



2012 GOP VP Fantasy Draft

One Big Guessing Game

To love sports obsessively is to know every player's stats, where he went to college, how he hits lefties at night, and so on. To love politics is to know the first office a politician ran for, who his best friends in Congress are and what office, deep down, he wants to hold later in his career. That's a long way of saying that the brains of sports junkies and political junkies are similarly wired. So if fantasy football, baseball, basketball, et al can be an addiction for a good chunk of the public, why not fantasy

politics? And what better way to dabble in this fantastical world than with a GOP Vice Presidential Fantasy Draft as we wait for Mitt Romney to announce his running mate. This is a process filled with just the sort of rampant speculation, misguided rumors and downright guesswork that makes fantasy owners stay up at night pondering their lineups. Good luck.

— CHRIS CILLIZZA (THE WASHINGTON POST); BIOS COMPILED BY SARA SCHWARTZ (EXPRESS); PHOTOS BY BETTY IMAGES, AP AND THE WASHINGTON POST

PICK: | PICKED BY:



Chris Christie

GOVERNOR OF NEW JERSEY

Background: No-nonsense, blunt and a popular governor, tea party favorite Christie has had to tamp down running mate speculation for months. The Star-Ledger in New Jersey reported Monday that Christie told a crowd in Manasquan, N.J., that, "I don't expect to be asked because, I don't know, do I look like a vice president?" The crowd shouted "Yes!"

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Rob Portman

OHIO SENATOR AND FORMER WHITE HOUSE BUDGET DIRECTOR

Background: Widely respected among Republicans, fiscal maven Portman is a sound pick with no obvious liabilities. "I am happy where I am," Portman said in an interview Wednesday. "I know this could disappoint some of the folks in the media who focus a lot on this VP pick, but people vote for the president."

PICK: | PICKED BY:



Bob McDonnell

GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA

Background: Staunchly conservative and a popular governor, McDonnell would bring strong national security credentials to the ticket as a 21-year Army veteran with a daughter who served in Iraq. But in late May, he appeared on WTOP's "Ask the Governor" program and said he was not being vetted. "I'm absolutely planning to finish my term."

PICK: | PICKED BY:



Marco Rubio

FLORIDA SENATOR

Background: Considered by many to be one of Romney's top choices and backed by the nation's largest tea party group to be Romney's vice president, Rubio is a young, conservative and telegenic Cuban-American. When asked by ABC News on Thursday about running-mate rumors, he said, grinning: "I don't comment on the vice presidential process."

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Bobby Jindal

GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

Background: With an inspiring backstory, Jindal is the first Indian-American to be elected governor. He's also a young, reform-minded, rising star in the Republican party. In his four-plus years in office, Jindal has built an impressive record that would fit nicely with Romney's promises to bring conservative principles to the federal government.

PICK: | PICKED BY:



John Thune

SOUTH DAKOTA SENATOR

Background: With a long legislative record and an early backer of Romney's campaign, Thune is a solid choice for many. But in an interview Monday with the Hill, Thune said he was in Boston to meet with Romney's senior advisers and Beth Myers, who is leading the vice presidential search. "It wasn't a meeting about what you think it's about," he said.

PICK: | PICKED BY:



Condoleezza Rice

FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE

Background: As a conservative woman of color with exceptional foreign policy experience, Rice is one of the more fascinating of the potential running-mate choices. A Fox News poll released Wednesday shows 30 percent of Republican voters would like to see Rice on the ticket. But she's pro-choice and closely aligned with President George W. Bush.

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Tim Pawlenty

FORMER GOVERNOR OF MINNESOTA AND FORMER 2012 GOP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

Background: One of the stronger candidates, Pawlenty is an evangelical Christian with blue-collar roots. Pawlenty has campaigned aggressively for Romney, and their wives are close friends. "I'm not as flashy as some, but compared to some others, I think I'm right in there," Pawlenty told Fox News on Wednesday.

PICK: | PICKED BY:



Rick Santorum

FORMER PENNSYLVANIA SENATOR AND FORMER 2012 GOP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

Background: Perhaps best known for his firm opposition to abortion and gay rights, Santorum's evangelical roots could help Romney win over religious conservatives. He also has strong name recognition. When asked in March whether he would consider in March whether he would consider accepting the No. 2 spot, Santorum said, "Of course."

PICK: | PICKED BY:



Susana Martinez

GOVERNOR OF NEW MEXICO

Background: As the nation's first Hispanic female governor, Martinez could attract female and Hispanic voters. CNN's Candy Crowley highlighted Martinez's suitability, saying she has "a trifecta of political assets: female, Hispanic and a swing state governor." But in April, Martinez said, "I can't do this halfway and jump into something else."

Never Been in a Fantasy Draft Before?

Step 1: Find some political junkies in your office. You're in D.C. — this shouldn't be hard.

Step 2: Pick a draft order. Choose numbers from a hat, go alphabetically or in order of office tenure. Another idea is to let Republicans go first, since it will be their ticket after all.

Step 3: Read these pages for some quick research so you don't blow the first pick by drafting Sarah Palin.

Step 4: Establish a time interval between picks. One minute is enough, considering Mitt Romney's been dragging this process out since April.

