



Monday, Jun 27, 2005

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Visit Aaron's website and journal @ www.aaronrboone.com

What next for Aaron Boone? The Carolina Panthers!!



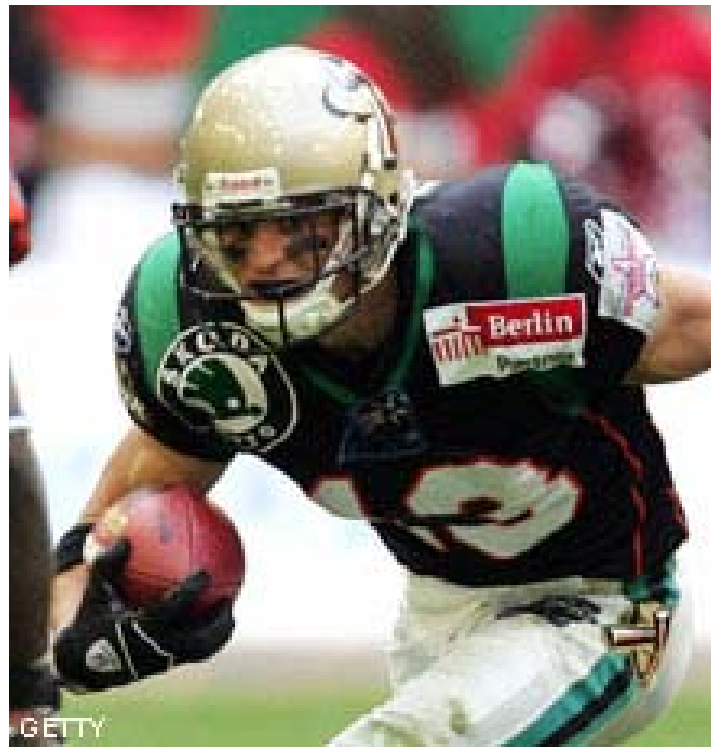
Now that the NFL Season is over with, Aaron Boone has returned back to the states and is preparing for the challenge of making the final cuts for the Carolina Panthers. In the past two seasons Aaron received injuries during the Training Camps for the Dallas Cowboys and Chicago Bears. In both cases he was waived at the final cut.

I spoke to Aaron by phone last week and he informed me that he is stronger and more confident than ever. He has come off of a great season in the NFL Europe. This has opened up a lot of eyes.

Upon his return he went immediately to the Panthers' mini-camp in Carolina. They were very excited to have him there. He thinks his prospects are pretty good this season.

Please watch the AirBoone Express issues over the next couple months as I will try to follow anything Boone-related. I will watch the Fan Sites to gauge their interest. There will be the newspaper articles (see the one below) and other commentary.

If you ever miss an issue of the AirBoone Express, you can always get them from Aaron's website: www.aaronrboone.com



Following is a nice article about Aaron from the Louisville Courier-Journal...an oddity since Aaron was a University of Kentucky player:

Monday, June 20, 2005

Next stop for well-traveled Boone is Carolina

By Michael Smith
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The Courier-Journal

LEXINGTON, Ky. -- For a guy who has made the world his home for the better part of the past seven years, Aaron Boone can't wait to get home -- to his real home.

Boone, the globe-trotting former University of Kentucky wide receiver, intends to spend the next several weeks fishing and camping with his brothers in Utah before starting training camp with the Carolina Panthers in late July.

"I can't wait," Boone said this week from his hotel room in Charlotte, N.C., where he participated in the Panthers' mini-camp.

If anybody deserves a vacation, it's Boone. He spent the past three months tearing up National Football League Europe for the Berlin Thunder, leading the league in receptions and special-teams tackles. The Thunder advanced to the World Bowl, NFL Europe's championship game, before falling to the Amsterdam Admirals 27-21 on June 11 despite Boone's 10-yard touchdown catch.

The end of one season signaled the beginning of another. Two days after the World Bowl, Boone arrived in Charlotte, underwent a physical, got fitted for equipment and went through a light practice with his new teammates.

"I'm still getting over the jet lag," he said Wednesday.

Boone, who just completed his second tour in NFL Europe, questioned a few months ago how much longer he wanted to pursue professional football. Stints with Dallas and Chicago failed to produce a roster spot, and at age 27 Boone had started to think more seriously about putting his degree in international business to work.

He always has been more about the experiences of life than the financial pursuits. He spent two years in Peru on a Mormon mission. He traveled to China and Europe several times before playing in NFL Europe. He speaks Spanish fluently and can figure out Chinese and German if he's not too rushed.

So he figured he'd give NFL Europe another shot and cut back on the importing business he'd practiced since his college days.

"I looked at this year as do-or-die," he said. "I backed off everything else and focused on football."

Boone topped the league with 43 receptions. Only one receiver posted more receiving yards than Boone's 582 in a 10-game season.

His success generated a whole new optimism that he'll ride into training camp.

"It's hard to go to Europe and get back for the NFL season," Boone said. "It's hard on your body. I've got a lot of nicks and bruises, and to go right into practice for a new team that's a challenge. I know I don't have that explosiveness right now, but I hope I can get it back. What I've heard from a lot of guys who play in Europe and then come back to an NFL camp is that they play well for about a week and then they hit a wall. That's what I want to avoid."

In addition to the fun he had on the field, Boone tried to take advantage of his opportunities off it. With a couple of days off in the middle of the season, he flew two of his brothers to Berlin, and then they took the five-hour train ride to Prague, Czech Republic, Boone's favorite European city.

"You're supposed to rest on your days off, but we walked all day in Prague," he said. "When else will you have the chance to spend 10 days with your brothers in Europe? The castles, the history, it's amazing."

Boone's previous travels helped him adapt quickly to Berlin. Boone said some of his teammates were scared to venture out because they didn't know the language or the land.

It didn't take him long to earn a reputation as the adventurous type, so when Fox TV sought a player to carry a camera for a week and show viewers a behind-the-scenes look at the Thunder, Boone was the obvious choice.

"It was fun," he said. "I took the camera with me on our team's bowling night. We were all dressed up in polyester shirts and trucker hats."

Boone might be worth a roster spot just for his entertainment value, but like every NFL team the Panthers' receiver position is highly competitive.

Keary Colbert and Steve Smith are projected starters, while Ricky Proehl is expected to be the third receiver. Karl Hankton, who doesn't play a lot at receiver, likely will occupy a roster spot because he's the special-teams captain. Recent reports indicate the Panthers will pursue former Washington receiver Rod Gardner through free agency.

That could leave Boone battling Purdue receiver Taylor Stubblefield, the NCAA's all-time receptions leader, and a handful of others for one spot.

"I know I'm not going to come in and start," Boone said. "To someday start is a dream, but the thing I'm most proud of from Europe is leading the league in special-teams tackles. Most receivers are return guys, and I'm not, so playing special teams is something not many receivers do. That might give me a shot."

The Boone-o-Meter Stats for 2005 NFLE Season:

Touchdowns:

Game 3: 4th Quarter catch - Ragone 5 yd pass to Boone in End Zone

Game 4: 4th Quarter catch - Ragone 12 yd pass to Boone.

Game 6: 2nd Quarter pass - Boone 51 yd pass to Jennings

Game 7: 2nd Quarter catch - Ragone 5 yd pass to Boone

Game 8: 2nd Quarter catch - Ragone 17 yd pass to Boone

Game 9: 1st Quarter catch - Ragone 8 yd pass to Boone (for Berlin Record)

World Bowl: 2nd Quarter catch - Ragone 10 yd pass to Boone

Receiving:

51 receptions, 665 yards for 13.1 yds/catch

Punt returns:

1 return for 15 yards

Special Teams and Defense:

14 tackles, 1 assist, 1 tackle off of an interception