

NFL's scouting systems tell story of changing technology

BY JOURDAN RODRIGUE / THE ATHLETIC
NYT News Service/Syndicate Stories

In the early 2000s, if Tony Lazzaro wanted to make a film cutup of a draft prospect for a coach, he would first have to borrow VCR tapes of that player's games, sometimes from his college, and sit in front of a television with a pen and notebook. He would write down the time stamps of when each play he wanted to highlight began and ended, then have a video specialist splice together the highlights manually.

Lazzaro, the Denver Broncos' vice president for technology and research, is now only a couple of clicks from any video he needs.

Like many NFL teams, the Broncos use an internal digital system to link their coaching, scouting and executive departments. That connectivity is especially important during the scouting and pre-draft process. Their football information system, called FIS for short, also becomes their evaluation center.

Lazzaro helped build it over his 25 seasons in Denver; it is among the more advanced internal scouting systems in the NFL, and its evolution is a mirror for the sport's progress in technology.

"It's kind of a one-stop shop for everybody," Lazzaro said.

Every piece of information the team might want about any player lives in FIS. So do current and historical scouting metrics and grades (on players from the Broncos and other teams), medical notes, film, and even salary-cap and contract details.

FIS aggregates scouts' reports on players into player profiles, which include sections for prospect film, testing and medical data, advanced information such as player movement and GPS data, personality and psychological evaluations. It can run analytical studies based on questions asked by coaches and scouts and can even produce player comparisons. (The Broncos playfully call these "clones.")

Any scout or coach can pull up any prospect in FIS to see this information in one place, instead of in separate reports or programs.

"A lot of teams have an app for pro scouting, an app for college scouting, an app for video," Broncos general manager George Paton said. "Ours is all built into one; that's not easy to do. Our college scouts can go to a school, have their system open, and they can just click on a player and then watch video."

Teams build programs such as FIS in part because they want to save time during the pre-draft process. Advanced internal scouting systems can sort massive amounts of information on prospects and organize the evaluations and grades the scouts, coaches, medical staff and analysts input.

In draft meetings, Broncos evaluators can click on a player profile, where they will see an aggregation of every scouting report, data point gathered and comparative assessment the group has made on that player. They can see all of his film, including packages of situational film (a receiver running routes against man coverage, for example, or an outside linebacker rushing on third down).

Coach- and scheme-specific preferences have been programmed into FIS and can also sort players, the product of detailed communication between

coach Sean Payton and Lazzaro's staff (for example, height thresholds for running backs or length of frame for receivers). Payton, his general manager said, is so interested in what the analytics team builds that he might ask Lazzaro "100 questions in three days."

The information is all packaged into digestible tabs and even small pictures within the scouting reports called "tags" or "alerts." It means users can make faster decisions and have more information to do so, including organizing digital draft boards.

"Back when I first got into scouting, it was all magnets," Paton said. "Your draft board, magnets."

"I haven't used a magnet in 10 years."

FIS had to evolve to remain a relevant tool as technology in the NFL advanced. So did its architect, Lazzaro.

"I'm old enough that the first piece was computers," he said.

Lazzaro, 50, is a pioneer of football technology and systems. A finance major at Colorado State, his open disinterest in that career path was recognized during his senior year by an adviser, who encouraged him to pursue something he actually liked. So he began cold-calling sports teams and got an internship with the San Diego Chargers.

Lazzaro noticed the IT professional there was overrun by work because he was trying to build the scouting department a system that could keep track of all of its prospects and scouting reports -- while he also worked on cybersecurity, online bookkeeping, ticket sales software and other tasks. So Lazzaro took over that scouting system as an intern and began to add to it.

After his internship ended, he reached out to the Broncos -- then led by general manager Ted Sundquist -- looking for full-time work. Sundquist was an Air Force Academy graduate who wanted more technology in football after working with advanced military devices.

By the time Lazzaro got to Denver, two of Sundquist's scouts had pieced together an internal system that was functional but needed development. Lazzaro dived in.

Offices were going digital, and personal computers became ubiquitous. Lazzaro spent a significant amount of his first decade in football technology digitizing written notes and manual processes and getting the team's football operations online.

The use of digital video was a key development. Teams were able to watch more film than ever, and do so at their computers. Video software that could edit film reels for game planning or player evaluation became ubiquitous, with some organizations contracting the work to external companies and others, such as Lazzaro and the Broncos, building their own programs. Software that could help coaches more quickly draw and distribute plays was the first in a series of steps that ultimately allowed them to electronically match their plays to video.

Then came a surge of data and interest in advanced metrics in sports, plus new data tools and publicly usable code and programming languages.

"Having stuff in the public space, I think, really pushes us to move forward," Lazzaro said. "You're crowdsourcing good ideas from everybody versus on our own for years."

Twenty-five years in the field have taught Lazzaro

that there will always be another technological catalyst. Right now, many NFL teams are exploring the use of large language models or artificial intelligence.

Two senior analytics and technology executives, one from an NFC team and one from an AFC team, told The Athletic their teams are using these programs to speed up time-consuming tasks such as logging and transcribing medical information.

The goal for many NFL franchises is to integrate AI, or any new technology, into their existing systems.

Most NFL teams have an internal scouting system that at minimum can digitally store prospect profiles, metrics and scouting reports. Not all of them also serve as an overall hub for an organization like FIS; in fact, some only exist as interactive spreadsheets to help sort and organize players or help a team build its draft board and draft strategy.

A technology expert from one NFC team noted its internal scouting system exists solely to organize, sort and rank prospects and their metrics. Yet that team has a significant investment in analytics and technology, so engineers build apps and other tools for evaluators that live outside that main system. This team has separately built mock draft simulators, trade analysis applications and even programs that help gather research on draft patterns and trends from other teams -- so it can build strategy against them -- where other advanced internal scouting systems might have these tools built in.

The most advanced internal scouting systems often share specific qualities.

They aim to guide a group of evaluators toward consensus -- aggregating number grades and describing prospects using simple colors and pictures instead of sentences and paragraphs help cut

through the biases inherently found in adjectives, a scout's presentation or a general manager's opinion. Within a large group of diverse opinions, a senior AFC technology executive said, an advanced scouting system should be able to identify and extrapolate small points of agreement. The act of drafting a player is the product of consensus reached among evaluators.

They help answer questions using programmed tools -- a coach can find every clip of a prospect doing one specific drill that applies directly to a schematic point, just by clicking a tab.

"We'll be watching tight ends, and Sean will want to know run after catch. Boom, it's right there," Paton said. "It's very intuitive."

Continuity is a key factor, too. The Broncos changed general managers four times after Lazzaro's initial arrival and head coaches nine times. But he and his team (now composed of seven people; three front-end developers, three data and analytics specialists and a data engineer) mostly kept their programs intact.

When staff members are hired elsewhere, the same internal scouting system cannot simply go along with them in totality. Second-year Jacksonville Jaguars general manager James Gladstone used JAARS -- the team's Joint After-Action Review System -- in Los Angeles when he was the Rams' director of scouting. It was initially built over a decade ago by Jake Temme, now the senior vice president for football analytics in Jacksonville.

JAARS was created as a communications hub and out of necessity as the team relocated back to Los Angeles from St. Louis. There were no set offices for scouts to meet, so Temme and IT specialist Ryan Garlich developed a system that could house scouting reports, meeting notes and other relevant information about prospects, plus dialogue

among scouts, coaches and executives. Over time, JAARS evolved into a highly advanced internal scouting system. (It functions a lot like FIS.)

Rams general manager Les Snead has remained in place, and so has JAARS. It keeps gathering team and external data, and it keeps evolving. Gladstone took Temme with him to Jacksonville to reprogram an existing internal scouting system called Blackwater -- to make it a lot more like JAARS. A year into that process, the system contains many of the same tools as its muse.

But it will take time for Blackwater's data to build similar depth -- years of Jaguars employees evaluating their players, opponents and prospects, using their own scouting language. They cannot take JAARS' data and paste it into Blackwater.

The search for innovation never stops, and, like coaches evolving their scheme, developers will look anywhere for a new idea they can turn into a tool for evaluators.

Recently, two NFL teams said scouts kept mentally pairing players in meetings and asking aloud, "Would you take this guy over this guy?"

So they had their engineers develop an app for their general managers that copied open-source code from a popular restaurant-ranking service. Their apps generated pairs of prospects in this year's draft class from within the same position group, and asked the general manager to rank them before presenting a new pair (sometimes including one player from a previous set).

Neither team knew the other's app existed, or that the two apps were essentially the same, but they were, because they borrowed the same code and were trying to answer the same question about the same prospects. Inevitably, however, the two general managers will have varying evaluations of some players, despite using the same data and tools. The difference is the human.

Classified

FIND. BUY. SELL.

classifieds.kentucky.com

Legals

Legals & Public Notices

HBKY, LLC,
Plaintiff,

Civ. No. 6:21-cv-00101-GFVT-HAI

KINGDOM ENERGY RESOURCES, LLC, ET AL.,
Defendants.

NOTICE OF SALE & APPOINTMENT OF APPRAISERS
Comes the undersigned, Court appointed Special Master, and gives notice that pursuant to the Order of Sale [Doc# 1137] entered in the above-captioned case on February 25, 2026 he will on **MAY 1, 2026 at 11:00 A.M.** at the door of the Bell County Courthouse facing the United States Post Office on Walnut St., in Pineville, Kentucky, offer for sale at public auction and outcry to the highest and best bidder the hereinafter described real property in Bell and Knox Counties, Kentucky, more particularly described in the Order of Sale (the "Realty"):

FORMER LEFT FORK MINING PROPERTY, KENTUCKY HIGHWAY 66, LEFT FORK OF STRAIGHT CREEK, BELL COUNTY PVA MAP # 099-00-00-001.00 AND:

FORMER LEFT FORK MINING PROPERTY, ROARING FORK OF STINKING CREEK, KNOX COUNTY PVA MAP #192-00-00-001.00
The Realty is being sold to pay the principal judgment of \$45,260,810.90, plus interest, costs, and fees and in accordance with the Order of Sale and terms therein, and subject to [Doc #335], including those terms related to credit bidding.

GENERAL SALE TERMS: (1) A minimum bid which is greater than or equal to 67% of the appraised value of the Realty will be required in order to bid (the "Minimum"), with the Minimum to be paid to the undersigned by certified check or cashier's check by a bidder before any bid will be accepted (i.e., **a bidder must pay the Minimum in order to bid at the sale**), which shall be held by the undersigned until the sale has concluded and refunded to any unsuccessful bidder within 10 days of the sale; (2) the balance of any bid in excess of the Minimum shall be paid to the undersigned within 20 days after the sale, by a certified or cashier's check payable to the "United States District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky"; and (3) if the successful bidder fails to timely pay the balance due, the certified or cashier's check for the Minimum shall be forfeited and shall be applied to cover the expenses of the sale, including any commissions due, with any amount remaining remitted to the Plaintiff and applied to reduce the Plaintiff's aforesaid judgment, and the Realty shall then be offered again for sale.

The Realty will be appraised by Kevin Bisceglia and Jonathan Evans, two disinterested, intelligent housekeepers actively engaged in or having at least one year of experience in the field of real estate. Their appraisals will be filed in the record once received by the undersigned and may be obtained from the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ C. BISHOP JOHNSON
C. BISHOP JOHNSON C. BISHOP JOHNSON, PLLC
PO Box 128
Pineville, KY 40977
Phone: (606) 337-6500
Fax: (606) 337-6100
Email: cbishopjohnson@bellsouth.net

IPL0324075
Apr 3,10,17,24 2026

Legals & Public Notices

NOTICE TO INFORM
At the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council meeting on April 16, 2026 Ordinance No.29 was enacted related to: (1) An Ordinance amending certain of the Budgets of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government to reflect current requirements for municipal expenditures, and appropriating and re-appropriating funds, FY 2026 Schedule No.26. These documents may be viewed in their entirety at <https://bit.ly/Ord29> or in the Council Clerk's Office at 200 E. Main St. Lexington, KY 40507. 859-258-3240. View all LFUCG legal notices at <https://www.lexingtonky.gov/public-notices>
IPL033361
Apr 24 2026

The Board, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d-4) hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

All Proposals shall become the property of the Board and will not be returned to Proposers unless a written request to withdraw is received prior to 4:00 p.m. local time on, Wednesday May 13, 2026.
IPL0332931
Apr 24 2026

Legals & Public Notices

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF KENTUCKY SOUTHERN DIVISION AT LONDON

HBKY, LLC,
Plaintiff,

Civ. No. 6:21-cv-00101-GFVT-HAI

KINGDOM ENERGY RESOURCES, LLC, ET AL.,
Defendants.

NOTICE OF SALE & APPOINTMENT OF APPRAISERS
Comes the undersigned, Court appointed Special Master, and gives notice that pursuant to the Order of Sale [Doc# 1137] entered in the above-captioned case on February 25, 2026 he will on **MAY 1, 2026 at 11:00 A.M.** at the door of the Bell County Courthouse facing the United States Post Office on Walnut St., in Pineville, Kentucky, offer for sale at public auction and outcry to the highest and best bidder the hereinafter described real property in Bell and Knox Counties, Kentucky, more particularly described in the Order of Sale (the "Realty"):

FORMER LEFT FORK MINING PROPERTY, KENTUCKY HIGHWAY 66, LEFT FORK OF STRAIGHT CREEK, BELL COUNTY PVA MAP # 099-00-00-001.00 AND:

FORMER LEFT FORK MINING PROPERTY, ROARING FORK OF STINKING CREEK, KNOX COUNTY PVA MAP #192-00-00-001.00
The Realty is being sold to pay the principal judgment of \$45,260,810.90, plus interest, costs, and fees and in accordance with the Order of Sale and terms therein, and subject to [Doc #335], including those terms related to credit bidding.

GENERAL SALE TERMS: (1) A minimum bid which is greater than or equal to 67% of the appraised value of the Realty will be required in order to bid (the "Minimum"), with the Minimum to be paid to the undersigned by certified check or cashier's check by a bidder before any bid will be accepted (i.e., **a bidder must pay the Minimum in order to bid at the sale**), which shall be held by the undersigned until the sale has concluded and refunded to any unsuccessful bidder within 10 days of the sale; (2) the balance of any bid in excess of the Minimum shall be paid to the undersigned within 20 days after the sale, by a certified or cashier's check payable to the "United States District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky"; and (3) if the successful bidder fails to timely pay the balance due, the certified or cashier's check for the Minimum shall be forfeited and shall be applied to cover the expenses of the sale, including any commissions due, with any amount remaining remitted to the Plaintiff and applied to reduce the Plaintiff's aforesaid judgment, and the Realty shall then be offered again for sale.

The Realty will be appraised by Kevin Bisceglia and Jonathan Evans, two disinterested, intelligent housekeepers actively engaged in or having at least one year of experience in the field of real estate. Their appraisals will be filed in the record once received by the undersigned and may be obtained from the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ C. BISHOP JOHNSON
C. BISHOP JOHNSON C. BISHOP JOHNSON, PLLC
PO Box 128
Pineville, KY 40977
Phone: (606) 337-6500
Fax: (606) 337-6100
Email: cbishopjohnson@bellsouth.net

IPL0324075
Apr 3,10,17,24 2026

Legals & Public Notices

NOTICE TO INFORM
At the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council meeting on April 16, 2026 Ordinance No.29 was enacted related to: (1) An Ordinance amending certain of the Budgets of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government to reflect current requirements for municipal expenditures, and appropriating and re-appropriating funds, FY 2026 Schedule No.26. These documents may be viewed in their entirety at <https://bit.ly/Ord29> or in the Council Clerk's Office at 200 E. Main St. Lexington, KY 40507. 859-258-3240. View all LFUCG legal notices at <https://www.lexingtonky.gov/public-notices>
IPL033361
Apr 24 2026

The Board, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d-4) hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

All Proposals shall become the property of the Board and will not be returned to Proposers unless a written request to withdraw is received prior to 4:00 p.m. local time on, Wednesday May 13, 2026.
IPL0332931
Apr 24 2026

State-Wide Recovery, Inc, 1365 Pride-more Court, Lexington, Ky 40505, 859-259-1206, is seeking to obtain a clear title to a 2013 Chevrolet Traverse bearing VIN 1GNKR6K0D0J10458. Owner: Adam Adkins at 4305 Flintlock Drive, Louisville, Ky 40216 and lien holder CPS at PO Box 57071, Irvine, CA 92619. You have 15 days from the date of the last publication to inform SWR in writing to claim vehicle.
IPL0324346
Mar 23, Apr 24 2026

LEXINGTON
HERALD-LEADER
KENTUCKY.COM

Auctions

Garage Sales

Willow Oak Neighborhood Yard Sale

Lexington, KY Willow Oak Neighborhood Yard Sale
Saturday, April 26, 8:00 AM-2:00 PM
Multiple families participating with a wide variety of items, including furniture, kids' items, home goods, clothes, toys, and more.

Merchandise

Miscellaneous

Derby Tickets

Oaks and Kentucky Derby Box in section 320. Great box under cover in the stretch . 6 seats both days with close proximity parking pass. Individual selling not ticket broker.
call 502-727-3027 Kentucky Derby Box

Service Directory

Lawn/Garden/Landscaping/Trees

Painting, Staining, Pressure Washing, Trimming, Mowing, Mulching
Call Tommy (859) 338-4884

LOOKING FOR THAT PERFECT THING?

Let Classifieds Help

HERALD-LEADER
KENTUCKY.COM