft was established in 1977, 40 players have been selected. Teams bid on players by submitting picks to the league, with the highest pick receiving the player's rights. The team then forfeits its corresponding draft pick in the following regular draft.

*Dispatch reporter Tim May contributed to this story.*

[amazzolini@dispatch.com](mailto:amazzolini@dispatch.com)