

NETWORK HOT NEWS

- **Marcus Lawrence:** groin injury
- **Keary Colbert:** hamstring injury
- **Tupe Peko:** strained knee
- **Steve Cheek:** Waived
- **Rod Gardner:** Traded to Carolina for sixth-rounder

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Entering Camp: WRs



By [Brad Thomas](#) PantherInsider.com
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What at first looks like the weakest position for the Panthers could end up surprising a lot of people when the team suits up and plays in September. As the Panthers re-focus on the running game in 2005, the receiving corps will be counted on to make big plays. As we head into camp, here is an overview of the Receivers currently on the roster:

Keary Colbert

Steve Smith – the once fiery Smith has matured, and has learned how to keep his temper under control. Some have speculated that he may be tentative coming off the broken leg he suffered in the opener versus Green Bay last season, but those people are wrong. Smith is back healthy, running at full speed and making cuts like he used to. He's still doing double duty as the teams' primary Punt Returner. Smith is the favorite target of [Jake Delhomme](#) and may have a career year as the teams' undisputed #1 receiving option.

Keary Colbert – Had some growing pains in 2004, but made his presence known; Colbert was second in the NFC last season in yards per reception, averaging 16 yards per catch, as well as setting Panthers rookie records with 47 receptions, 754 receiving yards and five touchdown catches. Coming into camp, he's the starter alongside Smith, and should continue to post solid numbers in 2005.

Ricky Proehl – As the elder statesmen, Proehl enters his 16th NFL season as the Panthers' clutch receiver. Although he's 37, Proehl shows no sign of slowing down... in fact, he averaged a career-high 14.6 yards per catch on 34 receptions in 2004. Although he isn't fast and he isn't big, Proehl reads coverages extremely well and has exceptional hands. He enters camp as the #3 receiver, and more than likely will remain there unless someone like [Aaron Boone](#) or [Drew Carter](#) has a phenomenal preseason.

Drew Carter – As usual, the Panthers have an unproven enigma that has loads of potential. This year, it's Drew Carter. After missing his rookie season last year because of an ACL tear in his right knee, Carter has a lot to prove. He is extremely fast, and showed flashes of brilliance in mini camps this spring and summer, but can he stay healthy?

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Aaron Boone – Boone was the 2005 NFL Europe leader in receptions AND Special Teams tackles. He was a sure-handed target for NFL Europe Offensive MVP [Dave Ragone](#), amassing 582 yards on 43 receptions and five touchdowns for the Berlin Thunder this past season. As he rounds into an NFL receiver, it could be his special teams prowess that could land him on the final roster.

Taylor Stubblefield - the All-Time NCAA Receptions Leader, but not fast and not big. Sure handed, but will he be able to hang in the NFL?

Karl Hankton – The fact that Scotty O’Brien is gone may signal Hankton’s departure. He’s never been much of a receiver in the past, but his presence on Special Teams is his main focus. At 34, Hankton may start showing signs of age and could be beat out by Boone.

Hugo Lira, [Efrem Hill](#), [Antoine Burns](#), [Eugene Baker](#), [Micah Ross](#) and JR Tolver don’t stand much of a chance of making the team unless they can produce on Special Teams.

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