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## No letting up for Weber

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If the weather is nice this weekend, Adam Weber plans to get some buddies together for a round of golf. If not, the former Gophers quarterback will relax at his family's home in Shoreview, enjoying the company of good friends.

He will not be waiting by the phone, fretting over where he might be picked in the NFL draft. Weber has done everything he can to maximize his chances, spending two months training with other prospects in Miami and time in Arizona working out with Eric Decker and Larry Fitzgerald Jr. He also has the enthusiastic support of agent Marc Lillibridge, who financed those expensive preparations, and longtime pro and college coach Marc Trestman, who is vouching for Weber's skills after working with him last winter.

They believe in him for the same reason he believes in himself. Throughout a Gophers career battered by instability and disappointment, Weber never lost his bottomless optimism, love for football and commitment to giving his best every day, for his team as well as himself. He said he feels certain there is an NFL team that will believe in him, too, so he will not sweat the details this weekend.

"My family wanted to throw a party, but I'm not sure I want to do that," said Weber, who is working out at the U while waiting for his future to unfold. "It can be a very stressful process, and I want it to be a nice, relaxed day.

"If I get a phone call, I get a phone call, and we'll go from there. And if it doesn't happen, then we'll take the next steps. Regardless of whether I get drafted, I know I'll be on a team. However I get there, I don't care."

Draft analysts predict Weber could be chosen in the middle or late rounds -- or not at all. Those who rank him lower point to his size (6-1) and his interceptions (51 over a 50-game career). Those who rank him higher have looked past that.

They see the guy who played in four

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different offensive schemes in five years, under three head coaches and four quarterback coaches, and never complained. No matter how daunting the adjustment or how harsh the criticism, Weber kept doing his job to the best of his ability. That's what convinced Lillibridge, a former NFL player and scout, to represent Weber -- and fund pre-draft training costs that Weber estimated at \$15,000 to \$20,000.

"Once I met him, I knew he was the kind of guy I wanted to represent," Lillibridge said. "He's got intelligence and moxie, and he's a leader."

Weber graduated last May with a degree in marketing, which enabled him to train full-time once the Gophers' season ended in November. He spent January and February in Miami, where he devoted 12 hours a day to preparing for the draft alongside top prospects such as Arkansas tight end D.J. Williams, Miami (Fla.) receiver Leonard Hankerson and Maryland receiver Torrey Smith.

Detroit Lions quarterback Drew Stanton helped Weber with his throwing mechanics. Trestman gave him pointers for his March 8 pro day at the U, where Weber and others worked out for several NFL scouts. Decker,

his former Gophers teammate who now plays for the Denver Broncos, told him what to expect when meeting with team representatives and invited him to train with NFL players in Arizona.

About eight teams have been in contact with Weber, and he visited the Jacksonville Jaguars. He understands some teams will dismiss him out of hand, but like Lillibridge, he is convinced that an organization that matches his values will give him a shot.

"I'm not just a bunch of numbers," Weber said. "I'm a guy who, regardless of what's going on, will do whatever I can to win. I'll never give up. I'll never be a distraction. I'll come in and be the hardest worker. That's what I have to sell."

Some NFL team -- one that appreciates integrity, selflessness and grit -- has the opportunity to snag a real bargain this weekend in Weber. More than once, he has been asked whether he wishes he had gone to another school, a place with fewer challenges and more success. To do so, he said, would be a pointless waste of energy.

Under Weber's philosophy, the most important play for any quarterback is the next one. Like always, he will be looking

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downfield this weekend, convinced that effort and belief will add up to something good.

"I'm not going to lie," he said. "It was very tough here at times, but I wasn't going to quit. I love competing, and I love the game of football, so I focused on doing the best I could every day. I know if I continue to work hard, things are going to work out."

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