

Grading Chiefs’ 2025 draft haul: Here’s the good (and bad) with KC’s picks

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The Kansas City Chiefs selected seven players in the 2025 NFL Draft, so it’s time to hand out grades.

How did they do? Let’s take a first-blush look at each of the Chiefs’ picks while also taking into account what it took to acquire them.

ROUND 1, 32ND OVERALL, LEFT TACKLE JOSH SIMMONS, OHIO STATE

Chiefs general manager Brett Veach joked with us at the NFL Combine in February that he’d shared a perfect plan with coach Andy Reid to obtain a franchise left tackle.

“Just suck for a year and pick in the top 10,” Veach recalled telling Reid. “Then we’ll get a left tackle.”

That’s obviously not an option for the Chiefs — the winner’s curse of making three consecutive Super Bowls while subsequently picking at the end of each draft.

This Josh Simmons pick, however, could be the best the Chiefs can ever do in this aspect — with the team shortcutting its way to a high-ceiling tackle while taking on some obvious risk.

Simmons could’ve been the No. 1 tackle off the board this class if he hadn’t suffered a knee injury last season. And even with it, well-respected offensive line analyst Brandon Thorn still ranked Simmons as his top-rated tackle prospect in this year’s class.

The most respected draft big boards — literally all of them — had Simmons getting selected before No. 32. So it’s going to be hard to fault the Chiefs for this pick, given this was an obvious need; they also have some runway to let Simmons heal up thanks to the free agency work they did in signing Jaylon Moore as a stopgap tackle option.

What we’ll never know: If KC was higher on Simmons or Oregon’s Josh Conerly Jr., who went three picks earlier at No. 29. Conerly, in some ways, fills more of a Veach profile while entering the draft as a younger player (age 21) with more development ahead.

As it stands, the Chiefs say they trust their medicals on Simmons. One can understand why this is the type of high-upside chance that might have a better shot of working in their particular environment.

And we can’t overlook KC wrangling an extra fifth-round pick out of Philadelphia to trade down one spot while still getting the guy it wanted in Simmons. The Chiefs were patient here, and it paid off in two ways.

No, we can’t predict Simmons’ playing or health future, but it’s hard to second-guess the Chiefs’ thought process and execution on this one.

Grade: A

ROUND 2, 63RD OVERALL, DEFENSIVE TACKLE OMARR NORMAN-LOTT, TENNESSEE

Omarr Norman-Lott’s evaluations are all over the board — and there’s good reason for that.

Tennessee employed him unusually over the last two seasons. Norman-Lott, for example, was not a starter in 2024 while averaging only 17 defensive snaps per game.

When he was in, he was highly productive, registering one of the best pass-rush win rates in college football.

Was that mostly because he was fresh? Or because he was good, but underutilized? And should



ANGELINA ALCANTAR/NEWS SENTINEL. USA TODAY NETWORK via Imagn Images
Tennessee defensive linemen Omarr Norman-Lott (left) and Daevin Hobbs (53) during warmups before a game between Tennessee and UTEP in Neyland Stadium on Saturday, November 23, 2024.

it be concerning that he’ll need to play a bigger defensive role for the Chiefs next year than he did for a Division I school in 2024?

This pick is in the eye of the beholder. Pro Football Focus had Norman-Lott ranked 27th; NFL.com’s Daniel Jeremiah, meanwhile, didn’t have him in his top 150 at all.

I still can see what the Chiefs were thinking here. There was about to be a potential drop-off in talent at defensive tackle, and that only magnified when Texas A&M’s Shemar Turner — another defensive tackle the Chiefs were linked to — went to the Chicago Bears with the previous pick at 62.

KC needed a Tershawn Wharton replacement. And oh, by the way, that type of rotational pass-rusher now has a big market in free agency, with Wharton getting a three-year, \$45 million deal with Carolina a few months back that included \$30 million guaranteed.

The Chiefs need to be correct about Norman-Lott turning his potential into production. And the route to success might be a bit narrower here, given that he should mostly start out as a pass-rush-down specialist.

Focusing on a premium position is smart this early in the draft, though, and the Chiefs don’t have to squint hard to see how Norman-Lott could be effective early with a Wharton-like role.

Grade: B

ROUND 3, 66TH OVERALL, EDGE RUSHER ASHTON GILLOTTE, LOUISVILLE

Speaking of players who have Chiefs comps: Ashton Gillotte is often likened to George Karlaftis, and even said last week that the current Chiefs defensive end has become his mentor.

Gillotte isn’t quite as tall as Karlaftis, but the high-motor power-rushing profile should look familiar. And we also shouldn’t underrate the fact that Gillotte should fit with KC; defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo certainly has preferences on players, and Gillotte turning into a George Jr. would make him a future candidate to get a lot of snaps with this particular defense.

Although Gillotte didn’t rank super-high on Big Boards, we now have plenty of evidence that NFL teams loved him. A story from Michael Silver at The Athletic, in fact, revealed that Gillotte was next on the Jaguars’ board at No. 70, and he also was a trade-up target for both the Rams and Lions. (The Rams even seemed willing to give up a 2026 second-round pick to move up.)

KC gets him instead, and it’s also worth pointing out that Gillotte could quickly become a fan favorite off the field, too. He gave most of his Louisville NIL money to charity and showed great personality and authenticity in his opening draft-day press conference with reporters.

The Chiefs probably played the board well here

too, waiting on pass-rusher until this pick before swooping in to take a guy that many other teams had their eye on.

Tough to be too critical of this pick.

Grade: A-

ROUND 3, 85TH OVERALL, CORNERBACK NOHL WILLIAMS, CALIFORNIA

This pick is the toughest for me to like — and it has nothing to do with the actual player.

Nohl Williams was productive at Cal and led the nation in interceptions. It’s rare to acquire outside cornerbacks with ball skills at this point in the draft, and KC gets a bonus of Williams being an option with the kick return game as well.

The compensation required to make this deal, however, is tougher to justify. The Chiefs traded away a 2026 fourth-round pick to move from 95 to 85 while surrendering the pick they received from the Bears after trading All-Pro guard Joe Thuney.

Trade calculators estimate KC gave up somewhere between sixth- and seventh-round value to get Williams.

What I do know is this: Williams now has more pressure to produce, as he’ll be the only compensation the Chiefs receive for Thuney.

The Chiefs are somewhat victims of their own success here. They’ve been *great* at evaluating and selecting late in the draft, which actually means they should be *less* motivated to make these types of trade-up deals. There’s an opportunity cost when losing a late-round pick, and that’s likely greater for an organization like KC that has struck gold with Jaylen Watson- and Isiah Pacheco-types in the seventh rounds of previous seasons.

Williams can make all this discussion moot if he plays well. And looking at the board as a whole, the Chiefs likely saw Williams as the last true outside corner available (lots of nickel corners were selected right after) in this “could-start-soon” tier; he could be a vital piece for KC, especially with outside corners Watson, Joshua Williams and Nazeeh Johnson facing expiring contract after this season.

This is a Spags fit as well: a physical, not-afraid-to-tackle cornerback with some size to him. Those guys usually succeed when playing with the Chiefs.

At 95, it’s a great pick. At 85 with a trade-up, it’s a to-be-determined ... with the Chiefs sacrificing maneuverability and future value while trusting they’re going to get this one right.

Grade: C+

ROUND 4, 133RD OVERALL, RECEIVER JALEN ROYALS, UTAH STATE

This is a situation where remaining flexible appeared to pay off in a big way.

Veach said before the draft that KC was all but certain to take a running

back. And because it was a deep RB class, I’m sure Veach would’ve loved to select one of those guys that slipped to this round.

But following a run on those players — guys like Trevor Etienne and Woody Marks went earlier in this round — Veach remained steadfast to take the best player on his board while seemingly getting a value with Jalen Royals in the fourth round.

Royals will take some time to adjust to the NFL after playing at Utah State, but his upside is intriguing — especially with the Chiefs. Team scouts compare his playing style to Chiefs receiver Rashee Rice, as they love his “RAC” ability (that’s “run after catch”).

And being honest: When Rice went down with his knee injury last season, the Chiefs had no one left on the roster who was perfect for that type of “throw short, run long” role.

KC eventually got Xavier Worthy more comfortable on short routes, but putting his head down and grinding out tough yards will never be his primary thing. It could be Royals’ thing, though, and he should love playing for an offense that values throwing to open space while encouraging playmaking in the short and intermediate.

This one could take some time. But the Chiefs should always be looking to add offensive firepower to help Patrick Mahomes, and scooping Royals at this spot sure seems like it could pay dividends.

Grade: A

ROUND 5, 156TH OVERALL, LINEBACKER JEFF BASSA, OREGON

This pick, to a lesser extent, is going to sound like the Williams selection: Understand the pick, but don’t love the move it required.

The Chiefs had to send a seventh-round selection this time (226th overall) to move up and get the player they wanted, and while that isn’t huge compensation, it remains the type of pick Veach and staff have hit out of the park in the past.

KC still has to love that Jeff Bassa remained on the board at this point. It’s challenging to play linebacker in Spags’ defense — part of the reason the Chiefs perhaps went over-market to re-sign the heady Nick Bolton this offseason so he could remain as the leader and play-caller for KC’s complicated defense.

Bassa was a team leader at Oregon and also displayed excellent smarts and athleticism. One can understand how he likely excelled in an interview setting after seeing his first sit-down with KC reporters, and it’s certainly not a stretch to see Bassa and Bolton becoming quick friends and getting the best out of each other, given their similar profiles.

This was a need as well. The Chiefs, after Willie Gay re-signed with the Saints last season, didn’t have a perfect player to fit the role of weakside linebacker who is best positioned to cover passing routes in space.

One could easily see Bassa succeeding with KC, given this defensive coordinator and the group of teammates around him. Like Williams, however, he’ll need to make an impact to justify the extra resource it took to make him a Chief.

Grade: B

ROUND 7, 228TH OVERALL, RUNNING BACK BRASHARD SMITH, SMU

The Chiefs finished their draft with a third and

final trade-up, sending their final two seventh-round picks to move up 23 spots so they could secure SMU running back Brashard Smith.

In a perfect world, KC might’ve already selected another RB by this point in time. Instead, the Chiefs let some value fall to them in Smith, who was rated as a top-170 prospect in five top analysts’ Big Boards.

The reality: KC is likely solving a partial need with Smith, though that still could turn out nicely. Smith is a receiver-turned-running-back who thrives in the pass game, and KC could use some of that third-down juice on an offense that struggled to come up with any explosive plays a season ago.

If we’re being honest, this pick will be fine even if Smith only adds some pop to KC’s kick return game. That’ll be a bigger deal with end-zone touchbacks carrying a greater penalty next season, and the Chiefs seem determined to be ahead of the curve in this area while wanting to be among the league leaders with these types of game-changing plays.

The Chiefs might’ve been shopping for a three-down, long-term option at running back. The draft didn’t fall that way, and with Smith, they potentially get higher upside in a more specific role.

In the seventh round — and even with a small trade-up — it seems like a logical move.

Grade: B+

OVERALL GRADE

There are several big-picture ways to gauge a draft after it ends.

And, in general, the Chiefs fared well in most of these areas.

For example, they stuck to premium positions early. It’s going to be difficult for the Chiefs — given they’ve already paid a lot of their stars — to get top-of-market offensive tackles, defensive tackles, edge rushers and receivers in free agency. KC wisely

used its first four picks on those positions, which makes the potential surplus-value payoff enormous, even if only 2-3 of those guys hit.

The Chiefs addressed their needs well. They also appeared to take advantage of the pockets of depth in the draft, striking at defensive tackle and edge rusher, for instance, just before runs at those spots took the most talented players off the board.

KC’s hidden leak remains, even if it was lessened this year. The Chiefs already have limited draft resources, and their over-aggressiveness in trading up has a price, even if it’s harder to see. Veach has a great history of having his late-round players hit, so when he surrenders those picks willingly in trade-ups, it’s not at zero cost. The Chiefs have roster holes that they could help with late-round lottery ticket stabs each year, and KC can’t get as lucky as it might if it held its breath a little longer on some of its late-round targets.

Still, Veach should be commended for the first-round trade-down — a crafty move that didn’t affect the Chiefs’ first-round pick anyway. That extra fifth-round selection helped the Chiefs come closer to neutral in draft-pick compensation when adding all four of their trades together.

Ultimately, one can certainly see Veach’s vision in this draft. He added high upside at his team’s most significant need, explosiveness at the offensive skill positions and Spagsy-type players that project as future starters on defense.

The Chiefs gave up some value to acquire the guys they believe in. The ones they selected followed logic, though, giving an early impression that this class will be remembered favorably over time.

Overall grade: B+

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MEMBERS MORTGAGE SERVICES PLAINTIFF

vs.

TOMAS MALDONADO, et al.
DEFENDANTS

Case No. SG-2024-CV-001591
Div. No.
K.S.A. 60
TITLE TO REAL ESTATE INVOLVED

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Under and by virtue of an Order of Sale issued by the Clerk of the District Court in and for the said County of Sedgwick, in a certain cause in said Court Numbered SG-2024-CV-001591, wherein the parties above named were respectively plaintiff and defendant, and to me, the undersigned Sheriff of said County, directed, I will offer for sale at public auction and sell to the highest bidder for cash in hand at the Sedgwick County Historic Courthouse, 3rd Floor Conference Room, West 510 N. Main, Wichita, KS 67203 in the City of Wichita in said County, on May 14, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., of said day the following described real estate located in the County of Sedgwick, State of Kansas, to wit:

THE NORTH HALF OF THE SOUTH HALF OF THE WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER, SECTION 4, TOWNSHIP 26 SOUTH, RANGE 1 EAST, OF THE 6TH PM SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS, EXCEPT THAT PORTION FOR HIGHWAY PURPOSES. Commonly known as 7530 N Broadway Avenue, Park City, Kansas 67219

This is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

Jeffrey T. Easter
SHERIFF OF SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS
LOGS LEGAL GROUP LLP
Attorneys for Plaintiff
6811 Shawnee Mission Parkway - Suite 309
Overland Park, KS 66202
(913) 831-3000
Fax No. (913) 831-3320
Our File No. 24-014114
IPL0226117
Apr 18,25,May 2 2025

In accordance with Sec. 106 of the Programmatic Agreement, AT&T plans LTE RRH SWAP at 3600 EAST HARRY ST WICHITA, KS 67218. Please direct comments to Gavin L. at 818-391-0449 regarding the site KS4694. 5/2/25
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IPL0230534
May 2 2025

Legals

Public Notice
IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS

In the Matter of the Adoption of IRELYNN EMMALINE ECK, a minor. SG-2025-AD-000110
NOTICE OF ADOPTION HEARING THE STATE OF KANSAS TO: ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:
YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Petition for Adoption has been filed in the above named Court praying for an Order and Decree of said Court that the Petitioner be permitted and authorized to adopt Irellynn Emmaline Eck as his own child; that an Order and Decree of Adoption of said child by the Petitioners be made and entered by said Court; that the parental rights of the biological father be terminated; and that they have all other proper relief. You are hereby required to file your written defenses thereto on or before May 29, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., at which time and place said cause will be heard. Should you fail thereof, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon said Petition. Patrick Mitchell, Beall & Mitchell, 210 N. St. Francis Ave., Wichita, KS 67202, (316) 842-4014, has been appointed to represent unknown father(s).

Mary A. McDonald, #13651
McDonald Law LLC
118 N. Newton, KS 67114 (316) 804-4350 Attorney for Petitioners
IPL0229216
Apr 25,May 2,9 2025

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