With each new recruiting cycle, needs need to be met. Irish head coach Brian Kelly and his staff have done a nice job of restocking the Irish roster with both numbers and quality talent. But to get back to the elite level many Irish fans hope to reach, they'll need to land at least a few more quality recruiting classes to keep the cycle of quality talent going.

Each year at this time, we take a look at the needs for each recruiting class. Numbers are always an interesting debate. Most never thought the Irish would reach the number of commitments they had last year, and each year the class number seems to increase as signing day nears. Many expect around 20 this year, but that number could easily climb to 21-22 (and probably will) with transfers and players succumbing to medical hardships. For our purposes, we're going to shoot with a number of 21 in this class. Yes, I know, some will suggest it won't get that high, but it always ends up being more than we originally thought.

With the 21 number in mind, the next obvious question will be how many scholarship players will the Irish take at each position? This is where the numbers become tricky, but I'll take a stab at it.

Quarterback (1)

I'm of firm belief that you take one quarterback every year. Everrett Golson will likely have the reigns for at least 2 more years. Will Andrew Hendrix be back in 2014? I think that depends on

the development of Gunner Kiel and Malik Zaire. If either or both develop into a solid No. 2 candidate, I think we'll see Hendrix move on to a very successful medical career.

Regardless of what happens, I still believe you need to take a quarterback every year. Transfers happen often at quarterback, especially when you have a young signal caller currently starting, which is what the Irish have in Golson. I love the upside of both Kiel and Zaire, but it's important to land another with the right skill set---being able to throw well, but also being able to move very well in pocket as well as being a run threat.

Running Back (1)

The Irish signed two outstanding running backs in Greg Bryant and Tarean Folston in last year's class. George Atkinson and Cam McDaniel each have a year after this season. Amir Carlisle will have at least two. Will Mahone will have three years. Some might suggest taking two running backs would be smart, but I'm not sure the Irish will be able to land two quality players.

Whomever you sign, you must believe they have a legitimate shot to compete with those on the roster. ND will get a great running back in this class, but it may be hard to land two, so I'd use the second running back slot for another position where you can likely get a better player. If you do take two, you better make sure the second guy is open to playing other positions.

Wide Receiver (3)

This was a hard call for me. The Irish have a lot of depth here, but I'm not sure they have anyone I'd call a truly elite player on their roster at wide receiver. A number of players could develop into that quality of receiver, but I don't think we can guarantee anyone reaches this level at this point. What's important to point out here is that I'd only be in favor of taking a third receiver if that third player was an elite prospect with game-breaking speed. My guess is Notre Dame will have a shot at such a player because I think their passing game will improve quite a bit this season.

It's not just numbers, but what type of receivers do the Irish need? Last year the Irish got some

bigger bodies in Corey Robinson and James Onwualu, and they also landed some pretty good speed in Torii Hunter, Jr. and Will Fuller. Onwualu will likely end up as a slot receiver, but he's probably not the ideal slot receiver as say a Davonte Neal would be. The Irish need to find another quick and elusive slot player in this cycle. The other need is to find a receiver with good speed, but also a bigger body, who can use both his speed and body to gain consistent separation against the competition and become a true deep threat for ND. Is 2014 receiver commitment Justin Brent this type of player? Time will tell. There aren't many Marquise Lee's in this world, but it sure would be nice if ND could snag someone of similar skill set. On the third slot, again, it's important that this player be a truly great prospect or there's no sense in taking someone. But again, I think they'll improve their passing game this season and will be in the race for some elite targets at wide receiver. I listed three slots, but this could easily turn into two. If it only ends up two, my hope is Notre Dame would use this scholarship for an elite O-linemen.

Tight End (1)

This is not a big need for Notre Dame after landing two quality tight ends last season, but considering Notre Dame's long streak of producing NFL tight ends, my guess is Notre Dame will likely lure someone who is too good to pass up. 6-foot-4, 230-pound La Mirada, Calif. prospect Tyler Lautau would be such a player. If I were Brian Kelly, I'd wait and see what he plans to do before accepting other commitments at this position. At some point it doesn't make sense to take a tight end in this class, so whomever they accept a commitment from must be able to compete with both Mike Heuerman and Durham Smythe.

Offensive Line (4)

At this point I have four offensive linemen listed in my projection for offensive line signees in 2014. This number is based on the health of Matt Hegarty and anyone else who is somewhat questionable heading into spring practice and fall camp. If the Irish lose another O-lineman, this number will definitely increase. Four may even be a bit small for the class at this point, but with five great linemen taken in last year's class, the ND staff might find it more difficult to lure elite prospects in 2013. There are a number of top line prospects already strongly interested in Notre Dame, but how many will they sign?

Position is also important for this recruiting cycle. Notre Dame landed at least two offensive tackles last year in Mike McGlinchey and Steve Elmer. Hunter Bivin could end up playing

tackle, but could also move inside to guard or center. John Montelus is likely a guard candidate. Colin McGovern is also a guard or center candidate. How many tackles and how many interior players the Irish will sign in 2014 will likely depend on where this current crop of O-linemen eventually land. However, most linemen commit long before fall camp, so the Irish staff will likely have to take an educated guess as to where each player will land from the 2013 class.

My guess is Notre Dame signs at least one tackle and then two interior players who could play guard and/or center. My guess is they also sign a prospect who could play either tackle or guard. Only one center prospect is needed, but you must make sure you can get a guy who is a great center candidate in case none of the 2013 signees end up being a good fit at center. Tackle is probably a bigger need than some think, especially if Bivin, Montelus and McGovern all move inside.

It won't likely be a large class of offensive signees, but it's important for Notre Dame to be somewhat picky and land some quality talent to compete with the current talent on the roster. Irish fans are always excited about commitments, but this season might be a good year for the Irish staff to remain a bit patient and try to land some of the very best prospects at each position. Last season's undefeated regular season will open some doors, and another good season on the field will help to continue to build interest in the Irish program. If ND could get on a roll early in recruiting, we could see a domino effect with other elite players wanting to jump on board. For that to happen, the Irish need to get a few elite players early to choose ND.

Tomorrow we'll take a look at the defensive side of the ball.