

The 2009 Rookie Scouting Portfolio Sample Version©

**Game Film Analysis
Player Profiles
Scouting Reports**

**A Prospectus of Fantasy Rookies at The
Offensive Skill Positions**

By

Matt Waldman

The 2009 Rookie Scouting Portfolio Sample Version is published by Matt Waldman

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Note about this Sample Version

It is my pleasure to provide you this free sample of the 2009 Rookie Scouting Portfolio. This 624-page, online publication that provides rankings and analysis of 165 rookie prospects at quarterback, running back, wide receiver, and tight end typically takes eight months of film study to produce. As its author, I take pride in the work I do and I am always trying to make it better. I love to hear feedback from my readers, so feel free to e-mail me at the address on page two.

This sample version of the Rookie Scouting Portfolio is just a preview. Here is what you will get when you subscribe and download the complete version:

- **Checklists and Game Film Profiles of Every Player Evaluated**
- **Fantasy Overviews For The Rookie Class at Each Position**
- **OVERRATED, UNDERRATED, and Projects at Each Position**
- **Fantasy Rankings And Historical Player Comparisons for Each Position**
- **A Glossary For The Criteria in The Positional Checklists**
- **An Abbreviated Draft Guide with Cheat Sheets that include:**
 - **Rankings**
 - **Commentary**
 - **Potential Rating: Upside, Boom-Bust, Maxed-Out Skills**
 - **Workout Times**
- **Draft Value Charts For Trading Picks in 8-, 10-, 12-, and 14-Team Dynasty Leagues**

This is just part of the excellent content you will receive with a subscription to Footballguys.com. I am a new staff member and writer with the site, but I have been writing and competing in the fantasy football online community and industry for several years.

Footballguys.com has always been a big favorite of mine for information, compelling discussion about football, and a place of great ideas to help fantasy owners draft set line-ups, and acquire players like an expert. So much so, I sought an opportunity to become a part of the tremendous staff of professionals who know how to make a site top-notch and keep it fun. I hope you take the opportunity to find out.

Best

Matt Waldman
Staff Writer, Footballguys.com
Author, *The Rookie Scouting Portfolio*
Columnist, *The Weekly Gut Check*

Note: The table of contents is a series of bookmarks in the Adobe document. Click the bookmark icon to access. At the end of the book is the **Abbreviated Draft Guide** designed for quick use in a fantasy draft or as a handy print-and-carry guide. To access the **Abbreviated Draft Guide**, click on the bookmarks and scroll to the bottom.

Introduction

The 2009 Rookie Scouting Portfolio is designed to give fantasy GMs and draftniks the best all worlds. On the surface, it is an online publication with rankings and analysis of draft-eligible prospects as the offensive skill positions of quarterback, running back, wide receiver, and tight end. The rankings and summary reports are in cheat sheet format to give the reader a quick and convenient overview for fantasy GMs to reference on draft day. But it is also contains supporting information presented in meticulous detail for those who wish to go beyond the general, one- and two-paragraph summaries.

What makes the RSP unique is its dedication to presenting its evaluation process and supporting work to the reader. It is a two-pronged, player evaluation approach that starts with a grading report in checklist format. Each checklist question is given a weight value and clearly defined for the reader in the glossary of the publication. This method provides a more uniform objectivity when grading players and helps the evaluator not get too enamored with one particular skill. Accompanying each checklist is a play-by-play analysis profile that notes what was observed to merit the scores on the evaluation tool. It also provides subjective analysis that helps fill in the gaps that may be missing from a uniform approach.

The goal is to share my views of the rookies, educate others about the nuances of the game of football, and show the research so the reader can conduct their own, if they choose.

Why Film Study is The Best Evaluator of Talent

The emphasis of game film to evaluate a player is based on the philosophy shared by some of the NFL's best personnel men in the history of the game such as Joe Thomas and Ron Wolf. Commissioner Pete Rozelle recommended Thomas to the Minnesota Vikings in the 1960's as their first personnel manager. Thomas went against the grain and built a team around scrambling QB Fran Tarkenton, a player that didn't have ideal measurements, but possessed far greater qualities that one could clearly see on the field.

By the early 70's, Thomas was doing the same thing in Miami. He drafted lesser regarded, Bob Griese over Heisman winner Steve Spurrier, traded for Paul Warfield, and picked Larry Csonka—a back most thought was too slow to be a productive NFL runner. When the Dolphins met the Vikings in the Super Bowl, Thomas had drafted or acquired nearly all the starters on both teams!

Former Packer's GM, Ron Wolf credits Thomas as a person who taught him valuable lessons about the art of personnel decisions. Wolf was the driving force behind the Packers acquiring Brett Favre. The choice of Favre was one of the cornerstones of the Green Bay franchise when they became Super Bowl Champion. Wolf was convinced Favre was a special player, not because what he saw from Favre at the combine, but film study of the future Hall of Famer's junior season at Southern Mississippi.

This is the *Rookie Scouting Portfolio's* fourth year in print and the feedback I have received from the first three publications has been excellent. I believe you will be equally pleased with the depth and scope of the 2009 RSP's analysis. Rather than only seeing a short summary based on a grading scale that is vaguely explained, *The 2009 Rookie Scouting Portfolio* is compiled to not only give you scores, rankings, and summaries, but also a play-by-play breakdown of what was observed during the game to arrive at these conclusions.

The driving force of this concept is the method and format in which the film is broken down and delivered. Each player's game performance is scored on a position-specific checklist containing all the necessary fundamentals that answer the key questions about a prospect's potential to develop into an NFL starter and fantasy asset:

- **Does the player demonstrate consistently sound techniques and decisions in game-day situations?** Hundreds of prospects fighting for NFL roster spots have the physical talent. Dozens of these players impress on the practice field, but when the lights come on, the stands are packed, and the adrenaline is pumping, even first round draft picks can fall apart. The problem has less to do with nerves and more to do with lack of preparation—long-term, daily preparation. The ability to react, decide, and execute with precision comes from techniques ingrained through hard work. These processes become second nature on the field and that ultimately leads to success. What happens on the field is almost always a product of the preparation. Bill Walsh drilled the 49ers relentlessly on the play known as “the catch.” His players thought the play would never work. Yet it was so ingrained in them when Walsh called this little-used, but highly practiced play, the team executed it to perfection when it was most needed.
- **Does the film provide examples that support or differ from the combine results?** The evaluation process is really nothing more than a recruiting process for a lucrative and demanding job. The resume consists of things like a player’s stats, media guide-driven measurements, and recommendations from coaches. The NFL Combine is an extensive job interview. The NFL runs the candidate through his paces to determine if what is on the resume holds up. A series of exercises designed to test the player’s physical skills, intellect, and maturity are administered in a neutral environment with the intent to provide all players an equal starting point. The combine is an important evaluation tool. Still, we all know some people perform a lot better on the interview than they do on the job. This is why the game film has such importance. To continue with the recruiting process analogy, the film is like a portfolio of work—a clear indication of the player’s talents when put to practical use in real game situations. In many cases, this leads to the next question...
- **Does the player transfer his physical skills to the football field?** If a WR runs a 4.6-second time in the forty at the combine, the foregone conclusion to the general public is the player is too slow for the NFL. But this combine result won’t alarm those that have seen the same WR outrun a defensive back with a good angle and 4.3-speed, or separate from a corner in man coverage that has timed well in workouts. Jerry Rice had functional speed—in other words, he was a more impressive runner in pads than in shorts. Larry Fitzgerald ran closer to 4.6 than prospects with far less skill than the Cardinals Pro Bowl receiver.
- **What is the player’s comfort level with physical contact?** Although it is a given football is a contact sport, the level of physical contact a player chooses to deliver or receive can vary greatly—even among pros. Wide receivers Todd Pinkston and Hines Ward are an excellent study in contrast. Pinkston was a highly regarded receiver among many scouts because of his speed, hands, and routes. Ward was a three-position player in college who lacked both polish as a route runner and an attractive 40-time. Pinkston has failed to develop into a productive starter because he doesn’t have a high enough comfort level with physical contact. Pinkston has trouble releasing from press coverage, fighting for separation in tight coverage, or going for the ball in traffic. On the other hand, Super Bowl XL’s MVP thrives on physical contact as a receiver, runner, and most impressively a blocker. This is a clear example why hitting is the great equalizer in football and where the film room takes precedence to the combine. Most players can perform a task with great execution in an atmosphere with minimal, or no contact, the ones that can execute under heavy physical contact, often illegal contact, are far fewer in number.

In-game commentary accompanies each checklist and is provided to illustrate the reasons behind the player score. Instead of generically describing a player’s skill set, *The 2008 Rookie Scouting Portfolio* describes how the player failed or succeeded in performing each skill set in specific detail. The intent is to provide you a frame of reference behind the information and a clearer understanding of the overall assessment.

The Concept Behind The Checklist Format

The concept of delivering a grade can be a highly subjective process. Take 4-5 people with a high level of expertise in a subject, and ask them to use a numerical or letter grading scale to evaluate an individual's performance on a specific task. Odds are slim you'll even come close to a unanimous agreement without establishing more specific guidelines all can agree upon first.

The initial problem is the grading scale. Rarely do people have a clearly defined grading scale in use. For example, there are the typical corporate grading scales of 1-5 or 1-7 (1 = the lowest score and 5 = the highest score) where the joke is no one ever receives the best or worst scores. People also have vastly different ideas about the type of performance deserving of each grade. The differences in opinion increase with the range of the grading scale. Double the range from 1-5 to 1-10 and the ability to find agreement becomes exponentially more difficult and further detracts from the apparent objectivity of the evaluation.

When you examine a scouting evaluation that tells you Reggie Bush received a 9 on a scale of 10 as a receiver, how do you know what the grade is really telling you? Did the evaluator watch Bush catch the ball 9 times out of 10 opportunities? Was it 90 out of 100? Or was it just one highlight and the way a coach lauded the player's skills as a pass catcher? There can be a big difference.

How is the category of receiving defined? Does it include components like route running, the ability to gain yards after the catch, or gaining separation off the line of scrimmage with a defender in tight coverage? All of these areas deserve evaluation otherwise the assessment is incomplete and unfair. Yet, lumping together specific skills can cloud the issue. Some talent evaluators fail to communicate how they separate these skills, if they do so at all. Their audience doesn't understand why a receiver he evaluated with a high grade as a route runner can't get open in the NFL. The evaluator just gave a number but didn't explain how he arrived at that number. If asked after the fact, the evaluator might explain his system in more detail, which can appear more as a rather convenient justification.

While evaluation of human performance will always be subjective, there is a way to limit the amount of variation in the scoring process and build-in more objectivity. The best way to accomplish this feat is the two-fold approach used as the basis for the RSP's game film analysis:

- 1. Clearly define the criteria in writing.** When the performance criteria has a definition, both the evaluator and the audience gain a more accurate understanding of what is expected from the evaluation process. The checklist criteria for each position in these scouting profiles are defined for your reference.
- 2. Score the criteria with a grade of "Yes," or "No."** Once there is written criteria, the evaluator only has to grade whether the individual performed the criteria as defined. The answer is either positive, negative, or the individual didn't have an opportunity to perform the criteria.

Of course, not all graded points have equal value when evaluating a player's performance. One cannot assign the same importance to a receiver's ability to run with the ball as one does to his ability to catch it. All evaluation processes prioritize the value of each criteria point in comparison to the whole, but not all evaluation tools adequately communicate the priority.

Scoring The Checklists

The criteria in these checklists are defined and assigned a numerical value. The more essential the defined criteria point to the player's projected NFL performance at their position, the higher the assigned point value for that particular skill. The player earns all the points for a score of "Yes," or none of the points for a "No." A score of "N/A," means the question is not applicable to the situation being evaluated—for instance, a running back that doesn't have an opportunity to make a difficult/acrobatic reception in a game cannot fail this area.

All positional checklists are scored on a 100-point scale. The overall score is my opinion of each player's current skill set, and contributes to my view of his overall potential to translate those skills as an NFL professional. Fantasy owners should be able to look at these scores and determine where they can find value players in their drafts.

Range	Overall Assessment
90-100	This is a rookie with the talent to contribute at a high level for an NFL team as soon as their first year and at latest, their second season. Since rookies are rarely top tier fantasy starters, this overall number states more to their dynasty potential to become an elite fantasy contributor in the years to come. Although unlikely a player with this overall score will amass this level of production on a consistent basis to become a must start in his first year, a rookie with this score will have the best opportunity in the right situation.
80-89	This rookie should eventually contribute at a high level for an NFL team early in his career. The upper range of this score probably means the player may need 1-2 years, but will eventually develop into a solid, if not excellent NFL player. He will be a solid fantasy starter usually taken in the top 3-5 rounds of a re-draft league. A player in the lower range has a chance to accomplish the same level of productivity but may have a clearly defined weak area(s) that requires improvement. He could contribute now, but he'll have liabilities an NFL defense will be able to exploit within a game or two. Most struggling starters that may produce decent numbers but make repeated mistakes that cost their team are playing at this level. These are players best used as a situational player or reserve. If he doesn't make progress with these skills earlier in his career, he'll most likely remain a situational player or backup.
70-79	A rookie with NFL talent but falls under one of three categories: he is new to the position, lacked great coaching because his skill sets detract from his physical talent, or he has decent--if not a high level of skills--but he doesn't have the elite physical talent. Players in the upper half of this range often become starters, and sometimes stars, but the rate of progress is slower than their peers. A player in the lower half is more likely to be career back up with the ability to be productive in spot situations. These aren't players a fantasy owner will want to draft in traditional leagues, but have nice value as mid-to-late round picks in dynasty leagues with deeper rosters. Even if not drafted to a fantasy roster in their first year, a savvy owner will be aware of these players and pick up them up on the waiver wire at the opportune time.
60-69	These prospects generally have more than one deficiency in their game. The media labels these guys as "projects," if they have the physical talent. Another likelihood is the player may have excelled in college but played in a system that contributed to his success more than his individual skills. These players are long shots to develop into a quality NFL and fantasy starter. You will likely see this player on various NFL rosters or vying for playing time in other professional leagues (AFL, CFL, or NFL-Europe) early in his career. A fantasy owner in a deep, dynasty league may want to keep an eye on these players for a few years but they aren't likely worth a pick unless the league has 40+ players and 16+ teams.
0-59	A player with this low of a score has major deficiencies in his game and probably lacks the physical talent relative to the average NFL player. With time, opportunity, and coaching this player has a chance to develop into a backup, but the likelihood of this player growing into a productive starter in the NFL or fantasy leagues is too low for someone to seriously consider until that player proves everyone wrong.

Criteria Glossary

At the end of this portfolio is a glossary of every criteria point on the checklist. Each criteria point falls under a broad category that describes a group of related skill sets for the position. Each broad category has a definition as do the criteria points. Most of criteria definitions end with an example player from NFL history that demonstrated this skill. The positions and their corresponding point value are listed at the end of each section.

This scoring system models the idea that there is very little separating a great pro from a good pro. Players in an NFL training camp constitute the top percentile of college talent. Therefore the difference between the skill sets and talents of pro players within their position is far smaller than the gap among the best and worst college starters. It is important to note these scores are generally derived from one game.

Although some prospects have checklists compiled from more than one contest, if not several, this is still a snap shot of a player's career. This means there is a chance that player has demonstrated a consistent level of skill not seen in these games. Yet, the checklist is designed to point out a player's talent level separate from their statistical performance.

Quarterbacks

Overview and Fantasy Impact of the Position

Overrated and Underrated

Projects

Best by Category

Fantasy Top 20

Player Comparisons

Scouting Checklists and Profiles

Overview and Fantasy Impact of the Position

A common perception of the 2009 Quarterback class is that there are two top prospects and a big drop in talent afterwards. I agree there is a separation, but I think it has more to do with the quality of the top two players and not a lack of talent among the remaining prospects. There are three to five players who could become quality starters down the line and I think they are getting short shrift. When we look back, it could turn out that the perceived riches of the TE class are overrated and the wealth of QB prospects is underrated.

As a dynasty league owner I think there are ten players who could eventually see time as starters in the NFL. Realistically, five of them have a strong enough combo of physical talent and skill to be in fantasy owners' lineups for the long haul.

Rookie quarterbacks are premium investments in dynasty leagues, but they are best avoided in typical re-drafts. Here is a list of the top 10 single-season performances for rookie quarterbacks and their year-end fantasy ranking among their peers at the position. Fantasy points are based on a general scoring system, 4 points per touchdown pass; 6 points per rushing touchdown; 1 point per 20 yards passing; and 1 point per 10 yards rushing:

Rookie QBs At Their Best						
Last	First	FF Pts	Rookie Year	Round	#	Season Ranking
Manning	Peyton	297.15	1998	1	1	6th
Kelly	Jim	287.55	1986*	1	14	5th
Ryan	Matt	252.40	2008	1	3	16th
Moon	Warren	242.00	1984*	U	U	12th
Mirer	Rick	241.95	1993	1	2	9th
Weinke	Chris	239.35	2001	4	11	19th
Flacco	Joe	234.70	2008	1	18	20th
Zorn	Jim	225.15	1976*	U	U	6th
Leftwich	Byron	219.75	2003	1	7	18th
Roethlisberger	Ben	219.45	2004	1	11	21st
	Average	240.58				14th

* - Denotes player's first year in NFL, not necessarily first year in pro football. Jim Kelly was drafted in 1983 but played in the USFL until '86. Warren Moon originally signed with the CFL.

U - The player was not drafted by an NFL team.

Only seven of the top 10 rookie fantasy quarterbacks were truly first year professionals. Moon and Kelly already had a few seasons of professional football experience in the CFL and USFL. Zorn played in a different era of offensive football. The highest-performing rookies generally produced numbers worthy of a fantasy backup. That's a late-round bargain for a backup in some re-draft leagues. Still, no experienced fantasy owner is going to build a re-draft team around a rookie. Rookie quarterbacks have a much higher value in dynasty leagues, although you don't want to build your team around one unless you have a productive veteran to keep in your lineup for the first 2-3 years. As good as Matt Ryan was for stretches, he wasn't a consistent fantasy starter out of the gate.

Overrated Prospects

Tom Brandstater: There are those in the mass media who love to market the draft by entertaining people with the idea that somewhere there is the “next great quarterback” deep in the draft and under the radar. It’s a great marketing ploy for advertising their agenda and more importantly an enjoyable part of evaluating so many players. But there are always college QBs with size, arm strength, and starting experience. I call them (Tom) Brady-in-a-Box because of the way people like to regard them.

Tom Brandstater is a smart individual with arm strength and when you catch him play, he’ll make a promising play one moment, followed by a poor play the next. He really didn’t have competition or insane expectations thrust upon him or his team in the way Tom Brady did at Michigan, one of the higher-profile programs in college football. Fresno State is a quality program, but doesn’t draw the same level of prospects. Brady got lost in the shuffle with Brian Griese and Drew Henson, two big-name recruits. Brandstater sat behind Paul Pinegar.

Even if Brandstater learns to read and react quickly to sophisticated defensive schemes, he is not accurate on the move. Those who expect Brandstater to develop into a back up have reasonable expectations, but anything more is overrating Brandstater’s physical skills. I don’t believe there is a lot of sentiment that he’ll be a starter someday, but he is getting more discussion than quarterbacks who are far and away more accurate passers with much better pocket presence and skill at reading defenses.

Hunter Cantwell, Louisville: Cantwell is another Brady-in-a-Box prospect. Like Brandstater, he has the size and arm strength. Cantwell was the unfortunate inheritor of a Louisville team that lost the last remnants of the Bobby Petrino era in the 2008 draft and he held his own in his first year as a starter. I actually like Cantwell’s game more than Brandstater’s because he is more consistent with his performance and he demonstrates the ability to adjust within the same game when something isn’t working for him. He has more poise and he throws with good mechanics on the run.

Cantwell’s greatest obstacle beyond inexperience is his mechanics with his release of the football. Wasted motion gives defenders more time to get to the quarterback. The result is either a sack or a deflected pass. Cantwell brings the ball down to his hip when he begins his delivery and then circles the ball behind him as he begins his release. Despite the fact he throws decently on the run, he’s not extremely mobile. He has a lot of skills to add to his game to gain a level of proficiency beyond that of a future back up.

Underrated Prospects

Nate Davis, Ball State: The perceived draft stock of Nate Davis is dropping and I think he’s easy to nitpick. He had a horrific pair of games at the end of his college career that included five fumbles in two games. He operates a fair bit from the spread formation. Plus, he wears gloves and he doesn’t grip the ball on the laces side when he throws passes. He also has a learning disability that has people questioning how quickly he can assimilate an offense. When you put it all together, Davis has an unconventional grip, less conventional offense, and he’s getting the reputation for being mentally slow. It’s a big mistake, in my opinion.

Davis has the quickest release of all the quarterbacks in this draft and he’s excellent at extending the pocket to make plays. He only threw eight interceptions this year and six last year despite his penchant for abandoning the script. One of the reasons is his terrific accuracy on the intermediate and deep ball. He can squeeze passes into tight windows and he doesn’t fear making the attempt to do so, which is a necessary trait to be an NFL quarterback.

Davis had one of the best performances I watched from a quarterback this year. There are a couple of mitigating factors to considering when looking at what his detractors have the say. The first was the loss of WR Dante Love, a bona fide pro prospect who suffered a career-ending injury earlier in the season. Love was one of the fastest receivers in the MEAC and losing their best vertical threat forced this offense to go with a

freshman with good skills, but more of a possession threat...and a freshman nonetheless. Davis also had to do a lot of his work with his slot tight end Darius Hill and his runner MiQuale Lewis. As he faced bowl worthy teams to conclude the season, opposing teams had the talent and the film to game plan a way to stop Davis' weapons.

Davis played behind a strong offensive line than allowed the least sacks in the MEAC, but some of the credit for this low sack total also goes to him. His mobility, accuracy, and quick release all make him a viable NFL prospect. Davis has said his learning disability makes it harder for him to learn by reading and he's naturally a visual learner. The NFL already does a lot of visual teaching with game film study. It may take him a year longer than some quarterbacks but it doesn't make him less intelligent. Davis might be the best pure passer in this draft and potentially the best bargain of the QB class.

Josh Freeman, Kansas State: Davis and Freeman (and to some degree Rhett Bomar) are the prospects who get glossed over when people say the quarterback class has two excellent guys and no one else. At 6-6 and 250 lbs., Freeman has the arm, accuracy, and poise in the pocket to be an NFL starter with more development. I was especially impressed with Freeman's toughness. He's got the size of Daunte Culpepper, but his ability to take punishment and stay on task reminds me of Steve McNair. He's not the runner that either Culpepper or McNair were at the height of their careers, but that might be a good thing in the long run. If he can continue to refine his game and learn to manipulate coverage he'll become a skilled drop back passer.

Projects

Brian Hoyer, Michigan State: I think Hoyer has a greater chance to be a success than Brady-in-a-Box candidates Tom Brandstater and Hunter Cantwell. The reasons are pretty clear when you examine Hoyer's game. He's a strong-armed passer with no major issues with his delivery and is capable of pinpoint accuracy in the intermediate and deep range. He just has to shore up minor footwork issues with his set up to address the problem. Hoyer moves and throws well moving to his left as a right-handed passer, and I think this a very good sign that he'll be able to refine his other issues.

What I like about Hoyer the most is whenever I watched him experience a bad play, he would frequently follow up with a strong play. He didn't play with a great receiving corps and I watched two games where he had a total of 13 drops – 10 of them in one game alone. He demonstrated patience and I liked that he didn't mind throwing the ball out of bounds when he couldn't spot anyone open. He's a reasonably mature player who plays within himself and was able to guide the Spartans to a winning season in a tough Big Ten conference. He also impressed with his performance in the East-West Shrine Game practices. I actually considered listing Hoyer as underrated, but I think he'll be brought a long slower with lower expectations so that makes him a project in my eyes.

Stephen McGee, Texas A&M: McGee was an excellent leader for A&M, the school he wanted to play for since childhood. But the A&M spread option offense is not a great match an aspiring NFL QB. McGee took a lot of punishment and he didn't get the reps under live fire as a drop back passer. Still, McGee has the arm, mobility, and poise to develop in the NFL. In the East-West Shrine Game he showed good accuracy with the deep ball and the ability to make small adjustments to avoid pressure in the pocket. One of the things DraftGuys analysts Cecil Lammey and Sigmund Bloom liked about McGee is his maturity and perspective on his career and the pre-draft process. I think McGee has what it takes to be a professional. Texans head coach Gary Kubiak, a former QB and QB coach, said McGee "[has] a chance to be a very good player." It's a good frame of reference to pay attention to.

Best and Worst By Checklist Category

The Best Quarterbacks By Category	Category	Player	Comments
	Arm Strength	Matt Stafford	All three have excellent arm strength. Stafford has the kind of arm that allows him to make throws that are uncommon for NFL signal callers.
		Rhett Bomar	
		Josh Freeman	
	Accuracy	Nate Davis	Davis has the best accuracy downfield and can thread the needle between defenders. Sanchez gets the edge over Stafford because he throws well moving to either side.
		Mark Sanchez	
	Delivery	Nate Davis	Davis is a pure passer with the quickest release of the bunch and he is very good at delivering accurately on the move with good mechanics.
	Decisions	Matt Stafford	Stafford has some streaky play, but he demonstrated good adjustments at the line of scrimmage before the snap and at this stage of their careers, sees the field better than his peers.
	Ball Handling	Mark Sanchez	USC recruits QBs who possess good ball skills and Sanchez does a really good job executing play fakes of a greater variety than you'll see elsewhere in the college game.
	Pocket Presence	Matt Stafford	Stafford is patience and makes small adjustments in space. Sanchez has good peripheral vision and thinks quickly under pressure. Both slide well in the pocket and are ready to throw the ball as they do so.
Mark Sanchez			
Scrambling	Pat White	White has the speed, agility, and open field vision to be dangerous in the open field, but he passes first and is one of the more accurate downfield throwers on the run in this class.	

The Worst Quarterbacks By Category	Category	Player	Comments
	Arm Strength	Joe Ganz	Ganz has a decent short game, but lacks the arm strength to consistently complete intermediate and long range passes at the NFL level.
	Accuracy	Tom Brandstater	Highly inconsistent all over the field and his accuracy plummets on the move.
	Delivery	Hunter Cantwell	All three need to shorten their delivery and Cantwell and Crane bring the ball down way too low to be effective in the NFL right now.
		Rudy Carpenter	
		Chris Crane	
	Decisions	David Johnson	A lot of players at this stage of their careers stare down receivers, but these two are liabilities throwing the ball in the middle of the field.
		Tom Brandstater	
	Ball Handling	Nate Davis	He's not bad at play fakes, but he had a disturbing trend of fumbling the ball when sacked late in the year.
	Pocket Presence	David Johnson	He tended to drop his eyes in the pocket under pressure and the he lost his confidence as the hits came.
Scrambling	Nate Longshore	He's a big, immobile target in the pocket.	

The Top 20 Quarterback Prospects for Dynasty Leagues

The list below is my top-20 quarterbacks based on film study. I am leaving out players I did not study although some might have made the list if I saw them. The Score column on these rankings is the highest raw checklist score performed on this player. Remember to always draft for value. Just because I think a player is the third-best prospect at his position doesn't mean he's regarded as such by your peers.

In my opinion, the general public places too much emphasis on a quarterback's arm strength and too little on his pocket presence, ball handling skills, and decisions. Obviously, the surrounding talent is a big factor in determining a young quarterback's likelihood for success. Since this publication was written prior to the NFL draft, the rankings are a reflection of players with the greatest chance to make a positive impact with their overall skill set within two to three seasons and how flexible their skill sets are to the widest varieties of offensive systems.

If a player has a high score and a low ranking, it may indicate that he is already close to maximizing his potential. On the other hand, if he has a high ranking and a lower score I believe the player possesses a high ceiling with extra work. The Potential column has three possible labels:

1. **Upside** - The player has significant areas he can improve to maximize his potential but can still perform adequately if he doesn't correct all of his deficiencies.
2. **Maxed** – The player has maximized his potential, which is often the case for players with good techniques but they don't appear to have the ability to get much faster, stronger, or larger.
3. **Boom-Bust** – These players have upside, but based on their current play, aren't likely to be successful unless they to make these improvements.

In any dynasty league setting, I would be comfortable drafting the first five quarterbacks on this list. After that, it depends on the size of the league but I think the top 10 prospects all have potential to be worthwhile fantasy players within a three-year period.

Rank	Name	Height	Weight	Score	Potential	Comments
1	Matthew Stafford	6-2	225	89	Upside	Stafford gets sloppy with his footwork and it creates issues with his accuracy - especially deep. But he has a great arm and is capable of pinpoint accuracy anywhere on the field - even under duress. He also sees the field better than any QB in this class. He was a big-time prospect, who has been a steady riser, which I think lulls some doubters to sleep.
2	Mark Sanchez	6-2	225	86	Upside	Sanchez is a very close second to Stafford. In fact, Sanchez is better than Stafford outside the hash and with the play action game. His stellar supporting cast at USC bullied the competition without much effort, but Sanchez showed pinpoint accuracy and a strong arm. I like how he moves in the pocket. Even with just one year under his belt as a starter I can see why he came out.
3	Nate Davis	6-2	226	93	Boom-Bust	Davis has the best accuracy on intermediate and deep passes of the prospects in his class. He is rarely sacked and he has the quickest release of the group. He also extends the pocket well. He has the skills to be a good starter. His grip, learning disability, and spread system will deflate his draft stock. Unless he drops out of the draft, don't be too concerned. Grab him.

4	Josh Freeman	6-6	250	78	Upside	Freeman might have the most upside of any player in this class. He's tough, has a strong arm, and his pocket presence is good (and getting better). He has the size of Culpepper and the presence of Steve McNair. He is much more passer than runner, but his deep ball and skills manipulating coverage need work.
5	Pat White	6-0	197	80	Boom-Bust	After Nate Davis, White consistently throws the best deep ball in the game and he has an arm of a 6-2, 225-lb guy. He can make those special, high velocity throws, too. He's a risk because NFL teams may fear investing in a future starter with his size. Staying healthy in an NFL pocket and opportunity will be his greatest obstacles. The CFL might be in his future.
6	Rhett Bomar	6-2	225	84	Boom-Bust	If Bomar didn't almost detonate his career before it started, he might have rivaled Stafford and Sanchez. He's capable of pinpoint accuracy anywhere on the field. His greatest blessing/curse is he's the most reckless QB of the class, but his physical skills are top-drawer.
7	Brian Hoyer	6-2	215	80	Upside	Hoyer is a sneaky-good player. There are several QBs this list that will be drafted over him, but he has the arm strength, developing skills to look off coverage, and skill with play fakes and pump fakes. He also has a knack for not getting rattled and he can be aggressive – which you want from a QB.
8	Stephen McGee	6-3	225	72	Upside	His career was not impressive, but the offense he ran was predictable and lacking explosion. He has the arm, the maturity, and the athleticism to be a better pro. I think he has big upside and you can see it when he operates a system that's not the spread option.
9	Willie Tuitama	6-2	234	83	Boom-Bust	Tuitama has tremendous upside. His footwork is what limits his potential to have pinpoint accuracy all over the field. He has good pocket presence, but he has to be more patient with progressions. He was highly touted, but never fulfilled his potential and lacks maturity.
10	Curtis Painter	6-2	225	76	Upside	Painter has the frame, the smarts, and the arm to be an NFL QB. He is somewhat raw as a prospect because of the simpler coverage a spread offense forces. He'll make a roster as a No.3 and develop from there.
11	John Parker Wilson	6-2	219	80	Maxed	Wilson could probably hang as well if not better than the four other guys ahead of him if he were thrust into a line up today. But most of the guys ahead of him have better physical skills to make throws off balance that he can't.
12	Graham Harrell	6-2	223	78	Upside	He is probably the best QB Mike Leach has had at Texas Tech. His arm strength is adequate, but his footwork needs improvement because it inhibits his accuracy past 15 yards. He has upside, but not as much as Stephen McGee or the guys above him.
13	Hunter Cantwell	6-4	236	73	Upside	Calm in the pocket and learns from mistakes, Cantwell has the arm strength, but he winds up on his release and brings the ball too low at the beginning. Generally a one-read and throw guy right now. I think he'll improve but expecting a starter might be stretching it.
14	Tom Brandstater	6-5	220	71	Boom-Bust	He has the size and arm. A lot of folks who buy into the mold-a-QB approach think he flashes pro skills. He may learn adequate coverage-reading skills, but he can't make the pocket-extending throws. Rob Johnson was these things, too.
15	Mike Teel	6-3	230	76	Maxed	Tough, mature college player capable of pinpoint accuracy. The arm strength is ok, but he's limited to the pocket.

16	Chase Daniel	6-0	218	74	Upside	An intriguing player because of his mobility, but like Harrell, he has to improve his mechanics. May need to go the CFL route to advance his development.
17	Drew Willy	6-4	214	76	Upside	Sees the field well, but lacks velocity on the intermediate and deep pass. Needs to improve his technique sliding in the pocket. Upside is there, but questionable how much.
18	Cullen Harper	6-3	225	74	Upside	Good use of pump fakes and play fakes. Arm strength is naturally good, but mechanics limit his range. Has to improve his skills moving to his left and is a liability throwing over the middle.
19	Rudy Carpenter	6-2	218	71	Maxed	Doesn't throw well on the move and needs to fix his wind up, but can be very accurate with time in the pocket.
20	Todd Boeckman	6-4	244	69	Upside	Accurate on the deep ball and moves well in the pocket, but far less effective outside the hash. Upside is limited, but might have enough to stick to a depth chart.

QB Comparisons

One way to sum up a prospect is to compare him to other pros that played his position. Sometimes it's also difficult to be accurate with just one player as a comparison because football players—as with anyone in their careers—have an amalgam of influences. Each prospect has skills reminiscent of multiple players so in this chart I list the players I believe are the best match for each. The order in which I list them is how I rank them (best to worst) on a spectrum of stylistic similarities. The "x" is where I believe the prospect will eventually fall along this spectrum if he fulfills his potential as a pro. The dashes indicate an approximate skill gap between the players in terms of where they fall and a slash indicates these players will likely be the same in skill set.

Rank	Name	Score	Height	Weight	Best Skills	Player Comparison	Comparison Explanation
1	Matthew Stafford	89	6-2	225	Arm strength; Intermediate accuracy; Field vision; Throwing off balance.	John Elway---X-Jay Cutler--Bert Jones	Less mobile than these players, but a gun for an arm and can throw on the move.
2	Mark Sanchez	86	6-2	225	Pocket presence; Play fakes; Arm strength; Accuracy	Steve Young--Boomer Esiason/X-Mark Brunell	Less mobile than these players, but moves fluidly in the pocket and accurate.
3	Nate Davis	93	6-2	226	Deep accuracy; Touch; Release; Arm strength; Impovisation	Brett Favre--Donovan McNabb--X	All three have some mobility and improvisational skills coupled with accuracy deep.
4	Josh Freeman	78	6-6	250	Arm Strength; Pocket presence; Poise	Steve McNair--JaMarcus Russell-X/Daunte Culpepper-	Obviously Culpepper has been better than Russell at this point but it's where I project them.
5	Pat White	80	6-0	197	Deep accuracy; Mobility; Running	Drew Brees---Dave Krieg/X-Jeff Blake	He has a better arm and mobility, but he'll need to refine his skills to match theirs to succeed.
6	Rhett Bomar	84	6-2	225	Arm strength; Mobility; Accuracy	Brett Favre/John Elway-Terry Bradshaw/Roger Staubach---X	He fits along the spectrum of big-armed, aggressive, risk-takers.
7	Brian Hoyer	80	6-2	215	Arm Strength; Poise; Mobility in pocket	Joe Montana--Ken Anderson--Trent Green-X	An efficient decision maker with poise. Tough one to peg.

8	Stephen McGee	72	6-3	225	Arm Strength; Mobility	Steve Young--Boomer Esiason--Mark Brunell-- X	He has a ways to go, but I think this tree of skills is his match if all works out.
9	Willie Tuitama	83	6-2	234	Arm Strength; Pocket presence	Steve McNair---David Garrard--- X	His raw skills are like these two QBs and he can wing it.
10	Curtis Painter	76	6-2	225	Arm strength; Quick decisions; Field vision	Kurt Warner--Trent Green--Jon Kitna-- X	If he learns to manipulate a defense from under center, he can pick a defense apart.
11	John Parker Wilson	80	6-2	219	Deep accuracy; Movement in the pocket	Tom Brady/Peyton Manning--Phil Simms----- X	He's a classic, stand and deliver QB.
12	Graham Harrell	78	6-2	223	Short range accuracy	Warren Moon---Jeff George--- X	He lacks their arm, but he's very effective in an empty backfield set.
13	Hunter Cantwell	73	6-4	236	Arm strength	Troy Aikman---Jim Everett--- X	Big arm with a little mobility.
14	Tom Brandstater	71	6-5	220	Arm strength	Vinny Testaverde--Steve Bartkowski--Kerry Collins--- X	Big arm, with virtually no accuracy on the move.
15	Mike Teel	76	6-3	230	Accuracy	Tom Brady/Peyton Manning--Phil Simms----- X /John Parker Wilson	He and John Parker Wilson are fairly close in ability.
16	Chase Daniel	74	6-0	218	Mobility	Drew Brees---Dave Krieg/Pat White--Jeff Blake-- X	He'll need to read defenses and improve downfield accuracy.
17	Drew Willy	76	6-4	214	Short range accuracy; patience	Brad Johnson---- X	Unless he shows a strong downfield game, this fits.
18	Cullen Harper	74	6-3	225	Short range accuracy; Senses pressure	Warren Moon---Jeff George---Graham Harrell-- X	He's a long way from these guys, but he fits here.
19	Rudy Carpenter	71	6-2	218	Short range accuracy; Deep ball accuracy	Drew Bledsoe--Chris Chandler---- X	Give him time and he can pick a team apart.
20	Todd Boeckman	69	6-4	244	Deep accuracy; Movement in pocket.	Vinny Testaverde--Steve Bartkowski--Kerry Collins--- X	He lacks their arm, but he's a pocket/downfield guy.

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

Accuracy Score:

High completion percentage (>60%) [4pts]:
Deep accuracy [2pts]:
Intermediate accuracy [5pts]:
Short accuracy [5pts]:
Accuracy rolling right [2pts]:
Accuracy rolling left [2pts]:

Arm Strength Score:

Velocity on deep routes [2pts]:
Distance on deep routes (>40 yards) [1pt]:
Velocity on intermediate routes [5pts]:

Delivery Score:

Delivers ball effectively from a variety of platforms [2pts]:
Throws a catchable ball (touch, tight spirals, etc.) [5pts]:
Quick Release [4pts]:
Compact delivery [4pts]:

Decisions Score:

Avoids double coverage [5pts]:
Looks off defenders [3pts]:
Effective use of pump fakes [2pts]:
Distributes ball to multiple receivers [2pts]:
Makes effective adjustments at the line [2pts]:

BHandling Score:

Effective use of play fakes [2pts]:
Handles center exchange consistently [4pts]:
Consistently effective with hand offs [1pt]:
Demonstrates ball security while running [1pt]:
Maintains control of ball when hit [4pts]:
Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [4pts]:

Pocket Presence Score:

Buys time effectively within pocket [7pts]:
Willing to take hit to deliver ball [2pts]:
Senses pass rush [3pts]:
Willing to throw ball away to avoid sacks [2pts]:

Scrambling Ability Score:

Effectively gains yardage when breaking the pocket [2pts]:
Effectively gains yardage when pocket collapses [1pts]:
Capable of breaking big gains as a runner [2pts]:

Durability Score:

Missed fewer than 10% of games [1 pt]:
Productive performer when injured [1 pt]:
No chronic injuries [1pt]:
No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation [5 pts]:

Game Stats

PAtt:
Comp:
Pyds:
PTds:
Ints:
Dropped:
Sacked:
Deflections:
Fumbles:
RAtt:
RYds:
RTds:

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name: Brian Hoyer **Date:** 11/1/2008 **Opponent:** Wisconsin

Overall Strengths:

Good pocket presence. Always looking downfield and can step away from pressure. Throws well while rolling right or left on short routes. Will throw the ball away and shows some ability to look off the coverage. Decent play fakes and pump fakes. He can take a hit and come back to deliver a good pass on the next play. He doesn't appear to get rattled. Hoyer has the raw skills to be a productive quarterback in the NFL, but he'll need to refine those skills for a few years before he can even think to get a serious shot to develop as a starter. What I liked most about Hoyer was his ability to make very good throws under pressure while behind in this game. On the last two drives he made several good throws that were dropped which would have resulted in big plays. He also did a good job all game long of following up a bad play with a very good play. He's one of those players that could surprise 3-5 years into his NFL career, if drafted.

Overall Weaknesses:

Good arm strength, but tends to overthrow the football on intermediate and deep routes. He was better on intermediate routes, especially square ins and seam routes. Still shows the tendency to stare down receivers. He is not a threat to gain yardage downfield as a runner. His footwork isn't bad, but needs to be sharpened so he has good spacing to deliver deep and intermediate throws without missing the target. He's a very conservative quarterback. He doesn't try to extend the play in situations where he has the opportunity to do so. As a result he'll throw balls away for take dump off passes in down and distance situations that would require him to try to make something happen downfield. This could be the result of very conservative coaching, but he'll need to show he can be more aggressive and make things happen at the pro level if he wants a chance to develop in the NFL.

Accuracy:

Hoyer overthrew his open receiver on a streak on a 2nd and 7 with 7:14 in the 1st QTR. The pass had good arc and a nice spiral, but it traveled 45 yards in the air and needed to be about 40 yards. Good accuracy on a roll to the right to hit his WR on a cross in the same direction just short of the first down marker. He hit the WR in stride and this helped the runner get an extra eight yards on the catch. On the next play, he executed a playfake and roll left, but underthrew the ball by 10 yards. Nice timing on a short out in the redzone that should have resulted in an easy touchdown, but the WR dropped the ball as we was running with it across the goal line. Instead, they had to go for a field goal with 8:45 in the half. Nice timing on a slant to his WR for 14 yards, hitting him in stride with 5:00 in the half. On the play action pass with 4:30 in the half, if Hoyer tried to hit the WR on his inside shoulder and with a little less air under the long pass, he would have hit the WR in stride and the result could have been a touchdown. Good job hitting the 41-yard throw with 4:05 in the 3rd QTR. He put too much air under the ball in a situation where less arc and the ball directed more to the inside shoulder could have helped the WR catch the ball on the run and get a much longer gain, if not a score. The WR instead had to slow down just a bit to change the direction of his route and make a leaping grab to come down with the ball. Good timing and decent placement, but not optimal. An accurate post pattern to the endzone 21 yards downfield that bounced off the WR's hands in tight coverage with 3:43 in the 3rd QTR. Good pump fake on a fade route 21-yards downfield that helped the WR get separation and then the CB had to interfere with the WR so it didn't result in a touchdown. Overall he was pretty accurate on outs, swings, and crosser but not NFL-accurate. He didn't always hit the players in stride on some of the drops. The throws were either at knee level, at the shoulders, or slightly behind the receiver. Very catchable balls, but not pinpoint accurate. He had a rough time not overthrowing streaks, corner routes, posts, or deep ins. He led his WR into the safety on a square in. If he threw it lower, the WR could have avoided the hit. The WR should have caught the ball, but this was not a professional quality throw. Good accuracy on a seam route to a wide open TE for 38-yard gain. He hit the TE in stride over his outside shoulder 25 yards downfield. Just overthrew a post corner that could have been any easy touchdown with greater accuracy. The one deep corner route he hit accurately was dropped with 1:00 in the game. But on the next play, he made a perfect throw, dropping the ball over the outside shoulder of his receiver on a deep seam route for :32 yards with :52 seconds left which got them into field possession for the winning field goal.

Arm Strength:

Hoyer's first throw was a swing pass to his RB in the right flat. The RB let the ball bounced off his inside shoulder pad for an incompleton. Although the RB should have caught the ball, the QB should have lead the RB a bit more on the play. Decent accuracy on an out route on 3rd and 13, but the ball was dropped. He definitely has the arm strength. He overthrew his WR on a 2nd and 7 play action pass down the right sideline by about five yards. The ball traveled 45 yards from his hand to the point it hit the field. Nice zip on a curl to the opposite hash for 8 yards with 10:00 in the half. He threw 40-yard pass from the opposite hash to his WR down the right sideline off playaction with 4:30 in the half, but the WR was just a step too far away. Nice zip on a deep in about 20 yards downfield with a little over a minute left.

Delivery:

Hoyer has a habit of patting the ball as he sets his feet just before he begins his release. He has done this twice on two very different types of throws. He has a nice quick release and gets the distances on this throws by generating torque with his hips. He did a good job of setting up in the pocket on this play action where he faced the opposite side of the defense on his drop while throwing from his own end zone. He throws a very nice spiral with decent velocity for a 10-yard gain and a first down with 13:30 in the 3rd QTR. He does have some issues delivering the intermediate and deep passes due the spacing with his feet during his release.

Decisions:

Hoyer seemed hooked on crossing routes. On 3rd and 7 with 12:15 in the half, Hoyer couldn't find anyone open and despite still having time in the pocket he hit his WR on a short cross well behind the first down marker. The team had to punt on the next play. This is the type of play where Hoyer needed to do more to make something happen if he were playing at the pro level. The design of this passing offense is the short passing game. He makes quick decisions and will throw the ball out of bounds if he's in the pocket and no one is open after his first scanning of his routes. This is a very conservative process and something he will need to do differently at the NFL level to be considered more than a back up. Hoyer demonstrated the ability to look downfield then turn to the left and deliver a swing pass to his RB early in the 3rd QTR. Instead of throwing the ball away on a 3rd down, he tried to hit his RB in the flat, but he got his RB ear-holed on the play. Excellent decision to bring the ball back down on a WR screen pass that he saw was well-covered by the secondary on the right side with 6:06 in the 3rd QTR. He then let the play develop a bit more and completed the pass to one of the receivers at the sideline a moment later. He stared down his receiver on an out route on the next play and the ball was nearly picked off by the CB jumping the route. Excellent job looking off the defense and going to a second option, his TE on a seam route with 6:07 in the 4th QTR for a first down and a 15-yard gain. He might have been going this direction all a long, but he manipulated the defense very well. He lost 16 yards on a play in the 4th QTR that took him outside the redzone because he tried to set up a screen and panicked a bit when the RB was covered up a bit. He should have thrown the ball away in this situation. His situational football IQ needs work. He tends to let go of the ball when he needs to hold onto it a bit longer to make a play and when holding onto it could hurt field position, he doesn't throw it away. What I really like about Hoyer is that he seems to follow up a bad decision with a very good play, which shows he's confident. He hit his WR on a deep post with 5:22 in the game, but the WR let it bounce off his hands in tight coverage.

Ball Handling:

His play fake on the long pass that fell incomplete with 7:15 in the half was decent, but not particularly thorough. He could have done a better job extending the ball and lowering his shoulders to sell it. Much better play fake with 1:25 in the 1st QTR when he extended the ball and then rolled left, underthrowing the pass incomplete. Based on the fact he was blindsided for a sack while in the act of delivering what would have been a long throw, Hoyer probably has pretty big hands to maintain possession of the ball. This is a very good physical attribute as a QB, because it will mean he won't have too many ball control issues in bad weather and he won't be as likely to turn the ball over when hit. The ball did fall out of his hand as he was falling to the ground, but he landed on it. Much better job selling the playfake on 1st and 10 with 6:45 in the 3rd QTR. He dipped his shoulders and head into the fake and hid the ball effectively. Good pump fake and throw with 3:40 to his WR on a fade route down the left side.

Pocket Presence:

Nice job to find the open lane to throw at the last second on 3rd and 7 with 7:11 in the 1st QTR. Hoyer had already set to throw the football over the middle and as he was beginning his release, he spotted the defender stunting up the middle with no one blocking him. Hoyer, threw the ball as he leaned away from the defender at the last moment. Although the receiver did not get the first down on the crossing route, Hoyer did a good job of hitting him in the face of pressure. Very nice job moving in the pocket on a 3rd and 16 with :34 in the 1st QTR. The defensive line executed a stunt and the DT got into the QB's face. But the QB side stepped the DT to the inside and immediately looked to the RB. But the RB was covered, so he brought the ball back down, dipped to the right to avoid the pursuit, and then spotted a receiver 10 yards downfield for a near completion in tight coverage. Very good pocket awareness and keeping his eyes downfield while under pressure. In fact, the WR was a victim of a pass interference non-call that would have resulted in a first down. Once again, good pocket presence on a 2nd and 10 play with 9:30 in the half. The pocket collapsed and he was able to break the pocket and get back to the line of scrimmage. He did a textbook job of turning his shoulder away from the front side rush and stepping up in the pocket to deliver a long pass off playaction with 6:12 in the half, but the backside rusher hit him as he was about to throw the ball. He did a great job of hanging onto the ball despite the hit. Good job following through on a long pass as he took a hit on a play pass with 6:45 in the 3rd QTR. He managed to get the ball downfield - actually overthrowing the receiver - which drew an interference call on the play.

Scrambling Ability:

He's quick and decisive moving around the pocket, but he's a pass-first quarterback. He doesn't appear to have impressive speed to get downfield when he breaks the pocket.

Durability:

Character:

Hoyer was on fire on the last two drives in the 4th QTR, hitting receivers in the hands on intermediate and deep routes.

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

Accuracy Score:

High completion percentage (>60%) [4pts]:

Deep accuracy [2pts]:

Intermediate accuracy [5pts]:

Short accuracy [5pts]:

Accuracy rolling right [2pts]:

Accuracy rolling left [2pts]:

Arm Strength Score:

Velocity on deep routes [2pts]:

Distance on deep routes (>40 yards) [1pt]:

Velocity on intermediate routes [5pts]:

Delivery Score:

Delivers ball effectively from a variety of platforms [2pts]:

Throws a catchable ball (touch, tight spirals, etc.) [5pts]:

Quick Release [4pts]:

Compact delivery [4pts]:

Decisions Score:

Avoids double coverage [5pts]:

Looks off defenders [3pts]:

Effective use of pump fakes [2pts]:

Distributes ball to multiple receivers [2pts]:

Makes effective adjustments at the line [2pts]:

BHandling Score:

Effective use of play fakes [2pts]:

Handles center exchange consistently [4pts]:

Consistently effective with hand offs [1pt]:

Demonstrates ball security while running [1pt]:

Maintains control of ball when hit [4pts]

Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [4pts]:

Pocket Presence Score:

Buys time effectively within pocket [7pts]:

Willing to take hit to deliver ball [2pts]:

Senses pass rush [3pts]:

Willing to throw ball away to avoid sacks [2pts]:

Scrambling Ability Score:

Effectively gains yardage when breaking the pocket [2pts]:

Effectively gains yardage when pocket collapses [1pts]:

Capable of breaking big gains as a runner [2pts]:

Durability Score:

Missed fewer than 10% of games [1 pt]:

Productive performer when injured [1 pt]:

No chronic injuries [1pt]:

No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation [5 pts]:

Game Stats

PAtt:

Comp:

Pyds:

PTds:

Ints:

Dropped:

Sacked:

Deflections:

Fumbles:

RAtt:

RYds:

RTds:

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name: Graham Harrell

Date: 11/1/2008

Opponent: Texas

Overall Strengths:

Harrell might be the best pro prospect the Texas Tech program as produced in a while. He moves well in the pocket, has good anticipation, and he's accurate in the deep and intermediate range of the field. He has good play fakes and he can gain yardage breaking the pocket if necessary. He throws well running to his right. He makes good decisions in the pocket and senses the pressure well.

Overall Weaknesses:

Sometimes he's too concerned about hitting the play with good timing and forces the ball across the field to run the play as designed. He does not appear effective throwing while moving to his left. He won't step into throws with pressure in his face. His footwork is sometimes problematic because his drops don't get him enough depth or establish a decent throwing rhythm against a tough pass rush. Sometimes he throws the ball across his body. I'm also wary about the adjustment from this spread the field offense to a more traditional pro system. He'll need work on his drops from center and reading the defense as he does this. I also felt like his throws to the intermediate range of the field were predominantly outside the hash marks. If he can make this transition, he has a future due to his accuracy and arm strength.

Accuracy:

Nice placement of the ball on a seam route 20 yards downfield to his WR with 13:16 in the 1st QTR. He put the ball just behind the WR so he could turn his torso back to the ball and use his back to shield the defender rather than leading him into a potential hit. It was timed well enough that the WR could continue to catch the ball in stride and easily turn up field, which he did for a 28-yard gain. Accurate pass thrown low and away to his slot WR on a circle route between the defenders in zone for four yards on 2nd and 9 in the face of a safety and MLB blitz. Good technique on a 2nd and 5 pass with 9:53 in the 1st QTR. He dropped three steps from the shotgun, looked left, felt the rush from the backside DE and saw it from the front side DE and rolled right. On the roll right he delivered a pass off his back foot that traveled 20 yards downfield to his WR coming back to the ball on the right sideline for a 15-yard catch and a first down. Harrell completed another pass rolling right to his WR Crabtree with 8:59 in the 1st QTR on a 2nd and 11 play. He had his hips turned downfield and released the ball off his backfoot with good velocity. He hit his WR 20 yards downfield along the sideline for a net gain of 15 yards and the first down. Good timing and placement on a back shoulder fade to Crabtree at the first down marker on a 3rd and 10 with 8:08 in the 1st QTR. He threw a ball across his body to the endzone, hitting his WR in the hands, but the ball was dropped on a 3rd and 10 pass with 6:57 in the half. This was also a play where he rolled right to avoid pressure. Great long ball accuracy on a 3rd and 6 pass from the six to hit his receiver on the run and over his shoulder 49 yards from where he released the ball with 3:31 in the 1st QTR. Good timing on a 10-yard cross to the slot receiver with 11:40 in the half. His first scoring pass was an 18-yard corner route thrown from the opposite hash, hitting his WR in stride over the outside shoulder. A perfect throw. Excellent timing on a sideline streak with 14:53 in the game for a gain of 35 yards. Good stop fade on 1st and 10 with :35 left to stop the clock and get within field goal range. Very well-timed for 11-yards. He then threw across the hash on a deep out with excellent timing for a first down to get them on the 28 yardline with :17 left in the game. Very good timing for such a long throw.

Arm Strength:

He showed some velocity throwing the ball off his back foot on a 3rd and 5 completion to his WR for a first down. The pass only traveled 23 yards, but it has some zip on it. On 3rd and 6 from their own six yardline, Harrell completed a 46-yard pass down the left sideline to his WR in single coverage. He threw the ball 2 yards deep in the endzone and the receiver caught it in stride at the 47-yard line: on the money pass that traveled 49 yards in the air.

Delivery:

Harrell executed a 3-step drop from the shotgun on a 3rd and 5 pass he completed to his receiver Crabtree with 13:45 in the 1st QTR. The steps in the drop weren't spaced in the way a pro quarterback would learn how to take a drop and he had a bounced his feet a bit to settle himself into a throwing position. I believe if Harrell made a habit of taking a full three step drop out of the shotgun, he would have avoided getting sacked on 3rd and 4 with 11:32 in the 1st QTR. He just shuffled his feet into a position to throw the ball, which was an equivalent of one large step in a three step drop. If he had more depth, he could have had time to still pull the ball down when the slant didn't come open and then turn and find the WR on the crossing route. At worst, he would have been making the throw with a defender in his face but completed the pass. This is a question of dropback technique from the shotgun of a 3-step crossover step vs. a 2-step drop and I prefer more of a 3-step drop with a crossover step due to good weight distribution and rhythm the QB gets. He also can step up if the DE's get a good angle with him being this deep. On a 2nd and 5 with 9:53 in the half, he took a 3-step drop and got about 9 yards depth in the pocket and this helped him survey the left of the field and still have time to roll right and way from the backside DE and front side Des while throwing off his backfoot to his WR at the right sideline for a first down. Harrell faced a safety blitz with both safeties coming up the middle and breaking through the line on a 3rd and 10 play with 6:54 in the 1st QTR. Harrell took a 3-step drop with three even steps - and still had his weight distributed backwards as he decided to throw the post to his WR. The ball sailed over the WRs head incomplete. I may be wrong, but I believe if Harrell used the cross over technique when dropping back that he would have been able to step into the throw and deliver a strike. His delivery is compact in terms of his arm, but his feed need work and this causes him to lose accuracy on throws under pressure because he doesn't step into them. Most pros use the crossover technique to drop and it allows them to step into their throws. Harrell appeared to have time to step into the throw, but was reticent about getting hit or didn't have a feel for the footwork rhythm to redistribute his weight into the follow through at the point he was standing. He has a 3/4 delivery at times and the release is not as fast as you would like to see - the ball doesn't snap off his arm.

Decisions:

Poor decision on the 2nd and 5 throw with 14:23 in the 1st QTR. The center snapped the ball high and Harrell made a great play to bring the ball under control, but he had to turn away from the line of scrimmage to catch the football. Because he was so concerned about the timing of the screen play, he whirled around to throw the ball without even making sure the receiver was open or taking enough time to deliver an accurate pass. He did set his feet, but he threw the ball so quickly, it was about two yards in front of the receiver and if the Texas CB was just a step earlier, he could have intercepted the pass. The pass fell incomplete. This spread offense gives Harrell the chance to employ a quick two-read or three-read option in some segment of the field. For instance on a 1st and 10 completion to his WR down the seam for 28 yards with 13:16 in the 1st QTR, he had the short option of hitting the RB on a circle route, the slot WR on the seam, or the flanker on a deep in. When the LB opted to cover the RB, the seam route came open. He made a good quick, choice. In the pros, a good man coverage with zone over top would make this offense more difficult to execute. This is very much a quick-strike offense. He did a good job anticipating the safety blitz up the middle with a MLB joining in on 2nd and 9 with 12:16 by dumping the ball low and away to his slot receiver running a circle route for a 4-yard gain. Nice job reading the defense and making the quick checkdown. On the next play, Harrell was sacked for two reasons: first the defensive front was moving around and confusing the offensive line about its pass blocking assignment and the safety was coming up to the line and then retreating, but at a depth that implied he was faking the blitz but at the snap he blitzed. Then, he had a WR coming free on a crossing route from the left, but his first read was to throw the quick slant at the right. He pulled the ball back when he saw the LB with good depth in the middle of the field, and by the time he turned his head to see the WR open on the cross, he had a defender diving past his throwing arm. He had to slide to his left, but the blitz got to his feet and brought him down. He made a very questionable decision with 8:19 in the half when he was waiting for a screen to develop with his RB. The LDE got around the corner as the RB fell down during his release from the pocket. Harrell was so focused on waiting for the RB to get up, he didn't notice the slot WR open on the crossing route and moving to Harrell's right. Harrell tried to throw the ball across his body to the RB with the DE in his chest. First of all, throwing across the field like this is never a good move unless it's a quick developing play. This was a not a quick developing play once the RB fell down and tipped off to the defense that a screen was getting set up. Plus, the moment he saw the DE coming free, the crossing route was open and it was an easier throw. I make what he didn't do sound very easy and it is not. Still, this is what he'll need to see or decide at the NFL level and it only takes 1-2 plays like this per game for a team to lose. Although a not a pass coaches like to see thrown, he made a nice toss across the field from the right sideline to a WR between the hashes inside the endzone. The WR was uncovered and just had to make a over the shoulder catch, which he dropped with 6:57 in 1st QTR on a 2nd and 10 play. Good decision to throw the ball away when the pressure forced him right and he didn't find anyone open with 3:04 in the 1st QTR. On 3rd and 4 with 1:47 in the half, he did not see the DB trailing his WR Morris on crossing route and the DB jumped the route and got his hands on the ball. If not for Morris' ability to steal the ball back, this should have been an interception.

Ball Handling:

Harrell did a good job coming down with a high snap from the shotgun that he tipped into the air and caught a second time with 14:23 in the 1st QTR. Good play fake out of the spread - he put the ball in the RB's belly before dropping back. From their own 3 yardline, the center snapped a low ball in the shotgun that bounced off Harrell's feet. Harrell did a good job fielding the ball from the endzone and hurrying a throw to his WR split to the right to end the play. Harrell executed a pump fake to the right side of the formation after the snap on a 1st and 10 screen play with 11:00 in the half. He then turn back to the left and threw the screen to his RB. Texas wasn't fooled and brought the RB down for a loss. Nice playfake with the empty hand on the first drop from center he had all day with :06 in the 3rd QTR. He hit his WR for a first down on the left side of the field with nice pass with good zip on it.

Pocket Presence:

Harrell did a good job veering to the right of the pocket on a 3rd and 5 completion to his WR Crabtree for a first down with 13:45 in the 1st QTR. He felt the DT getting a push on his LG so he slid to the right hash and threw a pass off his back foot to his WR for a six-yard gain. He did a decent job of sliding to his left away from a defender on a 3rd and 4 safety blitz, but he did not have the time to reset and throw as a second defender wrapped him up for the sack with 11:32 in the 1st QTR. Nice job rolling away from the backside and front side ends on a 2nd and 5 to deliver a 15-yard completion to his WR at the right sideline. He has a good feel for pressure. On a 1st and 10 with 8:23 in the 1st QTR, he rolled away from pressure to his right and eventually threw the ball away. This was the third time in the series he was able to avoid a sack by rolling right. Although he took a hit to try to complete a screen pass with a throw across his body much earlier in the drive, he was unwilling to step into a throw on a safety blitz that would have been a touchdown if he could follow throw and keep the ball down. In this first half, he was very effective at moving around in the pocket. Texas stopped blitzing him as frequently in the 2nd QTR and on 3rd and 14 with 10:12 in the half, Harrell was able to move around in the pocket and look downfield for nine seconds before he released the football. On this play he rolled right after spending about six seconds trying to stay in the pocket and then hit his WR on the comeback just ahead of the DB. He threw this pass on the run and hit the WR 30 yards downfield. The WR caught the ball in stride and turned upfield for just enough to get the first down. The net gain on the play was 14 yards, but the throw covered 30 while on the run. Good velocity on the ball and accuracy on the run. I think it's probably a good bet to say that book on Harrell is to force him to his left. While inside the Texas 10 yardline at the top of the 4th QTR on a 3rd and 10, Harrell tried to throw a quick slant to Crabtree that he missed the play before, but this time Texas bracketed covered on the WR. The

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name: Graham Harrell

Date: 11/1/2008

Opponent: Texas

pass rush forced Harrell to his left and he was clearly uncomfortable moving in that direction. He tried to spin away but was grabbed by the jersey and taken down. He is pretty quick and slippery in the pocket, except when forced to his left. He also seems to have difficulty throwing while moving that direction. He did a good job ducking under a defender while trying to move back to the right, but was still tripped up for a 13-yard loss. He did a good job sliding a couple of steps to his left with 6:01 in the game and delivering a streak route to his WR in the back of the endzone, but DB tipped the ball. There could have been a bit more loft on the ball. The next play, he led his WR on a cross just a foot too far on a 2nd and long. On the next play he overthrew a streak right into the chest of of the DB. This should have been intercepted. With :17 left he broke the pocket towards the left and threw a short pass to his WR in the flat but it bounced off his hands and was nearly intercepted with :08 remaining. The winning play was a deep pass of 28 yards to Crabtree on the sideline on a stop fade at the 6.

According to the commentary of Krk Herbstreit on the telecast, Mac Brown said Harrell didn't come to Texas because he didn't have a desire to run with the football when the opportunity presented itself. On 3rd and 2, Harrell faked an inside handoff from the spread and sprinted around the left corner for a six yard gain and a first down before sliding to the ground. He has the arm strength to complete a pass that travels 30 yards in the air while on the run to his receiver in stride. The DB nearly got to the pass, but the ball got there quick enough.

Scrambling Ability:

Durability:

Character:

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

Accuracy Score:

High completion percentage (>60%) [4pts]:

Deep accuracy [2pts]:

Intermediate accuracy [5pts]:

Short accuracy [5pts]:

Accuracy rolling right [2pts]:

Accuracy rolling left [2pts]:

Arm Strength Score:

Velocity on deep routes [2pts]:

Distance on deep routes (>40 yards) [1pt]:

Velocity on intermediate routes [5pts]:

Delivery Score:

Delivers ball effectively from a variety of platforms [2pts]:

Throws a catchable ball (touch, tight spirals, etc.) [5pts]:

Quick Release [4pts]:

Compact delivery [4pts]:

Decisions Score:

Avoids double coverage [5pts]:

Looks off defenders [3pts]:

Effective use of pump fakes [2pts]:

Distributes ball to multiple receivers [2pts]:

Makes effective adjustments at the line [2pts]:

BHandling Score:

Effective use of play fakes [2pts]:

Handles center exchange consistently [4pts]:

Consistently effective with hand offs [1pt]:

Demonstrates ball security while running [1pt]:

Maintains control of ball when hit [4pts]

Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [4pts]:

Pocket Presence Score:

Buys time effectively within pocket [7pts]:

Willing to take hit to deliver ball [2pts]:

Senses pass rush [3pts]:

Willing to throw ball away to avoid sacks [2pts]:

Scrambling Ability Score:

Effectively gains yardage when breaking the pocket [2pts]:

Effectively gains yardage when pocket collapses [1pts]:

Capable of breaking big gains as a runner [2pts]:

Durability Score:

Missed fewer than 10% of games [1 pt]:

Productive performer when injured [1 pt]:

No chronic injuries [1pt]:

No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation [5 pts]:

Game Stats

PAtt:

Comp:

Pyds:

PTds:

Ints:

Dropped:

Sacked:

Deflections:

Fumbles:

RAtt:

RYds:

RTds:

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name: Pat White

Date: 12/27/2008

Opponent: UNC

Overall Strengths:

Terrific display of deep ball throwing in this game. He showed an NFL arm when it came to throwing the deep out and the post pattern. He showed the accuracy to loft the ball over coverage or hit players in stride on deep passes. White was poised in the pocket and demonstrated the ability to slide away from defenders while keeping his eyes down field. He showed he knew how to set his feet after sliding and make accurate throws. He even showed some skills at looking off the safety on deep throws. He also demonstrated an understanding of when to break the pocket and run for extra yardage. When you pair this with consistent accuracy in the short game, I don't see why an NFL team really wants to make him a receiver other than his limited size and abundant speed and agility. He throws the ball well moving to his left. White could potentially be a Jeff Garcia-like player with a stronger arm.

Overall Weaknesses:

He tends to stare down receivers. He may look in one direction quickly before going back to looking for his primary receiver, but he locks onto his intended targets for too long before releasing the ball. He doesn't throw footballs with a lot of touch. He needs to arc the ball a little better against shallow coverage in front of his targets. He doesn't run with good pad level and with his size and speed/agility he could get hurt trying to run in the NFL. Sometimes his throws down come out of his hands with a tight spiral. He does a good job keeping his feet in front of him, but I didn't see him make any off balanced throws today. I believe White will be a victim of size prejudice as an NFL QB prospect and not get much of a chance in the NFL until he becomes too good at another level of pro football to not give him a shot.

Accuracy:

White was a little high with his throw on a smash screen to his WR on 1st and 10 with 11:59 in the 1st QTR, but the WR managed to catch the ball over his head with his hands and gain three yards on the play. Excellent timing on a 3rd and 11 pass for 22 yards on a deep out with 10:40 in the 1st QTR. He hit the WR in stride and with enough velocity and touch to get it over the defenders underneath the WR in the flat on his back shoulder. He led the slot WR on a screen pass and the WR caught the ball at helmet level with his hands. Great accuracy on a deep seam route that traveled from the 50 to the two yard line and the WR caught in stride with one hand over his outside shoulder with a CB at his back for the score. It was as good of a deep throw as you'll see in football. He is very practiced at throwing swing routes to RBs and WRs in the short range of the field. He leads the in stride or gets the ball to their back shoulder when there's tighter coverage. Great accuracy on a 35-yard touchdown with a throw that covered 40 yards in the air after sliding past pressure in the pocket. He hit the WR in stride on the post. Good job keeping his feet under him and squaring his body to the target on a pass on the run to his left with 7:05 in the half. The ball traveled 25 yards in the air down the left flat, but bounced off the hands of his receiver. It was the first incomplete pass of the game. Very accurate with good zip on a 25-yard pass to his WR in the left flat in tight coverage, but the ball bounced off the outside shoulder of the WR as the CB was hitting him on the inside shoulder. He led his RB too far on a roll left with 1:09 in the half. He could have taken a little off the ball on this throw. Good accuracy on a 20-yard out in tight coverage off a play fake from under center with 13:07 in the 3rd QTR. The ball was on-time and on the back shoulder of the defender so the defender coming from the outside couldn't jump the route. He overthrew his WR on a post on 1st and 10 with 3:45 in the 3rd QTR because the back of his guard was about to hit him during his release of the ball. He hit his receiver on a deep in route 33 yards down field against a deep zone on 1st and 10 with 8:14 in the game. Good zip on the pass for a 40-yard gain.

Arm Strength:

Excellent velocity on a deep out to his WR at the 25 yard line for a pass that traveled 30 yards in the air. This was an NFL quality throw and he got the ball over two defenders five yards under the receiver with 10:40 in the 1st QTR on 3rd and 11. He definitely has the arm strength. He threw a ball on a line to his WR in stride that covered 48 yards. On the next series he threw a ball 40 yards on a rope to his WR in stride on a post down the right hash with 2:36 in the 1st QTR. Good zip on a 1st and 13 hitch to his slot WR at the left hash in tight coverage for a four-yard gain. He got the ball to the WR just before the DB hit the receiver with 5:20 in the half.

Delivery:

His first pass was a smash screen on 1st and 10 with 11:59 in the 1st QTR. His three-step drop from the shotgun was decent and he set up well with the ball high against his chest before he began his delivery. The left-hander demonstrated a compact, over the shoulder delivery to the WR in stride. His 35-yard scoring pass was thrown with an end over end quality rather than a perfect spiral, but it was accurate, on-time and with good velocity. His passes are accurate and on-time, but the ball is frequently not a perfect spiral. He lacks touch on some shorter throws where a little more loft and finesse would make it easier to catch. His interception was a result of a corner fade that he threw without any loft and the DB jumped the route for the turnover with :55 in the half on a 3rd and 8 play inside the UNC 15 yard line. Good throw to the flat while rolling right and drifting away from pressure. He hit his WR in the hands for a four-yard gain on 1st down to the 10 yard line with 10:40 in the 3rd QTR.

Decisions:

On his 44-yard touchdown strike, he did a good job of looking to his left before coming back to the right and making the throw that covered 48 yards to the WR in stride. On 3rd and 5, he dropped from the shotgun, looked left and then back to the middle of the field before hitting his WR on a cross. The WR had the first down, but dipped behind the marker to get extra yards and was brought down just shy of the marker. While White will go through a progression or two, he tends to look quickly in one direction and then turn and stare down the intended target a little longer before he throws the ball and this gives the defense more time to adjust. He needs to work on staring down the decoy target and then turning back and quickly throwing to the intended target. If he learns to do this more often, he becomes a dangerous QB. He made two good pre snap adjustments at the LOS to change the play and get receivers routes adjusted. He caught a CB blitz off the right side and changed the play so he could check down immediately to a receiver in the left flat for a short gain and a first down with 4:11 in the half. Another excellent pump fake on a 3rd and 4 scramble up the middle for eight yards with 1:32 in the half. His quick flash of the ball froze the defense before he tucked it and ran. He stared down his WR in the corner of the end zone on 3rd and 8 with :52 in the half and it resulted in an INT. He saw the CB showing blitz off the right side before the snap on a 2nd and 5 play, but he still tried to freeze him with a pump fake before rolling to his left. He was run down for a sack and loss of nine yards on the play with 12:05 in the 3rd QTR. On 3rd and 13 with 11:23 in the 3rd QTR, he surveyed the right side of the field, looked to his left hash and then back to the right to hit his TE down the seam of the right hash over the shoulder for a 24-yard gain. The pass covered 21 yards, hitting the receiver in stride with a safety bearing down. Great set up of a safety by throwing a 2nd and 1 pump fake to the left flat and then unfurling a bullet in the middle of the endzone to his WR on a post between two defenders for a 20-yard score to take the lead.

Ball Handling:

Good ball fake to the runner up the middle before taking the option around right end for a seven-yard gain and a first down with 12:22 in the 1st QTR. He did a good job switching the ball from his outside arm to his inside arm when the LB coming from the outside got within range to hit him. Good job handling an errant snap from the shotgun with 11:22 in the 1st QTR by tipping the ball and then catching it to prevent it from sailing over his head. On a run around right end with 3:30 in the 1st QTR on 3rd down, he carried the ball under his left arm with pursuit coming to that side. He is adept at play fakes in this offense because there is a lot of action to RBs and WRs to use misdirection with all these athletes. He extends the ball well and finishes fakes reasonably well in the play action game. Good job carrying the ball high and tight with his left arm on a draw for eight yards on 3rd and 4 with 1:32 in the half. Good job extending the ball on a 1st and 10 play fake with 13:09 in the 3rd QTR.

Pocket Presence:

White showed poise on a 2nd and 7 botched snap from the shotgun that White had to tip into the air and then leap to catch it in order to prevent it from sailing behind him, but that poise disappeared after catching the pass. He reacted too quickly and tried to break a well-protected pocket. Once he saw he had nothing up the middle he was tackled by pursuit as he attempted to bounce it outside. If he simply stayed in the pocket and surveyed the field, he might have made a more productive play than get sacked. On a 3rd and 10 pass play with 6:11 in the 1st QTR from a four-WR spread set, White did a good job sliding out of the pocket to his left after feeling back side pressure. He rolled left and made a nice pump fake a few yards behind the LOS to freeze the defender five yards past the LOS in the flat at the left hash. This allowed him to bend the run to the left sideline for a 16-yard gain and a first down. His 35-yard score was a picture perfect play from the pocket with 2:36 in the 1st QTR. He executed a quick play fake from the shotgun spread, dropped back, slid forward to avoid the DT coming free up the middle and to his left and planted his feet at the right hash to deliver a strike 40 yards down field, on a rope, to his WR running a post. He even shifted his shoulder away from the rush before resetting to throw. It was exactly the same move analysts praised Redskin head coach and QB coach Jim Zorn for teaching Jason Campbell to execute and this was after Campbell spent three years in the league. He did a nice job of breaking the pocket to the left hash on a 1st and 10 pass from the spread with 7:05 in the half. Good job sliding underneath pressure and rolling left to his WR in the flat on 3rd and 5 with 13:29 in the 3rd QTR. The WR caught the ball eight yards past the LOS and gained a total of 15 on the play. He did throw a ball away to avoid a sack with 3:21 in the 3rd QTR while rolling left on 4th and 4. Ironically, if he looked closer downfield, he had an open man. He nearly eluded the blitz off the edge but slipped after slipping away from a DL's grasp with 3:23 in the game on 3rd and 5.

Scrambling Ability:

His first play was a designed run to right end from a spread look with four-WR (three on the left and one on the right) and he showed the vision to find a crease to cut back to the inside, but he was so upright with his running style between the tackles that he was knocked backwards upon contact. He only gained two yards on a run that a well-trained RB would gain at least twice the amount because of good pad level. Good pump fake to freeze the zone defender at the left hash in the flat on 3rd and 10 with 6:09 in the 1st QTR. He was able to beat the DB to the sideline with his speed to get the first down and nearly cut inside a defender at the sideline, but his plant foot went out of bounds after a 16-yard gain. On 3rd and 4 with 3:30 in the 1st QTR, he gained five yards around right end for the first down by being patient behind his pulling center. Once again, he ran very upright. Converting White to a running back would be a mistake. A receiver is an understandable possibility, but I do believe he's best-served trying to be a quarterback. He tried to power through a defender at the second level through a crease on 2nd and 8, but only gained three yards and his pad level was too high to get extra yards. He did a good job getting low and sliding forward on an eight-yard run during 3rd and 4 with 1:32 in the half. His legs tend to go dead on contact as a runner. He showed this on a run up the middle for a yard to open the second half. He's not good at breaking the pocket up the middle. Most of his positive gains or bigger plays came from getting to the perimeter. He was sacked on 4th and 1 when a pick play didn't work as he rolled left and his WR didn't come open. He broke a tackle attempt at his waist by a pursuing defender for a nine-yard gain on the option with 7:46 in the game. He is quick enough to run out of tackles and his change of direction with an angular running style tends to help him bounce off hits at times.

Durability:

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

Accuracy Score:

High completion percentage (>60%) [4pts]:
Deep accuracy [2pts]:
Intermediate accuracy [5pts]:
Short accuracy [5pts]:
Accuracy rolling right [2pts]:
Accuracy rolling left [2pts]:

Arm Strength Score:

Velocity on deep routes [2pts]:
Distance on deep routes (>40 yards) [1pt]:
Velocity on intermediate routes [5pts]:

Delivery Score:

Delivers ball effectively from a variety of platforms [2pts]:
Throws a catchable ball (touch, tight spirals, etc.) [5pts]:
Quick Release [4pts]:
Compact delivery [4pts]:

Decisions Score:

Avoids double coverage [5pts]:
Looks off defenders [3pts]:
Effective use of pump fakes [2pts]:
Distributes ball to multiple receivers [2pts]:
Makes effective adjustments at the line [2pts]:

BHandling Score:

Effective use of play fakes [2pts]:
Handles center exchange consistently [4pts]:
Consistently effective with hand offs [1pt]:
Demonstrates ball security while running [1pt]:
Maintains control of ball when hit [4pts]:
Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [4pts]:

Pocket Presence Score:

Buys time effectively within pocket [7pts]:
Willing to take hit to deliver ball [2pts]:
Senses pass rush [3pts]:
Willing to throw ball away to avoid sacks [2pts]:

Scrambling Ability Score:

Effectively gains yardage when breaking the pocket [2pts]:
Effectively gains yardage when pocket collapses [1pts]:
Capable of breaking big gains as a runner [2pts]:

Durability Score:

Missed fewer than 10% of games [1 pt]:
Productive performer when injured [1 pt]:
No chronic injuries [1pt]:
No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation [5 pts]:

Game Stats

PAtt:
Comp:
Pyds:
PTds:
Ints:
Dropped:
Sacked:
Deflections:
Fumbles:
RAtt:
RYds:
RTds:

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name:

Willie Tuitama

Date:

12/20/2008

Opponent:

BYU

Overall Strengths:

Excellent arm strength. He can throw the ball 50-55 yards in the air. He sees the field well and looks off defenders. He shows patience in the pocket and isn't rattled by a crowded pocket due to pressure; he'll stand in and make the throw. He executes thorough play fakes and strong pump fakes. He goes through his progressions. I really like how he slides in the pocket. He makes little steps away from the pressure he feels. I think Tuitama is a player with NFL upside. He has the arm, the pocket presence, the ability to see the field and manipulate coverage, and he is accurate anywhere on the field with the exception of some noted mechanical issues with his stride that can be corrected. I don't hear much about him as a QB prospect because of his off-field issues, but I think he's an underrated player who has starter potential if he can make better off-field decision.

Overall Weaknesses:

Tuitama has some inconsistencies with the deep pass. He has the tendency to over stride on deep balls which causes the ball to sail too high. He did this on deep throws or passes where he had to throw the ball from the opposite hash in a hurry. Basically his throwing mechanics deteriorate when he feels he has to put extra mustard or distance on the ball, which is a correctable problem. He also demonstrated the ability to correct this tendency within the game when he threw a perfect pass 54 yards downfield to his receiver in stride but it was dropped and then followed up with a 37-yard score on a ball he threw over 50 yards in the air. He sometimes makes reckless decisions such as throwing the ball across his body into double coverage. I did not see him have to break the pocket or move and throw to his left in this game. He has two alcohol-related arrests while in college.

Accuracy:

His first pass was from their own nine yard line with 9:08 in the 1st QTR. He threw a crossing route to his WR coming from the right and placed the ball on his back shoulder in anticipation of the LB coming from the other side to lay a hit. The ball bounced out of the WR's hands before the hit even came. On the next play, he showed excellent timing on a slant by placing the ball on the WR's back shoulder just as the receiver made his break. The ball was thrown just before the LB in zone could get his drop to disrupt the passing lane. On the play after that, Tuitama hit his slot receiver on a short hitch on the left hash on the WR's back shoulder that faced away from the oncoming LB about a foot away. Good timing and placement of the ball. He overthrew the deep out at the right sideline on 2nd and 10 with 7:00 in the 1st QTR. He put a little too much on the ball trying to zip it from the opposite hash and the ball flew on him. On the next play he hit his WR on a seam route of 17 yards in stride that resulted in a 71-yard play to the one yard line. Tuitama overthrew a seam route by about 10 yards on 1st and 10 with 3:59 in the 1st QTR. Good timing on an out route to his WR near the first down marker with two defenders within a yard of the receiver with 9:34 in the half. Nice placement of the ball on two seam passes in the 3rd QTR and the second one resulted in a 24-yard score. He threw the ball high and to the outside shoulder so the FB could turn away from the safety to make the play on each. Pinpoint accuracy on a short pass to his TE to kick off a drive with 9:47 in the game. He hit the TE on the outside shoulder away from the tight coverage.

Arm Strength:

Excellent velocity on the seam route for 71-yards that traveled about 25 yards from QB to WR in stride before the WR took it the rest of the way. He launched a deep pass down the left sideline 54 yards in the air on 2nd and 1 with 2:14 in the 1st QTR, but the ball was overthrown and too far to the receiver's right (See delivery). He threw a post pattern 56 yards in the air with excellent accuracy with 6:00 in the half, but the receiver dropped the ball. He also threw a 37-yard score to his WR on a post that traveled 50 yards in the air and it was clearly he wasn't overstriding on this throw. I think he's consciously aware that he tends to overstride on some balls and corrected it within the game.

Delivery:

Tuitama has a quick release and compact delivery, except when he tries to muscle the ball from a distance, such as the opposite hash on a deep out with 7:00 in the 1st QTR. He delivered the ball with a bigger wind up to his release and the ball sailed on him. On the seam route he overthrew with 4:00 in the 1st QTR he executed a five-step drop from center before releasing the ball. It appeared his feet were a little too wide apart on his release; he overstrides with his feet when releasing the deep ball which forces the ball to be too high. On the next pass on 3rd and 6, he didn't overstride at all, delivering a perfect 10-yard hitch to his WR for the first down. But on 2nd and 1 with 2:15 in the 1st QTR, he unleashed a 54-yard pass to the left but the ball was overthrown by about 10 yards and too wide: this is a common symptom of overstriding in the release of the football. He only seems to do it on deep patterns. Tuitama threw a very accurate post to his WR on a 1st and 5 with 6:00 left, but the WR dropped it. The ball was placed over his inside shoulder and led him well enough to catch it in stride but he let it bounce off his arm. The delivery of this ball was noticeably different because he didn't overstride. The first two throws where he took that first step too far, you could see his front knee bending at too great an angle like he was walking up a staircase. This time his knee was only slightly bent and this impacted his release because he had more control of how much loft he put on the ball so the receiver could run under it. His footwork on a short drop from the shotgun seemed muddled and it caused him to overstride on a sideline route to his TE which he overthrew despite the TE having a 3-4 step advantage over the DB.

Decisions:

Good patience on 3rd and 8 on what looked like a simple 10-yard hitch to his WR with 3:14 in the QTR. But the BYU defense played a zone underneath and Tuitama had to show the patience to wait for the LB dropping in zone to get out of the passing lane and follow the RB swinging out of the backfield to the sideline so he could complete the deeper hitch route for the first down. Although it was a pair of short routes on the same side of the field, the QB did a nice job of looking to the receiver closest to the sideline to draw the zone coverage away from the other receiver in the flat before he threw the ball to that WR in the flat. This opened enough space for his target to cut the play further inside and gain nearly nine yards on a 1st and 10 with :27 in the 1st QTR. Nice check-down to the RB in the flat after looking downfield to the same side long enough to see how the route developed and then turned to the flat and delivering the swing pass and hitting the RB on his back shoulder for a 13-yard gain to the BYU 12 yardline. Good pump fake left before attempting a crossing route that was broken up and the pass was high. Very believable action on the fake with 9:41 in the half. On 1st and 10 with 1:53 in the half, he rolled right away from pressure but tried to throw a short pass across his body and over a MLB in zone to a receiver in the middle of the field, which was deflected. Very good job surveying the field on a 2nd and 9 pass with :58 in the half where the BYU defense dropped eight defenders. He looked left before turning to the middle and throwing the crossing route after he drew the MLB in zone to the left side of the field. Good decision on 3rd and goal from the 6 in a shotgun set with three WRs on the left and one on the right to call a time out when he saw something with the defense before the snap that he didn't like. When play began again, he ran the ball into the end zone for a six-yard score to take a three-score lead.

Ball Handling:

Really sharp play fake and throw downfield with 6:06 in the half on a 1st and 5 play. He sold the fake really well by placing the ball near the RB's stomach and bending to mimic the run action midway through his drop. He couldn't field a shotgun snap that was at shin level and to his left that bounced off his foot and was recovered by BYU. His second TD was a playfake up the middle and throw to the FB down the seam for a 24-yard gain. They ran this play to perfect on the first play of the same drive for 18 yards. The ball fake wasn't bad at all bending and turning his head to the HB and extending the ball. He really needs to tuck the ball when he breaks the pocket. On his six-yard scoring run he held the ball away from his body in his inside hand.

Pocket Presence:

Good patience standing in the pocket on 3rd and 10 with the edges closing in as he delivered a 17-yard seam route to his WR in stride for a 71-yard gain to the one yard line with 6:54 in the 1st QTR. On 1st and 10 with 1:53 in the half he felt pressure up the middle as he dropped back and did a good job of rolling right. Good patience on 2nd and 7 from the 37 yard line with 7:14 in the 3rd QTR to drop back from the shotgun and as he felt pressure, slid to his right, pump faked, and then spotted a blown coverage. He threw a ball about 50 yards in the air to his WR streaking towards the post with no DB within 10 yards of him. He ran under a perfectly thrown deep pass for the score. The pump fake was actually a double move on a slower developing play, which demonstrates good patience to make the double move work with pressure forcing him to the outside. Two plays after he was sacked on 3rd and 16 with 12:48 left he took a snap from the shotgun and did a really fine job of sliding in the pocket until his TE got oen down the left has on a deep cross that started from the right side of the field. He hit the receiver in the hands on a ball thrown hard about 25 yards downfield, but the TE couldn't hang onto it. Great pocket presence on a play action fake where he turned his shoulders away from the LB off the frontside edge, stepped up, reset his feet and delivered a ball 23 yards to his WR on the left sideline with 8:45 in the game.

Scrambling Ability:

Tuitama was sacked on a 1st down pass off a play fake to the RB who missed the LB on the edge that sacked the QB with 14:13 in the game. He really had little chance because the block was missed. He showed good speed to the left end on a 3rd and goal pass play from a four-WR set with three on the left side and one on the right. The BYU defense got a good rush and he didn't see what he liked in coverage with a lot of room underneath to run. He took off around left end at the 10 yard line and beat the LBs in pursuit to the endzone. Decent speed, but not the kind to be a consistent big play threat as a runner.

Durability:

Character:

He had two alcohol-related arrests during his career.

Sample Running Back Checklists and Profiles

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Power Score :

Leg power, drives through arm tackles [1pt]:

Effective stiff arm [1pt]:

Initiates contact, runs behind pads, and punishes defenders [1pt]:

Good body lean/Finishes runs [3pts]:

Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [7pts]:

Balance Score :

High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:

Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:

Maintains balance when it from an indirect angle [7pts]:

BHandling Score :

Carries ball with either hand [1pt]:

Consistently handles QB/RB exchanges [3pts]:

Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:

Maintains control of ball when hit [7pts]:

Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:

Speed Score :

Effective short area burst [7pts]:

Separates from 1st and 2nd wave of defenders [1pt]:

Effective outside runner [3pts]:

Vision Score:

Makes good decisions with where to run [7pts]:

Patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [3pts]:

Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [1pt]:

Elusiveness Score :

Effective lower body jukes while on the run [3pts]:

Effective upper body jukes while on the run [1pt]:

Avoids direct shots [7pts]:

Effective stop-start movements [2pts]:

Effective lateral movement [3pts]:

Blocking Score :

Correct diagnosis of blocking assignments [1pt]:

Effort with assignments [3pts]:

Willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [1pt]:

Receiving and Routes Score :

Consistently makes receptions on catchable balls [3 pts]:

Makes difficult catch [1pt]:

Catches ball effectively with back to the quarterback [1pt]:

Consistently catches ball with hands and without juggling [1pt]:

Consistent target in the passing game [3pts]:

Runs precise routes [1pt]:

Durability Score :

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play [1pt]:

Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:

No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:

No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation [7 pts]:

Overall Score:

Game Stats

Attempts:

Rush Yds:

1st Downs:

Rush Tds:

Target:

Rec:

Rec Yds:

Rec Tds:

Fumbles:

Broken Tackles:

BLKs Assigned:

BLKs Made:

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Profile

Name: Arian Foster

Date: 9/1/2008

Opponent: UCLA

Overall Strengths:

Foster could a highly underrated back in this draft. He's a versatile player for several reasons. As a receiver, Foster catches the ball very well with his hands and adjusts well to errant throws. He is generally a strong pass blocker with patience to wait for his opponent to establish position before aggressively engaging which isn't something I see very often from college backs. As a runner, he's patient, varies his step size to allow blocks to develop, and has a variety of stutter moves, lateral cuts, and jump cuts for a big back to bounce runs to an open lane in a zone scheme. He has a solid stiff arm that neutralizes DBs in the open field and he has enough balance to gain yardage after contact against smaller defenders. He has an adequate burst and a gliding running style. He's a little faster than he appears. Foster, a philosophy major, is a bright student. One of the most prolific runners in UT history, I think Foster could start for a variety of NFL teams if he corrects some minor flaws to his game, stays healthy, and takes the right approach to pro sports. The problem is he's yet to correct hid pad level and ball carrying issues although he's been advised of it since he was a freshman.

Overall Weaknesses:

Foster runs with too high of a pad level in traffic. He has a decent body lean to end runs between the tackles, but he doesn't begin runs this way. This creates situations where defenders can get into his chest and either drive Foster backwards or strip the ball away. Foster also carries the ball too far from his body when running in the open field. His ball carrying arm will swing too much, exposing the ball to trailing defenders. He's quick, but lacks great speed for a runner. He's big, but I didn't see him punish any one as a runner. He is sometimes lacks decisiveness on plays and his patience becomes a curse more than a blessing. He appears to be more finesse than physical for a runner of his size. If he corrects the pad level and ball protection, he'll at least be a productive contributor to an NFL depth chart. He's been nicked up with various injuries that has limited his time in games. I have a feeling he lacks the commitment to be the player he could be.

Power:

On a one-yard gain with 8:55 in the 1st QTR, Foster ran through a hit to his legs two yards behind the LOS and was able to get into the line and fall forward for postive yardage. Good stiff arm on the DB at the 50 yard line that lasted for the final five yards of his 22-yard run with 2:03 in the half. He got his hand in the face of the DB and warded off a tackle until the RB reached the sideline to stop the clock. He finished a nin-yard run with 12:55 in the QTR by planting a stiff arm to the helmet of the CB about four yards down field and maintaining the stiff arm until he got to the marker and out of bounds. Good stiff arm to shove a DB away at the right sideline about 35 yards into a run for a 41-yard gain.

Ball Handling:

Foster carried the ball in the right flat with his right arm on a screen pass for a nine-yard gain with 14:51 in the 1st QTR. On the seven-yard gain with 9:31 in the 1st QTR, he carried the ball up the left hash with his left arm. On the run he bounced to the left side with 7:49 in the 1st QTR, he carried the ball under his left arm. He needs to keep his elbow close to his body as he runs with the football. Right now, he swings his arms too much and this creates an opening to the ball that an LB can exploit. He did a very good job of keeping the ball under his ball carrying arm on sweeps to the right or left. On a 1st and goal run with 10:19 in the 3rd QTR, Foster ran into the hole with his pad level too high and was stood up at the LOS and stripped of the football. UCLA recovered the fumble on the play. Foster needs to hold the ball tighter, but he also needs to keep his pads low when he enters a rushing lane so he can prevent defenders from getting into his chest. It's not just alright to run with low pad level when anticipating a hit. It's best to do it at all times.

Eisiveness:

Good juke move in the right flat to dip inside of the the defender shooting behind the LOS just after Foster turned upfield on a screen pass with 14:51 in the 1st QTR. He then ran out of DT's attempt to wrap his legs about four yards downfield and nearly hopped to the outside of a safety eight yards downfield for a nine-yard gain on the reception/run. Excellent juke move at the LOS to dip inside of the safety shooting through the LOS in run support off LG. Foster saw the safety coming through and began the move with a jump cut followed by a dip to the right. He burst through the open lane for a seven-yard gain with 9:27 in the 1st QTR on a 1st and 10. Probably the one of the more fluid, flashier moves I've seen from a runner all year. Good stutter step and bounce to left end on a five yard run from a three WR set on 2nd and 10 with 7:49 in the 1st QTR. Foster made a good move underneath the blocker occupying the OLB's penetration into the backfield on a 2nd and 10 run with 4:30 in the 1st QTR, but the LB was able to wrap him a yard behind the LOS. Foster nearly ran out of the tackle but was dropped after a gain of a yard. Nice plant and cut to the inside of an LB getting blocked behind the LOS on a 3rd and 9 screen pass with 4:51 in the half. He made a good juke to the outside by planting his feet at the LOS and leaning just a bit to the inside before bouncing through the crease off LG to get to the left flat for a 22-yard gain with 2:01 in the half. A very nifty and subtle, stutter move while running full speed down the right hash on a 2nd and 5 run for 41 yards with 11:55 in the 3rd QTR. Foster made a short move to the outside and then dipped inside of the safety, making the defender miss wildly about 20 yards downfield. He then turned his hips to the right flat behind his QB and gained another 15 yards. He then stopped and started back to the inside to break the wrap up of a DB at the sideline and keep his feet for another five to six yards on the play. On 1st and 10 with 3:12 in the game, he gained five yards around left end by turning his hips to the outside with a give-a-leg-take-a-leg juke on the CB at the LOS to get the corner for a five-yard gain.

Balance:

Foster dipped from the sideline to the inside at the end of a 41-yard run to avoid a DB's wrap. He nearly fell, but did a good job of planting his free arm into the gound and staying on his feet for another six yards with 11:49 in the 3rd QTR.

Speed:

He demonstrated a pretty good burst in the flat on a nine-yard screen with 14:51 in the 1st QTR. Foster looked very quick to take a run intended to go up the middle and bounce it around left end for a five-yard gain with 7:49 in the 1st QTR on 2nd and 10 from a three WR set. He appears to have quick feet. On a 1st and 10 he didn't have any room up the middle and there was good containment to the outside, so Foster made a quick dip from up the middle to RG and lowered his shoulders into the pile to gain two yards on the play. He reminds me a lot of Eddie George because of his size, his upright style, and his stride. On a 1st and 10 toss sweep to right end, Foster easily got the corner with his speed and hurdled the DB shooting through for his legs in the right flat for a gain of seven yards with 13:47 in the 3rd QTR. Foster showed enough of a burst to get past the OLB through a run off RG from the spread for a 41-yard gain with 11:57 in the 3rd QTR. He had a nice downfield block at the second level about four yards down field and Foster shot through the line untouched for 15 yards.

Blocking:

Foster came out of his play fake and cut the OLB coming off the left side on a 3rd and 2 completion with 8:17 in the 1st QTR. Foster got into the thighs fo the OLB and continued to move his feet as he made contact. The LB quickly turned and ran towards the left flat in pursuit of the WR. Excellent job cutting the LB coming off the right edge with 8:00 in the 1st QTR. Foster was patient enough to allow the LB to get up field and commit to his rushing lane before aggressively shooting for the LB's legs, taking the defender's legs out and giving his QB time to throw a deep sideline pass across the field. Foster stoned the LB coming off the left side on a 2nd and 9 pass from their own eight yardline with 5:00 in the half. He set his feet well and lowered his shoulders into the hit directly into the LB's chest. He followed up the hit by getting his hands into the chest and stomach of the defender and generated some control of the LB's side to side movements as the ball was thrown. He got a little too low on a cut block to a blitzing LB on 1st and 10 with 2:36 in the half, but Foster still slowed the defender and gave the QB time to complete a pass for a nice gain. He was patient enough wait behind his lineman and to allow the LB to come through the LOS and then dip to the opening to make a block as the QB threw the ball with 1:53 in the half. On the following play, the OLB was able to dip further outside Foster at the last moment and make the RB miss his angle. This move forced the QB to hurry his pass to avoid a sack. He had the DB blitz from the outside on the next play and Foster got shook off balance by a shoulder shake and the DB was able to punch the RB out of the way with a blow to the chest to get an open lane to the QB, who was already hit by the backside LB on the play. Foster seems to have more difficulty with quicker, faster rushers who can throw him off balance. Foster hustled to cut the LB on a flat pass to the FB for a seven-yard gain on 1st and 10 with 4:00 in the game. He followed up with a cut block on the LB on a flat pass on the following play.

Vision:

Good job picking through traffic to gain yardage up the righth flat on a 1st and 10 screen pass for nine yards with 14:51 in the 1st QTR. He did a good job seeing the outside opening on 2nd and 10 and bounced a run outside that was intended to go up the middle for a five-yard gain with 7:49 in the 1st QTR. On 2nd and 3 with 6:12 in the 1st QTR, he took a hand off from a two TE set against six men on the LOS and another three in the box and lost three yards. He didn't see the DT shooting through the gap between RG and C even though it was apparent just as he took the handoff. He felt inexplicably dipped to the right side where two LBs were coming free into the backfield rather than bouncing the run to a well-blocked left side. He was hit by the DT and thrown for the loss. Excellent patience on a 2nd and 1 run with 2:05 in the half from the 1 formation. He shortened his steps after receiving the ball and allowed his RG to pull to LG and followed that pulling lineman and his FB through a small crease for the first down. He then burst to the left flat away from a diving safety as he cleared the lane. He pressed the outside by getting inside of his WR blocking in the flat and gained 22 yards on the play. Good patience at the LOS and in the open field with his downfield blocks. Foster made the wrong move from the snap as the single back with 1:33 in the half and ran into the back of his QB, forcing a loss of four yards on the play. On a 2nd and 8 delay with 13:00 in the 3rd QTR, Foster made a jump cut to left end and outran the lineman and LB to the flat for a nine-yard gain and a first down. On a 1st and 10 run play versus and all out blitz with 6:04 in the game, the QB barely got the ball off as penetration hit him in the backfield and Foster tried to pick his way through the backfield to find a big opening at the LOS, but took too long and lost a yard on the play.

Receiving:

His first catch was a screen pass to the right flat with 14:52 in the 1st QTR. He executed a good release to the flat about four yards behind the LOS and turned back to the QB to catch the ball at chest level with his hands. He turned upfield for a gain of nine yards on the play. UT lined up Foster as a WR split right on 2nd and 8 with 7:31 in the half. He ran a quick bubble screen, catching the ball with his hands four yards behind the LOS and turning up field just as the LB shot through and wrapped both of his ankles. Foster nearly ran out of the wrap, but he was hit by an LB closing on the play and brought down for a three-yard loss. Foster gained a yard on a screen to the left flat on 3rd and 9 from their own eight yard line with 4:53 in the half. The end result wasn't much, but Foster had to turn back to the inside and catch the ball with his hands on a ball thrown behind him rather than in front of him at his own one yard line. This was a quick reaction and a good catch that prevented a fumble. Foster was able to turn upfield, plant his outside foot into the ground and cut to the inside of a block on an LB at the numbers near the five yardline, nearly bursting past the DT at the six, but falling from that player's wrap to his leg at the nine yardline with 4:51 in the half. On 2nd and 11 in OT, Foster caught a swing pass to the right flat with his hands about six yards behind the LOS with two LBs in pursuit from the inside and a third coming off block at the LOS. Foster froze the third LB with a great stutter move a few yards behind the LOS and ran past the LB as he crossed the LOS. But the LB tripped up Foster just as he passed and he slipped to the ground after a gain of five.

Durability:

Various nagging injuries throughout his career that has caused him to miss time or be limited in games.

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Power Score :

Leg power, drives through arm tackles [1pt]:

Effective stiff arm [1pt]:

Initiates contact, runs behind pads, and punishes defenders [1pt]:

Good body lean/Finishes runs [3pts]:

Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [7pts]:

Balance Score :

High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:

Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:

Maintains balance when it from an indirect angle [7pts]:

BHandling Score :

Carries ball with either hand [1pt]:

Consistently handles QB/RB exchanges [3pts]:

Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:

Maintains control of ball when hit [7pts]:

Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:

Speed Score :

Effective short area burst [7pts]:

Separates from 1st and 2nd wave of defenders [1pt]:

Effective outside runner [3pts]:

Vision Score:

Makes good decisions with where to run [7pts]:

Patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [3pts]:

Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [1pt]:

Elusiveness Score :

Effective lower body jukes while on the run [3pts]:

Effective upper body jukes while on the run [1pt]:

Avoids direct shots [7pts]:

Effective stop-start movements [2pts]:

Effective lateral movement [3pts]:

Blocking Score :

Correct diagnosis of blocking assignments [1pt]:

Effort with assignments [3pts]:

Willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [1pt]:

Receiving and Routes Score :

Consistently makes receptions on catchable balls [3 pts]:

Makes difficult catch [1pt]:

Catches ball effectively with back to the quarterback [1pt]:

Consistently catches ball with hands and without juggling [1pt]:

Consistent target in the passing game [3pts]:

Runs precise routes [1pt]:

Durability Score :

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play [1pt]:

Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:

No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:

No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation [7 pts]:

Overall Score:

Game Stats

Attempts:

Rush Yds:

1st Downs:

Rush Tds:

Target:

Rec:

Rec Yds:

Rec Tds:

Fumbles:

Broken Tackles:

BLKs Assigned:

BLKs Made:

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Profile

Name: Josh Vaughn

Date: 12/19/2008

Opponent: Montana

Overall Strengths:

This game was for the Division I National Championship. Vaughn has a lot to like about his running style. He's a big back with good feet and he's capable of making cuts one usually sees from smaller backs. When he lowers his shoulders, he will gain extra yards after contact and he has the leg strength to push a pile or carry players downfield. He also flashes a good stiff arm to clean up the collisions he has with defenders. Vaughn has skills as a cutback runner and demonstrates this skill behind the LOS as well as in the hole. He has enough of a burst to get outside and decent vision on a majority of his runs. I think Vaughn is the type of player who could fight his way onto a roster if he's invited to an NFL team's camp. If he can improve his speed just a bit more, he might become a real surprise and one of those names you hear people say came out of nowhere.

Overall Weaknesses:

Vaughn sometimes tries too hard to cut back on runs where it would be best to take what's available on the play (gap plays). He needs to be more consistent as a blocker and make it a habit to be the first to engage in a match up with a defenders. He's not used regularly in the passing game, although he catches the ball with his hands and adjusts well to the football. His biggest weaknesses is his lack of a second gear. He just doesn't seem to run with more than one speed. You can actually see him make the effort to pull away when he gets into the open field, but he doesn't appear to be moving any faster. Although he's a big back I saw Vaughn get stuffed on short yardage runs despite having good pad level or finding the right opening. The problem is he doesn't slam into the hole in these situations and create gaps with his strength. If he learns to do this and gains a little more speed - something his predecessor Tim Hightower was able to do - Vaughn could be a significantly better back than Hightower.

Power:

Very good body lean at the end of a nine-yard run off right end with 13:35 in the 1st QTR on an option pitch. He lowered his shoulders five yards downfield and ran through an LB's hit, carrying him an extra four yards on the play. It should be noted he was about as big as the defensive ends he was facing in this game. Vaughn showed good leg strength to keep his feet moving through a hit six yards downfield to gain an extra two on an eight-yard gain with 9:51 in the 1st QTR. Vaughn ran out of a defender's attempt to wrap his ankle nine yards downfield on an I formation run with 9:00 in the half. Good stiff arm on a 15-yard run after lowering his pad into a LB in the hole and then bouncing the run to left end with 5:43 in the half. Although he had good pad level on a 3rd and 2 run up the middle when he collided with the LB, he was driven back on the play and came up just short of the first down with 3:41 in the half. On the next play from a goal line formation on 4th and 1, Vaughn followed his pulling blocks to the left side of the line and used his free arm to meet the LB's hit and knock the defender aside at the LOS. He was able to gain 13 yards on the play running free down the left flat. Vaughn ran out of an arm tackle to his ankle in the hole as he was cutting back from RG to LG on a 24-yard run with 3:42 in the 3rd QTR. He then stiff armed the diving CB on the top of his helmet as he came from the outside and knocked the defender away as he got to the first down marker. Good stiff arm on the LB in the hole on a 33-yard run off a sweep to the right side with 2:40 in the game. He put the stiffarm on the defender at the first down marker about nine yards down field and ran out of the wrap up attempt his shoulders for another 24 yards.

Ball Handling:

Vaughn did a nice job carrying the ball under his left arm on his opening run outside the left hash for eight yards with 14:40 in the 1st QTR. Very good job fielding a high option pitch on 2nd and 10 as Vaughn headed for right end with 13:35. He caught the ball with his hands and tucked it under his outside arm. On the 15-yard run during 2nd and 6 with 5:43 in the half, Vaughn did a good job carrying the ball under his left arm. On his cutback run for 24-yards he forgot to switch the ball from his right arm to his left with 3:43 in the 3rd QTR.

Evasiveness:

Vaughn demonstrated the ability to dip to the outside on a rush for no gain with 10:10 in the 1st QTR and then followed up with a plant and cut to the backside of a run in the hole for an eight-yard gain with 9:51 in the 1st QTR. He made a small hesitation move as he approached the hole on a run off LT to freeze the LB in the hole and squeeze past him for five-yard gain with 4:30 in the half. Excellent outside-inside juke and cut back to the middle to fake out the safety in the hole and gain eight yards on a 1st and 10 run with 6:51 in the 3rd QTR. Vaughn made a very impressive lateral cut from RG to LG on a designed gap play to reach the backside hole for a 24-yard gain with 3:42 in the 3rd QTR.

Balance:

Very good pad level on an eight-yard run off LG with 14:48 in the 1st QTR. This low pad level allowed to him to bounce off his linemen and use his hands to guide himself through the hole for the yardage in tight space. He can bounce off trash in the line on runs and keep his legs churning, like an eight-yard run with 9:51 in the 1st QTR. Excellent pad level on a 2nd and 7 run behind his pulling RG to a lane off RG where he engaged a LB a yard past the LOS by lowering his shoulder into the defender's hit. Vaughn got the better of the collision, knocking the LB down and then the RB followed up with a stiff arm to the shoulder to ensure the LB could not get into Vaughn's body as he ran around the hit to left end for a first down and a 15-yard gain. Good balance on his final run of the game to leap over the defender on the ground in the hole off RG and then lower his shoulders into the safety just after landing on his feet and knocking the defender to the ground with the hit before runnign through him for a nine-yard gain with 1:30 in the contest.

Speed:

Vaughn didn't look extremely fast on the option pitch to right end with 13:35, but he outran the DE coming down the line to get the corner. He also burst past a LB five yards past the LOS on his way to a nine-yard gain. Vaughn showed enough quickness to reverse his field when no hole was available on a gap play with 11:30 in the half from the five yardline and outrun the defense to left end for the score untouched. On a 24-yard run that he cutback from RG to LG for the gain with 3:43 in the 3rd QTR, Vaughn got caught from behind by the LB coming across the field. Vaughn lacks that second gear to run away from people. He seemed to have only one gear on his 33-yard run with 2:45 in the game.

Blocking:

Vaughn did not play with good leverage on a chip to the DE coming off the right end on 2nd and 7 with 11:44 in the 1st QTR. Vaughn leaned into the contact and allowed the defender to knock him backwards before changing direction on his pursuit to sack the QB. If Vaughn delivered a blow to the DE, this sack might not happen because the DE would have lost momentum. Excellent job coming out of the backfield from the spread and standing up the MLB with a block to give his QB room to gain six yards on a QB keeper with 12:12 in the half. He got his pads under the LB's and used his hands well to freeze the defender as the QB ran by.

Vision:

During an eight-yard gain on his first attempt on the opening offensive play of the game, Vaughn showed good patience by keeping a short stride as he followed his pulling guard through a hole off LG and C. He stayed on the backs of two different linemen during the run as he maneuvered upfield with low pad level for the yardage. On a 1st and 10 from the Montana 44 yardline, the offensive line blocked to the left at the snap and Vaughn quickly dipped to the backside off RT as he got the ball. He gained three yards through an open lane. Vaughn lacked the patience to trust the gap play of a pulling guard and lead FB heading off RG through a crease against two LBs waiting to take on the blockers. He cut back to left end and was brought down for no gain. This is a fundamental error for an RB: do not cut back on gap plays and expect to gain yardage. On the next play, he took a spread formation hand off behind his pulling LG and pulling C into the hole off RG for an eight-yard gain, cutting to the backside of the guard's block towards the left hash with good quickness. He showed good patience with a stutter step to set up his blocks off left end by his lead FB and pulling guard to get between them and gain four yards with 1:27 in the 1st QTR. Vaughn reversed his field at the five yard line after trying to following his pulling G and FB off RG, but there was no open crease. Vaughn made the quick decision to cut back and outrun the defense to left end for the score. Vaughn made a very patient run with 9:00 in the half on 1st and 10 from an I formation set. The play involved a pulling LG and lead FB clearing a path off RG. Vaughn pressed the hole by following the FB into the hold and dipping inside of the block to follow the pulling G just as Vaughn got in the lane and the G engaged with his man. This ability to press the hole helped Vaughn gain 11 yards and a first down. Vaughn ran the same play two plays later, but the Montana defense got good penetration at the LOS and shot down the lane. Vaughn slid away from the lead blockers to his left and cut it inside for a two yard gain on 2nd and 3 with 7:49 in the half. Good decision in light of a good defensive play. Excellent job pressing the hole and using a fake to the outside as he was in front of the hole to force the safety to bite before sliding back to the inside to gain eight yards on a 1st and 10 run with 6:51 in the 3rd QTR. Although not the right play in theory, Vaughn made an excellent cut back on a 1st and 10 run designed to follow the FB and RG off the left side of the line with 3:44 in the 3rd QTR for 24 yards. He saw the large lane off the left hash and made a very strong lateral plant and cut to change direction from RG to LG and clear the lane to get upfield for a first down and more. Vaughn lost two yards on a play designed to go off the right side behind a pulling LG, but the defense called a safety blitz and LB blitz off the left side and the LB shot behind the pulling guard to grab Vaughn two yards behind the LOS and a second defender with excellent penetration off the right side cleaned it up with 8:24 in the game. Good patience following his blocks to the right side on a 2nd and 9 sweep with 2:45 in the game for a 33-yard gain and a first down. He also made a quick dip away from a defender at the sideline about 12 yards down field to get the extra yards.

Receiving:

He caught a swing pass with his hands while facing the QB on 2nd and 8 for a four-yard gain with 10:00 in the 3rd qTR.

Durability:

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Analysis

Name: Knowshon Moreno **School:** Georgia **Opponent:** Michigan State **Surface:** Grass
Height: 5-11 **Year:** Sophomore **Score:** 24-12 **Climate:** Sunshine
Weight: 217 **Date:** 1/1/2009 **Location:** Orlando **Temperature:** Temperate

Power Score :

Leg power, drives through arm tackles [1pt]:

Effective stiff arm [1pt]:

Initiates contact, runs behind pads, and punishes defenders [1pt]:

Good body lean/Finishes runs [3pts]:

Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [7pts]:

Balance Score :

High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:

Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:

Maintains balance when hit from an indirect angle [7pts]:

BHandling Score :

Carries ball with either hand [1pt]:

Consistently handles QB/RB exchanges [3pts]:

Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:

Maintains control of ball when hit [7pts]:

Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:

Speed Score :

Effective short area burst [7pts]:

Separates from 1st and 2nd wave of defenders [1pt]:

Effective outside runner [3pts]:

Vision Score:

Makes good decisions with where to run [7pts]:

Patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [3pts]:

Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [1pt]:

Elusiveness Score :

Effective lower body jukes while on the run [3pts]:

Effective upper body jukes while on the run [1pt]:

Avoids direct shots [7pts]:

Effective stop-start movements [2pts]:

Effective lateral movement [3pts]:

Blocking Score :

Correct diagnosis of blocking assignments [1pt]:

Effort with assignments [3pts]:

Willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [1pt]:

Receiving and Routes Score :

Consistently makes receptions on catchable balls [3 pts]:

Makes difficult catch [1pt]:

Catches ball effectively with back to the quarterback [1pt]:

Consistently catches ball with hands and without juggling [1pt]:

Consistent target in the passing game [3pts]:

Runs precise routes [1pt]:

Durability Score :

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play [1pt]:

Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:

No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:

No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation [7 pts]:

Overall Score:

13

90

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

N/A

Yes

No

Yes

Yes

No

Yes

N/A

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Game Stats

Attempts: 23

Rush Yds: 62

1st Downs: 5

Rush Tds: 0

Target: 6

Rec: 6

Rec Yds: 63

Rec Tds: 1

Fumbles: 0

Broken Tackles: 5

BLKs Assigned: 4

BLKs Made: 4

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Profile

Name: Knowshon Moreno

Date: 1/1/2009

Opponent: Michigan State

Overall Strengths:

Moreno is an excellent runner because of his vision and ability to gain yardage in tight spaces. He does this both with extremely sharp cuts and understanding how to be powerful in small space with his pad level and free hand to ward off hits by being first to deliver a shot. When Jim Brown talked about running the football in his biography, he discussed that great runners have great vision and see things developing before they happened. As a result, great runners react in such a way that they seem to be playing faster and more fluid than their opponents. Moreno often displays this quality because he can string together moves that work effectively as one action. He'll combine a head fake, footwork, and push off with his hand to change direction and ward off a defender in a tight space or he'll use a shoulder shake with a stutter move and spin to continue moving north-south in the open field. He's a high energy football player who makes plays all over the field with the ball in his hands or as a blocker. I think

Overall Weaknesses:

Moreno lacks breakaway speed. He is quick enough to get into the secondary, but lacks the sustained speed to pull away from most defensive backs. He carries the ball a little too far from his body and needs to be more consciously aware about protecting the ball against this body. He has really good balance, but I didn't see him recover from any hits that weren't head-on to his body in this game.

Power:

He dragged a DT a couple of yards at the end of a 13-yard screen, falling forward on 2nd and 2 with 11:39 in the 1st QTR. On 1st and 10 with 4:43 in the 1st QTR, he took a handoff through LG from a three-WR set against a 4-3 defense for eight yards. He had a huge opening to the second level off RG and once he got to the lane, he burst through it. He came out the other side to face a safety head-on. The safety got great position and went for Moreno's waist, but Moreno had excellent pad level and used his free arm to hit the outside shoulder pad of the defender and he drove through the defender with his legs. This allowed Moreno to force the defender to slide off his legs and he got another three yards after contact. Although the MLB had Moreno dead to rights in the backfield when he came through the middle of the line untouched with 7:21 in the half, Moreno nearly got away by using his free arm to push the LB to the ground. The RB fell when he was trying to cut inside of the defender and tripped over the LB. Good second effort in the hole while wrapped around the waist by the LB to drive his legs and get four yards on 1st and 10 with 13:50 in the 4th QTR. Good second effort off RG on 4th and 1 to turn away from the initial contact and get the first down, but a holding call was assessed on the center away from the play. He slipped a tackle in the right flat on the way to a 10-yard gain up the right sideline with 9:15 in the 3rd QTR. He used his left arm to ward off two hits on this play - it wasn't a stiff arm, but it was something he used in conjunction with shifting his body away from the brunt of the hit. He slid out of a tackle attempt by the MLB behind the LOS as he cut a run back inside the RG on a pitch to right end for 6 yards with 8:42 in the game.

Ball Handling:

His elbow often comes away from his body when he carries the ball. It's not far from his body, but there's enough of a crease for a pursuing defender to knock the ball loose with a good hit. On his swing pass to the right flat, he carried the ball under his left arm while running towards the opposing pursuit coming from the inside on 2nd and 7 with 13:12 in the 3rd QTR. Good job carrying the to the right sideline with his right arm on a 10-yard gain with 9:15 in the 3rd QTR.

Elasticity:

The difference between Moreno and a back like Ringer can be illustrated with a 1st and 10 pitch-out to the left with 10:48 in the 1st QTR. Like Ringer, who encountered a defender with decent penetration, Moreno had two defenders doing the same thing in the left flat. The difference was one defender was blocking Moreno's path about two yards away and five yards in the backfield as the RB received the pitch. The LB was three yards in the backfield coming north south in pursuit. Moreno shortened his steps and made a very sharp cut upfield, underneath the LB and ran hard to the LOS, plowing between defenders for a one-yard gain. He was able to make a dynamic cut in a tighter space. Great job stringing together moves in the flat against a DB facing him down four yards ahead as Moreno got to the LOS after his swing reception. He took a plant step to the right, then slid left with two more steps to elude the DB and the LB overrunning the angle in pursuit. He then planted hard with his outside foot and turned north-south, bursting past the CB and the LB before he was dragged down from behind for an 11-yard gain. His foot work coincided with a shoulder fake, head fake, and then upper body turn that froze the defense and allow Moreno to burst through them. His cuts are as sharp as any back I have watched in this class. On 1st and 10 with 14:45 in the half from the I-formation, Moreno took a hand off and immediately saw a gap opening on the left side of the line, but as he took a few steps in that direction, an LB got excellent penetration from the outside to the inside shoulder of the FB. Moreno slipped to the outside of the FB, but a safety was coming head-on to contain. Moreno planted his outside foot and cut between the FB and the safety and prevented what easily could have been a two-yard loss and got back to the LOS. Good job spinning away from a LB's hit two yards in the backfield and find a crease for a two-yard gain with 2:00 in the half. On a run around right end with 1:25 in the half, the MSU defense got great penetration about four yards into the backfield on the right side and Moreno reversed his field in the right flat, ran to the right hash behind his lineman and spun away from the CB to the inside for a four-yard gain that should have been a four-yard loss. This was such a quick turn of his body that he made the defender miss with this adjustment. He was this sharp in his moves and cuts all day. On 1st and 10 from the MSU 21, Stafford and Moreno collided during the exchange of the ball about five yards behind the LOS. This ruined the timing of the play, but Moreno still found away to make two players miss and weave his way back to the LOS.

Balance:

He faced a good form tackle on 1st and 10 with 4:39 in the 1st QTR and bounced off it by using is free hand to make the first contact and lowered his pads to force the DB to slide off his hit. In fact, if his elbow didn't hit the ground on what was ultimately at tackle by a DB cutting his legs, Moreno never hit the ground when he fell on top of the defender and slid off. He had his elbow on the ground, but if not for that, his attempt run downfield after regaining his feet would have counted. Moreno caught a swing pass with 13:11 in the 3rd QTR and encountered a DB trying to cut his legs five yards past the LOS. He was able to run through the hit and slide towards the sideline as he got hit by a second player. If he wasn't hit by the second play just after running through the first bit, he wouldn't have fallen down on this reception and run on 2nd and 7 with 13:11 in the 3rd QTR.

Speed:

Moreno may not have top end speed, but he's quick and fluid. He may have a lot of moves, but he understands how to string them together to get yardage. It's as if he sees one or two steps ahead and the other players are in slow motion. He's quicker than fast, but he still showed the ability to either reverse his field and get outside or take a play outside as designed with pursuing defenders trailing him unblocked. He got around left end with 2:31 in the game on 3rd and 8, but only gained six yards after running through a tackle at the sideline.

Blocking:

Moreno chipped a defender while releasing to the flat on the first pass of the game for UGA with 12:02 in the 1st QTR. Moreno motioned wide right out of the spread formation prior to the snap and put a terrific block on the CB a the numbers on a bubble screen to the WR with 14:09 in the half. He lowered his shoulder into the defender, stopping his progress and then followed up with a second hit as the CB tried to move away from Moreno. This allowed the WR to gain 12 yards and a first down. He hit the RDE with a hard chip as he released from the backfield on a 1st and 10 pass with 8:46 in the 3rd QTR. He does a good job lowering his shoulders and exploding into the defender when he chips a player. Moreno got good position and delivered a solid hit to the MLB coming on a blitz on 2nd and 16 with 6:11 in the 3rd QTR. The first hit knocked the LB back and Moreno repositioned himself quickly to hit the LB again just as the QB was throwing the ball. On a swing pass to the slot receiver with 8:10 in the game, Moreno accelerated downfield and put a lick on the MLB in pursuit as the play came to a close. Moreno went a little low on a cut block against the blitzing CB off the right edge on 3rd and 3 with 5:05 in the game, but he still had his head up so he could get his shoulders into the thighs of the defender. This kept the defender out of the back field as the QB hit his WR for a four-yard gain in the right flat for the first down.

Vision:

Excellent job using his downfield block to get outside the left hash and then weave back inside on a 13-yard reception/run off a screen pass with 11:39 in the 1st QTR. He got a nice-sized hole off RG guard for an eight-yard gain and then followed that up with a hole that developed slowly up the middle that he dipped through from the left to get seven yards and a first down. Good patience around left end on a pitch by following his pulling blocker and using the lead player to dip inside and outside to try to make defenders miss and spot an opening. He made a good stutter move behind the lineman to get four yards. Although Moreno is capable of stringing a lot of moves together, he recognizes when he needs to be decisive and hit the crease hard. On 2nd and 7 on a pitch to the right with 13:00 in the half, he hit the crease hard off right end and plowed through defenders for a two-yard gain on a play that the defense strung out effectively. There was no hesitation by Moreno on this run. If there were, he would have either had to reverse his field and hope to out run the defense to the left side for a big gain, which was unlikely, or he would have lost yardage dancing around behind the LOS. Moreno saw the MLB come untouched through the LOS on a 1st and 10 pitch to left end, but he couldn't not cut back to avoid the defender and was brought down for a four-yard loss with 7:54 in the half. Another example of how special Moreno's vision is: On 2nd and 7 with 13:14 in the 3rd QTR, he ran a swing route to the right flat, but the ball was thrown behind him. Moreno turned counter-clockwise back to the QB, snatched the pass over his head while facing his own end zone, and continued spinning so he faced up field. While he was doing this to make the catch, he knew the CB was coming head-on for him. Once Moreno was able to complete his turn upfield , he stepped over the diving CB with his outside leg and avoided that four-yard loss to get three yards past the LOS. He did this before he encountered a second defender. He gained six yards on the play, nearly running through two hits and coming just shy of the first down. On 1st and 10 with 6:22 in the game, he pressed the hole with the line slanting left and then cut back to the right side underneath two defenders on that side who got penetration a few yards behind the LOS. He nearly got to the sideline but fell as he was making a juke move to give the leg and take it away from the safety over top.

Receiving:

He caught a screen pass after releasing to the left hash from the middle of the line on 2nd and 2 with 11:42 in the 1st QTR. He caught the ball at chest level with his hands and turned up field for a 16-yard gain. Moreno caught a swing pass in the right flat with the ball coming over his inside shoulder just above his head. He leaped for the ball with his arms at helmet level while turning his inside shoulder back to the ball while running downfield. He snatched the ball with his hands three yards behind the LOS and made a nice move to the inside of the defense, splitting three defenders for an 11-yard gain and a 1st down. He caught a circle route on 3rd and 4 with his hands close to his stomach and turned up field to gain seven yards and a first down, splitting two defenders for a few extra yards at the first down marker. Excellent job adjusting to the ball on a swing pass to the right flat with 13:15 in the 3rd QTR. He had to turn back to the QB, catch the ball over his head with his hands, and continue to turn towards the sideline. He caught a short flat pass with 8:40 in the 3rd QTR and gained five yards on the play. He caught the ball close to his chest with his hands while facing the QB. Moreno's highlight catch of the day was a 3rd and 10 wheel route down the right sideline where he beat the LB by a step and leaped for the ball at the one yard line, catching it over his inside shoulder with his hands and landing in the end zone for a 21-yard score. What was most impressive was that he made sure to get one foot in the end zone and nearly adjust to get his second foot inbounds as well.

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Analysis

Name: Tyrell Fenroy **School:** Louisiana-Lafayette **Opponent:** UTEP **Surface:** Field Turf
Height: 5-8 **Year:** Senior **Score:** 24-37 **Climate:** Night
Weight: 205 **Date:** 11/8/2008 **Location:** Louisiana-Lafayette **Temperature:** Temperate

Power Score :

Leg power, drives through arm tackles [1pt]:

Effective stiff arm [1pt]:

Initiates contact, runs behind pads, and punishes defenders [1pt]:

Good body lean/Finishes runs [3pts]:

Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [7pts]:

Balance Score :

High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:

Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:

Maintains balance when it from an indirect angle [7pts]:

BHandling Score :

Carries ball with either hand [1pt]:

Consistently handles QB/RB exchanges [3pts]:

Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:

Maintains control of ball when hit [7pts]:

Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:

Speed Score :

Effective short area burst [7pts]:

Separates from 1st and 2nd wave of defenders [1pt]:

Effective outside runner [3pts]:

Vision Score:

Makes good decisions with where to run [7pts]:

Patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [3pts]:

Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [1pt]:

Elusiveness Score :

Effective lower body jukes while on the run [3pts]:

Effective upper body jukes while on the run [1pt]:

Avoids direct shots [7pts]:

Effective stop-start movements [2pts]:

Effective lateral movement [3pts]:

Blocking Score :

Correct diagnosis of blocking assignments [1pt]:

Effort with assignments [3pts]:

Willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [1pt]:

Receiving and Routes Score :

Consistently makes receptions on catchable balls [3 pts]:

Makes difficult catch [1pt]:

Catches ball effectively with back to the quarterback [1pt]:

Consistently catches ball with hands and without juggling [1pt]:

Consistent target in the passing game [3pts]:

Runs precise routes [1pt]:

Durability Score :

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play [1pt]:

Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:

No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:

No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation [7 pts]:

Overall Score:

12

78

Yes

Yes

No

Yes

Yes

N/A

Yes

No

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

N/A

Yes

Yes

Yes

No

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

No

No

Yes

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Game Stats

Attempts:

22

Rush Yds:

126

1st Downs:

5

Rush Tds:

2

Target:

3

Rec:

3

Rec Yds:

67

Rec Tds:

0

Fumbles:

0

Broken Tackles:

7

BLKs Assigned:

4

BLKs Made:

2

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Profile

Name: Tyrell Fenroy

Date: 11/8/2008

Opponent: UTEP

Overall Strengths:

He's a one-cut power runner in the frame of a smaller back. According to observers, he has improved his speed to the point that he now has a good burst and the ability to run away from defenders in the open field when he reaches the sideline. He catches the ball with his hands and runs with good balance when he's moving down hill. He does a great job keeping his legs moving forward and maintaining his balance on hits to his upper body. He runs out of a lot of arm tackles and his determination nets him extra yardage. I think Fenroy is a sneaky good player with some NFL potential, but his ability to gain muscle and a little more speed could help him get a chance to be more than a depth chart back. He'll also need to make better decisions at the line of scrimmage on a more consistent basis. His vision isn't too bad, but he can make small improvements in situations where he needs to bounce the run outside or follow his lead blocker and it could make a difference for his career.

Overall Weaknesses:

He's a one-cut downhill power runner in the frame of a scat back. He doesn't spot the cutback to bounce runs outside when the opening is available and he runs too upright between the tackles. He's a physical runner, but his pad level lacks the consistency for him to gain the type yardage he's capable of getting on plays where the holes are very small or non-existent. He plays with a neck roll that makes him look bigger than he is. He's a physical runner, but his dimensions are not much different than Brian Westbrook's.

Power:

On the run he spun out of the hit in the backfield with 1:43 in the 1st QTR, he actually used his free arm to push off the hit. It was a combo off him lowering his shoulder into the hit, and using a stiffarm to spin away from the defender to get to the LOS. He ran out of two arm tackles on a 2nd and 2 run for 24 yards with :05 in the half. The first broken tackle was against the LB coming from his right side in the hole, hitting his hip. The second was an attempt by the safety at his ankle. He dragged an LB for three yards on a five-yard gain on 2nd and 5 with 14:25 in the half. On 1st and goal from the five yard line he ran through a defender's tackle at the LOS, dragging the safety for a yard before discarding him to the ground with a stiffarm for a gain of three yards with 13:45 in the half. Good leg drive, body lean, and stiff arm on the play. He broke the edge defender's tackle as he entered the hole on a five-yard run off LG with 4:03 in the half. He ran out of a defender's attempt to wrap him at the waist with 12:34 in the game on a 14-yard run up the middle.

Ball Handling:

He carried the ball under his left arm on a run up the left hash with :05 in the 1st QTR. He carried it in his right hand on other runs, but then back to his left on a 27-yard screen pass down the left sideline. There were about 4-6 runs in the 3rd QTR where he didn't carry the ball under his left arm when he was running to the left, but he did demonstrate he could carry the ball under the correct arm and protect it well in the 1st half and 4th QTR.

Evasiveness:

He didn't make more than one small cut or change of direction to being each run. He does have quick first step and he angles his shoulders well into tight spaces. He showed this to elude a hit by his own player trying to block a DB in the open field after catching a screen pass in the 2nd QTR. He demonstrated the ability to make quick dips at full speed on a 31-yard run around left end with 4:34 in the 3rd QTR.

Balance:

He got hit head-on two yards behind the LOS by the DE on a 1st and 10 run with 1:43 in the 1st QTR, but he spun out of the hit and gained two yards rather than lost two. He runs with good balance on dive plays up the middle. He followed a pulling lineman between C and RG on 2nd and 1 with 3:29 in the 3rd QTR and rammed himself into the line and after contact bulldozed his way for three yards while still keeping his feet until the very end. Although he got wrapped up at the legs at the end of a 14-yard run with 12:34 in the game, it took two hits by defenders to knock him to the ground. He hit the MLB in the hole on 2nd and 3 with 7:36 in the game and was able to bet the better of the collision, forcing the MLB to drop to the RB's legs and try to tackle him there. The RB was able to keep his legs moving and drive forward for two more yards with a second defender trying to wrap him at the shoulders.

Speed:

He had a nice burst up the middle as he ran through two arm tackles for a 24-yard gain with :02 in the 1st QTR. On his 31-yard run off the screen pass with 14:08 in the 3rd QTR, Fenroy did show good speed up the right sideline, beating the safety who was ahead of Fenroy by a couple of yards when he began his pursuit on the sideline. A CB coming across the field had to make up ground and push the RB out of bounds. The fact Fenroy made up ground and pulled ahead of the safety demonstrated to me that he probably has good enough speed to be an NFL runner. Unless that safety was inordinately slow, Fenroy won't be too slow to at least be a contributor. Very good acceleration in the flat and then past the CB at the sideline on a run around left end with 4:35 in the 3rd QTR.

Blocking:

Fenroy completely missed the DT coming free up the left hash on a 2nd and 8 pass play from the shotgun. He didn't even see the defender come free of the LG although the RB was behind the RG at that moment. It appeared the RB was watching the RT and was too late to spot the DT, who got free and hit the QB as he threw the ball. On a 3rd down pass he did make a very small chip on a defender with his inside shoulder as he circled out of the backfield, but it was not effective. He appeared to be going through the motions on this effort. He didn't get a good angle on the backside pursuit off the edge on a designed roll left off a play fake. He was able to hit the defender, but not get his body in front of the rusher and prevent him from pursuing the QB on the play. He was effective on a lead block to the right edge, pushing back the DB and knocking him on his back. The technique wasn't great, but his strength, momentum, and positioning of the hit did the job and helped the ball carrier cut back to the inside of Fenroy's block for an eight-yard gain with :39 in the 1st QTR. There were 4-5 runs in the 3rd QTR where he didn't carry the ball under his left arm when he was running to his left.

Vision:

His 24-yard run was out of the pistol formation on 2nd and 2 with :05 in the 1st QTR. He followed his pulling guard into the middle of the line and dipped inside the guard's shoulder through an open lane and ran in a straight line up the field for the rest of the yardage. He made a nice downhill run for 5 yards on the next play, spotting the open lane off LG with 14:55 in the half. He plowed into the soft spot of the line behind his RG and RT on a 1st and 6 run for three yards when there didn't appear to be anything there. Good job weaving to the inside and back to the outside of his lead blocker's shoulder as he ran down the left sideline on a screen reception for 27 yards with 4:10 in the half. From the pistol formation on 3rd and goal with 3:13 in the half, he completely missed the cut back to the right side on a run up the middle that resulted in a 2-yard loss. He initially missed the hole up the middle and hit his own man on the way through the lane. This slowed his progress and helped the defenders flow to the ball and throw him down for a loss. Fenroy is far more comfortable running between the tackles than he is trying to take a run to the edge. On 1st and 10 with 14:50 in the 3rd QTR, he took a run from the pistol formation off RG when his lead blocker went off right end and had no one to block in the flat. If Fenroy follows this lead blocker to the outside, he probably gains twice the amount of yardage than the 3-yard gain he earned. Generally it's a good thing for a back to focus on staying between the tackles, but he should also trust his lead blocker and the design of the play. On 2nd and 5 with 4:38 in the 3rd QTR, Fenroy showed good patience to bounce a run to left end when he initially tried to take the handoff between LG and C, but spotted the LB filling the gap. Once he got around left end, he decisively bent the run inside of his WR in the left flat, pressing the outside lane developing until he dipped at the last minute behind the WR to the sideline for another 20 yards. Good job making two quick dips to get to daylight on a three-yard TD run with 2:03 in the 3rd QTR. He has good patience on zone runs up the middle. He gained 14 yards following a blocker up the middle. He stayed behind the lineman's inside shoulder for about 5-6 yards before cutting to his outside shoulder and accelerating up field.

Receiving:

On 1st and 10 with 4:29 in the half, Fenroy caught a screen pass to the left flat, turning his back shoulder to the QB to catch the ball with his hands close to his stomach and then turning up field. He gained 27 yards on the screen despite the fact that the linemen were in front of him but not far enough to the flat to help him immediately. He actually had to run through a lineman's diving block to get free in the flat because the blocker mistimed the attempt and nearly hit the RB who was running between the lineman and the defender. Fenroy caught a 2nd and 7 screen pass in the right flat with his hands at his back shoulder while running up field. He gained 31 yards down the right sideline until he was run out of bounds by CB coming across the field. Fenroy did a good job chipping an edge rusher before releasing in the left flat to catch a swing pass with 4:10 in the 3rd QTR. He caught the ball with his hands as he was turning up field. He veered toward the sideline, making a safety miss before cutting back to the inside of a blocker and dragging a defender nearly five yards for a nine-yard gain.

Durability:

Didn't practice during the week leading up to this game due to a bruised knee in the previous game.

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

Power Score :

Leg power, drives through arm tackles [1pt]:
Effective stiff arm [1pt]:
Initiates contact, runs behind pads, and punishes defenders [1pt]:
Good body lean/Finishes runs [3pts]:
Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [7pts]:

Balance Score :

High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:
Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:
Maintains balance when it from an indirect angle [7pts]:

BHandling Score :

Carries ball with either hand [1pt]:
Consistently handles QB/RB exchanges [3pts]:
Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:
Maintains control of ball when hit [7pts]:
Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:

Speed Score :

Effective short area burst [7pts]:
Separates from 1st and 2nd wave of defenders [1pt]:
Effective outside runner [3pts]:

Vision Score:

Makes good decisions with where to run [7pts]:
Patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [3pts]:
Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [1pt]:

Elusiveness Score :

Effective lower body jukes while on the run [3pts]:
Effective upper body jukes while on the run [1pt]:
Avoids direct shots [7pts]:
Effective stop-start movements [2pts]:
Effective lateral movement [3pts]:

Blocking Score :

Correct diagnosis of blocking assignments [1pt]:
Effort with assignments [3pts]:
Willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [1pt]:

Receiving and Routes Score :

Consistently makes receptions on catchable balls [3 pts]:
Makes difficult catch [1pt]:
Catches ball effectively with back to the quarterback [1pt]:
Consistently catches ball with hands and without juggling [1pt]:
Consistent target in the passing game [3pts]:
Runs precise routes [1pt]:

Durability Score :

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play [1pt]:
Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:
No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:
No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation [7 pts]:

Game Stats

Attempts:
Rush Yds:
1st Downs:
Rush Tds:
Target:
Rec:
Rec Yds:
Rec Tds:
Fumbles:
Broken Tackles:
BLKs Assigned:
BLKs Made:

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Profile

Name: Tyrell Sutton

Date: 12/28/2008

Opponent: Missouri

Overall Strengths:

Sutton is a tough runner for his size. He gains yardage after contact because he runs with a good pad level and keeps his feet churning when initially wrapped. He has good quickness and this helps him elude big hits turn them into glancing blows. Sutton is also a good receiver out of the backfield and he's capable of turning short passes into longer gains because of his quickness and open field vision. He's a reasonably mature runner between the tackles who will hit a crease hard and get the most yardage available to him rather than attempt risky cut backs or reversals of field to find a big play. I think Sutton is a late round pick who develops into a nice third down option if he stays healthy. He's about the size of Maurice Jones drew, but lacks the explosiveness.

Overall Weaknesses:

Sutton has experienced multiple injuries that has cost him games over the years. He's not a tall runner, but he has a low center of gravity. His lack of great speed makes it unlikely that NFL teams see him as a load carrier. He isn't used much as a blocker and he lacks great lateral cutting ability. I didn't see him spot the cutback lanes or pressing the hole as much as one might expect from a feature runner. Sutton is a tough, versatile back who could surprise but I think he's a change of pace runner at best.

Power:

At the end of his seven-yard run up left hash on the opening offensive play for the Wildcats with 11:45 in the 1st QTR, Sutton dove under the safety to avoid the hit. He lost his balance coming out of the hole and fell forward trying to lower his shoulders in anticipation of the contact. Sutton isn't going to do much to significantly push the pile with his size but he made the effort on a 2nd and 3 to gain two yards with 10:33 in the 1st QTR, keeping his shoulders low as he burrowed into the right side of the line that got a push off the LOS. On the following play he had a much better opportunity to hit the hole hard on an I formation isolation play with the LG pulling to RG. He followed that blocker and hit the hole hard on 3rd and 1 to gain three yards with 9:57 in the 1st QTR. He got hit by the safety four yards past the LOS on a run around right end with 14:39 in the half, but dove forward after the contact to gain total of six on the play. Good finish. He got hit two yards behind the LOS on a spread formation run with 8:36 in the half, but turned his back into the hit and spun forward for a gain of a yard. Good job keeping his legs moving on the play. Lowered his shoulder into the LB's contact through a hole off RG on a spread formation run and then spun off a second hit to gain six yards on 2nd and 10 with 5:13 in the half. Sutton got hit high by the DT at the LOS on 1st and 10 with 4:19 in the half, but carried the defender on his back another three yards on the play. Sutton had no problem throwing his body towards the first down marker, attacking the defender in the flat by lower his body into contact on a 2nd and 7 option pitch. This aggressiveness helped him get to the first down marker. He got wrapped at the end of a three-yard run with a little over a minute in the half, but did a good job keeping his legs moving. Sutton nearly ran out of a wrap to his legs on a spread formation run up the middle for a four-yard gain and a first down. On 2nd and 21 with 6:46 in the game, he broke an arm tackle by a diving LB as he burst through the hole off LG, broke a second tackle attempt to his legs six yards downfield and then did an excellent job lowering his shoulder into the DB's hit at the right hash 10 yards downfield and gained another seven yards after this contact on the play.

Ball Handling:

Sutton lost the ball at the end of a 44-yard catch/run on a screen when the DB punched the ball loose with a downward strike on the ball when they collided head-on with 7:04 in the 1st QTR. The play was called back due to an offside penalty. He could only carry the ball comfortably in his right arm in this game because he had a brace on his left wrist.

Elusiveness:

Good job turning his upper body away from an oncoming hit by an LB in the flat on a swing pass thrown to him five yards behind the LOS with 5:52 in the 1st QTR. This turn caused the LB to only have Sutton's legs as the target and the RB turned the potential loss into a two-yard gain. He made a quick dip to the outside to avoid two penetrating defenders off LG. He gained six yard around left end with 14:40 in the half. Excellent spin move in the backfield after taking a hand off from the spread and the DT got free to meet him three yards in the backfield on 2nd and 8 with :17 in the half. He planted with his feet and spun inside of the defender, bounced off a second hit at the LOS and found a gap off right end, spinning away from a DB's hit to get within a yard of the first down marker. He used a stutter step at left end before bouncing the run back to the inside on 2nd and 10 with 14:00 in the game for a seven-yard gain.

Balance:

Sutton was able to maintain his balance after a hit to his legs by an LB about five yards behind the LOS on a 2nd and 6 swing pass with 5:52 in the 1st QTR. He nearly tripped trying to bounce from the inside to the left end out of the spread on 2nd and 4 for a gain of three with 13:43 in the half. In the open field Sutton has good balance and power to run through hits. He ran through a CB's hit to his legs by lowering his forearm into the defender and then gained another five yards while getting hit in the back and in the outside shoulder on an 18-yard gain from a screen pass on 2nd and 19 with 11:10 in the half. Sutton hit the hole hard enough with good pad level to get four yards on 3rd and 2 with 8:02 in the half.

Speed:

Sutton showed a good burst up the middle for a seven-yard gain out of the spread versus a nickel look with 11:54 in the 1st QTR. He beat the backside defensive end to the hole off LG as he burst up the left hash. He took an option pitch around left end for a seven yard gain on 2nd and 7 for a first down with 3:35 in the half.

Blocking:

Sutton is generally a receiver and I did see him chip a defender in the first half, but his first true attempt gain with 5:04 in the 3rd QTR on 3rd and 7 when he threw himself into a hit on the DE stunting to the inside. He hit the DE in the chest and snapped the defender's head back, before slipping into the center of the field as a check-down option. He went too low on a blocker off the left edge on a keeper and the defender ran through him to tackle the QB on a keeper on 2nd and goal in OT.

Vision:

The NW offensive line got a small push on the right side as Sutton took a spread formation handoff on 2nd and 3 with 10:33 in the 1st QTR. He slid to that part of the line and lowered his shoulders into the pile, gaining two yards. Excellent job avoiding a three-yard loss in the backfield with a spin move to the inside and finding the soft spot of the line to get around right end for a seven-yard gain with :12 in the half.

Receiving:

On a 3rd and 9 play that was called back due to an offside penalty with 7:14 in the 1st QTR, Sutton caught a screen pass with his hands in the right flat a yard behind the LOS, ran through the right flat for a first down and dipped inside his lineman's block fifteen yards downfield, outrunning the LB 35 yards downfield before getting tackled at the Missouri 45 yard line for a 44-yard gain and fumbling the football away to Missouri. His first catch that counted was a 2nd and 6 swing route to the left flat about five yards behind the LOS that he caught with his hands as the LB was coming head-on for him with 5:54 in the 1st QTR. Once Sutton controlled the pass he turned away from the hit with his upper body and forced the LB to only have a shot at the RB's legs. The RB was able to maintain his balance after the hit by putting his right hand in the ground and recover his footing to burst up the flat for a two-yard gain that should have easily been a five-yard loss. Sutton caught a screen pass in the left flat with his hands extended from his stomach on 2nd and 19 with 11:14 in the half. He turned up field at the LOS with two DL's following him and a lineman blocking an LB a couple of yards up the left hash. He burst through the gap up the hash and behind the lineman's block six yards down field, lowered his forearm into the hit of a DB coming from the left flat at the 18 yard line and got another five yards running through two more hits for an 18-yard gain. Sutton caught a circle route in the middle of the field while facing the QB with 7:41 in the half and turned up the left hash for an eight-yard gain, keeping his legs moving as he was wrapped at the end of the run. He caught a 1st and 10 screen thrown hard to his back shoulder with 1:34 in the 3rd QTR and was immediately hit by a defender for a loss for three yards. His final catch was a short flat route from the slot that he caught into his body and turned up the right sideline for a gain of three with :57 in the 3rd QTR. Sutton was overthrown on a swing pass when the QB was under pressure in his own end zone with 14:08 the game.

Durability:

Played with a cast on his broken left wrist. He tore ligament and broke two bones. Doctors compared the injury to one suffered in a car wreck and he just had surgery a few weeks before the game. He wasn't even considered to play this game until a week before. He missed four games this year with the injury. He missed five games last year with knee and ankle injuries.

Sample Wide Receiver Checklists and Profiles

The Gut Check's WR Checklist Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

76

- Can physically break jam [2pts]:
- Can use elusiveness to break jam [2pts]:
- Uses body to shield defender from the ball [3pts]:
- Creates separation with burst out of breaks [5pts]:
- Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes [2pts]:
- Runs precise routes [5pts]:
- Finds opening in zone coverage [5pts]:
- Adjusts to QB when play breaks down [3pts]:
- Awareness of sideline [2pts]:
- Catches ball with hands first [5pts]:
- Adjusts to the ball in the air [2pts]:
- Catches ball well with back to the line of scrimmage [2pts]:
- Catches ball in tight coverage [5pts]:
- Catches ball in high traffic areas [3pts]:
- Consistently holds onto the ball when hit [4pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to make difficult catch [1pt]:
- Makes receptions on catch able balls consistently [5pts]:
- Effective lower body jukes while on the run [2pts]:
- Effective upper body jukes while on the run [2pts]:
- Avoids direct shots [2pts]:
- Effective stop-start movements [2pts]:
- Effective lateral movement [2pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to carry ball with either hand [1pt]:
- Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:
- Maintains control of ball when hit [5pts]:
- Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:
- High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit from an indirect angle [2pts]:
- Demonstrates effort with assignments [2pts]:
- Demonstrates willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [2pts]:
- Displays patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [1pt]:
- Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [2pts]:
- Leg power and drives through arm tackles [1pt]:
- Effective stiff arm [1pt]:
- Good body lean/Finishes runs [1pts]:
- Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [2pts]:
- Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities [1pt]:
- Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:
- No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:
- No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career [5pts]:

Game Stats

Target:
Missed Target:
Drops:
Juggles:
Dropped After Contact:
Rec:
Rec After Contact:
Difficult Rec:
Rec Yards:
Yards After Catch:
Yards per Catch:
Rec Tds:
Yards per Td:
Rush Att:
Rush Yds:
Rush Tds:
Fumbles:

Category Scores

Separation Score:
Routes Score:
Receiving Score:
Elusiveness Score:
BHandling Score:
Balance Score:
Blocking Score:
Vision Score:
Power Score:
Durability Score:

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Aaron Kelly

Date: 11/15/2008

Opponent: Duke

Overall Strengths

He makes a good effort as a blocker and has consistent production as a possession receiver. He is capable off adjusting his body to make diving catches at the boundary and he's physical enough as a runner to make the first man miss by running through arm tackles or spinning away from contact. He shows the ability to catch the football with his hands and make plays in traffic.

Overall Weaknesses

He doesn't consistently use his hands to catch balls where he would be better served to do so. Because he allows balls into his body too much, he drops passes in tight coverage, against harder hits, or in red zone situations because the ball bounces off is pads. He lacks great speed and needs double moves or play action to assist him in getting separation on routes deeper than 15 yards past the LOS.

Separation

Good swim move versus a CB on 3rd and 10 with 2:30 in the half. He faced the CB trying to jam him off the LOS by taking a jab step to the outside early in his release from the LOS and then threw his outside arm over the top of the CB to get inside position on the route. The ball wasn't thrown his way, but it was a good move. He lacks anything more than ordinary speed which is most evident by two things: his down field receptions of 15-20 yards are off play action and against zone coverage and he doesn't show much of a burst on screen passes that are well blocked.

Routes

His first catch was a corner route 19 yards down field. The CB originally played 10 yards off the LOS and was the shallow zone defender. The QB did a perfect job of lofting the ball between the CB and the safety on the play for a gain of 21 yards. The best part of the route was Kelly making a nice jab step to the inside before breaking the outside, which threw the S out of position long enough for him to get a clean opportunity to make the catch without the DB in range to hit him from over top. He made a nice quick turn back to the ball on a 3rd and 10 out route, but could have done a better job sinking his hips into the break but his speed on the turn was very good and he did not tip off where he was breaking as he released from the line with the defender about 5-7 yards off him.

Receiving

His first catch was a corner route 19 yards down field between the safety over top and the CB underneath with 0:21 in the 1st QTR. He caught the ball with his back to the QB and his back shoulder turned enough to catch the ball over that shoulder by cradling the ball to his body. His second catch was a smash screen with 8:14 in the half. He trapped the ball to his stomach while facing the QB and did not gain anything on the play. He made a diving, catch for 11 yards with 6:52 in the half, tightroping the sideline with both toes as he cradled the ball to his chest on the out route for a first down. He caught a slant 10 yards down field on a 1st and 10 with 2:03 in the half, catching the ball close to his body (it appeared he trapped it) and with his body facing the QB. He turned up field and spun away from a defender's hit to get another five yards on the play. He caught the smash screen by trapping the ball to his body on the next play for a gain of seven yards. Kelly dropped a slant in the back of the end zone with 5:32 in the 3rd QTR. He was open and the ball hit him at chest level, but as he usually does, he tried to trap the ball and it bounced off him as the defender hit him in the back. He caught a short sideline fade on 3rd and 7 for eight yards with 5:18 in the 3rd QTR. He had to dive for the ball and catch it with his hands while falling out of bounds and taking a hit over the top from the defender. He caught a slant with his hands near his back shoulder for a 15-yard gain and a first down with 2:30 in the 3rd QTR. He had an easy catch in a loose zone on the play. On a bubble screen, he did a good job extending his arms to catch a ball with his hands while he was drifting in the opposite directio at the end of his break. He was brought down for no gain, but he did well to hold onto the ball and prevent an interception with 1:20 in the 3rd QTR. He trapped a short hitch to his chest on a 1st and 10 pass with 11:03 in the game and turned it up field for a gain of nine yards. He gained 11 yards on the next play off a smash screen to the left side, which he trapped into his body and took up field for all of the yardage.

Elusiveness

One of the most common moves Kelly makes in the open field is a spin move to the inside or outside to break free from initial contact. He did this on a screen pass in the 2nd QTR and then later he did it on a 10-yard slant to get another five yards on the play.

Ball

Good job protecting the ball with his arm on a smash screen for no gain that was sniffed out by the Duke defense. He was able to take a hit to his ball carrying arm and still hang onto the football with no problem. He switched the ball from his right arm to his left when trying to spin away from a defender on a 10-yard slant with 2:01 in the half. He carried the ball under his left arm while turning from the right towards the inside of the field to his left with 11:04 in the game.

Balance

He attempted to spin off a hit on a smash screen reception with 8:14 in the half, but was gang-tackled on a good defensive effort by the Duke unit.

Blocking

He got his hands on the CB during a 2nd and 6 run with 14:05 in the 1st QTR, but did not aggressively get his body in front of the DB and the defender would have had an easy time ripping himself away from the WR's grasp to make on play on the RB if necessary. Not a great effort by the WR. A much better job on a 2nd and long run with 6:55 in the 1st QTR. He got good position on the CB and engaged the defender with his hands and used his body to turn the CB away from the run to open a lane for the RB to gain 9 yards on the play. He did as good of a job in the right flat on a 1st down run with 13:48 in the half. The CB tried to get inside and then outside the WR during the run, but the WR had good hand placement and made a strong initial effort to get in front of the CB before engaging him on the block. Although he was unable to knock down the DE on a cut block when he motioned towards the formation before the snap to make this crack back play, he impeded the defender's progress enough for the RB run past the DE through the lane for a 9-yard gain. Good effort. He wasn't too low, but he began the cut a step too early which prevent the hit from having any force and it allowed the DE to step away to the outside and pursue the RB. Good effort on the safety as the lead blocker on a screen pass with 2:55 in the half. Good block on the outside keeping his man at bay so the RB could run behind him with :40 in the 3rd QTR

Vision

Although he didn't gain a yard on the smash screen with 8:14 in the half, he made a good choice to turn to the inside of the defense with the outside defenders containing the edge effectively. He showed good patience to allow a defender to follow a receiver to the sideline and slipping behind him to get open on a short route to the inside that he turned inside two defenders for a 9-yard gain after making the catch with 11:04 in the game.

Power

Good job spinning away from a defender's attempt to wrap him up at the first down marker on a 1st and 10 reception off a slant with 2:01 in the half. He gained five extra yards on the play. This was a display of power to break arm tackles and elusiveness to spin. On the next play, he caught a smash screen from the right side of the field and ran through a tackle to get 7 yards on the play. He used a stiff arm on the trailing defender he beat to the inside and then dragged a second defender a few yards for a 9-yard gain off a short hitch from the right side with 11:04 in the game. He nearly ran out of an ankle tackle at the end of an 11-yard gain off a smash screen with 10:30 in the game. He gained about 3 yards falling forward after the wrap up.

Durability

Character

The Gut Check's WR Checklist Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

- Can physically break jam [2pts]:
- Can use elusiveness to break jam [2pts]:
- Uses body to shield defender from the ball [3pts]:
- Creates separation with burst out of breaks [5pts]:
- Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes [2pts]:
- Runs precise routes [5pts]:
- Finds opening in zone coverage [5pts]:
- Adjusts to QB when play breaks down [3pts]:
- Awareness of sideline [2pts]:
- Catches ball with hands first [5pts]:
- Adjusts to the ball in the air [2pts]:
- Catches ball well with back to the line of scrimmage [2pts]:
- Catches ball in tight coverage [5pts]:
- Catches ball in high traffic areas [3pts]:
- Consistently holds onto the ball when hit [4pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to make difficult catch [1pt]:
- Makes receptions on catch able balls consistently [5pts]:
- Effective lower body jukes while on the run [2pts]:
- Effective upper body jukes while on the run [2pts]:
- Avoids direct shots [2pts]:
- Effective stop-start movements [2pts]:
- Effective lateral movement [2pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to carry ball with either hand [1pt]:
- Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:
- Maintains control of ball when hit [5pts]:
- Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:
- High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit from an indirect angle [2pts]:
- Demonstrates effort with assignments [2pts]:
- Demonstrates willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [2pts]:
- Displays patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [1pt]:
- Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [2pts]:
- Leg power and drives through arm tackles [1pt]:
- Effective stiff arm [1pt]:
- Good body lean/Finishes runs [1pts]:
- Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [2pts]:
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Game Stats

Target:
Missed Target:
Drops:
Juggles:
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Rec After Contact:
Difficult Rec:
Rec Yards:
Yards After Catch:
Yards per Catch:
Rec Tds:
Yards per Td:
Rush Att:
Rush Yds:
Rush Tds:
Fumbles:

Category Scores

Separation Score:
Routes Score:
Receiving Score:
Elusiveness Score:
BHandling Score:
Balance Score:
Blocking Score:
Vision Score:
Power Score:
Durability Score:

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Hakeem Nicks

Date: 12/27/2008

Opponent: West Virginia

Overall Strengths

Nicks has nice size and power as a runner. He uses a stiff arm very well and will gain yards after contact versus DBs. This is a huge positive for the pro game because it makes him dangerous both inside and outside the hash. He's a physical blocker and aggressive in the run game which should endear him to more physical offensive teams and when you combine this with his decent burst, he can be effective downfield in the play action game. Nicks also has good moves in the open field to make defenders miss and he's quick enough to avoid the first hit. He has excellent hands and concentration to catch tipped balls and passes thrown away from his body. He actually has a knack for concentrating on difficult catches. I also like that he uses his head and eyes and shoulders to set up breaks by fooling defenders to look back for the throw at the wrong time or to anticipate a different route. If there's a receiver in this class that I think has the total game to be a quality starter for a team sooner than later, Nicks is one of them.

Overall Weaknesses

Nicks has decent speed, but he's not a true vertical threat, but there are several NFL receivers with his speed-size-quickness combo that are effective anywhere on the field in the right offense. Dwayne Bowe and Anquan Boldin come to mind as examples. He has enough acceleration to get open downfield on a well-run route that fools the defender, especially if run in conjunction with a play fake. Nicks does need to protect the ball better as a runner, but this is common for many players who handle the ball and transition to the pro gram. This is something he'll either fix in training camp or he'll get embarrassed once or twice in game before he addresses it. The most important skill Nicks needs to refine is how to use his hands and feet in conjunction with each other to elude or overpower press coverage. He has enough size to do this well, but right now he's taking advantage of corners when they play off him. Because Nicks is strong enough to beat the jam I think coaches in college football are more reluctant to test him regularly, but the on time it was apparent they did so in this game, Nicks couldn't defeat the jam.

Separation

Nicks got inside the CB on a deep post on a play action pass with 7:29 in the 1st QTR. He was even with the defender and if the pass weren't underthrown, he would have had an easy catch. But it was underthrown and a highlight reel-crazy play ensued that I'll describe under the Receiving Notes section. Although he showed some acceleration after the catch on a 66-yard score, he would have been caught from behind by the second defender if not for his stiff arm. He's fast enough to get down field on play action passes, but he's not a true vertical threat. He had some difficulty beating the jam early in the first quarter, but I didn't see anyone jam him for the rest of the half. He tried to use his hands to fight off the contact, but he wound up carrying the DB downfield. He was not the primary receiver on this play which was a screen pass.

Routes

He set up his break to the inside on a deep post by using his shoulders and footwork to make a slight dip to the outside before breaking inside on his 73-yard touchdown reception. Good job driving the defender back with his initial bust into his route on a 9-yard curl with 1:12 in the 1st QTR. He needs to do a better job of sinking his hips and minimizing his steps prior to his break. Good job coming back to the ball after making his break on a short curl underneath the shallow zone with 11:57 in the half on 2nd and 14. He anticipated the DB breaking on the pass and his steps toward the ball to attack the pass prevented an interception. Nicks got wide open on a corner route for a 25-yard score with 10:38 in the half. His route began in the slot and he looked inside to the QB before turning quickly to the outside. This look in, gave the CB the impression that the route was a slant and the DB bit too soon. The entire route was sold with Nicks' turn of the head and his eyes. The DB actually slipped trying to adjust back to Nick's break to the outside and he was wide open for the score.

Receiving

Nicks had a step on his CB with a DB also trailing on a deep post off play action with 7:29 in the 1st QTR. He tracked the ball by looking over his right shoulder. Just as the ball arrived, the CB cut under the pass that was slightly underthrown and tipped the ball. Nicks reached back and snatched the pass away from the CB, juggled it, and then secured the ball at the 20 yard line (53 yards from where the ball was released). He scored after dragging a defender for the final 10 yards on the play. Nicks caught a sideline pattern 30 yards down field on an option play with 5:02 in the 1st QTR. He was wide open due to the deception of the play: a WR throwing the ball off an end around. He turned back to the ball with his inside shoulder to catch the pass on the run with his hands at chest level. He then ran down the sideline for the score. He caught the 9-yard curl with his hands and chest level on 1st and 10 with 1:11 in the 1st QTR. He turned to the outside, but didn't gain anything more than the nine yards on the catch. Nicks caught a five-yard curl in zone coverage and turned it upfield for a nine-yard gain with 11:57 in the half. He caught the ball with his hands just as the DB over top was trying to defend the route. Nicks had an easy catch on a 25-yard corner route for a score on 3rd and 11 with 10:38 in the half. He turned his outside shoulder back to the QB and cradled the ball with his hands in stride to the pylon. Nicks made an incredible catch on a 3rd and 7 crossing route from right to left with 6:50 in the 3rd QTR. The ball was thrown behind Nicks and as he was turning back to the ball he got one hand on it, but was unable to gain total control over the pass. The ball went behind his left leg and between his legs as he was turning up field. As the CB trailed him, Nicks switch the ball from his left hand to his right and finally got control of the ball. All of this happened with Nicks on the run. He actually lost four yards trying to gain control of the ball. But when Nicks got control he ran up the left flat for a and eight-yard gain and a first down. Two plays later, he snatched a crossing route at the right hash by catching the ball over his head 12 yards downfield with 5:37 in the 3rd QTR. He caught a slant past the LOS between two defenders in tight coverage for a first down with 5:51 in the game. Good concentration to hold onto the ball in traffic and maintain control after the hit.

Elusiveness

Good job spinning to the inside of the DB who tried to jump the route on a five-yard curl so he could gain another four yards after the catch with 11:55 in the half. On his five-yard curl, he didn't keep the ball close to his body making the ball prone for a strip. After he finally gained control of the crossing route with 6:53 in the 3rd QTR he turned up the left flat and made a great pair of moves to get to the first down marker despite the DB blocking his path. He set up the defender with a shoulder shake and then spun to the inside, making the DB miss badly. He spun past the first down marker and into the head-on collision with a second DB, but he nearly spun away from that hit and needed to be gang-tackled by two additional defenders after the first DB hitting him head-on was holding on tight, but couldn't get the job done by himself.

Ball

Nicks held the ball too far from his body as he celebrated his 53-yard post catch off a deflection with 7:29 in the 1st QTR. He did managed to hang onto the ball with his large hands while dragging the defender to the end zone. Good job carrying the ball under his right arm down the right sideline after catching a 36-yard pass for a 66-yard score with 4:57 in the 1st QTR. He also held the ball away from the defender as he stiff-armed the defender down the sideline. He carried the ball with his left hand on gain after catching acrossing route by turning up the left sideline for eight yards with 6:51 in the 3rd QTR. He once again held the ball like a loaf of bread in that hand as he did a shoulder shake to set up the spin move to the inside. He needs to be more consistent with ball protection.

Balance

He rarely goes down with initial contact, he'll fight for extra yards and often needs to be gang tackled in the secondary. This happened on a five-yard curl that he took for a nine-yard gain with 11:55 in the 1st QTR. He was wrapped by the second defender attempting to tackle him and he was fighting to move forward before he had two more players jump on him to finally bring Nicks down.

Blocking

Good job coming from his position split wide left and running to the safety approaching the box near left end at the LOS. He hit the safety and pushed him off the LOS, turning him away from the pile where the RB was running up the left hash - good hustle to get there. On the next play, he locked onto the CB and turned him away from the LOS using his hands very well and overpowering the smaller CB. On 3rd and 2 of the same series, Nicks locked onto the same CB and drove him inside as the play design had the RB running to Nicks' edge. The initial push Nicks got was good enough for the RB to get the first down before the CB could slip the block and pursue the RB at the sideline. The play was called back on a holding penalty. He's very aggressive coming from the slot or wide into the defensive backfield to block down the safety to seal the corner. He did this on a 2nd and 6 run for seven yards with 7:55 in the 1st QTR. He aggressively shielded his CB on a 12-yard run on 3rd and 7 for a first down from the UNC one yard line with 1:53 in the 3rd QTR. Another strong effort as a blocker on a run with 8:45 in the game. He got a good push on the CB and drove him away from the play.

Vision

Power

Nicks' size allows him to drag smaller defenders for extra yardage. He caught a 53-yard post off a deflection and was wrapped at the waist at the 10 yard line. He was able to keep his legs moving while twisting and turning to get to the end zone. He extended the ball over the plane before he was brought down on the play. Good balance to run out of an ankle tackle down the sideline and then use his inside arm to stiff arm the second defender and knock the opponent to the ground on a 66-yard reception for his second score with 4:58 in the 1st QTR. He tried to turn outside and stiff arm the CB after catching a nine-yard curl, but his missed the defender with the stiff arm and was brought down by the ankles for no gain. He ran out of an ankle tackle and then stiff armed a safety at the 10 yard line on a 2nd and 8 reception on a cross that resulted in a 21-yard gain.

Durability

He got run up the leg on a block in the 3rd QTR with 2:00 left, but he shook off the nick and continued to play.

Character

Difficult childhood. Has two brothers in prison. Moved around some. There will be some concerns about his pro day performance where he didn't run the 40 and he gained 14 pounds a month after the combine. It's quite plausible Nicks gained that much weight by not adjusting his diet after injuring his hamstring in the 40-yard dash at the combine if he had to cease training to let it heal. It's very plausible for a younger man to gain and lose that much weight. The concern will come if he's not in shape by the time he reports to a training camp.

The Gut Check's WR Checklist Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

89

- Can physically break jam [2pts]:
- Can use elusiveness to break jam [2pts]:
- Uses body to shield defender from the ball [3pts]:
- Creates separation with burst out of breaks [5pts]:
- Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes [2pts]:
- Runs precise routes [5pts]:
- Finds opening in zone coverage [5pts]:
- Adjusts to QB when play breaks down [3pts]:
- Awareness of sideline [2pts]:
- Catches ball with hands first [5pts]:
- Adjusts to the ball in the air [2pts]:
- Catches ball well with back to the line of scrimmage [2pts]:
- Catches ball in tight coverage [5pts]:
- Catches ball in high traffic areas [3pts]:
- Consistently holds onto the ball when hit [4pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to make difficult catch [1pt]:
- Makes receptions on catch able balls consistently [5pts]:
- Effective lower body jukes while on the run [2pts]:
- Effective upper body jukes while on the run [2pts]:
- Avoids direct shots [2pts]:
- Effective stop-start movements [2pts]:
- Effective lateral movement [2pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to carry ball with either hand [1pt]:
- Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:
- Maintains control of ball when hit [5pts]:
- Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:
- High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit from an indirect angle [2pts]:
- Demonstrates effort with assignments [2pts]:
- Demonstrates willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [2pts]:
- Displays patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [1pt]:
- Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [2pts]:
- Leg power and drives through arm tackles [1pt]:
- Effective stiff arm [1pt]:
- Good body lean/Finishes runs [1pts]:
- Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [2pts]:
- Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities [1pt]:
- Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:
- No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:
- No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career [5pts]:

Game Stats

Target:
Missed Target:
Drops:
Juggles:
Dropped After Contact:
Rec:
Rec After Contact:
Difficult Rec:
Rec Yards:
Yards After Catch:
Yards per Catch:
Rec Tds:
Yards per Td:
Rush Att:
Rush Yds:
Rush Tds:
Fumbles:

Category Scores

Separation Score:
Routes Score:
Receiving Score:
Elusiveness Score:
BHandling Score:
Balance Score:
Blocking Score:
Vision Score:
Power Score:
Durability Score:

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Michael Crabtree

Date: 11/1/2008

Opponent: Texas

Overall Strengths

He shows some subtle techniques at getting separation that include varying the speed of his routes at spots a defender doesn't usually see. He attacks the football and is capable of snatching the ball. He has very strong hands and can rip the ball away from the opposition. He is a very physical receiver with balance, power, and skill at adjusting to the ball in the air. He works well with his quarterback and as demonstrated, is capable of clutch plays. He may need some refinement with defeating the press, but he showed he can deliver a punch and manhandle a CB at the line.

Overall Weaknesses

He doesn't carry the ball with good ball security. He had some repeated ankle trouble this season but didn't miss significant time and played through it. I didn't see him get behind coverage on vertical routes. I think he has decent speed, but he's quicker than fast. Other than top end speed, Crabtree has everything you want from an NFL receiver. He's a physical player along the lines of a Cris Carter or Anquan Boldin. More accurately, if you blended Boldin's physical style with Fitzgerald's ability to catch the ball in traffic, you'd get Crabtree.

Separation

Nice acceleration into the the reception and then past the pursuing LB's diving tackle for a nine-yard gain on his smash screen reception with 3:01 in the 1st QTR. On the comeback that I describe under the Balance heading in this analysis, Crabtree showed a very physical nature with his DB on the initial hitch. The DB tried to jam him at the LOS and Crabtree delivered a simultaneous punch with both hands to his chest, knocking the CB backwards and forcing the defender to move involuntarily to the inside of Crabtree to retain his balance. He was called on as pass interference penalty with 6:09 in the game, but he simply ran into the DB about 3-4 yards downfield while coming out of his break and the contact wasn't not a push off. Crabtree was just too big for the DB to keep his balance.

Routes

Crabtree ran a short in route on a 3rd and 5 with 13:51 in the 1st QTR. He ran the route at what appeared to be 3/4 speed against zone coverage, but when he came out of his break and saw the defender in the middle taking over zone responsibility from the CB, he made a very sudden move with his upper body to give the defender the impression he was breaking the route up the seam before turning back to the QB and coming back to the football. This created excellent separation and was a subtle - effective move. Crabtree did something else that was very subtle and effective with his routes on his next target. He was running what looked like a square-in when he turned back to the LOS and came back to his QB who was rolling right. He actually ran towards the sideline and used his shoulder to bump the CB as he made an attempt for the ball. This knocked the CB down but because he still technically cutting in front rather than running through him, the officials didn't call interference. Not sure if this was something he consciously thought about, but it was a smooth reaction. The backshoulder fade was a well-run route. The opposing CB lined up a yard off Crabtree before the snap. Crabtree made a move that was kind of like a hop step with his inside foot jabbing towards the middle of the field before angling back to the outside. This opened the hips of the corner to the inside as Crabtree got outside position. When the CB made the adjustment to turn back to the outside, Crabtree was already turning inside to catch the ball. Crabtree seems to move 3/4 speed until he has to make his opponent miss. And what I mean is misread a route, a move, or a chance at the ball, etc. He really attacks the football at the end of his routes. He did this on smash screen for a nine-yard gain on 2nd 10 with 3:01 in the 1st QTR.

Receiving

Crabtree's first catch was a comeback along the right hash for six yards on a 3rd and 5 with 13:42 in the 1st QTR. He did a good job coming back to his QB who had move to his right to avoid pressure. He caught the hard-thrown ball with his hands as he was running back to the football. Excellent diving catch with his hands near the right sideline after working back to the QB. He extended his body to the left, cutting off the defender's angle to the ball and used both hands to catch the ball, keeping his feet inbounds as his upper body fell to the sideline. On a 3rd and 10, he caught a back shoulder fade just past the end marker with his hands as the CB was coming over the top in an attempt to jump the route. He pulled it down and gained 8 more yards on the play. Good job catching the ball with his hands on a smash screen with 3:01 in the 1st QTR in a 2nd and 10 situation from the Texas 47 yardline. He consistently snatches the ball with his hands. His eighth catch was a WR screen he took behind his blockers at the sideline for six yards. Harrell overthrew a quick slant with 12:00 in the game on a 2nd and 7 from Texas 9-yard line. Harrell overthrew Crabtree on a fade route. The WR made a leaping attempt, but not only was the ball too high it was also too far out of bounds. Crabtree's winning catch was a 28-yard stop fade that he caught with his hands at the six and pulled away from the DB's grasp while keeping himself inbounds to run the ball in for the winning score with :01 left.

Eloiveness

He has enough quickness to side-step defenders and he has the power to make lateral cuts. He won't be able to make anyone miss in the open field, but he has enough agility to set up defenders in the open field to either run through them or around them.

Ball

Good job carrying the ball under his sideline arm on the passes he caught at the right hash or right sideline in the 1st QTR. Crabtree carried the ball under his outside arm on a flanker screen with 8:47 in the half, but he doesn't hold the ball high and tight. The ball was ripped out of his grasp as he was fighting for extra yardage against a group of defenders with 8:46 in the half.

Balance

Crabtree came back to the QB on a 2nd and 9 with 2:31 in the half. He attacked the ball, catching it with his hands, as he was running back to it at the 13 yardline with a DB trailing fast. He turned upfield towards the sideline as his momentum took him back to the 15 yard line. Where the CB who was covering Morris near the sideline delivered a shoulder first hit to Crabtree's left leg, knocking the WR back to the 22 yard line a yard behind the LOS. But Crabtree put his left hand in the ground and maintained his balance and then lifted this arm to brush past the second defender diving to clean up the play. He then was met head-on by a third defender who he hit with this outside shoulder and spun off to the inside at the 15 yard line before diving forward back to the 13. Great demonstration of balance in the face of four defenders to gain five yards after getting knocked back five yards.

Blocking

He was the lead blocker for a WR screen on 1st and 10 with 5:24 in the half, but he completely misdiagnosed the angle of his assignment and watched him make the tackle before flopping to the ground in an attempt to get some kind of hit on him. On a 2nd and 10 play with 8:50 in the 3rd QTR, Crabtree made a great block on the CB to seal the play on a WR screen at the left sideline. He delivered a hard enough blow that you could hear his shoulder pads colliding with the defender.

Vision

Crabtree gained six yards on a 3rd and 5 reception with 13:42 in the 1st QTR. He showed good awareness of the first down marker when he caught the ball, because his momentum carried him behind the marker, but he immediate dove forward once he got his footing so he could insure he made the first down. He caught a flanker screen with 8:50 in the half at the 12 yard line and weaved his way around blocks at the 14, 22, and 26 yard lines. He set each block up by dipping one way then cutting back to the inside or outside of the block to avoid the pursuit. It was like he was weaving little "S"s every five yards for nearly 20 yards. He fumbled the ball away as he tried to lean for an extra yard to the 30-yard line. His next flanker screen came with 4:43 in the half on a 2nd and 3 and he did a good job folling his blockers past the marker and out of bounds for a five-yard gain.

Power

Crabtree has the build to bully smaller corners. He caught a 10-yard sideline fade and gained 8 yards on the play, nearly half of them with the CB pulling on his jersey as he ran down the right sideline. Crabtree caught a ball over the middle 12 yards past the LOS with 9:14 in the 3rd QTR and as he came down, there were three defenders within two yards of him. #13 was coming from the left sideline; #7 was over top, and #21 was also over top. Crabtree made a quick first move to the inside as #21 grabbed his ballcarrying arm and then the jersey. Crabtree lowered his shoulders into a collision with #7, knocking #7 to the ground with #21 hanging nito him at the 46 yardline as the WR continued driving his legs and leaned forward to the 50. Kirk Herbstreit says on the telecast that analysts he talks with say he reminds them of Andre Johnson.

Durability

Crabtree limped off the field with an apparent foot or ankle injury after his first catch with 13:41 in the 1st QTR. The left ankle was wrapped during this first drive and he returned to the game soon after. His ankle has bothered him much of this season and he's still producing.

Character

The Gut Check's WR Checklist Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

- Can physically break jam [2pts]:
- Can use elusiveness to break jam [2pts]:
- Uses body to shield defender from the ball [3pts]:
- Creates separation with burst out of breaks [5pts]:
- Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes [2pts]:
- Runs precise routes [5pts]:
- Finds opening in zone coverage [5pts]:
- Adjusts to QB when play breaks down [3pts]:
- Awareness of sideline [2pts]:
- Catches ball with hands first [5pts]:
- Adjusts to the ball in the air [2pts]:
- Catches ball well with back to the line of scrimmage [2pts]:
- Catches ball in tight coverage [5pts]:
- Catches ball in high traffic areas [3pts]:
- Consistently holds onto the ball when hit [4pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to make difficult catch [1pt]:
- Makes receptions on catch able balls consistently [5pts]:
- Effective lower body jukes while on the run [2pts]:
- Effective upper body jukes while on the run [2pts]:
- Avoids direct shots [2pts]:
- Effective stop-start movements [2pts]:
- Effective lateral movement [2pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to carry ball with either hand [1pt]:
- Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:
- Maintains control of ball when hit [5pts]:
- Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:
- High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit from an indirect angle [2pts]:
- Demonstrates effort with assignments [2pts]:
- Demonstrates willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [2pts]:
- Displays patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [1pt]:
- Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [2pts]:
- Leg power and drives through arm tackles [1pt]:
- Effective stiff arm [1pt]:
- Good body lean/Finishes runs [1pts]:
- Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [2pts]:
- Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities [1pt]:
- Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:
- No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:
- No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career [5pts]:

Game Stats

Target:
Missed Target:
Drops:
Juggles:
Dropped After Contact:
Rec:
Rec After Contact:
Difficult Rec:
Rec Yards:
Yards After Catch:
Yards per Catch:
Rec Tds:
Yards per Td:
Rush Att:
Rush Yds:
Rush Tds:
Fumbles:

Category Scores

Separation Score:
Routes Score:
Receiving Score:
Elusiveness Score:
BHandling Score:
Balance Score:
Blocking Score:
Vision Score:
Power Score:
Durability Score:

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Mike Wallace

Date: 1/2/2009

Opponent: Texas Tech

Overall Strengths

Wallace reminds me of Brandon Lloyd in terms of his size, but he's much faster. He catches the ball well and capable of bringing down a pass in coverage on deep balls. I liked that he demonstrated the ability to vary his speed and burst at the end of a route in tight coverage. He can accelerate quickly after making the catch. Wallace turns his hips well and sells the double move effectively. I think he has a chance to develop into a quality slot receiver with deep ball potential in the NFL, but I'm not sure if he can be more than a one-dimensional guy.

Overall Weaknesses

He can sink his hips into a route, but he still needs work with his breaks. He's at this stage a one-dimensional player who works best on crosses, slants or getting deep from the perimeter. He sometimes catches the ball too close to his body and he lacks the patience to take advantage of his great speed in the open field as a runner or return specialist. He's a shield off blocker at best. His speed will catch many an eye, but he'll need to learn to work out of press coverage to have any opportunity to be an every down threat in the pros.

Separation

He's got the speed to get deep on just about any CB in college football. On 1st and 10 with :27 in the opening quarter, Wallace put a double move on the CB along the right side of the formation and got five yards of separation with the move and acceleration past the defender. The QB overthrew the pass by four yards. Wallace clearly beat the safety and the CB on a 41-yard post on 2nd and 8 with 12:01 in the half, but the ball was underthrown and he had to slow down and turn back to the ball coming over his inside shoulder to catch the ball with the CB wrapping him on the play. Wallace demonstrated a last-second burst on a deep post with 6:04 in the half, but the pass was overthrown and well outside of the receiver's path. I was impressed with his burst considering he was facing a CB playing about nine yards off him at the LOS and the defender immediately turned and ran with the snap, reading deep pass all the way. This ability to burst late in a route is a good skill for a vertical threat especially in bracketed coverage.

Routes

Excellent job selling the out and up on the CB in single coverage with :27 in the 1st QTR. He sank his hips and turned his hips to the sideline, baiting the CB to turn outside. Wallace was then able to turn upfield and accelerate past him. Good route. Good depth on a short route to get behind the first down marker on his break for a first down with 4:38 in the half. It was a short cross on 2nd and 3 and he caught the ball beyond the line and gained a total of eight yards on the play. His opponent was giving him a deep cushion on a 15-yard reception on an out route with 2:36 in the 3rd QTR. He made a nice spin out of his break to get to the outside, but needs to work on sinking his hips and coming out of the break with fewer steps.

Receiving

His first catch was a deep slant in tight coverage for a 15-yard gain on 3rd and 9. He caught the ball at chest level with his hands close to his body. The CB tried to rip the ball from his grasp, but he managed to hang on as he was brought to the ground with 3:15 in the 1st QTR. Wallace caught a 41-yard score with 12:01 in the half. The WR nearly dropped the pass as it went through his hands, but he was able to retrieve it off his thigh pad and rip it from the CB's grasp. Good concentration and difficult catch. He ran a quick cross that he caught into his body on 2nd and 3 with 4:38 in the half and gained five yards after the catch for a total gain of eight yards. He leapt into the air at the sideline on a 2nd and 8 out route to catch the ball at chest level with his hands before he was knocked out of bounds for a 15-yard gain with 2:43 in the 3rd QTR. He didn't need to leave his feet on the play.

Elusiveness

Wallace is very quick and he's good at turning his hips and changing direction in tight quarters, both as a route runner and runner after the catch.

Ball

He carries the ball too far from his body when running and he dropped the ball after fielding his third kickoff. He was trying to secure it to his body as he dropped it.

Balance

He was able to run out of an arm tackle and then spin to the inside of a hit at the right hash on his third return and gain another 10 yards on the play. If he were able to maintain his footing after this hit, he had the entire left side of the field open. He nearly did it, but fell once he cross the left hash.

Blocking

He's not a very physical player and his blocks tend to be about positioning himself in front of the defender and shielding the opponent from the path to the ball. He doesn't deliver a powerful initial hit, but he does try to use his hands to stay in front of the opponent.

Vision

Wallace's first return was an 18-yarder on the opening kick. He followed the wedge up the right hash, but the four players were out numbered by the eight defenders within the area and Wallace was brought down when the defense easily broke the wedge. His second return went for 20 yards and he appeared to outrun the wedge ahead of him and this lack of patience prevented his teammates from setting up blocks. He needed to hang back a bit, find a lane and then use his burst. He had nowhere to run on an end around on 2nd and goal from the seven yard line with 10:57 in the 3rd QTR. He tried to take the right sideline, but TT did a great job of stringing out the play.

Power

Good job running out of an attempt to wrap him by the ankle after catching a three-yard cross and turning up the right hash for another five yards. He's not going to bounce off a lot of hits or break the grasp of players very often, but he is quick enough to break through trash.

Durability

Character

The Gut Check's WR Checklist Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

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- Can use elusiveness to break jam [2pts]:**
- Uses body to shield defender from the ball [3pts]:**
- Creates separation with burst out of breaks [5pts]:**
- Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes [2pts]:**
- Runs precise routes [5pts]:**
- Finds opening in zone coverage [5pts]:**
- Adjusts to QB when play breaks down [3pts]:**
- Awareness of sideline [2pts]:**
- Catches ball with hands first [5pts]:**
- Adjusts to the ball in the air [2pts]:**
- Catches ball well with back to the line of scrimmage [2pts]:**
- Catches ball in tight coverage [5pts]:**
- Catches ball in high traffic areas [3pts]:**
- Consistently holds onto the ball when hit [4pts]:**
- Demonstrates ability to make difficult catch [1pt]:**
- Makes receptions on catch able balls consistently [5pts]:**
- Effective lower body jukes while on the run [2pts]:**
- Effective upper body jukes while on the run [2pts]:**
- Avoids direct shots [2pts]:**
- Effective stop-start movements [2pts]:**
- Effective lateral movement [2pts]:**
- Demonstrates ability to carry ball with either hand [1pt]:**
- Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:**
- Maintains control of ball when hit [5pts]:**
- Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:**
- High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:**
- Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:**
- Maintains balance when hit from an indirect angle [2pts]:**
- Demonstrates effort with assignments [2pts]:**
- Demonstrates willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [2pts]:**
- Displays patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [1pt]:**
- Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [2pts]:**
- Leg power and drives through arm tackles [1pt]:**
- Effective stiff arm [1pt]:**
- Good body lean/Finishes runs [1pts]:**
- Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [2pts]:**
- Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities [1pt]:**
- Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:**
- No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:**
- No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career [5pts]:**

Game Stats

Target:
Missed Target:
Drops:
Juggles:
Dropped After Contact:
Rec:
Rec After Contact:
Difficult Rec:
Rec Yards:
Yards After Catch:
Yards per Catch:
Rec Tds:
Yards per Td:
Rush Att:
Rush Yds:
Rush Tds:
Fumbles:

Category Scores

Separation Score:
Routes Score:
Receiving Score:
Elusiveness Score:
BHandling Score:
Balance Score:
Blocking Score:
Vision Score:
Power Score:
Durability Score:

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Percy Harvin

Date: 1/8/2009

Opponent: Oklahoma

Overall Strengths

Harvin has a lot of skills to like. He's quick and fast, but runs with a veteran running back's vision. He follows blocks very well and hits the hole decisively. He doesn't shy away from contact and finishes runs well enough that he'll get the extra yard after the hit. He catches the football well with his hands and has very good footwork with his routes. He uses his upper and lower body well to choreograph moves at the LOS to get separation from coverage. He is an effective and aggressive blocker, although he's not extremely physical. He does a good job getting in body in front of an opponent and using his hands to turn a defensive back down field. He was effective playing hurt in this game (ankle/heel injury that kept him out of his last game).

Overall Weaknesses

Harvin does not carry the ball under his left arm. He lacks power as a runner and I did not see him make a difficult catch or come down with a ball in traffic or tight coverage. I'd like to see him versus press coverage.

Separation

On 3rd and 8 with 10:57 in the 1st QTR, Harvin's first target and catch was a crossing route from the slot position starting from the left side of the formation. He did a good job of chopping his feet off the line to get the CB covering him about two yards off the LOS to lean outside, which helped Harvin get a clean release to the inside. Harvin has some serious acceleration. On 1st and 10 with 3:08 in the 1st QTR, he caught swing pass that was essentially a screen play to the right flat. He allowed his blockers to set up down field, but once that happened, he showed excellent acceleration to get through a lane between two receivers. He demonstrated excellent speed and burst on a 45-yard run with 5:05 in the half.

Routes

Harvin ran a stutter and go from the slot on 3rd and 6 with 13:33 in the 3rd QTR. The CB was lined up 5 yards from Harvin at the snap of the ball. Harvin did a nice job of driving towards the defender with his first few steps, then used a good stutter step and shoulder fake to the inside to freeze his defender and get to the outside. When the ball was in the air, Harvin had two yards of separation on the defender, but the ball was overthrown. Having made a diving attempt to catch the ball over his head, but it was a little more than a hand length away.

Receiving

Harvin's first target/catch was a 3rd and 8 crossing route from left to right with 10:56 in the 1st QTR. The QB threw the five-yard pass with a little more zip than necessary and the ball was a bit behind Harvin, but the WR did a good job using his hands to catch the pass that was just behind his inside shoulder and bring it into his body while on the run. He gained 19 yards on the play. His next catch was a swing pass from the right flat position on the left side of the formation on 1st and 10 with 3:07 in the 1st QTR. He caught the ball thrown high behind his back shoulder with his hands and turned up field to get 15 yards on the play and a first down. Harvin's next pass was a seven-yard gain off a swing pass/screen play he caught with his last target. This one came with 10:00 in the half. He caught the ball with his hands at chest level in the right flat and turned towards the right sideline as he got within a yard of the LOS and past the right hash and he gained seven yards on the play. On 3rd and 4 he caught a short hitch for five yards with 9:17 in the half underneath zone coverage for the 1st down. He had to get low and fall to the ground to make the catch. Harvin ran a post pattern on 2nd and 10 with 6:40 in the 3rd QTR and had to turn back to the QB to make a leaping catch with his hands extended over his head on the high throw. As he got his hands on the ball the CB was able to pull the ball away from his hands as the safety laid a hit to his chest. If the QB throws the ball earlier and leads the WR to the middle of the field, the WR could have run under the ball for the score. He dropped the ball after contact, but it would have been a highly difficult catch to make.

Eloiveness

After Harvin caught his first pass, a crossing route three yards past the LOS on 3rd and 8 with 10:57 in the 1st QTR, Harvin had the original CB in coverage in pursuit, the safety coming from the middle of the field and a CB coming from the right flat over top. When Harvin got to the 30 yard line (the first down marker), he did a good job of turning to the right while running at full speed and turning his hips upfield just in time for the safety over top to miss Harvin with his diving tackle attempt. Harvin was finally pushed out of bounds by the original CB in coverage for a 19-yard gain. He has very quick and nifty footwork both as a runner and receiver. Harvin made a really nice dip to the inside of his pulling G and then another to the outside of two defenders in the open field for a 45-yard gain with 5:11 in the half. He has very effective stop-start move as a runner.

Ball

Harvin carried the crossing route reception under his right arm as he turned up the right sideline with 10:57 in the 1st QTR. He carried the first few targets under his right arm, but even when he was running down the left flat, he was carrying it in the correct arm because the defense was coming from the sideline in pursuit. When he gained 12 yards around left end with 11:37 in the 4th QTR, he carried the ball under his right arm although most of the pursuit closest to him was coming from his right side.

Balance

Good balance to drag a defender extra yardage on a 45-yard run. He isn't going to bounce off solid hits, but he does a good job of getting low and falling forward, so his technique and balance are good but not effective as an every down runner. He runs like a good punt returner, which is an asset for a team using him out of the backfield or on short passes.

Blocking

On a play out of the spread where the QB faked the ball to Harvin and then followed the WR/RB up the middle, Harvin did not attempt to hit any defender he encountered and the QB was dropped for a loss with 10:38 in the half. On 1st and 10 from the 36 with 9:12 in the 3rd QTR, Harvin came off his position in the slot and went after the safety on a QB keeper. He did a good job staying patient so he could gauge the correct angle to engage the safety before getting his hands on the defender and turning him away from the play. Not a hard hit, but a good job figuring out how to use his body to shield the defender. On the next play, he demonstrated the willingness to be aggressive on a run play where he was lined up in the slot to the left of the formation and went after the CB. He got his hands into the pads of the CB and drove him back until the whistle blew with 8:38 in the 3rd QTR.

Vision

Harvin came in motion and lined up next to the QB in the shotgun, flanking the QB's left side on a 1st and 10 with 10:01 in the 1st QTR. He took the hand off and pressed the hole to set up the TE coming across the formation to block down on the OLB in the hold off LG, but the RDE shot through and hit Harvin in the legs two yards behind the LOS and took the WR down. On 2nd and 10 with 4:15 in the 1st QTR, Harvin took a direct snap in a three-WR set against nine men in the box and a 10th shooting up to the left end just as Harvin got the snap. Harvin took a step to the right and then bent the run up the left hash, squeezing behind two pulling blockers to the left side for the WR to pop out the other side of the line with a five-yard gain. On his second swing pass with 10:02 in the half, he did a terrific job anticipating the safety shooting between blocks at the LOS and cutting back to the inside, but slowing his steps and then making a jump cut to the inside to slip the safety's tackle attempt before lowering his shoulder into the pile for a seven-yard gain. Harvin rushed for 45 yards after motioning from the slot to flank the QB's right side in the shotgun from their own three yard line with 5:20 in the half. The run was a counter play, where Harvin took a step to the right before turning back to the left to take the ball. He followed his pulling G and pulling C to the left side and made a lightning quick cut inside the G through a lane up the right hash for six yards before dipping away from the safety coming from the left and making another slight dip to the outside of the CB in the right flat at the 12 yard line. When he crossed the 1st down marker at the 13 yard line it was a footrace down the sideline before he cut the play back to the inside at the 35 yard line behind three down field blockers. But he was dragged down by the shirt tail at the 48 yard line. Harvin's first score came with 4:22 in the 3rd QTR out of the variant of the Wildcat formation. He took the snap and ran around right end, following his blocks, dipping the play to the inside when he found an opening and getting low as he dove into the endzone for a two-yard score. One thing that makes Harvin an effective runner between the tackles is his ability to get in and out of small spaces and run with enough patience to take shorter steps until he needs to burst through the lane. He got three yards on a play with :49 in the 3rd QTR where the OU defense got good penetration at the left side of the line where Harvin was heading, but he continued to stay patient until he found the crease to squeeze through for a three-yard gain on what could have been a three-yard loss. Harvin got great blocking up front on a 4th QTR counter play where he came in motion to flank the QB to the left before running counter action at the snap. He took the hand off and followed both the pulling LG and LT to the right side, running up the gap behind the LT and there was seven yards of open space between the LOS and the next human being in the area. He burst past the the DB at the right hash at the first down marker and dipped to the right sideline behind a down field block by the WR. He got 52 yards before he was knocked out of bounds by the safety. He gained 12 yards off left end with 11:36 in the

Power

He's stronger than he looks. Some of that power is a product of a really strong burst. On 1st and 10 with 3:07 in the 1st QTR, Harvin took a swing pass up the left flat and accelerated between two receivers, hitting the CB as the CB came from the left sideline and tried to wrap up Harvin. But the WR was able to drag this CB from the 34 yardline where the WR lowered his shoulder into the collision, all the way to 39 yard line before he nearly spun out of the CB's tackle at the 41. He has what many people would term slippery power. He's fast, understands how to run with leverage and moves away from the brunt of impact or makes the impact first to diminish the defender's initial hit. Although it was two dips away from pursuit that helped Harvin gain 45 yards on a run with 5:11 in the half, Harvin also lowered his shoulder into the safety as he was dipping away so when Harvin's shoulder hit the defender he had a distinct position advantage when he made contact and easily got past him. On his 45-yard run in the 2nd QTR, he did a good job using his left arm to brush past the LB at the end of the hole at the five yard line before dipping to the right flat for the rest of the yardage. He actually used that arm three other times to ward off defenders and maintain some distance from them throughout the run.

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Percy Harvin

Date: 1/8/2009

Opponent: Oklahoma

Durability
Character

He had an injured right ankle a few weeks ago and is playing on pain killers in his game. He told the media he had no difficulty running straight, but experienced pain running laterally.

Sample Tight End Checklists and Profiles

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

73

- Can physically break jam [2pts]:
- Can use elusiveness to break jam [2pts]:
- Uses body to shield defender from the ball [3pts]:
- Creates separation with burst out of breaks [5pts]:
- Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes [2pts]:
- Runs precise routes [5pts]:
- Finds opening in zone coverage [5pts]:
- Adjusts to QB when play breaks down [3pts]:
- Awareness of sideline [2pts]:
- Catches ball with hands first [5pts]:
- Adjusts to the ball in the air [2pts]:
- Catches ball well with back to the line of scrimmage [2pts]:
- Catches ball in tight coverage [5pts]:
- Catches ball in high traffic areas [3pts]:
- Consistently holds onto the ball when hit [4pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to make difficult catch [1pt]:
- Makes receptions on catchable balls consistently [5pts]:
- Effective lower body jukes while on the run [1pt]:
- Effective upper body jukes while on the run [1pt]:
- Avoids direct shots [1pt]:
- Effective stop-start movements [1pt]:
- Effective lateral movements [1pt]:
- Demonstrates ability to carry ball with either hand [1pt]:
- Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:
- Maintains control of ball when hit [5pts]:
- Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:
- High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit from an indirect angle [2pts]:
- Demonstrates effort with assignments [2pts]:
- Demonstrates willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [2pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to get lower than defender and drive forward [3pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to move laterally and shield defender from target [2pts]:
- Displays patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [1pt]:
- Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [1pts]:
- Leg power and drives through arm tackles [1pt]:
- Effective stiff arm [1pt]:
- Good body lean/Finishes runs [1pts]:
- Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [2pts]:
- Missed fewer than 10% of games [1pt]:
- Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:
- No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:
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Game Stats

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Rec Yards:
Yards After Catch:
Yards per Catch:
Rec Tds:
Yards per Td:
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Rush Yds:
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Fumbles:

Category Scores

Separation Score:
Routes Score:
Receiving Score:
Elusiveness Score:
BHandling Score:
Balance Score:
Blocking Score:
Vision Score:
Power Score:
Durability Score:

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Anthony Hill

Date: 12/29/2008

Opponent: Rutgers

Overall Strengths:

I like Anthony Hill because he has the prototypical size for a tight end and he could surprise an NFL team if given the chance. He is a terrific run and pass blocker. He can dominate an LB with his strength and he shows tenacity and patience on downfield blocks. He is physical with 1st and 2nd level defenders. He has the patience and on-field awareness to make good decisions releasing from the LOS or blocking. He has very good hands and catches the ball well in tight coverage or with his back to the QB. A good leader on and off the field. Brandon Pettigrew has similar dimensions as Hill, but lacks the same skill as a blocker. I think a team will find a way to use Hill as a second TE and if he increases his athleticism, he could take on a bigger role in the future.

Overall Weaknesses:

If he were faster, he'd be a terrific prospect, but he lacks great speed and burst, and he isn't very agile as a runner. Hill is not a consistent threat as a receiver in this offense, but if he can get a little faster, he might grow into a more viable threat.

Separation

Hill looked slow coming off the LOS on a 2nd and 7 pass play with 14:00 in the half. The DE was able to get a solid hit on the TE as he came off the line and run step for step with him 10 yards down field. He showed good strength to get a strong push off the DE, jamming him at the line on a 2nd and 12 pass play with 3:51 in the half. Despite his exhibition of strength, he still demonstrated a lack of quickness to get separation on the DE. He did manage to angle his body away from contact to squeeze between the LB and the safety up the right seam to catch a pass for a 21-yard gain on 3rd and 7 with 11:51 in the game. As the game wore on, he looked better getting separation down the seam. He side-stepped a defender and used his hands to avoid the jam on a 2nd and 10 route with 7:08 in the game. Although he wasn't targeted, he got significant separation due to his move.

Routes

Good out route in zone coverage with :29 in the game. He doesn't do a good job of sinking his hips, but he found the soft spot in the zone to get open.

Receiving

His first target was a 3rd and 7 seam pass with 11:51 in the game. He turned back to the pass with his inside shoulder, catching the ball with his hands near his back shoulder as the DB was trailing him by a yard as the ball landed in his hands. On 3rd and 9 with 9:25 in the game, he caught a drag route with a delayed release from the LOS. He caught the ball with his hands as the ball landed over his outside shoulder at the first down marker eight yards down field. He did an excellent job keeping his balance to turn the play up field despite his momentum carrying Hill towards the boundary. The result was 16-yard score. His final catch was a 14-yard out that he caught at helmet level with his hands and tapped both feet inbounds before going out of bounds to stop the clock with :29 in the game.

Elasticity

He's not going to make anyone miss as a runner after the catch, but he does a good job of turning his shoulders and avoiding contact at the LOS when he faces a jam coming off the line.

Ball Handling

On his first catch, a 21-yard seam route, he tucked the ball quickly under his right arm away from the trailing defender who was only a yard behind him as he reached back to catch the pass with 11:49 in the game. He does need to make sure he holds the ball tighter to his body while running with it.

Balance

He's a mismatch in the secondary when it comes to staying upright against someone hitting him high.

Blocking

Hill was lined up on the right side of the line and came off the ball, got his hands into the DB's shoulder pads, and drove him back about 4 yards while turning his opponent's back to the sideline, and pancaking him as the RB ran through the gap he created on 1st and 10 with 14:50 in the 1st QTR. He absolutely manhandled the OLB on a 6-yard run by the RB on 2nd and 5 with 11:05 in the 1st QTR. He got into the LB's shoulder pads and drove him outside the right hash, ending with a shove that sent the defender backwards after the RB got three yards past them. Good job initially holding off the edge rusher before releasing into the flat on a 2nd and 13 pass play that gave the QB time to roll right and hit his WR on a 44-yard strike on a deep post with 7:54 in the 1st QTR. He misdiagnosed a run blitz by the CB at last minute and let the CB get into the back field while he blocked the OLB on 2nd and 10 with 3:50 in the 1st QTR. The misread was more good timing by the CB, but if he recognized the blitz, the RB probably doesn't lose two yards. He completely missed a cut block on his assigned man, the RDE, on a 1st and 10 run with 14:35 in the half. This RDE got down the LOS in pursuit to clip the RB in the ankle. He helped double team the RDE on a 3rd and 1 pass, pushing the DE further into the line as the QB rolled right and passed right for a first down with 13:15 in the half. A really good job in pass protection on 1st and 10 with 12:21 in the half. He got good hand placement and leverage on the DE and turned his opponent's back to the left sideline as the QB was rolling left, neutralizing the DE's pass rush completely. I like his tendency to be aggressive. On a 1st and 10 run with 8:00 in the half, he took advantage of the DE getting out of position and drove into the defender's side, pushing him far off the LOS. He may not have a lot of speed, but he plays well enough as a blocker that he could either become a second TE or gain weight to become an offensive lineman. On 1st and 10 with 1:15 in the half, he missed the opportunity to hit the OLB stunting away from him, but he picked up the RDE. After the DE hit him once, the DE turn and ran to the outside to pursue the runner, and Hill kept his body in front of the DE and met him at the hash, delivering a good hit that knocked the DE two yards backwards and opened a cut back lane for the runner (the scrambling QB) to gain 16 yards on the play. This all happened at the LOS, but because the play was a broken play it really counts as a down field block. He dominated the OLB on 2nd down block with 9:27 in the 3rd QTR, getting a strong push off the LOS and then turning him to the outside.

Vision

As a runner his vision is generally good, but he's not a dynamic runner after the catch. He does seem to anticipate contact well enough to adjust his body coming out of his stance, as a blocker, and a receiver.

Power

He'll run through arm tackles or high hits and carry defenders for extra yardage if they try to wrap and drag him to the ground.

Durability

Character

When the team was 0-4, the team reported that Anthony Hill saved their season by calling a meeting before the Duke game and rallied his squad with that action.

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

82

- Can physically break jam [2pts]:
- Can use elusiveness to break jam [2pts]:
- Uses body to shield defender from the ball [3pts]:
- Creates separation with burst out of breaks [5pts]:
- Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes [2pts]:
- Runs precise routes [5pts]:
- Finds opening in zone coverage [5pts]:
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- Effective stop-start movements [1pt]:
- Effective lateral movements [1pt]:
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Vision Score:
Power Score:
Durability Score:

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Brandon Pettigrew

Date: 12/30/2008

Opponent: Oregon

Overall Strengths:

Pettigrew catches the ball well with his hands and can take a hit. He hangs onto the football effectively in traffic. He has good balance and when his shoulders are square he will run over defenders in the secondary. He's a very good straightline blocker, capable of getting lower than his assigned man, driving him off the LOS, and turning him away from the play. As an all-around combination of blocker and receiver, Pettigrew fits the mold of an every down tight end and this distinguishes him from much of his peers in this draft class.

Overall Weaknesses:

What concerns me most about Pettigrew is that he struggles as a blocker when asked to move laterally. He lacks elusiveness or lateral skill as a runner. He has a slow first step out of his stance, but it appears that can be corrected, because by step three he was accelerating nicely into his routes on a routine basis. If Pettigrew can improve his overall speed and quickness, he has enough upside as a receiver to be a highly effective every down tight end and a viable fantasy threat. But if his speed and agility remain as it is, I think he'll disappoint because he'll be one-dimensional as a blocker and receiver. I love what Pettigrew can do, but the things he can't do leaves me concerned his value is too high. He and Chase Coffman might be more similar than people think, except Coffman's hands and body control are special and Pettigrew is merely good at most aspects of the position with the exception of these few glaring issues.

Separation:

His initial release on a crossing route with 7:24 in the 1st QTR was slower than you would like to see - but by his third step he was able to accelerate more noticeably. He did a good job of getting inside the safety at the LOS so he could complete his route. Pettigrew had initial difficulty getting separation after blocking down on the DE during a 1st and 10 pass with 13:07 in the 3rd QTR from the 12 yard line. Because he got a bit jammed in his release and had to pick through traffic to get across field on a drag route, he didn't get enough depth on his route and the QB overthrew the pass, expecting his receiver to be in the endzone. On a 3rd and 14 seam route with 9:28 in the game, he had a step on the safety about 20 yards down field.

Routes:

Good job quickly turning out of his break on a deep cross 15 yards down field for the reception with 7:24 in the 1st QTR.

Receiving:

Pettigrew's first catch was off a play action roll where he had to execute a block on a DE to the inside before releasing on a flat route to the outside. He caught the ball over his back shoulder on the run four yards down field at the five yard line with a DB about a yard from him in pursuit. Pettigrew was able to gain another seven yards on the play with 8:40 in the 1st QTR. Pettigrew's second catch was a crossing route for 15 yards with 7:23 in the 1st QTR. He caught the ball 15 yards down field about five yards behind the LB and just in front of the safety coming head-on to hit him. He caught the ball with his hands while running towards the sideline, angling his back shoulder to the ball. Within a split-second of catching the ball, he was hit in the chest by the safety - a bang-bang play. Pettigrew had no problem holding onto the football despite getting knocked to the ground quickly from the hit. He gained nine yards on the same play/route he ran for his first catch. He caught the ball the same way and lowered his shoulder into the safety to get an extra yard on the play. His next catch was again the same route, but he slipped after catching the ball. Trying to turn to the inside, Pettigrew gained only a yard on the play. He dropped an in-cut on 2nd and 20 with 8:28 in the 3rd QTR. He cradled the ball into his body and dropped it when he tried to turn up field and spotted the DB coming towards him. His last catch was the same as his first catch from nearly the same situation (their own one yard line with 5:12 in the game). The caught the ball with his hands, turned up field, and dove across the first down marker to avoid a hit. This time he had to adjust to the QB rolling out a little further than the play was timed. He was overthrown on a drag route with 4:48 in the game.

Elusiveness:

I saw him dive away from contact, but no display of footwork to avoid defenders and stay upright.

Ball Handling:

He primarily carried the ball under his right arm in this game.

Balance:

Pettigrew was hit head-on after catching a flat route with 8:43 in the 1st QTR. The was able to run through the safety's blow and a hit from the CB in the back of his legs to carve out four additional yards after contact for the first down and an 11-yard gain.

Blocking:

Good block and release to a flat route on a designed roll to the right side with 8:44 in the 1st QTR from OSU's own one yard line. He was able to engage the DE in the shoulder pads and generate a push two yards towards the LOS as the QB executed a play fake before rolling right. As he began his roll, the TE had a good start into his release. He was able to jam, turn, and drive the same DE on the next play, a run by the QB around his end of the field for a three-yard gain. He didn't have his hands inside the defender's pads, but he had a firm grip on the defender and did a great job using his legs to drive the DE off the ball by positioning his body low. On the following play, he cut-blocked the DE to the ground and prevented the backside pursuit on a 16-yard gain by the RB to the opposite end. He had a much more difficult time coming off the line and running down field to make a block. He missed a few blocks in the 1st QTR when he had to move laterally to keep up with a LB. He nearly allowed the DE to run down the line to catch the RB on a run off his block near the goal line with 13:00 in the game. He struggles when he has to move laterally.

Vision:

Power:

Good job keeping his legs moving after contact from a safety on a flat pass he caught over his back shoulder. He gained seven yards after the catch and fell forward for the first down and an 11-yard gain with 8:41 in the 1st QTR. He lowered his shoulder into the safety for a nine-yard gain with 14:38 in the 1st QTR off the same kind of play he ran for his first catch, a flat route off a play action roll where he first blocked down on the DE before releasing to the outside.

Durability:

He was less effective at the beginning of the season due to a high ankle sprain.

Character:

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

Can physically break jam [2pts]:

Can use elusiveness to break jam [2pts]:

Uses body to shield defender from the ball [3pts]:

Creates separation with burst out of breaks [5pts]:

Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes [2pts]:

Runs precise routes [5pts]:

Finds opening in zone coverage [5pts]:

Adjusts to QB when play breaks down [3pts]:

Awareness of sideline [2pts]:

Catches ball with hands first [5pts]:

Adjusts to the ball in the air [2pts]:

Catches ball well with back to the line of scrimmage [2pts]:

Catches ball in tight coverage [5pts]:

Catches ball in high traffic areas [3pts]:

Consistently holds onto the ball when hit [4pts]:

Demonstrates ability to make difficult catch [1pt]:

Makes receptions on catchable balls consistently [5pts]:

Effective lower body jukes while on the run [1pt]:

Effective upper body jukes while on the run [1pt]:

Avoids direct shots [1pt]:

Effective stop-start movements [1pt]:

Effective lateral movements [1pt]:

Demonstrates ability to carry ball with either hand [1pt]:

Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:

Maintains control of ball when hit [5pts]:

Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:

High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:

Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:

Maintains balance when hit from an indirect angle [2pts]:

Demonstrates effort with assignments [2pts]:

Demonstrates willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [2pts]:

Demonstrates ability to get lower than defender and drive forward [3pts]:

Demonstrates ability to move laterally and shield defender from target [2pts]:

Displays patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [1pt]:

Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [1pts]:

Leg power and drives through arm tackles [1pt]:

Effective stiff arm [1pt]:

Good body lean/Finishes runs [1pts]:

Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [2pts]:

Missed fewer than 10% of games [1pt]:

Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:

No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:

No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career [5pts]:

Game Stats

Target:

Missed Target:

Drops:

Juggles:

Dropped After Contact:

Rec:

Rec After Contact:

Difficult Rec:

Rec Yards:

Yards After Catch:

Yards per Catch:

Rec Tds:

Yards per Td:

Rush Att:

Rush Yds:

Rush Tds:

Fumbles:

Category Scores

Separation Score:

Routes Score:

Receiving Score:

Elusiveness Score:

BHandling Score:

Balance Score:

Blocking Score:

Vision Score:

Power Score:

Durability Score:

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Dan Gronkowski

Date: 10/18/2008

Opponent: Wake Forest

Overall Strengths:

Gronkowski has good hands and can hold onto the ball after taking a hit. He has enough speed to get to the intermediate range of the field and shows enough agility to adjust to the ball in the air. He protects the ball well after the catch and has enough strength to break arm tackles and gain yardage after the reception. He is a very good run blocker, capable of hooking defenders at the ends, driving 1st and 2nd level defenders off the LOS or at least generating enough of a push to eliminate them from the play. Gronkowski may never be a star at his position, but I think he should at least make a roster and become a contributor capable of 20-30 receptions per season in the short range of the field if needed.

Overall Weaknesses:

His general method for getting separation is to push off a defender before he makes his break. He will need to learn how to make better breaks without getting physical with his opponent. There were a number of things I didn't get to see him do: run in the open field; face a jam at the line of scrimmage that he had to use foot work to elude; catch the ball with his back to the line of scrimmage; and run a route different than a hitch or seam route. I think he has potential to become a starting TE, because he has a nice blend of athleticism and receiving skills, but how dynamic of a receiver he'll be is still hard to say based on this evaluation. If he becomes a starter, I think he'll always be the guy that does a workman-like job but teams will look to replace if they find a more dynamic receiver who can also block. He's really going to best serve teams as their second TE.

Separation

Very quick release off the line of scrimmage from a three-point stance on the first play of the game. He wasn't thrown the ball, but he got into the second level of the defense with good quickness. He sank his hips into his break on a short turn around for the first down on a pass play with 5:25 in the 1st QTR. He didn't do a great job of it because he didn't sink his hips far enough, but he did it nonetheless. Good job pushing off the LB dropping in zone and being the first to hit the LB before the defender could try the same thing on a 7-yard hitch with 3:07 in the half.

Routes

He released from the line on a 3rd and 1 pass play and ran about 10 yards downfield towards the safety with 12:38 in the 1st QTR. But he didn't try to break before he reached the defender. Instead he hit the defender to create the separation and turn around. By the time he did this, a deep pass was released downfield. This wasn't a really well-run route. Good seam route 15 yards down field for a 20-yard gain with :58 in the half. He got a clean release from the line and ran past the LB in shallow zone, bending the route once behind the LB to open a good window for his QB. He rounded the out he ran into the left flat on a six-yard reception with :13 in the half, but he did get out of bounds to stop the clock.

Receiving

His first catch was a 10-yard hitch as the slot man in a bunch set off the left side of the formation with 5:24 in the 1st QTR. He caught the ball with his hands at helmet level and brought the ball quickly into his body away from the impending hit of the LB coming from the inside to get the first down. His next catch came with 3:07 in the half on the same play. It looked nearly identical to the first, but from the opposite side of the formation. He made a nice adjustment to the football on an 20-yard reception where 18 of those yards were gained on the pass downfield. He had to turn his shoulders back to the QB to catch the ball thrown to his outside shoulder. This helped him shield the ball from the defense as he caught the ball with his hands at chest level. He released off the LOS on a 1st down pass play and crossed the left hash towards the right hash before turning back to the inside. When he came out of his break he caught the ball between two defenders for a six-yard gain with :34 in the half. Good concentration to catch the football on an out-cut for six yards with :13 in the half. He caught the ball and immediately took a hard hit, spinning away from enough of it to get out of bounds. He caught the ball at chest level with his hands close to his body. He caught the same pass a play later for six yards with :07 in the half. He was overthrown on a pass down the middle to begin the 4th QTR with 14:13 left.

Eloiveness

He did a good job of turning away from the impending hit on a 10-yard hitch with 5:25 in the 1st QTR. This helped him protect the ball and lean forward with the LB wrapped around his waist to get the first down. Otherwise, he wasn't very elusive after the catch.

Ball Handling

He carried the ball strictly under his right arm in this game.

Balance

Gronkowski is big enough to be a physical mismatch for a lot of DBs. He showed the ability to deflect an on-coming hit on a reception with :13 in the half.

Blocking

His first block off the LOS came on the second offensive play of the game, a run up the middle with 13:39 in the 1st QTR. He got out of his stance quickly and waited for the LB to engage. And he was able to turn the LB well away from the line with good hand placement. He had a distinct size advantage over his opponent on this play. He was able to generate a push on the OLB when he came out of his three-point stance on a 3rd and 1 run on the opening play of the 1st QTR. Great hook block on the DE to seal the left edge on a 13-yard run with 3:54 in the 1st QTR. He turned the DE's back to the inside and was able to slow the DE's push to keep the edge open. Although he was knocked to the ground on a block on the DE during a 2nd and 5 run for a first down around right end, Gronkowski attacked the defender quickly and got enough of a push that when he was defeated on the play, he fell forward and the DE couldn't get over him to pursue the RB. Excellent job hooking the OLB into the backfield to open a lane and help the RB get six yards with 1:58 in the 1st QTR. He hooked the DE on a run with 10:18 in the half and prevented him from getting backside pursuit on a run.

Vision

Gronkowski demonstrated some awareness of where his opponents were in space as a receiver, making on miss after a catching a hitch, but he's not a dynamic runner after the catch who will be using his vision to outrun defenders for a significant gain.

Power

Gronkowski has decent strength can break tackles in the secondary as a runner, but he lacks the great speed or quickness to be a dynamic runner after the catch. He's more apt to run through a glancing blow and gain a few yards after the catch before he's gang tackled by a secondary and linebackers that catch up to him.

Durability

Character

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

82

Can physically break jam [2pts]:

Can use elusiveness to break jam [2pts]:

Uses body to shield defender from the ball [3pts]:

Creates separation with burst out of breaks [5pts]:

Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes [2pts]:

Runs precise routes [5pts]:

Finds opening in zone coverage [5pts]:

Adjusts to QB when play breaks down [3pts]:

Awareness of sideline [2pts]:

Catches ball with hands first [5pts]:

Adjusts to the ball in the air [2pts]:

Catches ball well with back to the line of scrimmage [2pts]:

Catches ball in tight coverage [5pts]:

Catches ball in high traffic areas [3pts]:

Consistently holds onto the ball when hit [4pts]:

Demonstrates ability to make difficult catch [1pt]:

Makes receptions on catchable balls consistently [5pts]:

Effective lower body jukes while on the run [1pt]:

Effective upper body jukes while on the run [1pt]:

Avoids direct shots [1pt]:

Effective stop-start movements [1pt]:

Effective lateral movements [1pt]:

Demonstrates ability to carry ball with either hand [1pt]:

Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:

Maintains control of ball when hit [5pts]:

Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:

High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:

Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:

Maintains balance when hit from an indirect angle [2pts]:

Demonstrates effort with assignments [2pts]:

Demonstrates willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [2pts]:

Demonstrates ability to get lower than defender and drive forward [3pts]:

Demonstrates ability to move laterally and shield defender from target [2pts]:

Displays patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [1pt]:

Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [1pts]:

Leg power and drives through arm tackles [1pt]:

Effective stiff arm [1pt]:

Good body lean/Finishes runs [1pts]:

Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [2pts]:

Missed fewer than 10% of games [1pt]:

Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:

No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:

No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career [5pts]:

Game Stats

Target:

Missed Target:

Drops:

Juggles:

Dropped After Contact:

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Difficult Rec:

Rec Yards:

Yards After Catch:

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Rush Yds:

Rush Tds:

Fumbles:

Category Scores

Separation Score:

Routes Score:

Receiving Score:

Elusiveness Score:

BHandling Score:

Balance Score:

Blocking Score:

Vision Score:

Power Score:

Durability Score:

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Davon Drew

Date: 12/6/2008

Opponent: Tulsa

Overall Strengths:

Drew is a big man with soft hands and good feet as a runner in the open field. He catches the ball well in traffic and will hold onto the ball after taking a hit. He has some initial quickness to make the first player miss if he's on the run and he is powerful enough to bounce off hits and break tackles. He separates well from press coverage off the line of scrimmage and in the slot or downfield against safeties. He's an underrated player that I believe could develop into a frequent contributor as a borderline H-back/ in-line TE for an NFL team. I'm not sure he has the athleticism to be a star, but he could be productive in the passing game and become a favorite target of a QB in situational football. He's very much worth a late round pick if you have a dynasty league and want a cheap investment at the TE spot that could pay dividends.

Overall Weaknesses:

Lacks great speed for his position. Although he got downfield on some plays I'm skeptical he's able to consistently be a downfield threat. Seems like he could add some muscle and become a more fit athlete. He's a decent blocker who is able to turn his defender and generate a push, but he doesn't dominate his opponent and needs to become more aware of anticipating and countering the techniques used against him as a blocker. He's not sharp out of breaks as a route runner. Most of these things can be corrected and I think he has just enough size to get his chance to contribute within three seasons.

Separation

Drew lined up as the outside slot man on 3rd and 7 with 13:35 in the 1st QTR against bump and run coverage by a CB. The CB jammed him at the line, but Drew did a great job using his hands. He ripped the CB's grip and pulled the CB to the outside as he ran to the inside on a slant, getting separation and catching the pass for a first down. On a pass attempt 30 yards down the right seam, Drew came off the line with a quick release, but was jammed by the safety from the outside, forcing him a couple yards to the inside. Drew still did a nice of running through the contact and having a yard and a half to two-yard cushion on the DB as the ball arrived. Unfortunately for him, the pass was overthrown by a few yards. I don't think the jam disrupted his route that much. Good speed to get the separation from a safety. Good job breaking the jam on the next play to get outside release as a slot receiver.

Routes

He has speed to run verticle routes, but he didn't look especially quick coming out of an out route with 2:20 in the half. He did get enough separation on a jerk route that freed him from an LB to catch a 2nd and 11 pass five yards downfield and then break to the middle and past the LB to get the first down.

Receiving

Good catch on the slant with his hands on 3rd and 7 with 13:35 in the 1st QTR. He caught the hard throw over his inside shoulder while running downfield for a gain of 12. Drew's third catch was a drag route to the left that he caught and immediately took a hard shot by the DB coming up in support. He was eventually brought down for a 4-yard gain after catch the ball with his hands running away from the QB.

Elasticity

He is quick on his feet. When he caught the slant from the outside slot on 3rd and 7 he dipped away from the safety just past the first down marker and made the defender completely miss his angle on the tackle attempt for a gain of five yards after the catch.

Ball Handling

Good job carrying the ball tightly against his right arm as he was trying to get yardage up the right hash on a jerk route with 1:03 in the half.

Balance

Good balance to maintain his footing as the LB in coverage hopped on his back to bring him down. Drew ran through the tackle, turning his body away from the hit and forcing the LB to slide off him. He did this while he lowered his shoulders into a hit by the DB just before crossing the first down marker for a gain of 11 yards. Good balance to have a DB give him a hard shot and the DB to bounce off him while he maintained his feet immediately after catching a drag route in the left flat with 3:46 in the 3rd QTR.

Blocking

Very good push on the DE toward the center of the line to open a lane for his RB to run through on ECU's first offensive series of the game. His second block on the next play was able to turn his DE to the sideline so he could pursue the RB running through the line. Excellent job double-teaming the DE with the LT and then peeling off to shield the MLB long enough for the RB to run behind him for a gain of eight yards on a 1st and 5 from the 20 yard line on the first ECU drive of the game. He got a really good push on his DE with 9:53 in the half to turn the opponent into the line and open up a lane wide enough for his RB to get a few yards. On a 3-yard run from the 15 yard line he blew the OLB off the LOS way out of the play. Good job on a sweep, getting to the second level and delivering a cutblock on the OLB which stopped his progress enough to not be on the tackle. Good push on a DT with 7:10 in the 3rd QTR and driving him to the outside to help create a cutback lane so his RB could gain 6 yards. They chose to run the ball off the TE's block on 3rd and 2 in the tie game in the middle of the 4th QTR. They were just short. There were some plays in the 4th QTR where he was consistently late off the snap although it didn't impact his block, it's something to note. I don't know if he had trouble hearing the count or forgot the count.

Vision

Good open field vision on his first run after the catch, a 13-yard play where he bent the run across the field, dipping away from the safety over top to get extra yardage.

Power

He will lower his shoulder to initiate contact and get extra yardage and does a pretty good job of slipping tackles, which was demonstrated with the LB unable to bring him down after a jerk route on 2nd and 11 with 1:03 in the half. His ability to break the tackle got him half the total yardage on the play and the 1st down.

Durability

Character

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: **School:** **Opponent:** **Surface:**
Height: **Year:** **Score:** **Climate:**
Weight: **Date:** **Location:** **Temperature:**

Overall Score:

70

- Can physically break jam [2pts]:
- Can use elusiveness to break jam [2pts]:
- Uses body to shield defender from the ball [3pts]:
- Creates separation with burst out of breaks [5pts]:
- Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes [2pts]:
- Runs precise routes [5pts]:
- Finds opening in zone coverage [5pts]:
- Adjusts to QB when play breaks down [3pts]:
- Awareness of sideline [2pts]:
- Catches ball with hands first [5pts]:
- Adjusts to the ball in the air [2pts]:
- Catches ball well with back to the line of scrimmage [2pts]:
- Catches ball in tight coverage [5pts]:
- Catches ball in high traffic areas [3pts]:
- Consistently holds onto the ball when hit [4pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to make difficult catch [1pt]:
- Makes receptions on catchable balls consistently [5pts]:
- Effective lower body jukes while on the run [1pt]:
- Effective upper body jukes while on the run [1pt]:
- Avoids direct shots [1pt]:
- Effective stop-start movements [1pt]:
- Effective lateral movements [1pt]:
- Demonstrates ability to carry ball with either hand [1pt]:
- Demonstrates ball security [3pts]:
- Maintains control of ball when hit [5pts]:
- Maintains control of ball in adverse weather conditions [1pt]:
- High performance in adverse conditions [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit head-on [1pt]:
- Maintains balance when hit from an indirect angle [2pts]:
- Demonstrates effort with assignments [2pts]:
- Demonstrates willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays [2pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to get lower than defender and drive forward [3pts]:
- Demonstrates ability to move laterally and shield defender from target [2pts]:
- Displays patience in traffic (sets up blocks) [1pt]:
- Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field [1pts]:
- Leg power and drives through arm tackles [1pt]:
- Effective stiff arm [1pt]:
- Good body lean/Finishes runs [1pts]:
- Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner [2pts]:
- Missed fewer than 10% of games [1pt]:
- Performs at high level while playing with an injury [1pt]:
- No chronic injuries (Two or more injuries to same body part) [1pt]:
- No injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career [5pts]:

Game Stats

Target:
Missed Target:
Drops:
Juggles:
Dropped After Contact:
Rec:
Rec After Contact:
Difficult Rec:
Rec Yards:
Yards After Catch:
Yards per Catch:
Rec Tds:
Yards per Td:
Rush Att:
Rush Yds:
Rush Tds:
Fumbles:

Category Scores

Separation Score:
Routes Score:
Receiving Score:
Elusiveness Score:
BHandling Score:
Balance Score:
Blocking Score:
Vision Score:
Power Score:
Durability Score:

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Travis Beckum

Date: 10/6/2007

Opponent: Illinois

Overall Strengths:

Good athlete with height, strength, and agility. He makes the effort to catch the ball with his hands and he has the speed to get down the seam and beat safeties on vertical routes. He has some nice skills to elude defenders in open space. He can beat CBs while split wide and make acrobatic catches with his hands. He has a great deal of upside if he can become more consistent as a hands catcher over the middle. With only a little more than two seasons as a TE, I think he needs more work to be a real factor in the NFL. He flashes the right techniques, but lacks the consistency. If he shores up these inconsistencies, he has the athleticism to be productive.

Overall Weaknesses:

Beckum has the athleticism to be factor as a move TE in the NFL, but he has a lot of issues that make him overrated in my book. He fights the ball when he attempts to catch it with his hands and most of the time he traps the ball into his body. This game really illustrated what happens when a receiver body catches the football and faces contact: he drops the pass. Beckum is also frequently slow out of his release from the LOS and he has difficulty getting off the jam when split wide against a CB. He's strong enough but the jam throws off his position in routes. He needs to learn to know how to avoid the jam and use more technique when slipping it rather than simply trying to muscle away. He's undersized in terms of weight and will need to add 15 lbs of muscle to at least be somewhat effective at the LOS.

Separation

Beckum got a free release of the LOS on his first target and catch, a 15-yard out with 7:12 in the 1st QTR. He was in the slot with 14:54 in the half on a 3rd and 7 pass play and could not release from the defender at the LOS. The defender was able to ride him with inside position and prevent Beckum from getting separation on his break to the inside. When the ball was thrown, Beckum had to play defense to prevent the interception. When in a three-point stance at the LOS, Beckum was consistently late to get off the line at the snap during the first few series of this game. You could wait a beat before he got off. Beckum was rode upfield by the CB jamming him at the LOS when the TE was split wide on a 3rd and 3 play. Beckum was able to get inside position at the right hash on the play, but he wasn't on time to the spot of the throw and had to extend his body to make the catch, dropping the ball. Beckum used his hands to muscle the CB away from him to get inside on the break, but he had to make such strong effort to shove the defender away, it threw off his route and the timing to the spot of the throw. A more experienced receiver with the jam would have established better position before confronting the CB off the ball. Beckum got a free release off the LOS on a wheel route after motioning across the line before the snap. He caught a 40-yard pass on the play with 6:22 in the half. He had clear separation past two defenders, but the ball was underthrown and he had to slow down to make contact with the ball.

Routes

Beckum was open underneath the zone on a free release from the LOS on a 15-yard out with 7:12 in the 1st QTR. He attacked the ball out of his break by coming back to it and turning his back to shield the two defenders behind him. He also made a very fluid turn in his break to the outside versus the LB running stride for stride from the inside. He used the official to get separation from the LB over the middle on a crosser with 6:04 in the 1st QTR. He did a fairly good job sinking his hips at the break on a short out with 9:19 in the half, but could not come down with the ball between two defenders at the right hash. Good break on his flat route for a 12-yard gain with 3:00 in the game. He stopped and turn smoothly kept the break flat.

Receiving

Beckum trapped his first target into his chest, a 15-yard out with 7:12 in the 1st QTR. He double clutched the ball slightly as he was securing the pass after the initial catch. Beckum's second target was a one-yard cross from the wing that he took up the right flat for another eight yards with 6:08 in the 1st QTR. He caught this pass with his hands at eye level. Beckum caught a flat route at the LOS with :05 in the 1st QTR. The ball arrived at chest level and he trapped it there as he faced the QB. He turned upfield but was hit by the CB and LB at the same time, only gaining a yard on a play. Beckum made a good effort to adjust to the ball on a in cut where the defender had inside position all the way. He lept over the shoulder of the defender and batted the ball away to prevent the interception with 14:55 in the half on 3rd and 7. On 1st and 10 with 9:24 in the half, Beckum release to the flat after motioning across the formation. He caught the ball at chest level by trapping it as he faced the QB. He juggled the ball slightly as he secured the ball, but he managed to hang onto it when the CB pushed him out of bounds. He dropped a pass the he let bounce off his chest at the right hash between two defenders with 9:19 in the half on 2nd and 3. Beckum allowed a ball to go through his hands on a 3rd and 3 slant with 9:14 in the half. The TE had to extend for the ball after having trouble getting off the LOS and he also had a safety bearing down on him as he went for the pass. He dropped a crossing route at the LOS after getting hit by the defender. Beckum also caught this ball into his body with 6:52 in the half. Beckum caught a 40-yard pass on a wheel route by turning back to the QB as he ran down the right flat in double coverage. The DB trailing him was in position to intercept the pass, but Beckum reached back to get his hands on the ball to tip it away from the DB's grasp. The second trailing defender had the ball bounce off his helmet as Beckum was falling to the ground. The ball fell towards the TE and landed between his elbow and side while laying on his back with 6:23 in the half. Good concentration on the play although I believe most of the work was a fortuitous bounce of the ball that lodged itself into his body. Beckum was overthrown on an out with 2:03 in the half. Beckum dropped the pass on the next play, a 2nd and 10 crossing route with 2:00 left. He tried to catch the ball with his handst just as the CB hit him in the back. The ball popped loose as Beckum fell to the ground. Beckum caught a 3rd and 10 crossing route six yards past the LOS with 12:10 in the 3rd QTR. He had to turn back to the ball, but he caught the pass with his hands. He then turned up field for another 13 yards and the first down. Although he caught the ball with his hands on the play, he had a slight juggle here as well. He consistently fights the ball. He caught the ball on a pivot route over the middle with 4:45 in the 3rd QTR, gaining a total of 12 yards on the play. He trapped the ball into his body as he was running away from the QB and gained six yards after the catch. Beckum made a diving, over the shoulder catch on a go route down the right sideline for a 35-yard gain. He caught the ball fully extended with his hands and maintained control of the ball as his hands and ball hit the ground at the same time with 14:55 in the game. The ball was trapped, but the officials ruled it a catch. Beckum ran a go route on 2nd and 6 with 10:07 in the game against tight coverage. The CB had inside position and did a better job of tracking the football. The CB got higher a half a beat faster than Beckum and caught the ball at its highest point. He caught a 2nd and 1 flat route with his hands while turning back to the QB with 4:39 in the game. He took a hit after the catch, but managed to hang on for the first down and a gain of two yards. On 1st and 10 with 3:00 in the game, Beckum reached behind to grab a pass with his hands with the LB trailing him for a 12-yard gain. Good concentration to hang on with the LB bearing down. The LB hit him, but not as hard as the shots to his back where he dropped the other passes. He made a diving catch on a pivot route in tight coverage for an eight-yard gain with 2:33 in the game on 2nd and 10. It was hard to tell, but it appeared he caught the ball with his hands, but close to his chest on the play.

Elusiveness

Good quickness to stop and use his free hand to shove the DB away in the right flat. Good spin move after catching a six-yard crossing route on 3rd and 10 with 12:08 in the 3rd QTR. He spun to the inside of the DB, forcing the defender to completely miss, dipped past a second defender to the inside, and accelerated past two defenders up the middle for a 19-yard gain on the play.

Ball Handling

Good job carrying the ball under his right arm on a cross to the right flat with 6:04 in the 1st QTR. He had the ball fairly tight against his body and took three shots from defenders as he tried to gain extra yards. He had a defender try to rip the ball from his grasp when he was triple teamed on a six yard run after a pivot route with 4:41 in the 3rd QTR. Beckum did a good job keeping both hands on the ball and protcting it from the strip.

Balance

Good job lowering his shoulder into the safety at the end of a six-yard run after catching a pivot route six yards downfield with 4:41 in the 3rd QTR. He was able to fall forward on the play after the head-on collision.

Blocking

Beckum helped double-team the RDE on a 1st and 10 pass with 2:38 in the half. The effort was there, but the positioning of his body and hand placement didn't help his teammate prevent from the DE from getting an upfield push on the play.

Vision

His spin move in the 3rd QTR was a good job to get to the open area for 13 extra yards after the catch. He also knows when to simply lower his shoulder and plow forward through contact as demondtrated by a catch and run with 4:41 in the 3rd QTR.

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Travis Beckum

Date: 10/6/2007

Opponent: Illinois

Power

On a 9-yard gain with 6:06 in the 1st QTR, Beckum stopped as he turned the corner on a crossing route and used his free arm to shove the LB to the side so he could gain another three yards on the play.

Durability

Broke his left fibula in 2008 and he missed half the year.

Character

A linebacker in high school. He set the Wisconsin record for receptions by a TE with 61 in his first season at the position.

Glossary Of Scouting Criteria

Accuracy

Accuracy is a simple concept: Is the ball placed where it needs to be on a particular type of throw. The key is the type of throw. Is the player on the move while throwing? How much distance does the throw cover? Does he place the ball in a position for the receiver to have the best chance to catch the ball while minimizing the risk of the defender making a play? NFL defenses have the time and players to more effectively game plan for a quarterback try to force him into throws that are of greater difficulty for him to complete with a high degree of accuracy.

High completion percentage—at least 60%: This is the magic number for a quarterback to be considered accurate from a statistical perspective. College statistics often reflect the lower quality of competition in comparison to the pros, and a quarterback that doesn't have starter talent on the professional level often accumulates great numbers in a pass-friendly system. Texas Tech has been an example of such a system. Nonetheless, a player deserves credit for being able to complete this high a percentage of passes and many of these quarterbacks play in pro style offenses and have elite talent. **Point Value: QB (4).**

Accurate ball placement on deep routes: When a ball is thrown a distance of 35 yards or greater, and:

1. The throw is placed either to lead the receiver to catch the ball in stride.
2. Intentionally thrown behind the receiver when the DB has good position in front of the player.
3. The pass is thrown to a spot where only the receiver can make a positive play.

Peyton Manning and Brett Favre throw the deep routes with accuracy. Favre makes riskier decisions, but both signal callers had outstanding success in the deep passing game. Yet the deep throws are the riskier plays in the passing game and aren't attempted as often as other plays. **Point Value (2).**

Accurate ball placement on intermediate routes: When a ball is thrown a distance between 15-30 yards, and:

1. The throw is placed either to lead the receiver to catch the ball in stride.
2. Intentionally thrown behind the receiver when the DB has good position in front of the player.
3. The pass is thrown to a spot where only the receiver can make a positive play.

Kurt Warner, Trent Green, and Marc Bulger possess excellent timing and accuracy with intermediate routes. All three played in pro systems that relied on this skill. This area of the field is where a pro quarterback has to be accurate in order to move his offensive down the field consistently. **Point Value (5)**

Accurate ball placement on short routes: When a ball is thrown a distance of under 15 yards, and:

1. The throw is placed either to lead the receiver to catch the ball in stride.
2. Intentionally thrown behind the receiver when the DB has good position in front of the player.
3. The pass is thrown to a spot where only the receiver can make a positive play.

Some of the more difficult passes for a quarterback to throw are short routes because of the touch, placement, and quick delivery necessary to execute the throw. Most NFL starting quarterbacks have an accurate short game. **Point Value: (5)**

Displays accuracy with throws rolling to the left or right: A quarterback that can throw on the run—either on a designed roll out or breaking the pocket while under pressure—presents multi-dimensional threat to a defense. Most quarterbacks can throw a decent pass of reasonable distance (20-35 yards) with accuracy when

rolling to the side of their throwing arm. Fewer quarterbacks are this accurate with throws off a roll to the side opposite of their throwing arm. Defenses generally try to force a quarterback to his weak side when pressuring the pocket. Steve McNair does a very good job throwing the ball on the run, especially to the opposite side of this throwing arm. **Point Value: QB (2)**

Arm Strength

Arm strength has many meanings for a quarterback. The first thing people think of is how far can the quarterback throw the ball. A quarterback with an adequate arm strength in the NFL can throw the ball at least a distance of 40 yards. The next factor that is at least equally important is how hard a quarterback can throw the ball. Several spots on the playing field require a hard throw for a completed pass. For instance, many red zone passing plays require the quarterback to throw the ball hard and into a tight space because there is less room for the offense to operate. Most of the great quarterbacks of the modern era had great arm strength: Dan Marino and John Elway are two examples. In contrast, Joe Montana had adequate arm strength, but he could still make all the requisite throws.

Demonstrates velocity on deep routes: When a quarterback can throw the ball 40 yards downfield with a lot of speed and little arc, he has good velocity on this throws. A ball that hangs too long when in the air gives the defensive backs in coverage enough time to adjust to the open receiver and break up a certain reception. **Point Value: QB (2).**

Demonstrates distance on deep routes (more than 40 yards): There are a few reasons 40 yards is the magic number for distance. First, most safeties play between 15-20 yards off the ball when in standard coverage. A 40-yard pass adequately stretches the defensive formation and helps create a cushion for the offense to execute run plays and shorter passes. A completed 40-yard pass also radically changes field position for an offense regardless of where they were on the field. Plus, the optimal timing and distance where a receiver can get separation and throw doesn't hold up their stride is around the 40-yard mark. Finally, the quarterback generally has a little less than 3 seconds before the pocket breaks down. If the average NFL receiver runs forty yards downfield in 4.4-4.5 seconds, the quarterback has about half that time to release the ball. A throw requiring greater distance often requires more time in the pocket, which is consistently difficult to obtain. **Point Value: QB (1).**

Demonstrates velocity on intermediate routes: Many NFL throws require a high level of velocity so the quarterback can release the ball last minute and prevent the defensive back from having a chance to make a play on the ball as it hangs in the air. A quarterback with good arm strength makes it more difficult for a defense because he has fewer discernable weaknesses as a passer for them to exploit in a game. **Point Value: QB (5).**

Balance

Balance is a core factor in effective ball carrying. It is the combination of good foot and body placement, agility, and awareness of one's physical space. A player with good balance can adjust to the force of a hard blow and not fall over. Football players are trained to maintain their balance when facing most head-on collisions with a defender, but special players have the rare ability to keep their balance when the direction of the blow or placement of the blow to the body is difficult to prepare for the collision, or react to its force. Although an extreme example, Barry Sanders frequently demonstrated throughout his career that a low pad level, uncanny anticipation of defensive angles, and great balance could defeat the backfield penetration of a player with a significant height-weight advantage. Despite Sanders' examples of performing this to the extreme, not falling down when hit is still the basic expectation. As a receiver, Herman Moore possessed great balance in and out of routes adjusting to the ball, and as a ball carrier after the catch.

Demonstrates the ability to maintain balance when hit head-on: It doesn't matter whether the player caught his fall with his free hand and staggered forward for a few more yards or the opposing defender slid off

him like a bug hitting a car's windshield on a stretch of highway, when a runner keeps his footing after receiving a head-on hit to the chest, waist, or legs he has effectively demonstrated this level of balance. These are the types of one-on-one battles a runner is expected to win if matched up with a player of comparable size. **Point Value: RB (1), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Demonstrates the ability to maintain balance when hit from an indirect angle: The same concepts of balance apply in this situation as they do with a head-on collision. The difference is the defensive player's angle to the ball carrier. When a player can maintain his footing when hit from behind or the side, he is demonstrating this high level of balance. Barry Sanders and Terrell Owens have shown this skill with the ball in their hands. **Point Value: RB (7), WR (2), and TE (2).**

Demonstrates high performance in adverse conditions: When a ball carrier can run in wet, muddy, or icy field conditions and maintain his balance as if he were in good conditions, he earns credit for this skill. **Point Value: RB (1), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Ball Handling

The category of *Ball Handling* incorporates a number of skills ranging from the most fundamental to the highly advanced. A superb offensive skill player not only demonstrates the ability to protect the ball while the target of 11 defenders, but also can use the ball to trick the defense with misdirection plays and allow his teammates more room to execute plays. Peyton Manning is a fine example of a quarterback that takes good care of the ball and can trick a defense with his play-fakes.

Demonstrates the ability to carry the ball in either hand: The preferred technique is for the runner to carry the football with the ball in his arm that is closest to the sideline—otherwise known as “the outside arm.” The reason for this technique is to safeguard the offensive in case of a fumble, because the likelihood of the ball leaving the field of play—and the offense retaining possession—is higher when the ball is jarred loose from the ball carrier's outside arm. Sometimes a runner is better off switch the ball to the arm opposite the on-coming defender, so he meets the defensive player's blow with his side that his not carrying the ball. A runner that shows the ability to switch the ball to the appropriate hand as he is running earns credit for this skill. **Point Values: RB (3), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Consistently handles QB/RB exchanges: One of the more fundamental parts of being a running back is the expectation of consistently handling the variety of hand offs, pitches, or toss plays between himself and the quarterback. A high percentage of turnovers begin with the RB having difficulty establishing control of the ball during the exchange. **Point Value: RB (3).**

Consistently effective with hand offs: See above, but apply this more toward the quarterback's ability to get the ball accurately and consistently into the back's hands. **Point Value: QB (1).**

Handles center exchange effectively: Again, one of the most fundamental points to playing a position. The quarterback is expected to handle snaps that reach his hands, and to field shotgun snaps within reasonable range of his body. One muffed exchange in a game does not constitute a problem, nor does more than one in a game with poor weather conditions. But a quarterback that has difficulty with easier snaps does no earn credit for this skill. **Point Value: QB (4).**

Demonstrates ball security while running: The ideal way to carry the football is with the ball tucked between the arm and chest with the elbow locked into the body. This technique makes it difficult for an opposing defender to knock the ball away from the runner's body, regardless of the angle. While the ball does not need to be tucked against the runner's chest, the elbow needs to be tucked tight enough to the body that there is no air between the arm, the ball, and the body. If there is a gap, the player's level of ball security is inadequate for the pro level. Giants RB Tiki Barber had a huge deficiency with ball security throughout much of his career, but he has recently learned the ideal technique. Barber has now become one of the most reliable ball carriers in football for the past two seasons. **Point Value: RB (3), WR (3), TE (3), and QB (1).**

Maintains control of the ball when hit: This skill has a lot to do with both a player's ball carrying technique, and comfort level with physical contact. Short of a perfectly placed hit to the ball, the runner should be able to maintain possession of the ball from the time he receives it until the whistle blows. Marshall Faulk had a great track record for maintaining control of the ball in these situations while in the prime of his career. Quarterbacks have a lower point value, because they are more often subject to plays to his blindside while in the act of throwing the football—the expectation to maintain control from this type of hit is lower. **Point Value: RB (7), WR (5), TE (5), and QB (3).**

Maintains control of the ball in adverse weather conditions: Most players experience some difficulty maintaining possession of the ball under duress when playing in harsh weather, but the ones that can avoid this type of negative play are a cut above. Quarterbacks have a higher point value for this area because they handle the ball on every play and the team has a higher expectation for them to maintain control of the ball regardless of the weather. **Point Value: RB (1), WR (1), TE (1), and QB (3).**

Effective demonstration of play fakes: Many quarterbacks execute play fakes in their offense, but the ability to set up the fake and sell it to a defense is the result of consistent attention to detail and practice. An effective play fake forces the defense to consider the ball has been handed to another player. A quarterback accomplishes this task when he maintains the same body language with the play fake as he does handing off the ball. This means he has to cultivate the type of body language on his hand offs that sets up his play action game. Selling the play action pass requires the signal caller to follow through on all the small motions of the hand off and then hiding the ball from the defense's line of site to cultivate the illusion. He can accomplish this feat by turning his back to the defense with the ball in his chest, or hiding the ball behind his back as he finishes the appearance of an exchange with the runner. If the quarterback simply lowers the ball, but doesn't turn or lower his body in the way he would actually hand the ball to the runner, he is not providing an effective play fake. **Point Value: QB (2).**

Blocking

Skill players block for the run and pass on a limited basis, but if the play is to have a high level of success, their assignments are as important to execute as those of their teammates on the offensive line. A skill player's attitude towards blocking can also speak a lot to the way they approach the game overall:

1. Comfort level of with hitting
2. Courage
3. Teamwork
4. Understanding of the offense

Blocking is generally the one of the key skills where top prospects need the most refinement before they make the transition from college start to NFL starter. A good blocker sees the field much earlier than his peers with a similar level of talent in other facets of their game. Edgerrin James is a consummate pass blocker as a running back that makes excellent diagnosis of assignments and is regarded as an aggressive, physical hitter on blitz pick-ups. Hines Ward is a receiver that understands how his blocks can turn 15 or 20-yard runs into 50 or 60-yard touchdowns. He also searches out ways to attack the defense after he has successfully completed his first assignment on the play.

Correct diagnosis of blocking assignments: Diagnosing the correct assignment occurs most often with backs and tight ends in the passing game where they face blitzes from multiple players from one side, delayed blitzes, or twists and stunts. The back should try to block the pass rush from the inside first and work his way to the perimeter, rather than react immediately to the rusher coming off the edge. Receivers rarely have to stay in to block on a pass play and are not graded on this skill because most blocking assignment are direction in front of them at the line of scrimmage. **Point Value: RB (1).**

Demonstrates effort with assignments: As mentioned before, college prospects generally need a lot of work with their blocking techniques upon entering the pros. If the back, receiver, or tight end demonstrates they are attempting the correct technique or they make the effort to physically attack their block, the player is awarded credit. Players that flop at the feet of a pass rusher or demonstrate a clear lack of effort to sustain a block on

plays coming to their side of the field are not giving the desired effort. **Point Values: RB (3), WR (2), and TE (2).**

Demonstrates the willingness to block in the open field and on broken plays: This willingness illustrates not only a high level of football awareness and the desire to hit, but also unselfishness towards making that extra effort for the overall success of the team. Quarterbacks are generally asked to shield the defender from the play by flopping at the feet of their assignment—mainly to protect their offensive leader from injury. This is not usually the case with the other skill positions—especially receivers that are expected to open up the secondary for their teammates. **Point Values: RB (1), WR (2), and TE (2).**

Demonstrates the ability to get lower than the defender and drive forward: The tight end is the extension of the offensive line, and is counted on to deliver quality blocking on running plays. The ability to use good blocking technique and physically control his opponent on running plays or passing plays is a sign that the tight end has potential to be an every down threat, and not just a situational player. **Point Value: TE (3).**

Demonstrates the ability to move laterally and shield the defender from the target: A receiving threat at the tight end position can be effective on many plays if he just shows good feet and the skill of getting in the way of his opponent's path to the ball. **Point Value (2).**

Character

The category is not graded into the total, but more of an indicator of well-known positives or negatives about a player on and off the field. I am more interested in game film study than private investigation, so I don't do extensive hunting for off field information. This category places equal weight towards performance factors on the field.

High effort player regardless of situation: Players that show determination, persistence, and a belief in their talent despite the situation turn out to be desirable leaders. Sometimes this can be evident when a player's team decides to discount his ability to be a quality starter and leader despite initial success and limited opportunity (Drew Brees). Other times the adversity that shows the player's character comes from the team falling behind in a contest and the player leading his team to a come from behind win with his inspiring play. **Point Values: QB (2), RB (2), WR (2), and TE (2).**

Maintains poise and/or demonstrates a high level of performance in pressure situations: The best teams find players that are confident enough to play with poise and produce when the game is on the line. There are stars and role players that possess these traits. Robert Horry has numerous championship rings as a basketball player and though he was never the primary or even secondary offensive weapon on an NBA team, his ability to repeatedly deliver big baskets in high stakes situations earned him the moniker *Big Shot Bob*. WR Ricky Proehl has never been a star, but his play as a Ram and Panther have propelled both teams to Super Bowl appearances. This point also has to do with players not losing their cool and making mental or emotional mistakes in pressure situations. A player that cuts into the middle of the field in a two minute drill when they had a clear opportunity for a first down, run out of bounds, and stop the clock did not maintain his poise as much as a player that loses his cool, and commits a personal foul after a key play. **Point Values: QB (2), RB (2), WR (2), and TE (2).**

Demonstrates willingness to sacrifice for the welfare of the team: This can be a player laying his body on the line to absorb a big hit, play with a risky injury in a big game to make a big contribution, or even volunteering to play a different role than desired to make his team better. Ronnie Brown and Cadillac Williams could have been starters at different universities, but neither transferred schools. Instead they brought the team together with their ability to work as teammates and led Auburn to an undefeated season in 2004. **Point Values: QB (1), RB (1), WR (1), and TE (2).**

Clean public record throughout college career: A player that has made the news for being arrested, subject to team disciplinary action, or poorly representing himself or his school in the media is a player with future potential issues based on this track record. These problems if they recur, can potentially cost an NFL franchise money, team chemistry, wins, and a good relationship with their community. **Point Values (if scored as "no."):** **QB (-5), RB (-5), WR (-5), and TE (-5).**

Decisions

This is one of the key areas where a quarterback entering the NFL has the most to learn before he becomes an effective starter. The speed of the game is significantly faster. Offensive systems in the NFL are far more complex due to the greater volume of plays and the fact defenses do a lot more to confuse a quarterback than in the college game. One can understand why learning how to make the right decision with split-second timing may be a time-consuming process, but one of ultimately great importance for long term success. Some NFL quarterbacks learn enough to limit their mistakes and allow their enormous physical talents to outweigh their occasional recklessness (Favre and Elway). Others learn to consistently make the best decision for the situation (Montana and Brady). Good decision-making has a lot to do with awareness of quarter, down, and distance situations, and reading defensive tendencies prior to the snap and while he is dropping back into the pocket.

Avoids throwing into double coverage: The quarterback has an understanding of the defense to identify where there will be single coverage, and choose the best option on the play. When the quarterback is under pressure, he doesn't try to force the ball into double coverage when the situation doesn't dictate an attempt out of desperation. **Point Value: QB (5).**

Looks off defenders in coverage: A skilled passer can manipulate the defense to react to where he is looking downfield. A savvy quarterback can spot a cornerback looking into the backfield and then provide the defender a false impression of what he intends to do with the route. Even more often, he'll look off the safety to create an opening for his primary receiver. **Point Value: QB (3).**

Effective use of pump fakes: In the same vein as looking off a safety, the ability to fake the motion of throwing in a particular direction forces the defense to react in the direction of the fake. The pump fake provides the quarterback more time to look downfield or it creates more space for his receivers to operate in the coverage. A good pump fake doesn't always require a full follow through. In fact, some of the better fakes occur with both hands on the ball. Rich Gannon developed a quality set of pump fakes as his career progressed. **Point Value: QB (2).**

Spreads the ball around to receivers: A quarterback that reads the defense and avoids locking onto the primary receiver with every play is already on his way towards becoming a quality NFL quarterback. Staring at the receiver as he runs his route before throwing the ball invites multiple defenders to make a break on the route and intercept the ball. On the other hand, a quarterback that will rely on all his receiving options, and avoid being predictable in the situations where he throws a specific receiver's way, is much more challenging to a defense. When a quarterback ends the game with at least five receivers with multiple receptions, that player has demonstrated the skill of spreading the ball around to his offensive skill players. **Point Value: QB (2).**

Makes effective adjustments at the line of scrimmage: An effective adjustment before the snap of the ball occurs when the quarterback spots the intentions of the defense and changes the play to exploit its weakness. This can involve changing a run to a pass, a pass to a run, the offense's formation, or a particular route of a receiver. These adjustments often create game-changing plays and keep the defense guessing as to what will happen next. Peyton Manning may be the best at pre-snap adjustments in today's NFL. **Point Value: QB (2).**

Delivery

The delivery is how the quarterback throws the ball beginning with his set up, including the placement and speed of his release point, and ending with the quality of the throw. A quarterback should be able to throw a catchable football with a quick release and from a variety of angles without a long, awkward delivery.

Capable of delivering the football effectively from a variety of release points: The traditionally acceptable release point is almost directly over the head, but closer to the ear of the quarterback's throwing arm. For a quarterback of average height, this allows the ball to start its trajectory at a high enough point to travel over the line of scrimmage. Still, there are common situations where a quarterback must be able to release the ball at a $\frac{3}{4}$ delivery, side arm, or in some other way in order to get the ball around opposing players and to the open receiver. Brett Favre has demonstrated his effectiveness throwing from a variety of release points and this enhances his ability to make plays under pressure inside the pocket or on the move. **Point Value: QB (2).**

Throws a catch able ball (touch, tight spirals, etc.): A well-thrown spiral travels with better aerodynamics and is easier for a receiver to catch without fighting it. Throwing the ball with the necessary velocity and arc for the situation also makes the receiver's job easier. A ball thrown the wrong way in the wrong situation can not only result in a missed opportunity but also generate a turnover. Joe Montana didn't have a gun for an arm, but consistently threw a football that was one of the easiest for receivers to catch. He knew when to throw the ball softly, when to put a lot of arc under a pass, and when to throw the football into a narrow area with zip. **Point Value: QB (5).**

Quick release: A quarterback that can get the ball out of his hands quickly has a great advantage over the defense because he can wait until the last possible moment to throw the football. This allows the quarterback to keep the defense guessing and they don't have the opportunity to react to in time to defend the throw. A quick release also allows the quarterback to stand in the pocket for a longer period of time, or throw routes that require a last minute pass in order to avoid tipping off the defense. Dan Marino had one of the more idea deliveries of a football among pro quarterbacks. The Dolphins quarterback had one of the quickest releases in history and despite his lack of mobility was one of the tougher quarterbacks for defenses to sack. **Point Value: QB (4).**

Compact delivery: When a quarterback can throw the ball without a significant wind up, he protects the ball from pressure in the pocket and has more time to scan the field before committing to a receiver. The other part of the equation that made Marino tough to defend was his compact delivery. **Point Value: QB (4)**

Durability

The category for durability is designed to measure the player's ability to play with pain, overcome injury, and determine if he has any chronic issues that may prevent him from reaching his full potential as a pro. Some injuries are more a test of the player's work ethic than they are career-threatening occurrence. Others test both their recuperative powers and character. More players slide in the draft due to injury history than most any other factor about them.

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career: If the player has missed more than 10% of his chances to play because of injury then it speaks to either the severity of the injury, or possibly a low pain threshold in comparison to his peers. **Point Value: QB (1), RB (1), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Demonstrates ability to perform at a high level while playing with an injury: Several players will suit up with injuries, but not all demonstrate a level of performance that makes them more than a decoy in the offensive scheme. Hines Ward demonstrated his ability to be a playmaker as a senior at the University of Georgia when he starred at quarterback in the Peach Bowl versus Virginia while playing with his jaw wired shut. **Point Value: QB (1), RB (1), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Without chronic injuries throughout college career: A chronic injury is when a player has an injury more than once to the same body part while in school. While the injury could be minor and have little effect on the player as a pro, it is something worth checking out because as the player ages, these small chronic injuries can take longer to heal. Marc Bulger was a quarterback evaluated as a first day talent, but his durability was a concern. Bulger's career has reflected this evaluation: a pro bowl talent, but has missed a significant number of games already. **Point Value: QB (1), RB (1), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career: These injuries are the most serious issues because they often cause the player to lose some amount of speed, athleticism, or strength for at least a short-term period, if not the remainder of his playing career. Second year runner Frank Gore had first round talent, but major injuries led talent evaluators to question whether he'd ever approach the same level of productivity in the pros as he demonstrated at full health and as a prep star and collegian. **Point Value: QB (7), RB (7), WR (7), and TE (7).**

Elusiveness

Elusiveness is the skill of avoiding contact. If a runner demonstrates he can use his ability to change direction, or drive the opposing defender off balance to either, avoid a hit or the full impact of a hit, and still manage to make

forward progress, he possesses an adequate amount of elusiveness to his running style. There are several techniques ball carriers use to avoid hits. Some runners have all the techniques in their arsenal and can keep defenders off balance with an endless variety of moves, while others may only have a few effective moves in certain situations.

Displays effective lower body jukes without coming to a complete stop: These are the skills of using moves while on the run that fool the pursuing defender. These moves include the stutter-step; spin moves, or *giving and taking away a leg* (when the runner creates the illusion to the defender that the tackler has a good angle on the grabbing the runner's leg but is just being set up to miss if he shoots for it). Barry Sanders and Marshall Faulk used these moves to perfection. **Point Values: RB (3), WR (2), and TE (1).**

Displays effective upper body jukes without coming to a complete stop: Head fakes, shoulder fakes, and dips are the most common upper body moves runners use to lure the defender into breaking down too early in one-on-one situations in the open field. Sayers and Chuck Foreman used a lot of upper body movement to throw off an opposing defender. Since receivers spend more time in the open field, upper body moves generally have greater value to their overall game. **Point Values: RB (1), WR (2), and TE (1).**

Demonstrates the ability to avoid direct shots: This category is less about moves and more about a runner's tendency to avoid the full force of a big hit. Most feature backs with higher than average longevity either aggressively deliver blows to the defense or understand how to avoid receiving them on a consistent basis. Corey Dillon and Curtis Martin are backs that never seemed to take big hits throughout their careers. **Point Values: RB (7), WR (2), and TE (1).**

Demonstrates effective start-stop movements: The ability to come to a full stop and change direction is a start-stop movement. The best start-stop moves require few steps, if any, to come to a full stop, which makes the move more sudden and difficult for a defender to adjust while in pursuit. Sanders, Emmitt Smith, and Ladinian Tomlinson all displayed terrific start-stop moves as runners. **Point Values: RB (2), WR (2), and TE (1).**

Demonstrates effective lateral movement: Lateral movement is otherwise known as making cuts—sharp changes of direction to the left or right while still in stride or not losing much speed. There are several kinds of cuts. Backs like Barry Sanders, Jamal Anderson, and Priest Holmes made jump cuts where they appear to be able to plant both feet and hop away from on-coming defenders as they take off in a different direction. Most backs are able to plant one foot and change direction while on the run with some degree of effectiveness. A back with good cutting ability can plant and side step a defender that has telegraphed his angle. A back with even better lateral movement can cut across the backfield to take advantage of a lane opening up on the opposite side of the formation in which the play was intended to go. Some of the best backs of all time were able to make dramatic cuts with minimal steps and without slowing down. Gale Sayers could cut at a 75-80 degree angle at full speed on a mud-caked field. **Point Values: RB (3), WR (2), and TE (1).**

Pocket Presence

Pocket presence takes the qualities one often finds in a good leader: courage, intuition, and wisdom. The general public often mistakes the concept of a mobile quarterback as a player with running back skills. There is no argument that a signal caller with this level of running ability can wreak havoc on a defense. But if that player cannot adjust his position in the pocket while keeping his eyes downfield and maintain a position where he can release the football without having to reset his feet, then he becomes more of a liability. First and foremost, a quarterback has to sense the pressure and possess a good internal clock about the time he has to scan the field before making a decision. His decision should be dictated by his desire to make the best play for his team in the context of the game.

Moves effectively in the pocket to buy time: A quarterback with good pocket presence side-steps pressure while keeping his eyes downfield. He doesn't sacrifice his stance to the degree that he cannot make a quick, accurate throw. Less experienced quarterbacks can drop their head and attempt dramatic, elusive moves to avoid pressure, but they wind up committing to running the football because they lose their bead on the receivers. A quarterback with good mobility and pocket presence understands when to roll out and when to make a slight adjustment with either the upper body or legs to elude the rush. I'd argue that Tom Brady is much better at eluding pressure in the pocket with a completed pass as the end result than Michael Vick, the most elusive

quarterback in football. Both have outstanding win-loss records, but Brady is more dangerous because he can distribute the ball for a big play under intense pressure. Vick's plays under pressure more often have an all-or-nothing result. **Point Value: QB (7).**

Willing to take a hit and deliver the ball at the last second: A quarterback has to exhibit the patience to deliver the ball at the right time for some plays to be successful. A quarterback that will stand in the pocket and deliver a throw at the last second while knowing a defender is bearing down on him is often rewarded with a completion to a receiver breaking free from single coverage for a big play. This is how the quarterback exhibits his comfort level with physical play and where he can lead by example. Steve McNair, a quarterback with excellent mobility throughout his career, has regularly exhibited the courage to take the last-second hit to complete a long touchdown pass. **Point Value: QB (2).**

Senses pass rush: A quarterback should have an internalized mechanism that tells him when the pocket is about to break down and dictate when to take evasive action. This is much like a running back's vision—some players are more instinctive than others—but the difference is the quarterback may have to use more than his sight to feel the pressure. John Elway and Fran Tarkenton were great at sensing the rush. Elway reportedly could hear the blindside pursuit as well as use his peripheral vision to see the progression of the shadows to gauge when to break the pocket. If you watch his highlights, he often eluded backside pressure that would have resulted in a sack or fumble with most quarterbacks. **Point Value: QB (3).**

Willing to throw the ball away to avoid sacks: This is one thing most quarterbacks have to learn when they enter the NFL. The competitive fire to make a play often takes over, and they attempt to keep the play alive—often to the detriment of a sack or turnover. In most down and distance situations, throwing the ball away is a preferred alternative for a pro quarterback under pressure. Peyton Manning is one of the more patient signal callers in the NFL. While one of the most aggressive downfield throwers in football today, he is among the best at knowing when to throw the ball out of bounds. His throws are often in a safe range of a receiver to make the catch with giving the defense a chance to make the play. Manning understands how to keep his team in the game with minimal risk. **Point Value: QB (2).**

Power

Simply put, *Power* is a football player's ability to move forward when a defender presents himself as a physical obstacle attempting to stop his progress. The variety of methods a player can use to address this obstacle and the how effectively he can overcome what impedes him determines the player's overall score within this category. Walter Payton's style of play epitomized the techniques of a power runner. The fact Payton was not a big back illustrates the point that power often has as much to do with aggression, leverage, and determination as it does size and momentum.

Displays leg power to drive through arm tackles: To get a positive score, the ball carrier must consistently demonstrate the ability to run through, or pull away from a defender's attempt to grab the runner's body. The defender may be of any size, and an attempted arm tackle is to grab any part of the ball carrier's body to bring him down. If the runner cannot make forward progress by running past the attempt when grabbed, he does not receive credit. If the player trips from an attempted arm tackle to the legs but the defender could only manage to hit the leg, ankle, or foot but not hold on through the tackle, then the player still receives credit. A demonstration of consistency is for the runner to exhibit this skill on at least 75% of the chances a defender has to arm tackle him in a game. Walter Payton is the best example of a runner that uses this technique as well as the stiff-arm, and initiating contact. **Point Values: RB (1), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Displays effective stiff-arm: To receive a positive score, the ball carrier must be able to extend his arm and make contact with the defender. At this point, he must either maintain his space from the tackler and keep the defensive player away from his body, or knock the player backwards. **Point Values: RB (1), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Demonstrates ability to initiate contact, run behind pads, and punish defenders: These are the techniques an aggressive runner uses when they anticipate contact. Ball carriers lower their heads or shoulder into a hit, or initiate the hit with a forearm adequately demonstrates this tendency. Effective use of these

techniques not only makes the runner more difficult to tackle, but the ball carrier takes less punishment than he delivers—wearing down the defense’s will and stamina. **Point Values: RB (1), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Demonstrates good body-lean when finishing runs: It is a fundamental point of coaching for a runner to fall forward for extra yardage as a defender makes the tackle. In addition, a low pad level with the shoulders leaning forward and the knees bent gives the ball carrier a leverage advantage in a collision with another player. The advantage often translates into extra yardage after contact. Edgerrin James may be the best active runner in the game when it comes to his ability to stay low, and gain extra yardage upon contact with a defensive player. **Point Values: RB (3), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Gains yards after contact/second-third effort runner: Often known as a runner that “dies hard,” this is a ball carrier that succeeds moving forward after a hit or an attempted tackle. The amount of yardage gained isn’t part of the criteria—as long as the initial hit does not permanently halt the player’s forward progress. Several backs are known for their ability to gain yards after contact. Clinton Portis and Corey Dillon have been known for this skill though their style of play is often a study in contrast because Dillon is far more physical a player than Portis. Still, Portis is a productive back in a power offense. **Point Values: RB (7), WR (2), and TE (2).**

Receiving

There are many possible things to lump under the category of receiving. For the sake of establishing clear, criteria, the checklist format considers receiving:

1. The act of catching the football
2. The adjustments a player must make with the ball in the air
3. How consistently the player makes a reception in lieu of their immediate environment

Wide receivers and tight ends generally run more intricate routes and encounter more complex coverage than runners, so their checklists split out routes from receiving skills. Runners on the other hand, simply have a more generic route-running category grouped with their overall skill as a receiver.

A consistent target in the passing game: This point only applies to runners. If the back is targeted on average 3-4 times per game, he is a player coaches want to use as a weapon in the passing game. Brian Westbrook epitomizes a back that is seen as major part of his team’s passing attack. **Point Value: RB (3).**

Runs precise routes: This only applies to the RB checklist because the variety of routes for backs to run in most passing games consist of swing passes, passes to the flat, screen plays, circling out of the backfield over the middle, and the occasional wheel route deep. Most of the routes require the back to run to a general area, sit down in a zone of space, and wait for the throw. **Point Value: RB (1).**

Catches the ball with hands first/Consistently catches ball with hands without juggling: A good receiver understands the best way to bring in a pass with optimal control over the ball is to catch the ball with one’s hands first, and arms extended away from the body. A receiver that uses his hands first, has a greater chance to make a successful second effort on a ball he can’t initially control. In contrast, a player that catches the ball with his body has to deal with a more violent ricochet if he doesn’t gain initial control. In addition, a receiver that catches the ball with his hands naturally establishes a wide area for the quarterback to throw a catch-able pass. The basic technique of catching a football is to have one’s thumbs up when catching a ball at least chest-high, and thumb’s down with passes thrown lower. Although some backs are a major part of the passing game with some NFL team’s the type of throws made to the backs don’t place optimal expectations on hands technique because they are seen as long hand offs. Torrey Holt has excellent catching technique. **Point values: RB (1), WR (5), and TE (1).**

Demonstrates the ability to make the difficult catch: There are a number of ways to define a difficult catch. Tight coverage where the defender(s) have the advantage, passes that require an acrobatic effort, or receptions that require excellent skills at tracking the ball in the air such as over the shoulder grabs up the center of the field and the ball thrown directly over the receiver’s head. Think Brandon Lloyd or Randy Moss when imagining these catches. **Point Values: RB (1), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Catches ball well with his back to the quarterback/line of scrimmage: Several routes are designed so the receiver can catch the ball while heading up field to gain maximum yardage. A receiver that can turn back from the waist while on the run or catch the ball over his shoulder can maximize the space between himself and the coverage on a well-thrown ball. Torrey Holt and Isaac Bruce made these types of routes into an art form in the Rams offense. **Point Values: RB (1), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Consistently makes receptions on catch-able balls: This is the primary job of a receiver. The definition of a catch-able ball is anything not defined as a difficult catch. Certainly the ball is catch-able even when the reception is difficult to make, but a good way to re-phrase this point is to say *does the receiver make the easy catches*. Marvin Harrison is a model of consistency. **Point Values: RB (3), WR (7), and TE (7).**

Adjusts to the ball in the air: The receiver can leap, extend his arms, or turn his body to create the best opportunity to catch a ball. Backs are rarely required to run routes where they have to make these types of adjustments to the ball. Randy Moss and Chad Johnson make this look easy. **Point Values: WR (2) and TE (2).**

Catches the ball in tight coverage: The receiver can make a reception when a defender is close enough to disrupt the pass with his body, shield the throw from the receiver's line of sight, or to jar the ball loose with a blow to the receiver. Larry Fitzgerald and Keyshawn Johnson are receivers that have been well known to present themselves as big targets in tight coverage and shield the ball from their competition. **Point Values: WR (5) and TE (5).**

Catches the ball in high traffic areas: This is a case where the receiver can be wide open but is catching the ball in a space where linebackers and defensive backs are within range to hit him with a running start shortly after he makes contact with the ball. This is the ultimate display of courage and concentration for a receiver. Michael Irvin made a living on these throws throughout his career. **Point Values: WR (3) and TE (3).**

Consistently holds onto the ball when hit: It may seem logical that this point could be grouped with the point above, but there are numerous situations where a receiver is in no danger of absorbing a hard hit but still fails to maintain control of the ball after the defender makes contact. Once again, this point illustrates the player's concentration and comfort level with physical play. Hines Ward and Larry Fitzgerald fit the mold here. **Point Values: WR (4) and TE (4).**

Routes

If the concept of gaining separation is about *how* to run and turn in order to get open, route running is more about the awareness of *where and when* to run and turn. Running effective pass patterns takes precision and timing. It also takes awareness of how the defense and offense are reacting to each other before the snap. A great route runner with awareness of the game (Steve Largent, Cris Carter, and Art Monk) can have a very long career at the receiver position because he relies less on speed than his peers to get the job done.

Runs precise routes: A precise route requires timing and good footwork because the pass patterns are often designed to be in sync with the quarterback's drop. If the receiver does not get to the desired spot in time, the quarterback has to hesitate and the result can be a misfired throw or a sack. In addition to timing, a good route covers the required distance to gain the intended yardage. A coach calls plays that match the game situation in terms of down and distance, and the pass routes have a lot to do with the choice. When the intended distance of the route is run within the expected amount of time, the receiver is most likely catching a well-thrown pass thrown at the precise moment when the quarterback finishes his drop. Isaac Bruce is a terrific route runner that makes the more challenging intermediate routes look easy. **Point Values: WR (7) and TE (7).**

Finds the opening in zone coverage: Sometimes getting to the open area isn't as much about creating the space with precision and timing, but with an understanding of where the natural opening occur within a defensive formation against a specific offensive play. This is what it means to find the "soft spot" in zone coverage—a coverage type where the specific defenses cover an area as opposed to a specific offensive player. Tight ends are frequently asked to find the soft spot and *sit*—in other words, face the quarterback and provide a big, easy target for him. **Point Values: WR (5) and TE (5).**

Adjusts to the QB when the play breaks down: Offensive football has become such a refined aspect of the sport, but there is still a fair amount of improvisation because defenses are equally prepared for what they encounter in a contest and render the original intent of the play ineffective. When this happens, receivers are coached to break off their routes. They either make their way back to the quarterback, or modify their routes to run in a direction that provides the signal caller a downfield option. Whether or not this is coached on a regular basis, a quality receiver has established a rapport with his quarterback to alter his route and make himself the best possible target for his teammate trying to make a throw under pressure. Keenan McCardell and Rod Smith continue to make a living in the NFL because among other things, they do a great job getting to the right place at the right time for their quarterback. **Point Values: WR (3) and TE (3).**

Awareness of the sideline: Most people associate a receiver's awareness of the sideline as being able to catch the ball with both feet in bounds. This is part of the equation, but not all. It also has to do with the receiver using the sideline to his advantage when running a pass route. On deep routes, a receiver that keeps enough distance between himself and the sideline is actually creating more cushion for him to back away from a defensive back in tight, inside coverage, and gaining more room to make a catch while in bounds. In contrast, a receiver may use the sideline and his body as natural barriers to prevent the defensive back from making a break on the football. **Point Values: WR (2) and TE (2).**

Scrambling

Technically speaking, scrambling is more about the ability to keep the play alive behind the line of scrimmage with the intent to complete a pass, but I'm gauging it more to skills used to gain positive yardage as a runner. Clearly John Elway and Fran Tarkenton, two quarterbacks I mentioned earlier in this category, were excellent runners and it was the same skill set they used to buy time to throw the ball. There is an entire range of running threats at the quarterback position. Michael Vick is a breakaway threat that can score from anywhere on the field. A quarterback like Jake Plummer can outside the pocket to gain first downs in long yardage situations, but is more of a classic scrambler. Matt Hasselbeck and Ben Roethlisberger have the type of mobility to gain yards when the play breaks down, but more as a last resort.

Effectively gains yards when breaking the pocket: When the quarterback chooses to leave the pocket either on a roll out with the option to run, designed sweep, or a quarterback draw, he should demonstrate the speed, elusiveness, and/or power to gain positive yardage expected from a primary ball carrier. Jake Plummer, and a healthy Steve McNair and Daunte Culpepper possess these type of skills **Point Value: QB (2).**

Effectively gains yards when the pocket collapses: When the quarterback is forced to run because of pressure that forces him up the middle of the field or to the perimeter, he should be able to avoid the sack and gain at least a small amount of positive yardage (2-3 yards). An example of a player that shows an adequate level of skill in this area is Tom Brady. The Patriots quarterback is not a good runner, but he can more often than not avoid the sack in these situations. **Point Value: QB (1).**

Capable of breaking big gains as a runner: These are quarterbacks that can break runs of 20-yards or more in either of the two situations described above. Vick, and Donovan McNabb both possess big-play ability as runners. **Point Value: QB (2).**

Separation

The key component to getting open against tight coverage is the receiver creating space between himself and the defender. The concept of *separation* from the defender in college football differs considerably from the NFL. The saying "If you're *even*, you're leavin'," describes the fact that successful plays are executed in tight spaces in the pros. If an NFL receiver has more than a step on his coverage, this is considered a grand opportunity for the quarterback to complete a pass for a big play, if not a score. Creating separation involves speed, quickness, physical play, and savvy. Hall of Fame receiver, Steve Largent had the speed of a receiver that belonged on the bench, but he was a master at gaining separation on any kind of route—short, intermediate, or long—and this made him difficult for defenses to stop.

Can physically break jam: The NFL uses a lot more press coverage than the college game. Press coverage entails the DB lining up close to the receiver and aggressively initiating contact to delay the receiver from releasing into his route. The strategy is to disrupt the timing in the offense's passing game and afford the pass rush more time to pressure the quarterback. College receivers initially have difficulty beating the jam so the timing or location of the route isn't compromised in the process. They must be able to use a variety of moves to gain a leverage advantage and quickly out-muscle their opponent from the beginning. **Point Values: WR (2) and TE (2).**

Can use elusiveness to break jam: Footwork, head fakes, and upper body fakes can all contribute to defeating press coverage with a minimal amount of contact. A receiver that effectively varies his techniques has the most success. **Point Values: WR (2) and TE (2).**

Uses body to shield the defender from the ball: This is one of the best ways to gain separation in tight coverage. On routes such as fades, hitches, or curls the receiver faces the quarterback and uses his back to present a natural barrier between him self and the ball. **Point Values: WR (3) and TE (3).**

Creates separation with burst out of breaks: Exploding out of cut or break is similar to a runner's ability to accelerate through a hole. The more sudden the receiver is with his breaks, the more effectively he can gain separation on a variety of routes that require a quick turn (curls and hitches) or breaks (digs, outs, out and ups, etc.). Marvin Harrison excels in this aspect of getting open because he keeps his hips low which allows him to more naturally accelerate in and out of his cuts. **Point Values: WR (5) and TE (5).**

Gains noticeable separation on intermediate/deep routes: Fly patterns, stutter and go routes, streaks, posts, and deep slants are patterns where the receiver creates separation with both acceleration and long speed. Some receivers can get open with "build-up speed." These players are generally long-striders that take longer to get to top speed, but gain separation as they achieve the top end of their stride. Santana Moss and Steve Smith are receivers with both explosive, short-area acceleration and long speed. Justin McCareins has deep speed but is more of a long-strider. **Point Values: WR (2) and TE (2).**

Speed

A player can be fast in different contexts. *Speed* can be measured over a variety of distances and directions. 40 yards in a straight line is the most recognizable format that people use to measure a football player's speed. While intermediate to long-range sprinting speed has its benefits, there are other components of being "fast," as a football player. This includes short area burst—or acceleration—and non-linear speed. It is also a lot different for a player to run fast in conditions when he isn't in several pounds of pads, hasn't been hit dozens of times for 45-50 minutes, and his stamina level is less than optimal. Throw in the fact the player running at the combine isn't being asked to think and react to outside stimuli such as a called play, or opposing defenders trying to take his head off, and there's a good reason to wonder whether *functional speed* is overlooked in the evaluation process. A football player that can't make good decisions instinctively is no longer as fast as a player that can react rather than think. This is why players such as Mike Anderson, Michael Irvin, and Priest Holmes have made several big plays throughout their careers but lacked the impressive stopwatch speed at their respective positions.

Demonstrates effective short area burst/Gains separation with burst out of breaks: A ball carrier or receiver that can accelerate to full speed within a short distance and that full speed is fast enough to separate from those still attempting to accelerate in pursuit has an effective short area burst. A player with good acceleration is more likely to gain significant, positive yardage than a player with better long-range speed that needs a bit more distance to achieve the same or better rate. Emmitt Smith was a perfect example of a player that lacked elite stopwatch speed, but possessed great acceleration. **Point Values: RB (7), WR (5), and TE (5).**

Demonstrates the ability to separate from the 1st and 2nd wave of defenders/Gains noticeable separation on intermediate and deep routes: When a ball carrier or receiver can create a tangible space between himself and a pursuing defender during a run or pass route in tight coverage of at least 15-20 yards in length and the defender cannot make a play, this runner or receiver has adequate intermediate to long-range, football speed. The specified distance of 15-20 yards is generally the maximum space between the linebackers and defensive backs and the line of scrimmage. If a player can pull away from players when they get into this area of the field, they have enough long-range speed to be considered a breakaway threat in a football game.

Running back Stephen Davis was rarely a threat to break a run of over 15-20 yards, but was still a quality starter for many years, which supports the point that short area burst is in many cases a more important factor. **Point Values: RB (1), WR (2), and TE (2).**

Demonstrates the ability to turn the corner on designed plays to the outside: Running plays to the edge of a defense require a combination of both acceleration and maintaining an adequate level of speed as the player is changing direction on the move. Edgerrin James is no longer a back that can separate from the 1st and 2nd wave of defenders on a consistent basis, but he still has the ability to get to the perimeter of the defense and gain positive yardage. **Point Value: RB (3).**

Vision

Two of the most important factors that separate a talented runner from a talented athlete are the level of comfort he has with physical contact (his heart), and his ability to anticipate and exploit the best places to run with the football (*Vision*). Locating the best place to run requires a runner to vary his rate of speed, set up the blocks in front of him, and move in one direction to exploit daylight in another. Vision requires a high level of intuition and backs or receivers with great vision and strong fundamentals as a runner exhibit a style that is akin to a great improviser in music or the spoken word—instinctive, on the edge, but in control of the moment. Vision is the common denominator among great runners. Gale Sayers, Jim Brown, and Marshall Faulk all had great vision and each had a running style vastly different from each other.

Makes good decisions where to run: This sounds like a very general thing to use as criteria to judge a back, but the concept is that simple. If the play is designed to go up the middle on regular down and distance play, but there is a huge opening off tackle, does the runner attempt to get outside or just ram it into the pile? A good runner often spots the potential hole before the snap, but still makes the adjustment if he sees something better that is within his reach. **Point Value: RB (7).**

Displays patience in traffic (sets up blocks): Although a runner sometimes has to create openings with a physical style in short-yardage situations, a quality ball carrier is capable of waiting for his blockers to reach their assignments before he runs through the opening. The Kansas City Chiefs explain this concept as effectively running through the layers of the defense—something Priest Holmes has been great at doing as a runner. A patient runner will hesitate in his movement to allow a player in front of him to pass or make a play, but is decisive in his actions. A tentative runner will hesitate, but is merely looking for an opening rather than setting it up. An RB has a greater point value for his area than receivers because the nature of his job is to run in traffic with greater frequency. **Point Values: RB (3), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Takes good angles away from defenders in the open field: A runner with good instincts and peripheral vision has the ability to alter the direction of his run just enough to prevent a defender in pursuit from catching up to him. The timing and direction of this decision is what makes this open field technique and effective way to make a big play despite the fact the defensive player has exhibited enough recovery speed to get within distance of making a tackle. Gale Sayers was masterful at this type of running. Receivers have a higher point value for his area than backs because they more frequently get the ball in the open field. **Point Values: RB (1), WR (2), and TE (1).**