

The 2011 Rookie Scouting Portfolio-SAMPLE VERSION

**Game Film Analysis
Player Profiles
Scouting Reports**

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

By

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The 2011 Rookie Scouting Portfolio

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Important Note: The table of contents is a series of bookmarks in the Adobe document. Click the bookmark icon on the Adobe menu 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 2011 Rookie Scouting Portfolio is designed to give fantasy GMs and draftniks a convenient and extensive analysis of draft-eligible prospects at quarterback, running back, wide receiver, and tight end. Supported with exhaustive detail, the reports are in cheat sheet format to give the reader a quick and convenient overview for fantasy GMs to reference on draft day.

What makes the RSP unique is its dedication to presenting my process and supporting work to the reader. It is a two-pronged, evaluation approach that begins with a grading report in checklist format. Each checklist question is given a weighted value and is clearly defined for the reader in the glossary of the publication.

This method provides a more uniform objectivity when grading players. It insures that one or two particular talents don't cover up a collection of deficiencies. It also provides a clear format for readers to understand which skills I most. 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. When used in concert, the reader should gain a clearer insight to my judgments. They can use many of the play-by-play sections to adjust the scoring method to tweak the scores to what they believe has more or less value.

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: Joe Thomas and Ron Wolf. Commissioner Pete Rozelle recommended Thomas to the Minnesota Vikings in the 1960's as its 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 were easy to spot 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 for teaching him valuable lessons about the art of personnel decisions. Wolf was the driving force behind the Packers acquiring Brett Favre. Wolf was convinced Favre was a special player and not because of what he saw from Favre at the combine, but from film study of the future Hall of Famer's junior season at Southern Mississippi.

This is the *Rookie Scouting Portfolio's* sixth year in print and I continue to learn more with each season of work. If this is the first year you have purchased the RSP, I believe you will be equally pleased with the depth and scope of the RSP's analysis as the readers who discovered it between 2006-2010. 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 of the necessary fundamentals that answer the key questions about a prospect's potential to develop into an NFL starter or 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 flowing, 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 that adds value over years leading to this point and is rarely duplicated with short-term focus/cramming. 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 his resume holds up and how he handles pressure. 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 4.6-40 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 on film 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. It was even discussed this year that scouts prefer to hand-time players at the combine despite the presence of an automated timing device. This means there will always be variation in the reported times, which diminishes its value. Jerry Rice had functional speed and he was a more impressive runner in pads than in shorts. Larry Fitzgerald ran closer to 4.6 than prospects with far less skill and I vividly remember experienced football people in the media, who have a public following, questioning if he had the physical skills to be a complete NFL 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 contrasts. 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 failed to develop into a productive starter because he lacked a necessary comfort level with physical contact. Pinkston had 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 2011 Rookie Scouting Portfolio* aspires to describe how the player failed or succeeded in performing each skill set, often 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 to evaluate an individual's performance on a specific task. Tell the evaluators to use a numerical or letter grading scale to score them and the odds are slim you'll even come close to a unanimous agreement. Unless they established more specific guidelines they all agreed upon first, there will be few instances where there isn't wide variation on the score.

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 come to an 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? 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-pronged 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,” is more complicated. In traditional evaluation realms for employee performance “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 show great balance in rough field conditions on a sunny day in perfect stadium conditions cannot fail this area.

However, as a reader do you want to presume the player can perform a skill that the evaluator didn’t see or do you want to presume the player has to prove he can do it before the evaluator gives him credit? The world of sport is a “prove it to me” system. Therefore, I grade players with “No” if I did not see a player perform a skill with clear exceptions that deal with character, durability, and weather. I clearly note if I did not see a player perform a certain skill, which will help the reader see which scores might be depressing a player’s value. I also give players a categorized potential rating of “upside,” “boom-bust,” or “maxed,” to show which players have an opportunity to exceed their evaluation, and if so, how great is the risk-reward of it happening?

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 his first year, and at latest, his second season. Since rookies are rarely top tier fantasy starters, this overall number states more to their dynasty potential to become elite fantasy contributors in the future. Although it is 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, and often 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 he might 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 or have physical limitations that cost their teams are playing at this level. These are players best used as a situational player or reserve, but the team may have no choice but to start them. 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 with this score he often falls under one of three categories: he is new to the position, he 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 often slower than their peers. A player in the lower half is more likely to be a career backup 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. Some of these players I will rank higher than their score indicates because I believe they can learn quickly on the job and develop into a better player or I didn't see them produce one or two key skills that depressed their scores. Quality WR and TE prospects tend to score in this range because they generally have a tougher learning curve than runners and lower quantity and quality of college coaching than QBs.
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 UFL) 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. In extenuating circumstances I will use multiple games to score one player if necessary, but I try to avoid it.

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 his statistical performance.

Quarterbacks

Overview and Fantasy Impact of the Position

Skill Breakdowns

OVERRATED AND UNDERRATED

Projects

Fantasy Top 20

Ranking and Comparisons

Scouting Checklists and Profiles

Overview and Fantasy Impact of the QB Position

The 2011 class of QBs is a fun group to profile, but a maddening one if you're a fantasy owner or draftnik. There are six players with the raw skills to develop into franchise quarterbacks, but each of them have enough flaws to disappoint. If that happens, there are another 6-8 passers with enough potential to develop into starters within the next 3-5 seasons that could make fans say, "I told you these draft experts don't know what they're talking about – none of them were as good as (insert player name here), who wasn't ranked that high."

In re-draft leagues rookie quarterbacks are not worth a draft pick. Sam Bradford had an excellent rookie year, compiling 244.9 fantasy points, which is the fourth-highest total for a rookie in at least 40 years.

Rookie QBs At Their Best						
Last	First	FF Pts	Yr	Rnd.	No.	Season Ranking
Manning	Peyton	297.15	1998	1	1	6th
Kelly	Jim	287.55	1986*	1	14	5th
Ryan	Matt	252.4	2008	1	3	16th
Bradford	Sam	244.9	2010	1	2	20th
Moon	Warren	242	1984*	U	U	12th
Mirer	Rick	241.95	1993	1	2	9th
Weinke	Chris	239.35	2001	4	11	19th
Flacco	Joe	234.7	2008	1	18	20th
Zorn	Jim	225.15	1976*	U	U	6th
Leftwich	Byron	219.75	2003	1	7	18th
Average		248.49				

* - Denotes player's first year in NFL, not necessarily first year in pro football. Jm Kelly was drafted in 1983, but he played in the USFL until 1986. Warren Moon originally signed with the CFL.

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

Bradford's performance bumped Ben Roethlisberger from the top 10, but if the Steelers quarterback is included in an analysis of the "top-11," 7 of the best 11 rookie performances in the modern era have taken place in the past 12 years. This is one small sign that the NFL has become a quarterback-friendly league. Although Leftwich and Weinke never became dependable starters, Manning, Ryan and Roethlisberger are Pro Bowl-caliber players and Joe Flacco has flashed enough skill to help manage the Ravens to the playoffs multiple times. Bradford appears poised to become a Pro Bowl-caliber player if he can adapt to an offensive system change in only his second year in the league.

None of this should mean much to re-draft owners, but it is important information for dynasty leagues because 6 of the 11 quarterbacks discussed here are players that could have been (or likely will be) fixtures for a dynasty roster. This is why the 2011 QB class is minefield worth navigating. Its likely that the top QBs won't come off the board as high as preceding classes, which could present some real bargains if an owner is willing to take a chance on five of the top six players on my list in rounds two and three. However, there are no Matt Ryan or Sam Bradfords in this class that immediately stand alone. There's a chance 2-3 of these players could perform this way, but it's not as apparent prior to the draft as previous QB classes.

Skill Breakdowns

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio checklists are designed to assess whether a player possesses a physical skill or technique that meets the baseline requirements that I believe will make him a successful professional. These skills and attributes are defined in the publication's glossary. However, the checklist isn't designed to differentiate how much or little of that technique each player has. Matt Ryan has the baseline level of NFL arm strength, but Michael Vick has this attribute in abundance.

So in addition to the checklists scores that measure the number of skills and attributes a player has developed to a baseline level of proficiency, the skill breakdown reports are an avenue to compare how skilled these players are in each category. I use the play-by-play notes from my film study to categorize each player.

The subheadings under each skill should be reasonably self-explanatory, but here's a quick break down.

Star Caliber: A level of skill that rivals the best in the game at his position.

Starter Caliber: A level of skill commensurate with a full-time starter at his position.

Committee Caliber: A baseline level of skill for a player to contribute productively in an offense.

Reserve Caliber: These players lack some amount of technique or athleticism to consistently be productive, but the skill is good enough to contribute to a team.

Free Agent: These players lack the minimum skill in a given area to make a team if evaluated strictly by this single component.

Deficient: The player's skill set is so lacking that they aren't likely to receive interest from a team until it improves to a at least a free agent level.

Accuracy

Accuracy is how close to target a quarterback can throw a pass. The skill requires good mechanics, patience, poise, anticipation, and in some cases good arm strength. I evaluated these players on their short, intermediate, and deep accuracy, and their accuracy on the move. NFL caliber accuracy is significantly more demanding than what is acceptable for a college quarterback. NFL offenses tend to operate with a greater emphasis on timing routes and with the expectation that an open receiver is a player in single coverage who might be considered well covered in a college game. In the NFL it's not just about getting the ball in the area of the receiver, it's about placing the ball in a tight window just away from the defender, or throwing the ball to an area where the receiver can make an adjustment to the pass in tight coverage.

<u>Star Caliber</u>	<u>Starter Caliber</u>	<u>Committee Caliber</u>	<u>Reserve Caliber</u>	<u>Free Agent</u>	<u>Deficient</u>
	Blaine Gabbert Christian Ponder Greg McElroy Jeff Van Camp Jerrod Johnson Nate Enderle Ricky Stanzi Ryan Mallett Scott Tolzien Trevor Vittatoe	Adam Froman Andy Dalton Jake Locker Kellen Moore Mike Hartline	Ben Chappell Cameron Newton Colin Kaepernick Diondre Borel Kevin Riley T.J. Yates Tyrod Taylor	Austen Arnaud Carson Coffman Ryan Colburn	Dwight Dasher

The Best: Blaine Gabbert and Chrisitan Ponder have the best accuracy overall in every range of the field and they can throw the ball well on the move. Gabbert displays moments of star-caliber accuracy on the move that reminds me of Brett Favre, Roethlisberger, and Elway. Ryan Mallett throws players open extremely well and his skill with the vertical throws is better than half of the current NFL starters. However, Mallett doesn't throw the ball as well on the move or under pressure.

The Worst: Ryan Colburn's coach refers to Colburn's streaky accuracy as "foul balls," and accounted for this issue as a week-in, week-out factor. Austen Arnaud has moments of pinpoint accuracy with pro-style intermediate routes, but he has a significant mechanical flaw with his front leg during his throws that force passes high of target on a consistent basis. Dwight Dasher will attempt to convert to RB so there's no sense in discussing his deficiencies as a passer.

Arm Strength

This attribute might be the most overrated among the average fan. There are two components to arm strength: distance and velocity. As long as a quarterback can throw the ball 35-40 yards in length with strong accuracy and good velocity, he can produce at a high level in the NFL. Rich Gannon is a perfect example. There are some players who have improved their arm strength after entering the league (Drew Brees), but it's still not a common occurrence. So a player with less than adequate arm strength is likely to have limited upside.

<u>Star Caliber</u>	<u>Starter Caliber</u>	<u>Committee Caliber</u>	<u>Reserve Caliber</u>	<u>Free Agent</u>	<u>Deficient</u>
Blaine Gabbert Cameron Newton Ryan Mallett Tyrod Taylor	Adam Froman Andy Dalton Austen Arnaud Ben Chappell Christian Ponder	Colin Kaepernick Greg McElroy Mike Hartline T.J. Yates	Dwight Dasher Kellen Moore Ricky Stanzi Ryan Colburn Scott Tolzien	Carson Coffman Kevin Riley	

	Diondre Borel Jake Locker Jeff Van Camp Jerrod Johnson Nate Enderle Trevor Vittatoe				
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The Best: Blaine Gabbert, Cameron Newton, Ryan Mallett and Tyrod Taylor all possess the arm of a top NFL prospect. They can throw the ball with accuracy and velocity at least 50 yards; sling the ball to the opposite side of the field with enough zip to meet the timing requirements of deep outs and deep comebacks; and they can make plays on the move that a defense will force a quarterback to attempt.

The Worst: Carson Coffman and Kevin Riley lack the requisite arm strength to make all of the throws with the velocity needed to make a roster.

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF SKILL BREAKDOWNS PURCHASE THE COMPLETE VERSION OF THE 2011 ROOKIE SCOUTING PORTFOLIO AT FOOTBALLGUYS.COM

Overrated: Talent, But Glaring Holes

These quarterbacks have several components of their game that makes them good enough to contribute right away if not for other deficiencies that they need to address. These areas will either limit their early contributions or prevent them from seeing the field at all. If these issues aren't fixed, they won't ever come close to approaching their potential.

Colin Kaepernick, Nevada: The Nevada quarterback saw his stock rise at the Senior Bowl, but I think some of this buzz is manufactured by those enamored with the fact that he didn't look as stick-skinny up close as he did on tape. The QB continued to add weight between those practices and the NFL Combine, which I think further enhanced the buzz surround him. I also think the media seemed enamored with his speed and this was highlighted by the South Squad's propensity to use Kaepernick on designed running plays during scrimmages and the buzz that resulted from it. I agree Kaepernick has long-term upside, but I fail to see how his stock should be on the rise when the QB still has clear flaws in his game that will take some time to correct.

The first issue is his release. Kaepernick began his career with a side arm release that he has improved...

Easy-Fix Projects

Cameron Newton, Auburn: It's dangerous to label Newton as an easy fix, but his issues with accuracy, touch, and rhythm all stem from the fact that...

Underrated QB Prospects (SEE COMPLETE 2011 VERSION)

QB Projects

Austin Arnaud, Iowa St.: As much as Arnaud needs work with his mechanics, there is a lot to like about the Cyclones quarterback. Arnaud has really good velocity and moments of pinpoint accuracy in tight coverage in the intermediate range of the field that display a high ceiling of potential. I watched Arnaud hit deep comebacks and deep outs in tight coverage as well as anyone, and he's also very good at throwing the fade stop. In this respect, there's some similarities to the promise that Cam Newton has as a downfield passer.

I'm was also intrigued with Arnaud's decision-making. He repeatedly...

The Top 20 Quarterback Prospects for Dynasty Leagues

My rankings are based on a combination of the data collected, my view of a player's potential fit with any offensive system, and his potential for growth. In addition to rankings and comparisons tables that supply workout scores and short summaries, I am leading with more detailed written summaries of each runner in the top 40 so you don't have to hunt through the play-by-play analysis.

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 sets, and how flexible their skill sets are to the widest varieties of offensive systems. In any dynasty league setting, I would be comfortable drafting the first 10 quarterbacks on this list. After that, it depends on the size of the league. I believe all 20 prospects on this list that have a chance to develop into fantasy-relevant players – even as backups – within three seasons.

FOR A COMPLETE SET OF RANKINGS PURCHASE THE COMPLETE VERSION OF THE 2011 ROOKIE SCOUTING PORTFOLIO AT FOOTBALLGUYS.COM

7. Greg McElroy, Alabama (6-1, 220)

If McElroy had the athleticism and arm of most of the players above him and retained his current level of technique, he'd be my top quarterback prospect in this class. Maturity, intelligence, and poise might be intangibles to some, but they are actual skills. They manifest on the field with the way a player executes techniques and the gameplan. McElroy has these intangibles in abundance.

Although not the caliber of athlete of my top five passers, McElroy throws reasonably well on the run in the short area of the field. He can make throws on the run in this range moving to his left or his right. What makes him an underrated prospect is his pocket presence, which is as good, if not better than any quarterback in this class.

He stands tall under pressure, slides to an open area in the pocket, and finds the open receiver consistently and while facing pressure outside or up the middle. He also shows toughness to take hits and continue stepping into his throws.

McElroy is patient with routes to make sure he's allowing the play to develop as designed, and he reads the entire field and plays with an aggressive, downfield mentality. He makes basic pre snap reads with accuracy, getting his team into appropriate pass or run plays depending on the defensive alignment.

The greatest concern about McElroy's game is his arm strength and accuracy. His throws aren't consistently hitting receivers in stride. He tends to be a little off the mark with even some short range passes, especially when throwing to his left. He needs to set up quicker from his drops. Right now his drops slow down his timing with receivers on routes against man coverage and this is where I believe his minor accuracy issues come into play.

He wasn't asked to make as many pro style throws in the intermediate passing game as I saw from some prospects, but at the Senior Bowl McElroy showed enough arm strength and accuracy for me to believe that he'll develop into a more accurate downfield passer.

McElroy is a classic pocket passer who plays with stylistic strengths that are similar to Tom Brady. He's not Brady's

height and his arm isn't nearly as strong, but McElroy has enough physical skill to at least become a long-term veteran back up with the savvy to show more if he's matched with the right team/coaching staff.

8. Ricky Stanzi, Iowa (6-4, 223)

After McElroy, Stanzi is the most impressive QB in the pocket that I have seen in this class. He can slide away from pressure or stand tall and make the throw against pressure. His execution of play fakes and mobility to roll out or break the pocket is at a level above most of the passers in this class.

Stanzi throws the ball with touch and pinpoint accuracy in the short range of the field and he's not afraid to make tight throws in coverage in the intermediate range of the field. If Stanzi had a little better arm strength to throw the ball with velocity and placement about 50-55 yards downfield rather than 40-45, he would be considered a better prospect.

His velocity on passes thrown from the opposite hash isn't top-notch. He lacks that extra zip to fire a pass from anywhere on the field and fit it into a tight space. At this point in his career he's more of a timing passer who depends on his anticipation of a break to get the ball to his receiver, and throwing the player open.

Where he'll initially struggle in the NFL is proving he can make a pinpoint throw in tight coverage more than 15 yards downfield on a second or third read where he'll have to fire it with a lot of zip. I haven't seen him do this successfully. If he can, he has a real future as an NFL starter. If not, he'll be a backup that can play decent football with talent around him or a borderline starter in a west coast system that wants a player who can read the field quickly and check the ball down if the deep route isn't there right away.

As with most prospects, Stanzi's decision making needs to improve. He tends to lock onto his deep receiver early and draw the safety into the area too soon. He also tends to force the ball in critical situations late in games and he needs to develop more poise to throw the ball away or make an alternate play. It's nice to see he's trying to make the big play to seal the game, but he needs to play with more poise.

Stanzi's lack of poise also translates to his decisions to climb the pocket. He tends to lose this skill when the game is on the line. The Iowa quarterback sometimes takes risks against pressure that can lead to mistakes.

If he can improve his arm strength and poise he might have a better than expected NFL career as more than just a valuable back up.

9. Andy Dalton, TCU (6-2, 215)

Dalton has a lot of skills that a team will value from a QB prospect. He throws a good deep ball with anticipation and on a line. If he can refine the placement of some of these throws so his receivers can consistently run under the passes, he will become an excellent deep ball passer. Right now he's good, but not great in this area.

Dalton has a quick release and tends to get rid of the ball in rhythm with his drops and with good velocity. He can

deliver the ball over the top or at a three-quarter motion depending on what's in front of him at the line of scrimmage and how open his passing lanes are.

He does a very good job of setting his feet after a designed roll to throw the football. Dalton is willing to take a hit to complete a pass in the pocket and he has the mobility to break the pocket and gain yardage as a runner.

Dalton also shows some ability to get through multiple progressions before tucking the ball and running. If he can continue to learn to make tight movements to climb the pocket, he has the accuracy, arm, and athleticism to develop into an NFL quarterback.

But before Dalton makes that leap from NFL prospect to NFL player, he has some things to address. He sometimes places too much zip on short passes that could use a little more touch than velocity. He plays in a spread or Pistol offense where he's not frequently taking drops from center. And he doesn't have the skill of climbing the pocket with tight movements to manage pressure so he can throw the ball efficiently.

His decision-making remains immature: He doesn't show the ability to throw the ball away or check-down. Sometimes he holds onto the ball too long and he doesn't use his eyes to look off defenders as much as just he moves from one progression to the other. He needs to learn to set up the safety downfield, which isn't something he has to do very often from a spread formation or empty backfield sets.

If he learns to make maturer decisions, he has the athleticism arm and base accuracy to develop into a starter.

10. Colin Kaepernick, Nevada (6-4, 233)

Kaepernick has seen his stock rise among draftniks because of his physical skills and promise as a passer. I don't have him ranked as highly as others might because I believe his mechanical flaws are more pronounced than his peers ranked ahead of him. While his athleticism is very good, it's not likely enough to make him an immediate difference maker that an NFL team will try to rush his development.

Despite his speed and agility, I like that Kaepernick doesn't try to force the ball when under pressure and he displays the maturity to throw the ball away rather than rely too much on his athleticism. When he uses his athleticism it's generally in contexts that are extremely productive.

Kaepernick has good arm strength; the ball flies off his arm with a lot of velocity despite a release that he has only improved from a side arm delivery to a little higher than three-quarter motion. However, Kaepernick's wind up is still elongated and his release is far from compact. His three-quarter delivery invites more deflections than his 6-6 frame would suggest.

When moving around the pocket or breaking the line of scrimmage, he has a tendency to carry the ball loosely from his body. With his long limbs, the ball becomes an inviting target for defenders to swipe. Because of those

long limbs, he also needs to learn to carry the ball high and tight. But even when he tucks the ball he tends to leave too much space for the ball to come loose when hit. As a runner he has some speed and change of direction, but he runs out of control, which will make him prone to big hits and turnovers.

Kaepernick waits too long to check the ball down in the passing game and he needs to learn how to climb the pocket and not just try to break free of the line. His footwork needs to improve and as it becomes more consistent, his accuracy should also get better. Right now, he tends to throw the ball high and away and his throws are frequently just a half-beat late. His anticipation should also improve with better footwork because his motor skills will be able to count on this consistent motion with his feet. He has good timing on deep passes and executes rollouts and passes on the run with consistent success, which is what excites a lot of evaluators because he can become a playmaker outside the pocket that many quarterbacks will never be.

I think Kaepernick is a talented but raw prospect who could develop into a solid starter if he demonstrates the work ethic and mental acumen to read defenses and execute with more precision as a readback passer.

11. Scott Tolzien, Wisconsin (6-2, 212)

Tolzien is a prospect with significantly more polish than the players ranked below him, but he'll always lack the physical skills and upside of the players ranked above him.

He operated from a pro-style offense, which should make his transition a little easier, and he shows decent skill at three-, five-, and seven-step drops. He knows where his check downs are and he does a fine job of executing the play action game with thorough play fakes.

Tolzien will go through his progressions and he does a good job of looking off pass defenders to open zones for the receiver he wants to target. He has enough arm

strength to throw the ball 45 yards downfield with accuracy and hit the deep out from the opposite hash, even with pressure in his face.

Tolzien is an accurate passer with good timing, a quick release, and the guts to stand in the pocket and deliver the ball with pressure in his face. However, he's not going to make plays outside the bounds of the system on a consistent basis. He needs to add muscle to his tall, skinny frame because he is a pocket passer who takes punishment to get rid of the ball at the last moment (if needed) with his quick release.

He is a poor runner who lacks the speed and acceleration to break the pocket for decent gains. Like Marc Bulger, Tolzien is an either-or type of player: an efficient technician behind with great protection or a tackling dummy without it.

To have a chance to perform in the NFL, Tolzien needs to get better at three things: 1) Recognizing blitz reads prior to the snap, which most college quarterbacks have to get better at. 2) Improving his delivery, which is too often a three-quarter release that comes out of his hand low and easily deflected. And 3) He has an adequate arm, but he needs to show more anticipation with his deep passes to be consistently accurate downfield or opposing defenses will sit on receivers' routes and wreak havoc on the passing game.

One thing that Tolzien has that will draw the interest of quarterback-friendly coaching staffs is a very quick release. Although I doubt he'll ever become a solid starting quarterback for any length of time, I'd be shocked if he isn't drafted and added to a roster as prospect that they see has a promising, career backup who could produce if matched well with a play-action, short-passing system.

QB Rankings Table

Note: Times and measurements are from the NFL Combine or Pro Day workouts. "Potential" is my assessment of the player's development curve based on the potential for the athlete to improve his strength and athleticism with additional training, or learn the techniques and concepts of is position.

Players labeled "Upside" have additional opportunities to become better athletes and/or technicians at their position. Players earning the "Boom-Bust" label generally have a high level of athleticism but lack the knowledge of a skill or concept that could be difficult to learn.

In some cases, these "Boom-Bust" players have excellent skills and knowledge of concepts, but the base athleticism to perform the job might be questionable and the chance of them improving these physical skills are not likely. A player with a "Maxed" label has likely reached his athletic (or conceptual) potential and this will limit his ability to grow beyond his current assessment.

Name	Ht	Wt.	Score	Pot.	40	20	3-cone	V	Comments
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Greg McElroy	6-1	220	92	Maxed	4.91	4.45	7.11	33.0	McElroy is a classic pocket passer who plays with stylistic strengths that are similar to Tom Brady. He's not Brady's height and his arm isn't nearly as strong, but McElroy has enough physical skill to at least become long-term veteran back up with chances to show more if he's matched with the right team/coaching staff.
Ricky Stanzi	6-4	223	81	Upside	4.93	4.43	6.95	32.5	After McElroy, Stanzi is the most impressive QB in the pocket that I have seen in this class. Stanzi throws the ball with touch and pinpoint accuracy in the short range of the field and he's not afraid to make tight, intermediate throws in coverage. If he can improve his arm strength and poise he might have a better than expected NFL career as more than just a valuable backup.
Andy Dalton	6-2	215	79	Upside	4.87	4.27	6.93	29.5	Dalton has a lot of skills that a team will value from a QB prospect. Dalton also shows some ability to get through multiple progressions before tucking the ball and running. If he can continue to learn to make tight movements to climb the pocket and better decisions, he has the accuracy, arm, and athleticism to develop into an NFL quarterback.
Colin Kaepernick	6-4	233	68	Boom-Bust	4.53	4.18	6.85	32.5	Kaepernick has seen his stock rise among draftniks because of his physical skills and promise as a passer. I don't have him ranked as highly as others might because I believe his mechanical flaws are more pronounced than his peers ranked ahead of him. While his athleticism is very good, it's not likely enough to make him an immediate difference maker that an NFL team will try to rush his development to get him on the field without hurting his long-term prospects.
Scott Tolzien	6-2	212	92	Maxed	4.93	4.12	6.84	29.5	Tolzien is a prospect with significantly more polish than the players ranked below him, but he lacks the upside of the players ranked above him. Tolzien is an accurate passer with good timing, a quick release, and the guts to stand in the pocket and deliver the ball with pressure in his face. However, he's not going to make plays outside the bounds of the system on a consistent basis.

QB Comparisons Table

Note: In theory, player comparisons are a reader-friendly way to get a clearer mental picture of a player's physical build, athleticism, technical skills, and potential. In practice, this is a hit-or-miss process that, at the very least, is an entertaining exercise. Each "-" is an approximate level of separation between one player's talent and the next. The key word is "talent," because there are some players with lesser careers listed ahead of more famous or productive peers. This is my subjective interpretation of a talent and not success. For example, I have LaMont Jordan ahead of Chester Taylor on a spectrum of comparison for a runner on this list. Taylor has arguably had the better career, but I believe Jordan had star caliber potential that Taylor lacked.

Name	Ht	Wt.	Score	Pot.	Comparison	Comments
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Greg McElroy	6-1	220	92	Maxed	Drew Brees--X-Bruce Gradkowski	McElroy lacks Brees' accuracy, but he has the pocket presence, aggressive mentality, and decision-making to become a starter in an offense that allows McElroy to maximize his poise and smarts and minimize his minor flaws.
Ricky Stanzi	6-4	223	81	Upside	Kyle Orton--X	Stanzi's potential to develop into a starter after backing up a player reminds me the path Orton took. Stanzi might wind up that player that a team values until they find an elite prospect. He would do quite well in a West Coast system where short drops and timing routes match Stanzi's anticipation.
Andy Dalton	6-2	215	79	Upside	Tony Romo---X	Dalton isn't the fluid athlete that Romo is, but he fits along this spectrum of player. It's possible he could improve at a rate to approach the skill that Romo has. His potential to become a great deep ball thrower makes him a good candidate for a downfield passing game.
Colin Kaepernick	6-4	233	68	Boom-Bust	Drew Stanton-X	I think Kaepernick would be a better downfield passer working off a power running game and early down play action.
Scott Tolzien	6-2	212	92	Maxed	Kurt Warner-Marc Bulger--X	Tolzien's quick release and play action skills make him a nice prospect for a West Coast system or a Mike Martz offense that operates on intermediate timing routes.

Running backs

Overview and Fantasy Impact of the Position

Skill Breakdowns

Overrated and Underrated

Projects

Fantasy Top 40

Ranking and Comparisons

Scouting Checklists and Profiles

Overview and Fantasy Impact of the RB Position

The 2011 RB class is the most difficult I have assessed in six years. After Mark Ingram and Ryan Williams, there are 7-15 backs that have starter potential and another 15 with enough skill to develop into solid contributors for a team.

Yet what makes this class so intriguing could also be its source of trouble...

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Dynasty and Re-Draft Advice

Lately my annual advice to fantasy owners in dynasty leagues about drafting rookie running backs has been consistent: pick runners early and often, but exhibit patience with them. Expect to wait as long as three years for a runner to earn a chance at playing time. Because running backs age fast in the NFL, yesterday's star can become today's has-been and yesterday's nobody becomes today's starter and tomorrow's stud. This makes the position the most liquid commodity in the trade market and stockpiling the position gives a fantasy owner more chances to acquire quality players through means in addition to the draft.

Draft position should never be a reason to dismiss a runner in the NFL because of the glut of talent in the league. As is the case with the NFL draft, first year RBs are rarely taken in the first two rounds of fantasy drafts (non-dynasty). The knowledgeable fantasy player waits until the mid-rounds. It's a different story in dynasty leagues, but bargains are frequently available. In addition to LeGarrette Blount, who was a waiver wire pick for most that paid off handsomely, Peyton Hillis and Arian Foster were examples of two unheralded picks that demonstrated talent far beyond common perception. Undrafted free agent Chris Ivory had a run of production when the Saints starter Pierre Thomas – and undrafted free agent – got hurt.

Another factor that can determine a player's draft value is his projected carries. Will the rookie be the feature back from day one? Is he considered part of a committee? Or is he the sure-fire backup to the starter?

The last 54 years of stats are remarkably consistent when one profiles rookie production by an average range of rushing attempts. From 1950-2008 there were over 1700 running back seasons in the NFL. The overall average performance for these rookies is pretty underwhelming since most rookies at the position are backups, special teams contributors, and developmental projects. But when the data is broken down by total carries in a season, it's worth viewing:

Rookie RBs - By Attempts: 300+ Range									
Atts	Range	RBs	Rush Atts	Rush Yds	Rush TDs	Rec	Rec Yds	Rec TDs	FF Pts
300+	1950-2004	14	335.43	1420.0	11.57	38.64	328.57	1.07	250.71
300+	1970-1979	2	316.5	1527.5	10.50	26.50	178.00	1.00	239.55
300+	1980-1989	5	344.4	1483.8	13.60	42.40	378.2	1.40	276.2
300+	1990-1999	5	338.6	1361.2	11.40	38.0	338.00	1.20	245.52
300+	2000-2004	3	321.0	1277.0	8.00	50.00	382.00	1.33	221.93

In 2009, there wasn't a rookie that earned more than 247 carries (Knowshon Moreno) and in 2010, Jahvid Best and Ryan

Mathews seemed poised to see this kind of workload, but injuries derailed the execution of those plans and opened the door for Blount to lead rookies with 201 carries.

As with any NFL RB, a rookie that earns 300 or more carries in a season will earn fantasy points equivalent to a No.1 RB in an owner's starting lineup. Most of the rookies that accomplish this feat were highly touted, opening day starters. Then there were backs who came close to the 300-carry mark that had starter-worthy seasons in two-RB fantasy lineups: Cadillac Williams with 290 carries in 2005; Marshawn Lynch with 280 in 2007; and Steve Slaton with 268 in 2008.

Skill Breakdowns

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio checklists are designed to assess whether a player possesses a physical skill or technique that meets the baseline requirements that I believe will make him a successful professional. These skills and attributes are defined in the publication's glossary. However, the checklist isn't designed to differentiate how much or little of that technique each player has. BenJarvus Green Ellis has the baseline level of NFL speed, but Darren McFadden has this attribute in abundance.

So in addition to the checklists scores that measure the number of skills and attributes a player has developed to a baseline level of proficiency, the skill breakdown reports are an avenue to compare how skilled these players are in each category. I use the play-by-play notes from my film study to categorize each player.

The subheadings under each skill should be reasonably self-explanatory, but here's a quick break down.

Star Caliber: A level of skill that rivals the best in the game at his position.

Starter Caliber: A level of skill commensurate with a full-time starter at his position.

Committee Caliber: A baseline level of skill for a player to contribute productively in an offense.

Reserve Caliber: These players lack some amount of technique or athleticism to consistently be productive, but the skill is good enough to contribute to a team.

Free Agent: These players lack the minimum skill in a given area to make a team if evaluated strictly by this single component.

Deficient: The player's skill set is so lacking that they aren't likely to receive interest from a team until it improves to a at least a free agent level.

Power

Simply put, *Power* is a football player's ability to move forward when a defender attempts to stop his progress. The variety of methods a player can use to address this obstacle and how effectively he can overcome it 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.

<u>Star Caliber</u>	<u>Starter Caliber</u>	<u>Committee Caliber</u>	<u>Reserve Caliber</u>	<u>Free Agent</u>	<u>Deficient</u>
Mark Ingram	Alan Bradford	Stanley Havili	Evan Royster	Moise Plancher	Derrvin Speight
Delone Carter	Daniel Thomas	MiQuale Lewis	Jeremy Avery	Derrick Washington	
Bilal Powell	DeMarco Murray	Anthony Allen	D.J. Harper	Nic Grigsby	
	Baron Batch	Graig Cooper	Noel Devine	Eddie Wide	
	Ryan Williams	Shaun Draughn	Vai Tava	Alexander Robinson	
	Damien Berry	Jay Finley	Dwight Dasher		
	Mikel LeShoure	Kendall Hunter	Jamie Harper		
	Chad Spann	Derrick Locke	Alex Green		
	Roy Helu, Jr.	Dion Lewis	Charles Clay		
	Darren Evans	Jacquizz Rodgers			
	Thomas Merriweather	Armando Allen, Jr.			
	Stevan Ridley	Giovanni Ruffin			
	Brandon Saine	John Clay			
	Johnny White	DuJuan Harris			
	Shane Vereen	Phillip Tanner			
		Ricky Dobbs			
		Mario Fannin			
		Jordan Todman			

		Da'Rel Scott Taiwan Jones			
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The Best: Mark Ingram, Delone Carter and Bilal Powell are the most consistent with their pad level, second effort, and tendency to attack the defense to finish runs. All three players have the strength and technique to push a pile, drag a defender, and run through the grasp of defenders. Moreover, they relish delivering the first blow.

The Worst: Eddie Wide and Alexander Robinson tend to fall after initial contact. Derrvin Speight rarely runs through wraps and his pad level is so deficient that he often falls as he prepares for contact...

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On-Field I.Q.

I believe the best players not only exhibit impressive skills, but they know how to integrate these individual components into their game and make unusual physical and conceptual adjustments as if its second nature. There is little to no hesitation whatsoever with their decisions and movements and I like to use the term "fluidity," to describe this behavior. Here are eight runners that have exhibited a noticeably higher than average on-field I.Q and I believe they possess the fluidity to become quality NFL players.

Mark Ingram: I've watched Ingram abandon his blitz pickup to aid a teammate who got beaten on his assignment. Ingram knew in a split-second that if he stuck to his assignment his quarterback would get sacked. Ingram also shows strong spatial awareness near the sideline to stay inbounds and work his way forward in traffic. He has a knack for doing that one extra thing to make a play successful and I believe he has a great chance to become a special player in the NFL.

Delone Carter: Carter runs between the tackles like he belongs in an NFL starting lineup. He demonstrates an affinity for...

Third-Down Potential

These runners possess a level of skill as pass protectors and/or receivers that should get them a chance to contribute early in at least a limited role.

Short Yardage Skills

The following backs have a skill as short yardage runners and could earn time as situational backs early in their career.

Special Teams

Second- and third-day picks often pay their dues on special teams before earning a chance to contribute at their position of choice. These backs have the athleticism, special teams experience, or defensive experience to contribute to special teams and enhance their chances of sticking with a team.

Overrated: Talent, But Glaring Holes

These backs have several components of their game that make them good enough to contribute right away if not for specific skill deficiencies that they need to address. These areas will either prevent them from seeing the field early in their careers or limit their contributions. If these issues aren't fixed, they won't ever come close to approaching their potential.

Brandon Saine, Ohio State (Lateral agility): Saine is a big back with speed, balance, power, and some of the better third down skills – especially as a receiver – that I've seen in this class of runners. However, his lateral agility is so sub par that it brings down the rest of his game to a level that limits him to a situational runner, at best.

He's not an overrated player in the classical sense. In fact, I probably have him rated higher than most. However, Saine fits the definition of a talented player with a glaring hole in his game. If his agility has been limited due to an injury (Terrell Davis had a hamstring issue at Georgia and his coach didn't take it seriously, which is one reason he never looked like the back at Georgia that he was in the NFL), Saine could be a major surprise. In today's environment where big-time college football programs receive an insane level of media coverage, it's doubtful Saine has been limited by an injury fans didn't know about.

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Easy-Fix Projects

These runners have minor issues that I believe will take a relatively short time to address if they work at it.

Jordan Todman, Connecticut (Pressing the hole): Blocking schemes are set up in such a way that the best way for a runner to execute a play successfully is to approach the hole at a slower pace and then accelerate through it. This *slow to the hole, fast through it* approach is also mixed with heading slow in a direction away from the intended path and then cutback with acceleration once the runner has drawn a defender away from that rushing lane. This is called *pressing the hole*.

Todman has the burst to develop at least into an effective change of pace committee back with strong production. However, the runner tends to hit the hole too fast, slow down as he encounters a defender, and then try to use his agility or balance to work away from the contact. His approach to running between the tackles is backwards and he makes plays look more difficult than they should be. When Todman exhibits greater patience and uses the correct slow to the hole, fast through it approach, he's significantly more productive on these runs.

I think the fact that he's demonstrated some conceptual ability to take the correct approach means he should continue to improve. If he does, the rest of the skills that he possesses will be more naturally integrated into his overall game and he will become a more consistent producer in the NFL. If not, he could struggle early.

Underrated RB Prospects

Chad Spann, Northern Illinois: Every year, I have at least 2-3 backs rated higher than most who are drafted late or not drafted at all. Spann will likely be one of these players. He's a fluid player with a high motor, a muscular bubble, and low center of gravity who can set up a defense to get an open lane and finish strong.

Spann ran through as many hits as any back I studied this year and he has a noticeably explosive burst from his cuts. He has a slippery, but determined running style that has a lot of intelligent decision-making behind it. When I watched Spann, he reminded me of Priest Holmes due to this style and his dimensions. Ironically, Spann told me via Twitter that Bears wide receiver Johnny Knox said the same thing about him the day before while they were training together.

Although Chargers GM A.J. Smith attended Spann's Pro Day, it's likely Spann is at best a late third-day pick, which means my rating of him is nowhere commensurate with his probable draft position. If you're a fantasy owner, draft Spann in the late rounds and give him a few seasons.

RB Projects

These runners have the attributes to develop into contributors or starters in the NFL, but their opportunities in college were limited due to injury, lackluster play, or glaring weaknesses than can be fixed with work.

Damien Berry, Miami: Berry has the speed, physical style, and balance to develop into a productive NFL runner. But the South Florida runner lacks the components of vision that could be the difference between Berry becoming a productive runner and a physically impressive, but inconsistent reserve. He has poor recognition of run blitzes and he does not know how to press the hole (see Jordan Todman in the *Easy Fixes* section). If he can't learn to recognize lanes that aren't huge or will develop with increased skill to manipulate the opening while he's running towards the line of scrimmage, Berry will never get to maximize his physical abilities.

RB Rankings

The Top 40 Running back Prospects for Dynasty Leagues

My rankings are based on a combination of the data collected, my view of a player's potential fit with any offensive system, and his potential for growth. In addition to rankings and comparisons tables, that supply workout scores and short summaries, I am leading with more detailed written summaries of each runner in the top 40 so you don't have to hunt through the play-by-play analysis.

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 sets, and how flexible their skill sets are to the widest varieties of offensive systems. In any dynasty league setting, I would be comfortable drafting the first 13 runners on this list. After that, it depends on the size of the league. I believe there are 21 prospects on this list that have a chance to at least contribute to a backfield and potentially grow into fantasy-relevant players within three seasons.

13. Jacquizz Rodgers, Oregon St. (5-5, 196)

Rodgers is a good cutback runner in a zone scheme on stretch plays. He can press and cutback, but he's also decisive enough to hit the crease fast and use his short stature to his advantage to hit small creases that don't look like openings for most backs. He has enough strength and balance to run through arm tackles and trash at the line of scrimmage.

Rodgers sometimes rushes his blockers and gets too close to the action rather than set it up with a move. Rodgers is the type of runner that makes great moves to

get out of trouble as opposed to a runner that runs patiently to set up a great move in the open field.

Because he's so short, he's not the ideal candidate as a receiver from the backfield on routes where the QB will have to throw the ball over the line of scrimmage.

As a blocker, Rodgers is inadequate. He doesn't show the desire to block like his older brother. He will avoid contact or avoid squaring his body to the defender when he has an opportunity to make a play and he's not used in this capacity very often. I also didn't see any demonstration of top-end speed.

If Rodgers can improve his passing game skills and flash some top-end speed he could become a starting caliber back. At this point he projects as a talented, but limited, change of pace contributor to an NFL backfield.

14. Evan Royster, Penn State (5-11, 212)

Royster runs with good balance and change of direction. He's the type of back that reads the defense and finds a cutback lane and he has the patience to set up his blockers by varying his step size or taking a direction to press the opening before the cutback.

Royster isn't a nifty runner; he won't string multiple moves together, but he can plant and cut or make a sharp change of direction. He gets yardage after contact because he has good pad level and he possesses a nice feel for either ducking through a hit or wrap or spinning off a hit after doing what he can to get low and attack the defender in the collision.

He has good vision, but sometimes gets impatient on runs to the outside where he could have stretched the play for more yards without the risk of gaining fewer than what he achieved up the middle. His speed is average. He doesn't catch the ball with his hands away from his body, often trapping it against him.

His stock plummeted this year because he arrived to campus about 10-15 pounds heavier than the team desired. Royster was initially resistant to shedding the pounds he added by design and even after the weight loss, he didn't appear quick enough to excite NFL scouts.

It's probable that Royster will stick with a roster as a long-term back up who does everything well enough, but nothing at a high level.

15. Noel Devine, West Virginia (5-8, 179)

Devine is a dangerous college runner because of his excellent burst, stop-start agility, and speed to the corner. He's a big-play runner who is always looking for an opportunity to bounce the run to the open field. He is very adept at making the first defender miss. His low center of gravity makes it difficult for the opposition to wrap him.

He'll never be confused with a power runner, but he's very slippery and tough to bring down in open space. Devine has enough explosiveness to become an RBBC contributor in the pros with a prominent role as a change of pace back.

Yet Devine makes a lot of start-stop moves that can get him in trouble when he's facing defenders that have good gap discipline or the athleticism to catch him when he has to accelerate from a stop in a tight space. He needs to demonstrate more discipline between the tackles to stick with creases that are open but will require more physical running. The problem is that Devine is not big enough to be a physical runner on a consistent basis and he won't get the tough yards frequently enough to be effective, which is why he tries to make defenders miss and reverse his field. His pass blocking is a complete liability due to severe technique lapses and his lack of size.

He's much more suited for use in the slot or from the shotgun in spread sets where he can play more one-on-one/open field football. If a team that wants to adopt the Patriots' recent (2010) developments with the spread picks Devine, they probably got a decent cog for the system. However, he's not a back with the size-skill set combo that translates to most NFL offenses.

16. Alex Green, Hawaii (6-0, 225)

Green has a nice initial burst for his size and he routinely beat the first defender to the line of scrimmage or around the corner with his acceleration from a stop. He also routinely ran through wrap attempts behind the line of scrimmage.

He runs so hard to the hole that you have to wonder if he could gain more yards with a slower approach to the line and then time his burst as he finds a crease. I didn't see a consistent level of patience. There were only limited times where I saw Green keep his feet moving after contact and he wasn't able to run through hits to his legs.

He catches the ball very well as a receiver and he shows good effort as a blocker. However, Green needs to make sure he doesn't leave his feet to deliver a punch and then lose his balance against defenders his size or larger. He also drops his head as he sets up his block and this allows defenders to get by him. He tends to do this against bigger-faster athletes

Green might be the first 1000-yard rusher at Hawaii during the era of the June Jones/Mouse Davis offensive system, but he'll need to show he has the interior skills to run from the I formation. The physical skills are promising enough that he could develop into a very good pro running back if he refines the techniques of his craft. A raw Jamal Anderson comes to mind.

17. Damien Berry, Miami (5-10, 211)

Berry does a good job of falling forward on most of his runs. He's a physical runner who will bounce off hits and stiff-arm defenders to get extra yardage. He does a good job of getting his pads down against oncoming defenders to finish plays for yards after contact. If the play is well blocked, he has enough burst to get into the open field. He also has the ability to make a sharp initial cut to change direction and get downhill.

Berry physically looks the part of a running back and he exhibits some skills in the passing game. He likes to be physical in pass protection and when making his best effort, he moves his feet well to mirror defenders and then square his body to deliver a punch. As a pass receiver, Berry catches the ball with his hands and he can adjust routes to get open for his quarterback.

If Berry has strong acceleration, it didn't show up consistently on the field in situations where it really counts: in traffic or against defenders with good angles on him. He does not show recognition of run blitzes before the snap that he could adjust to. He needs to demonstrate the ability to press the hole and set up cutbacks. His productive runs were often straight shots through bigger holes.

If he can learn to recognize holes and cut back lanes, and then learn to press these creases, he has the physical

skills to contribute. I think what slows him down is that he lacks the fluidity that conceptually strong runners have.

18. Taiwan Jones, E. Washington (6-0, 194)

It's evident from the first time you see Jones that he plays very fast. He has a terrific assortment of cuts, dips, spins, and fakes to elude defenders to the corner and in the open field. If given enough room, Jones has the speed to take it the distance on any play. Repeatedly I watched Jones rip free of defenders getting grip on his shoulders from behind and maintaining his balance for 20-30 more yards.

His speed is legitimate. The highlights of him outracing the field against Nevada on two different runs prove it. He has that Ryan Williams quality to keep his feet moving in tight spaces and he maintains his quickness to elude defenders reaching for him. He also has the balance to run through wraps and bounce off glancing hits for additional yardage.

I don't think he'll be able to run as well in the open field and behind the line of scrimmage against NFL defenders as he does against his college opponents. A lot of his moves are stop-start or dips that slow him down. In these highlights he lets pursuit back into the play but still manages to elude them or accelerate past. He won't do that with nearly the same frequency in the NFL.

Unfortunately, I could not procure Jones' games and I had to resort to YouTube highlights. None of these highlights showed a player who had to make choices to get between the tackles and take the sure run rather than bounce everything outside or take the huge cutback.

His reckless style might be taxing on his body. He broke his foot this year (missing two games) and broke his leg (missing four games) as a freshman. However, if Jones can demonstrate the between the tackle skills in an NFL game that I didn't see on a basic highlight package, he could be a fast riser this summer.

19. DuJuan Harris, Troy (5-7, 202)

Harris has that low center of gravity and short area quickness combined with the footwork and the combo of large muscular thighs and bubble that should make him a viable NFL prospect at RB.

He has the feet to pick through trash between the tackles and the stop-start speed to change directions in the open field and set up defenders in the hole. He finishes plays with good pad level and he's tough to bring down with just a hit. Harris catches short passes very well with his hands and he's a willing blocker on the edge in the run game or in pass protection.

He runs the ball a lot from formations where he's not getting the chance to press the hole or demonstrate any level of patience he might have as a runner. Although he can run through hits, he's a short player and there will be a concern that he won't hold up as an every down runner.

He will be criticized for his tendency to stop his feet because there are very few backs that thrive in the NFL with a stop-start style on a consistent basis. He grades

out higher on the sum total of his individual skill sets than what he does putting them all together and this issue with his feet is one example. If he can change that stylistic tendency, he could become a viable committee back with possible upside.

He reminds me of a small-school Maurice Jones Drew, but without the top-end speed or unusual power. Still, Harris could have a chance to surprise if he is consistent in a training camp, has better speed than I gauged, and/or he can perform well against a higher level of athletes.

20. MiQuale Lewis, Ball St. (5-6, 193)

Lewis has a very quick first step and good balance to run through hits to his legs. He is tough to bring down in the open field when facing him down hill or from any angle where you aren't trailing him, because he's so short and thick that it's tough for defenders to get low enough, quick enough to deliver a good hit.

His junior year numbers were terrific when paired with a pro prospect at QB (Nate Davis) and an offensive line with upper classmen. He earned an extra season of eligibility due to ankle and shoulder injuries early in his career.

He doesn't appear to have game-breaking speed. He has good balance, but he won't punish a defense and he doesn't get a lot of yards after contact unless running through arm tackles counts. He makes the effort as a blocker, but his size makes him somewhat of a liability on anything more than cut blocks and chipping a defender already assigned to a lineman.

When you combine his height, poor numbers this year, and his conference, and I think you have an underrated back if he can stay healthy, which is a true enough concern that I don't have his rated as highly as some of the other shorter backs on this list with similar skills.

21. Darren Evans, Virginia Tech (6-0, 227)

Evans does a good job running with his eyes: reading keys and bending the run to the correct side of the block ahead of him. He also spots the cutback clearly and if he has the room he can hit it.

His runs have a fast pace and he can burst past the first and second level of a defense. He generally has good vision and decision-making at each phase of this run - especially for a back that doesn't significantly vary his pace as he approaches the hole. He runs with one speed most of the time, but he gets to that speed quickly. Evans does a good job of sliding away from a direct hit and when he can deliver a blow from an angle, he has the strength and speed to deliver some punishment.

He's a good runner behind a gap style attack who can catch the football. He will flash some skills for an NFL team, but he'll need to improve his pad level and patience to contribute for a team.

Evans has a tendency to run with a naturally high pad level and when he can't prepare ahead of time to get low, he's prone to shots that will knock him backwards. When he gets his pads low, he can bounce off hits and get yardage. But he tends to only do this when he's cleared the line of scrimmage and has some time to prepare

rather than consistently run low. This is why he's not as effective as a cut back runner.

He'll need to keep his pads low at all times so he can use his power, but when he cuts back he has difficulty doing it. Evans frequently can't generate yards after contact on direct hits at the line of scrimmage because his pad level is too high for him to have leverage to move his legs.

He'll keep his legs moving when wrapped from behind but there's a difference between dragging a defender and running through a defender in tight space. Runners that do the former are a dime a dozen. Runners that do the latter, play on Sundays.

He's more than a year removed from an ALC tear. If he can improve his pad level and patience, I think he'll be a solid committee back capable of nice production.

22. Roy Helu, Jr. Nebraska (6-0, 220)

Helu has a decent eye for the cutback and he also spots the second hole while inside a crease. He has the size and leg strength to churn his legs for extra yards after he makes contact and he has pretty good quickness with his cuts and dips away from defenders.

Helu has the leg strength and leg drive to get yards after contact, but he often raises his pads after the initial hit while he's driving forward and it slows his momentum while inviting defenders to get under his pads and begin driving him backwards. He misses out on lots of opportunities to gain more tough yards due to his lapse in technique.

At the Senior Bowl practices Helu actually had reps where he slowed down and leaned backwards from the prospect of a collision, which drew some damning criticism from a couple of successful backs turned RB coaches in attendance.

Because his technique for blocking is to consistently throw his shoulder into the midsection of a defender, there is no evidence that he knows how to use his hands, move his feet, and maintain good balance or deliver a punch in pass protection.

Helu's speed doesn't consistently show up on the field. If he can change that issue and run with a better attitude/pad level between the tackles, he'd be a much higher-rated prospect on my list (top-15).

23. Baron Batch, Texas Tech (5-8, 207)

Batch is a high-effort player and he runs hard between the tackles for his size. He protects the football well, hits the hole with decent speed, and he can bounce off hits in traffic.

I like that he's not afraid to lower his shoulders and initiate contact and he protects the ball well in traffic. He can catch the ball with his hands and he has good balance. He can press the hole and find the cutback lane and he demonstrates elusiveness. He's pretty good jack-of-all-trades running back.

Yet, Batch lacks top-end speed and power. He also played in a Texas Tech system during much of the Mike Leach era where the offense employed huge line splits,

which opened much bigger holes than Batch will see in the NFL.

If Batch can demonstrate the vision of an NFL back, he has the physical skills and versatility to make a roster and possibly earn time as a change of pace performer who can perform admirably if the starter gets hurt. He might become a fan favorite as a contributor, but he lacks the physical attributes of a starter.

24. Nic Grigsby, Arizona (5-11, 199)

Grigsby is a quick and shifty runner with the ability to string moves together in tight spaces. He has enough speed and acceleration to get to the edge of a defense and find extra yards. He carries the ball under the correct arm and he is willing to fight for extra yardage. He's a patient runner who follows the play as designed.

Grigsby needs to work on his techniques to pass protect in the pocket. He tends to catch defenders - letting them deliver the first shot - rather than be the aggressor. He has patience, but he didn't show the skill to anticipate where defenders were going to be and he's not as adept with running with his eyes as he'll need to be in order to make up for his lack of size, power, and balance.

25. Anthony Allen, Ga. Tech (6-0, 228)

Allen has the size, quickness, and balance to intrigue an NFL team with his potential. He didn't earn a lot of opportunities as the "B" back in Georgia Tech's variant of the triple option to catch passes from the backfield, but from what I saw he has underrated receiving skills. He catches the ball with his hands and he demonstrates good concentration to adjust to the football.

Allen's vision as a pro style runner is relatively unproven, because the "B" back primarily runs fullback dive plays in the Yellow Jackets offense. When Jonathan Dwyer was the "B" back, Allen was the wingback and he primarily ran the end-around. Prior to that, he was at Louisville and only had limited carries.

When Allen breaks through the line of scrimmage he demonstrates some burst, but he doesn't see the open lanes that are available with a small change of direction. Allen has not shown a penchant to create and this is an important trait from even reserve-caliber backs at the pro level.

His pass blocking is among the worst I have seen from any runner in this class. He drops his head too early into stand up blocks, flops at the feet of defenders on cut blocks, and he often displays a clear lack of effort.

Allen, like Dwyer, has the potential to develop into a downhill, power runner, but he's a long way from earning this designation in the NFL.

26. Armando Allen, Jr. Notre Dame (5-8, 199)

Allen has good change of direction and a quick burst. He is small enough to squeeze through tight spaces and he has the leg drive and power to run through arm tackles and wraps.

His low center of gravity makes him difficult to wrap and he can get lost behind his lineman. He makes the effort

as a pass blocker, getting good position and getting his hands in front of him. However, he doesn't deliver a good punch or sustain the block long enough to be effective on deeper routes. He could get his hands a little higher to improve his blocking.

He has good patience in the hole, but he's not always patient behind the line of scrimmage or as he's getting to the second level once he's cleared the first crease. I didn't see any flashes of breakaway speed. He doesn't always make the best decisions in short yardage situations and a majority his attempts came from the shotgun formation.

27. Alexander Robinson, Iowa St. (5-9, 191)

Robinson has speed, lateral agility, and the ability to string moves together in space to make defenders miss in the open field. He runs sharp routes from the backfield and he catches the ball well with his hands. He's a shorter runner with thick thighs and what appears to be a light upper body that could add 10 pounds of muscle without diminishing his speed.

Robinson isn't a powerful back and he can get stopped with a hit that other backs with his dimensions in the NFL tend to run through or at least squirt through for extra yardage after contact. His balance after contact is not NFL-quality at this stage of his career. Whether that will get better with more muscle remains to be seen. He makes the effort to get into position as a blocker, but he's used more often as a pass receiver.

He's a decent receiver but he has the occasional lapse with his hands. Robinson will have to develop better skills to get yardage after contact to make an NFL team. If he does improve this area of his game, he has the speed, agility and decision making to develop into a nice complement for an NFL team.

28. Jay Finley, Baylor (5-10, 203)

Finley has decent acceleration and finishes plays hard: spinning, twisting and falling forward after contact. He follows his blockers effectively, but he also has a good feel for the cutback and can make the first defender miss.

Finley is frequently unwilling to engage linemen with little more than a push from an angle that won't put him in the path of the defender to the target. He can't have the luxury of choosing which defenders he's going to block with gusto and which he'll be the matador.

Finley runs upright and linebackers and defensive linemen at the line of scrimmage chop him down quickly. His ability to change direction seemed limited. He didn't display any ability to pick and slide to a crease or juke a defender in the open field.

He's fast, but he lacks elite speed. He doesn't run through a lot of tackles and his change of direction is limited. He has enough athleticism to make an NFL team, but he needs to refine his skills to do more than be a reserve at the end of the bench or bouncing around practice squads.

29. Vai Taua, Nevada (5-9, 213)

He flashes nice feet behind the line of scrimmage to bounce to a hole. When he keeps his pads low he can

bounce off head-one collisions and get extra yardage. He shows patience behind pulling blockers and can pick and slide at the line of scrimmage to find a crease. He catches the football with his hands and he has adequate burst on plays the work as designed. He makes the effort as a blocker.

Taua might have nice size for his frame, but he doesn't run with good pad level, which causes him to get stood up at the end of runs at the point of a collision and prevents him from finishing runs with yards after contact. He can make the first cut, but he has difficulty stringing moves together or making east-west moves to avoid defenders when he gets to full speed.

He lacks a good enough burst to get outside or get up field against quality defensive tackles with NFL-caliber burst. He didn't try to engage defenders as a stand up blocker and sometimes telegraphed his cut blocks. He might be a better fullback prospect than a running back even with his timed speed under 4.6 in the 40 and a nice 20-yard shuttle time.

30. Dwight Dasher, Middle Tenn. St. (5-10, 202)

Dasher has speed and very good open field vision. He also shows some ability to read blocks downfield and change of direction to gain yardage. He tends to carry the football close to his body. Get Dasher in open space and he is as that third gear to outrun the secondary for a long score. He flashes a nice stiff arm against bigger defenders. He also shows some ability to read blocks between the tackles and make adjustments to find an open crease.

Dasher doesn't run with good enough balance for an RB. His pad level looks good on some runs, but often times he lowers it too much. His gait is too close together, which causes Dasher to get tripped by glancing blows to his feet that seem like innocuous trash for established college RBs to run through.

Dasher almost exclusively carries the football under his right arm. He might be more effective as a receiver in open space than a between the tackles runner. He'll get his first shot as a return specialist.

31. Ricky Dobbs, Navy (6-1, 203)

Dobbs is an athletic runner with decent change of direction and the fundamentals to keep his pads low and legs moving into contact. He protects the ball well as a runner.

His burst is decent and if Dobbs can demonstrate some patience and strong decision making on slower-developing offensive run plays from the I-formation, he might have a future in the NFL as a runner.

As a runner his skill to patiently wait for blocks to develop and read his down linemen's keys is untested. His ability to get to the corner is untested as well as pass blocking and pass receiving. He's a project at this point.

I think he should get a look as a receiver to test his hands because his ability to run in the open field could be better exploited and Dobbs will need to gain another 10-15 pounds to become a decent prospect as a runner.

RB Rankings Table

Note: Times and measurements are from the NFL Combine or Pro Day workouts as made available prior to publication. The scores with these rankings are the highest raw checklist score performed on this player. 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.

"Potential" is my assessment of the player's development curve based on the potential for the athlete to improve his strength and athleticism with additional training or learn the techniques and concepts of his position. Players labeled "Upside" have additional opportunities to become better athletes and/or technicians at their position. Players earning the "Boom-Bust" label generally have a high level of athleticism but lack the knowledge of a skill or concept that could be difficult to learn. In some cases, these "Boom-Bust" players have excellent skills and knowledge of concepts, but the base athleticism to perform the job might be questionable and the chance of them improving those physical skills are not likely. A player with a "Maxed" label has likely reached his athletic (or conceptual) potential and this will limit his ability to grow beyond his current assessment.

Name	Ht.	Wt.	Score	Pot.	40	20	3 Cone	V	B	Comments
Jacquizz Rodgers	5-5	196	86	Boom-Bust	4.47	4.26	7.31	33.00		Rodgers is a tough runner to tackle because he has excellent change of direction skills, a good burst, the vision to set up cutbacks, and a low center of gravity to bounce off hits. He runs with the toughness of an athlete 20 pounds heavier, keeping his legs moving after contact and with good pad level. Rodgers also protects the football with great technique, carrying the ball high and tight to his body. With what I saw in this game, he has the skill to become a nice change of pace runner in an NFL offense as long as he develops some third down skills. If his timed speed shows up more frequently on the field, he could become a bigger contributor.
Jordan Todman	5-8	203	79	Upside	4.40	4.18	7.24	38.00	25	Todman has good feet, a decent burst, and good pad level. However none of this matters if he cannot learn to become more patient. This is a quality considered his strength, but I think he has too many lapses where he's too quick to the hole, slows down and then is forced to use his talents to extricate himself from a bad situation. If he can work through his tendency and improve his pass protection, he'll be a valued contributor in a committee.
Derrick Locke	5-8	188	79	Maxed	4.40	4.15	6.98	37.50	16	Locke has an explosive burst and he demonstrates patience to set up blocks and use that acceleration to get positive yardage as well as break arm tackles. He runs with surprisingly good balance for a player of his size. His best asset as a football player might be his hands.
Da'Rel Scott	5-11	211	77	Upside	4.34	4.20	7.15	34.00	19	Scott has a knack for avoiding the first defender and cutting the play downhill to get whatever yards he can. He has the third gear to run away from defenders when he reaches the secondary and enough acceleration to get solid yardage on most any well-blocked play. He has some balance and strength, but he's not a punishing runner. He's also a one-cut, downhill type of back. His third down skills need work.

RB Comparisons Table

Note: In theory, player comparisons are a reader-friendly way to get a clearer mental picture of a player's physical build, athleticism, technical skills, and potential. In practice, this is a hit-or-miss process that, at the very least, is an entertaining exercise. Each "-" is an approximate level of separation between one player's talent and the next. The key word is "talent," because there are some players with lesser careers listed ahead of more famous or productive peers. This is my subjective interpretation of a talent and not success. For example, I have LaMont Jordan ahead of Chester Taylor on a spectrum of comparison for a runner on this list. Taylor has arguably had the better career, but I believe Jordan had star caliber potential that Taylor lacked.

Name	Ht.	Wt.	Score	Pot.	Comparison	Comments
Jacquizz Rodgers	5-5	196	86	Boom-Bust	Barry Sanders-- Maurice Jones-- Drew---X	Rodgers has that stop-start, hard-cutting, reversal of field style characteristic of these players at their most elusive. I'm just not convinced he has the quickness and speed to perform at a starter level.
Jordan Todman	5-8	203	79	Upside	Thurman Thomas-- Donald Brown-- X/Maurice Morris.	Todman isn't as shifty or dynamic as Thomas or his former teammate Donald Brown and he lacks their same level of skill in passing situations that these two players had. I think Todman is more likely to develop into a back of Maurice Morris' stature with slightly more upside.
Derrick Locke	5-8	188	79	Maxed	Dexter McCluster-- Mewelde Moore-- DannyWoodhead-X	Locke is a versatile offensive player that can play in the slot, in the backfield or as a return specialist. His size, basic skills and versatility put him in the range of comparison with Dexter McCluster, but Locker lacks the vision and great change of direction skills of the former Ole Miss star.
Da'Rel Scott	5-11	211	77	Upside	Robert Smith-- Michael Bennett/X	Scott has the speed and downhill mentality that Smith and Bennett had at their best, but he'll need to become more versatile and physical to approach Smith's upside.

Wide Receivers

Overview and Fantasy Impact of the Position

Skill Breakdowns

Overrated and Underrated

Projects

Fantasy Top 45

Ranking and Comparisons

Scouting Checklists and Profiles

Overview and Fantasy Impact of the WR Position

Wide receivers are beginning to generate a greater impact as rookies, but most of the time it is in a supporting role with stretches of strong play. Hakeem Nicks, Percy Harvin and Austin Collie had strong play as rookies in 2009 with nice games from Louis Murphy, Mike Wallace, Jeremy Maclin, Mike Thomas and Johnnie Knox. Yet historically it's still rare to see rookie receivers post starting-caliber fantasy seasons.

Last year, Dez Bryant led all rookies with 45 catches for 561 yards and 6 touchdowns – good for 48th among fantasy receivers. Jacoby Ford was a close second with 625 combined rushing/receiving yards and 4 scores (51st among receivers). Throw in 75th-ranked fantasy receiver Blair White – an undrafted free agent signed by the Colts – and there were only three rookies with production that could be considered bye-week caliber, at best.

Even with a greater incorporation of spread offense philosophies in the NFL, receiver remains one of the more difficult positions to play in the NFL. The offensive and defensive schemes are more complex, there are far more adjustments at the line of scrimmage, and the speed of the game is ratcheted up a notch. What is considered “open” in the pros is a route a majority of college quarterbacks would not deliver. A longer season of running takes a toll on these players and it's common for them to wear down and get hurt.

Dynasty and Redraft League Advice

Dynasty leaguers should temper their expectations when selecting a receiver in the opening rounds of a draft, because...

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Skill Breakdowns

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio checklists are designed to assess whether a player possesses a baseline physical skill or technique as defined in the glossary of the publication. What it does not do is differentiate how much or little of that technique each player has. The skill breakdown reports are an avenue to explore these comparisons. This is a more subjective process that distills the notes taken in the profiles section of the game analysis research tool.

The subheadings under each skill should be reasonably self-explanatory, but here's a quick break down.

Star Caliber: A level of skill that rivals the best in the game at his position.

Starter Caliber: A level of skill commensurate with a full-time starter at his position.

Committee Caliber: A baseline level of skill for a player to contribute productively in an offense.

Reserve Caliber: These players lack some amount of technique or athleticism to consistently be productive, but the skill is good enough to contribute to a team.

Free Agent: These players lack the minimum skill in a given area to make a team if evaluated strictly by this single component.

Deficient: The player's skill set is so lacking that they aren't likely to receive interest from a team until it improves to a at least a free agent level.

Separation

The term encompasses the skills and techniques involved with gaining distance from an opponent assigned to coverage. Two contributing factors are speed and acceleration. Some receivers have the speed to get behind a defense even when the defenders are giving a cushion of 8-10 yards. Others are long-striders that build up speed and then there are receivers that aren't particularly fast over a longer distance, but their initial quickness is so good that it catches faster defenders off guard and out of position. However, there are rarely players fast enough to get consistent separation by running in a straight line.

The most important way to get consistent separation in the NFL is to win against press coverage. This involves a variety of techniques a receiver uses with his hands and feet that he mixes and matches to get into his route.

<u>Star Caliber</u>	<u>Starter Caliber</u>	<u>Committee Caliber</u>	<u>Reserve Caliber</u>	<u>Free Agent</u>	<u>Deficient</u>
A.J. Green Denarius Moore	Armon Binns Cameron Kenney Dane Sanzenbacher Darvin Adams DeAndre Brown Greg Little Jeremy Kerley Julio Jones Leonard Hankerson Scotty McKnight Terrell Zachary Titus Young Torrey Smith	Adrian Hilburn Armand Robinson Aubrey Quarles Austin Pettis Chris Matthews Doug Baldwin Dwayne Harris Greg Salas Jamel Hamler James Cleveland James Kirkendoll Jeff Maehl Jereme Brooks Jonathan Baldwin Juan Nunez Keith Smith Kris Adams Mark Dell Niles Paul Randall Cobb Ronald Johnson Ryan Whalen Tandon Doss Terrence McCoy Terrence Toliver Tori Gurley Vincent Brown	Adrian Cannon Bart Johnson Bo Bowling D'Andre Goodwin Derrell Johnson-Koulianos Jarred Fayson Jeremy Ross Jerrel Jernigan Jimmy Young Jock Sanders Tebiarus Gill Terrance Turner	Gerald Jones	Kodi Burns

The Best: A.J. Green has the speed, strength, and techniques to beat press coverage on a consistent basis. I might be too generous with Denarius Moore's grade in this area, but he has terrific straight-line speed. If he learns to defeat press coverage, he'll be dangerous. Dane Sanzenbacher demonstrates a nice variety of techniques to get off the line despite a skinny frame. Greg Little and Julio Jones should become highly adept against the jam within a short period of time; both are too quick and powerful for most defenders.

The Worst: The better prospects on this list not equipped with the experience or skills to handle press coverage are Jerrel Jernigan; who has the quickness, but spent most of his career at Troy in the slot and Jarred Fayson; who has the strength and quickness, but also was a slot receiver that ran a limited set of routes.

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On-Field I.Q.

I believe the best players not only exhibit impressive skills, but they know how to integrate these individual components into their game and make unusual physical and conceptual adjustments as if its second nature. There is little to no hesitation whatsoever with their decisions and movements and I like to use the term “fluidity,” to describe this behavior. Here are eight runners that have exhibited a noticeably higher than average on-field I.Q and I believe they possess the fluidity to become quality NFL players.

Cameron Kenney: Kenney, like most players that excel both on special teams and offense, has a knack for making big plays with or without the football. He understands how to change his approach to defeating press coverage against skill opponents. In contrast, a good prospect like Leonard Hankerson tends to use the same technique repeatedly and doesn't vary his approach soon enough to keep the opposition guessing.

Randall Cobb: Cobb, like Green, has the physical intelligence to integrate his physical skills to execute at a high level. It makes little difference for a receiver to have a 41-inch vertical leap if the timing and flexibility aren't there to get into position to make the play or the hand-eye coordination isn't good enough to secure the football. Watch Cobb against Alabama in 2009, and you'll see Cobb make athletic plays that require an integration of various physical skills in response to heightened awareness of the game situation and opposition.

Deep Threats

These receivers have the skills (refined or untapped) to contribute as deep threats.

YAC Attack

Some receivers make big plays on short receptions that they turn into long gains due to their skills as ball carriers. These receivers possess an abundance of these skills.

Special Teams

Second- and third-day picks often pay their dues on special teams before earning a chance to contribute at their position of choice. These receivers have the athleticism and/or special teams experience to contribute and enhance their chances of sticking with a team.

Overrated: Talent, But Glaring Holes

These backs have several components of their game that makes them good enough to contribute right away if not for deficient skills that they need to address. These areas will either limit their early contributions or prevent them from seeing the field at the start of their careers. If these issues aren't fixed, they won't ever come close to approaching their potential.

Terrence Toliver, LSU: The former LSU receiver is a great example of physically talented receiver who has not integrated his skills to produce at a consistently high level. Toliver drops easy passes, he has mishaps with routes, and he doesn't maximize his opportunities as a blocker. The problem is...

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Underrated WR Prospects

Vincent Brown, San Diego State: Brown was one of the most impressive players at the Senior Bowl and his performance was a clear reflection of what he displayed on the field during the regular season. Brown has good technique against the jam and plays bigger than his size because...

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WR Projects

Juan Nunez, Western Michigan: Nunez has the speed and quickness to get on top of defenders in single coverage and with work, he is fluid enough with his movements to quickly assimilate release techniques against press coverage. Coach Bill Cubit, who also coached fellow WMU alum Greg Jennings, says that Nunez...

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The Top 45 Receiver Prospects for Dynasty Leagues

These are my top-45 receivers based on film study. I am leaving out players I did not study. These players, and possibly others, could have made this list if I watched them play. My rankings are based a combination of collected data in this portfolio, my view of their potential fit with any offensive system, and their potential for growth based on the film study. In addition to rankings and comparisons tables, that supply workout scores and short summaries, I am leading with more detailed written summaries of each runner in the top 40 so you don't have to hunt through the play-by-play analysis.

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 sets, and how flexible their skill sets are to the widest varieties of offensive systems. In any dynasty league setting, I would be comfortable drafting the first five receivers on this list in the early rounds. After that, it depends on the size of the league, but I think the top 12 prospects all have potential to be worthwhile fantasy players within a three-year period.

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(18) DeAndre Brown, S. Miss (6-5, 233)

Brown was often mentioned in the same breath as A.J. Green and Julio Jones when they were all high school prospects. Brown has the hands, height, size, and leaping ability to develop into a starting NFL receiver. His skill sets remind me of a Plaxico Burress-type of athlete.

Brown has worked well against press coverage at the college level and he tracks the ball well enough to make adjustments to errant throws away from his body. He possesses good concentration to catch the ball with his hands and his height advantage helps him highpoint the ball in tight coverage despite a below average vertical leap.

Brown sets up vertical routes and he understands how to play the sideline on these routes to his advantage. He is a smooth runner after the catch although he can sometimes make reckless decisions with his body.

When Brown is square to a defender in the run game he has the strength willingness to deliver a punch and work his hands inside an opponent to establish control.

Brown's greatest nemesis has been his health. He broke his tibia in a 2009 bowl game and he then had a rod inserted into his shin when doctors discovered a subsequent fracture.

However, doctors believe Brown will not have a higher likelihood of injury. If he can stay healthy and get better with his routes, I think he's at least a decent possession receiver.

(19) Keith Smith, Purdue (6-2, 214)

Smith had the size and skill combination to elevate his stock if he didn't suffer a torn ACL and MCL early in the 2010 season.

The Purdue senior has the makings of a sound possession receiver with some big-play ability. He

catches the football away from his body and he has nice-sized hands to snare the ball.

He had the vertical explosiveness to high-point passes, but he also had the flexibility to adjust to low and away throws. He's also quick enough to set up angles with dinks away from defenders as a runner after the catch.

Smith runs with good balance and uses his body with a reasonable degree of physicality. He drags tacklers for extra yardage, doesn't go down when hit high, and he has a good stiff arm.

Smith can set up breaks on deep routes, but he's not very adept at doing this in the short/intermediate range of the field where he has to sink his hips or make a sharp turn inside, outside, or back to the quarterback. He tends to round off his breaks here.

Smith's blocking needs work. He has the size to generate a push and sustain blocks and he often uses his hands well to get a decent reach or shield of an opponent, but he frequently overruns his assignment or allows defenders to run past him that he should have had the awareness to block rather than his initial assignment.

If Smith can return from this significant knee injury and perform close to his pre-injury form, he could be a bargain for a team. However, heading to the draft injured is a difficult position for a receiver. Danario Alexander and Mike Sims-Walker are good examples. Smith tried to avoid this route by petitioning for a sixth year of eligibility, but the NCAA denied his request and he's forced to go pro.

I believe Smith has the tools to be as good or better than a Jonathan Baldwin or Greg Salas – two receivers in this draft that I think Smith was the optimal blend of what they do well – it's dependent on his knee. I dropped him to this spot due to the injury, which should indicate I have reasonable confidence in him developing into a quality pro.

(20.) Jeremy Ross, Cal (6-0, 209)

Ross looks (and runs) like the star high school RB that was converted to a WR. He has a thick lower body and he runs with the power and balance of a halfback in the open field. He flashes a good stiff arm against linebackers and safeties and he runs with a nice pad level to get under contact and uses his powerful legs to run through it.

With his strong open field moves when the ball is in his hands that includes an assortment of stutter steps, jukes, spins, and lateral cuts to get an angle on defenders, I wonder if he shouldn't be switched back to running back at the NFL level. The fact he didn't beat out Jahvid Best and Shane Vereen (if given a chance) isn't necessarily a reflection that he can't play the position.

If he remains a receiver, Ross has the raw skills to excel. His acceleration is noticeably good and he has the explosiveness to get airborne and highpoint the football. He makes quick turns out of his breaks and he can adjust to the ball high or low.

Ross demonstrates the ability to work back to the quarterback and he understands zone coverage well enough to find openings. His routes against single coverage need more work. He tends to tip off the direction of his breaks and at this point he doesn't set up or make breaks with the precision of a pro receiver.

Ross catches the football with his hands, but he has a tendency to juggle the ball. This becomes more pronounced when he has to catch the ball with his back to the quarterback and in tighter coverage.

Although a dangerous open field runner, Ross tends to rely too much on the hurdle move, which could get him to trouble. He has enough confidence to use this move in areas where there are too many defenders around to get a shot on him before he lands.

Although very athletic, he doesn't have the size advantage over most NFL cornerbacks that make other receivers potential assets on the outside. Yet, Ross' 39-inch vertical leap does compensate for his average height. If he fulfills his potential, he could be a sturdier Steve Smith or Santana Moss.

Ross is second all-time to DeSean Jackson in punt return average at Cal and he has earned five strength and conditioning records. The receiver/runner is an impressive athlete and an intriguing offensive project with a ton of upside. When I see him run, read that he can squat 500 pounds, leap 39 inches, and run a 4.39-40, I see Ross as a halfback.

Regardless, he's a player to remember even if his best chance is initially earn a spot is on special teams.

(21.) Ronald Johnson, USC (5-11, 199)

Johnson has decent quickness and he exhibits good form as a route runner to sink his hips into his breaks and make quick changes of direction. He works with his quarterback to find open areas in zone coverage when the initial route doesn't create a target. He has enough initial quickness to get separation on quick-breaking routes and deceptively deep speed to run past defenders at intermediate depths.

Johnson catches the ball with his hands and turns up field decisively. He finishes well as a runner, showing the willingness to lower his pads to get through contact for extra yards while keeping his legs moving. He bounces off a lot of arm tackles and occasionally flashes the balance to run through some bigger hits.

Johnson will need to improve his effort as a blocker. He tends to get in the way of a defender, but not deliver a punch or sustain contact and turn a defender away from the flow of the play.

Johnson resembles his fellow USC alum Steve Smith because of the positive facets of his game. The big

question is whether he has these skills at a level

similar to Smith.

WR Rankings Table (Top 45)

Note: Times and measurements are from the NFL Combine or Pro Day workouts. "Potential" is my assessment of the player's development curve based on the potential for the athlete to improve his strength and athleticism with additional training or learn the techniques and concepts of is position. Players labeled "Upside" have additional opportunities to become better athletes and/or technicians at their position. Players earning the "Boom-Bust" label generally have a high level of athleticism but lack the knowledge of a skill or concept that could be difficult to learn. In some cases, these "Boom-Bust" players have excellent skills and knowledge of concepts, but the base athleticism to perform the job might be questionable and the chance of them improving those physical skills are not likely. A player with a "Maxed" label has likely reached his athletic (or conceptual) potential and this will limit his ability to grow beyond his current assessment.

Name	Ht	Wt.	Score	Pot.	40	20	3-cone	V	B	Comments
DeAndre Brown	6-5	233	67.5	Boom-Bust	4.59	4.33	6.93	29.00	20	Brown was often mentioned in the same breath as A.J. Green and Julio Jones when they were high school prospects. Brown has the hands, height, size, and leaping ability to develop into a starting NFL receiver and he reminds me of a Plaxico Burress-type of athlete. Brown's greatest nemesis has been his health. If he can stay healthy and get better with his routes, I think he's at least a decent possession receiver with starter potential.
Keith Smith	6-2	214	77.5	Boom-Bust	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	Smith had the size and skill combination to elevate his stock if he didn't suffer a torn ACL and MCL early in the 2010 season. The Purdue senior has the makings of a sound possession receiver with some big-play ability. Smith runs with good balance and uses his body with a reasonable degree of physicality. He had the vertical explosiveness to high-point passes, but he also had the flexibility to adjust to low and away throws. He's also quick enough to set up angle with dinks away from defenders as a runner after the catch. If Smith can return from this significant knee injury and perform close to his pre-injury form, he could be a bargain for a team.
Jeremy Ross	5-11	209	77.5	Upside	4.39	0.00	0.00	39.00	0	Ross is second all-time to DeSean Jackson in punt return average at Cal and he has earned five, team strength and conditioning records. The receiver/runner is an impressive athlete and an intriguing offensive project with a ton of upside. When I see him run and read that he can squat 500 pounds, leap 39 inches, and run a 4.39-40, I see Ross as a halfback. Regardless, he's a player to know about. If he remains a receiver, Ross has the raw skills to excel.
Ronald Johnson	5-11	199	76.5	Upside	4.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	16	Johnson has decent quickness and exhibits good form as a route runner to sink his hips into his breaks and make quick changes of direction. He catches the ball with his hands and turns up field decisively. He finishes well as a runner, showing the willingness to lower his pads to get through contact for extra yards while keeping his legs moving. He bounces off a lot of arm tackles and occasionally flashes the balance to run through some bigger hits. It's hard to tell whether he's truly as similar to USC-alum Steve Smith as he appears until he's in a pro system, but the potential is there.

WR Comparisons Table (Top 30)

Note: In theory, player comparisons are a reader-friendly way to get a clearer mental picture of a player's physical build, athleticism, technical skills, and potential. In practice, this is a hit-or-miss process that, at the very least, is an entertaining exercise. Each "-" is an approximate level of separation between one player's talent and the next. The key word is "talent," because there are some players with lesser careers listed ahead of more famous or productive peers. This is my subjective interpretation of a talent and not success.

Name	Ht	Wt.	Score	Pot.	Comparison	Comments
DeAndre Brown	6-5	233	67.5	Boom-Bust	Vincent Jackson--Mike Williams (SEA)-X-Ramses Barden	Tall, physical, and capable of getting downfield enough to produce as more than just a redzone threat. Injuries have hindered is refinement.
Keith Smith	6-2	214	77.5	Boom-Bust	Art Monk---X	A 'tweener with possession receiver potential, but also enough athleticism to make big plays.
Jeremy Ross	5-11	209	77.5	Upside	Chris Chambers--X	Explosive and electric, Ross might be a better RB prospect, but he flashes Chambers' upside when the Dolphin-Chief was at is best.
Ronald Johnson	5-11	199	76.5	Upside	Steve Smith (NYG)-X	Faster and tougher after the catch than credited, Johnson and Smith are players capable of being a QB's best friend.

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Tight Ends

Overview and Fantasy Impact of the Position

Skill Breakdowns

Overrated and Underrated

Projects

Fantasy Top 15

Ranking and Comparisons

Scouting Checklists and Profiles

Overview and Fantasy Impact of the TE Position

The 2011 tight end class is not as good as last year's group, but there are still 4-6 players with the talent to develop into productive fantasy starters within the next 2-3 years. However, the depth of this class is nothing like the group from 2010.

If you look at various draft guides, you'll notice players in my rankings who are ranked well ahead of prospects that are likely to get drafted first. It's because this class of tight ends has...

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Skill Breakdowns

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio checklists are designed to assess whether a player possesses a baseline physical skill or technique as defined in the glossary of the publication. What it does not do is differentiate how much or little of that technique each player has. The skill breakdown reports are an avenue to explore these comparisons. This is a more subjective process that distills the notes taken in the profiles section of the game analysis research tool.

The subheadings under each skill should be reasonably self-explanatory, but here's a quick break down.

Star Caliber: A level of skill that rivals the best in the game at his position.

Starter Caliber: A level of skill commensurate with a full-time starter at his position.

Committee Caliber: A baseline level of skill for a player to contribute productively in an offense.

Reserve Caliber: These players lack some amount of technique or athleticism to consistently be productive, but the skill is good enough to contribute to a team.

Free Agent: These players lack the minimum skill in a given area to make a team if evaluated strictly by this single component.

Deficient: The player's skill set is so lacking that they aren't likely to receive interest from a team until it improves to a at least a free agent level.

Elusiveness

Elusiveness is the skill of avoiding contact. A ball carrier has an adequate amount of elusiveness if he demonstrates the change of direction skills to drive the opposing defender off balance and either avoid a hit or the full impact of a hit while still managing to continue moving forward. There are several techniques ball carriers use to avoid hits. Some ball carriers have all the techniques in their arsenal and can keep defenders off balance with an endless variety of moves. Others may only have a few effective moves in certain situations, but it works extremely well with their style.

<u>Star Caliber</u>	<u>Starter Caliber</u>	<u>Committee Caliber</u>	<u>Reserve Caliber</u>	<u>Free Agent</u>	<u>Deficient</u>
	D.J. Williams Virgil Green	Collin Franklin Jordan Cameron Julius Thomas Kyle Rudolph Lance Kendricks Mike McNeill Rob Housler Ryan Taylor	Allen Reisner Brad Taylor Cameron Graham David Ausberry Luke Stocker Nick Provo Preston Dial Will Yeatman Zach Pinalto	Ben Guidugli Charlie Gantt Greg Smith Lee Smith Weslye Saunders	

The Best: Green and Williams have multiple moves that work effectively in tight spaces. They may not be dominant in the open field in the NFL, but they will get their yards after the catch because they possess enough elusiveness in their toolkit.

The Worst: Guidugli, Gantt, the Smiths, and Saunders are all straight-line players. Guidugli is probably the worst because he also lacks the quickness to make any effective change of direction.

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Overrated: Talent, But Glaring Holes

Some tight ends have several components of their game that makes them good enough to contribute right away if not for other deficiencies they need to address. These areas will either limit their early contributions or prevent them from seeing the field. If these issues aren't fixed, they will never come close to approaching their potential.

Luke Stocker, Tennessee: Considered a top prospect entering the season, Stocker has the height and hands to adjust to throws and make plays in traffic. He's big enough to show promise as a run blocker and he has enough build up speed to have some success as a receiver down the seam. However, Stocker's physique and game has enough flaws that it's doubtful he'll ever become more than a reserve in the NFL.

The problems begin with...

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Underrated TE Prospects

Will Yeatman, Maryland: Yeatman fits both categories of a project and an underrated player. I believe he will develop at a faster rate than the typical inexperienced tight end, but he has spent more time away from the game than the average college player.

Yeatman was an All-American Lacrosse star and tight end at Notre Dame when he began his career in 2006. He established himself as an impressive...

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The Top 15 TE Prospects for Dynasty Leagues

These are my top-15 tight ends based on film study. I am leaving out players I did not study, but could have made this list if I watched them play. My rankings are based a combination of collected data in this analysis, my view of their potential fit with any offensive system, and their potential for growth based on the film study. The Score column on these rankings is the highest raw checklist score performed on this player.

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 sets and how flexible their skill sets are to the widest varieties of offensive systems. In any dynasty league setting, I would be comfortable drafting the first seven on this list and three of them in the early rounds. Beyond the first seven prospects it depends on the size of the league, but I think the prospects ranked between spots 7-12 all have enough potential to at least monitor their progress over a three-year period.

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Collin Franklin, Iowa State (6-5, 252)

Franklin has a chance to get drafted because he ran a decent 40-time at his pro day and at his dimensions, it makes him a viable developmental project as a move tight end. Franklin was often split wide or placed in the slot at Iowa State where he was among the receiving leaders at his position in the FBS.

Franklin has the receiving skills you want from an NFL TE. He catches the ball very well with his hands away from his body and he adjusts to high and low throws as well tracking the ball with his back to the passer.

Franklin moves well in the open field and dips inside and outside blocks fluidly. He protects the ball well and he's big enough to break arm tackles and fall forward. His speed is good enough that he can threaten a seam on some plays even if it's not consistent.

As a runner, Franklin's power is a little below average for his size but he does execute good pad level and he falls forward on a consistent basis. He makes the effort as a blocker and if he can add more muscle and develop more consistent technique, I could see Franklin sticking with a team and developing into a reliable reserve capable of decent production as a receiver if needed.

But he's not a starter in the making unless he's paired with a highly precise quarterback that can exploit defenses with his pass catching talents in the way a Jacob Tamme was used with Peyton Manning. Franklin might surprise as a reserve TE who grows into a starter with value in an offense that emphasizes the pass and the TE is a frequent check-down option.

10. Brad Taylor, Baylor (6-2, 241)

Taylor's upside is as a move-TE where he can be used in the slot or split wide. He has the speed to stretch the

seam and the acceleration and movement to gain yards after the catch. He runs a lot like a receiver.

He does a good job bending routes away from defenders to create additional separation and he finds openings in the zone. He also works with his quarterback when his teammate is flushed from the pocket. His best skill is his hands and ability to adjust to the football. He can fully extend for the ball, turn on the run, or catch passes at his knees while in stride.

He's undersized and will likely struggle with teams that need an in-line run blocker or limit their tight ends to

short zone plays in the passing game. He could develop into an adequate run blocker on plays where he can be matched up with a defensive back.

He'll need to refine his skills with routes that aren't seams or crosses and require more footwork and technique with breaks. If he works hard enough to develop his game, he could become a nice weapon as a receiver.

TE Rankings Table

Note: Times and measurements are from the NFL Combine or Pro Day workouts. "Potential" is my assessment of the player's development curve based on the potential for the athlete to improve his strength and athleticism with additional training or learn the techniques and concepts of his position. Players labeled "Upside" have additional opportunities to become better athletes and/or technicians at their position. Players earning the "Boom-Bust" label generally have a high level of athleticism but lack the knowledge of a skill or concept that could be difficult to learn. In some cases, these "Boom-Bust" players have excellent skills and knowledge of concepts, but the base athleticism to perform the job might be questionable and the chance of them improving those physical skills are not likely. A player with a "Maxed" label has likely reached his athletic (or conceptual) potential and this will limit his ability to grow beyond his current assessment.

Name	Ht.	Wt.	Score	Pot.	40	20	3	V	B	Comments
Collin Franklin	6-5	252	75	Upside	4.69	0.00	0.00	34.50	28	Franklin is not seen as a starter in the making. However if he's paired with a highly precise quarterback that can exploit defenses with his pass catching talents in the way a Jacob Tamme was used with Peyton Manning, Franklin might surprise as a reserve TE who grows into a starter with value
Brad Taylor	6-2	241	75	Upside	4.59	4.81	7.67	0.00	14	Taylor's upside is as a move-TE where he can be used in the slot or split wide. He has the speed to stretch the seam and the acceleration and movement to gain yards after the catch. He runs a lot like a receiver. He'll need to refine his skills with routes that aren't seams or crosses and require more footwork and technique with breaks.

TE Comparisons Table

Note: In theory, player comparisons are a reader-friendly way to get a clearer mental picture of a player's physical build, athleticism, technical skills, and potential. In practice, this is a hit-or-miss process that, at the very least, is an entertaining exercise. Each "--" is an approximate level of separation between one player's talent and the next. The key word is "talent," because there are some players with lesser careers listed ahead of more famous or productive peers. This is my subjective interpretation of a talent and not success. For example, I have LaMont Jordan ahead of Chester Taylor on a spectrum of comparison for a runner on this list. Taylor has arguably had the better career, but I believe Jordan had star caliber potential that Taylor lacked.

Name	Ht.	Wt.	Score	Pot.	Comparison	Comments
Collin Franklin	6-5	252	75	Upside	Mercedes Lewis-Donald Lee--X	A reliable receiver in the flats like Lewis was to start his career. If Franklin can develop as a blocker, he has low-end starter potential.

Brad Taylor	6-2	241	75	Upside	Dustin Keller-Lance Kendricks-X	Runs like a receiver, but has to learn to block like a TE.
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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, resources, and players to more effectively game plan for a quarterback. They have greater success forcing QBs into throws that have a greater degree of difficulty to complete with a high degree of accuracy. The correct anticipation for when to throw the ball is also a key component of accuracy and vitally important in single coverage. Anticipation is also linked to the timing of the QB's drop, play fakes, decisions, and delivery.

High completion percentage—at least 60%: This is the magic number for a quarterback to be considered accurate from a statistical perspective. Lofty stats in the college game are often a reflection of the lower quality of competition, and a quarterback that doesn't have starter talent on the professional level can accumulate great numbers in a pass-friendly, college 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 have elite talent. **Point Value: QB (5).**

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. Drew Brees throws receivers open, making high-risk throws where only the receivers can adjust to the ball for a completion to occur. The deep throws are among the riskiest plays in the passing game, but an important factor to keep a defense off balance.

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, Drew Brees 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, because this is the area of the field that is generally open in any defensive scheme. **Point Value (7)**

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. West Coast- and Spread-influenced offenses use short passes a lot like running plays, which places a premium on short route accuracy. **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 rollout or breaking the pocket while under pressure—presents a 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 in his prime did a very good job throwing the ball on the run, even 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 adequate arm strength in the NFL can throw the ball at least 40 yards directly in front of them. 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 with great velocity 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 and he played in an offensive system that emphasized his timing and touch. Drew Brees plays in a system in New Orleans that plays to the quarterback's anticipation and pinpoint accuracy with throwing receiver's open.

Demonstrates velocity on deep routes: When a quarterback can throw the ball 40 yards downfield with a lot of velocity and little arc, he has good velocity on this throws. A ball that hangs too long in the air gives the defensive backs in coverage enough time to adjust to the open receiver and break up a certain reception. There are times where more arc and anticipation is needed on a deep throw, but the minimum arm strength needs to be there. **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 the throw doesn't hold up their stride is at 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 (2).**

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).**

Demonstrates velocity on the move: There are times in an NFL game where the defense has a tactical advantage over the offense and forces the quarterback to improvise in order to generate a positive play. When this happens, the defense has put the quarterback in a position where he has to make a throw into a tight space while moving away from pressure or throw the ball away. This requires a high velocity throw from an off-balanced position and sometimes the distance is short, but the window is extremely tight or the window is larger, but the distance is far greater. **Point Value: QB (2)**

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 (3), WR (2), and TE (2).**

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 (2), WR (1), and TE (1).**

Maintains footing when making cuts: A ball carrier should be able to maintain balance when he changes direction without contact from a defender. **Point Value: RB (3), WR (2), and TE (2).**

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.

Carries the ball under the correct arm: 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 possession 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 switching the ball to the arm opposite the on-coming defender, so he meets the defensive player's blow with his side that is 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 (1), WR (1), and TE (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 not earn credit for this skill. **Point Value: QB (2).**

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 (2), TE (2), 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 (3), TE (3), and QB (2).**

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 hide 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 (1).**

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 (1).**

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 was a consummate pass blocker as a running back and he made excellent diagnosis of assignments and was 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), TE(1), and WR(1).**

Effective cut blocking technique: A cut block is properly executed when an offensive player shoots for the defender's beltline to knock the defender's feet off the ground. This is commonly used on the edges of a play by receivers in the open field, tight ends on outside running plays, and running backs in pass protection. The most common mistake made with cut blocks is to shoot too low and target the defender below the knees. This lapse in technique gives a defender a greater chance to hurdle the block attempt and maintain his path to the ball carrier or quarterback. Another common lapse is for the defender to drop his head before executing the attempt. A player that does this increases his chances of losing sight of the target and falling short of the opposition, which gives the defender a chance to sidestep the block. **Point Value: RB (1), TE (1), and WR (0.5)**

Good hand placement on stand up blocks: Good blocking technique frequently involves the ability to sustain a position against an opponent. The preferred way for an offensive player to accomplish this is to get his hand into the chest of the defender and hold onto the area of jersey under the shoulder pads and close to the chest. This is a legal hold in the NFL and it is a position that helps a blocker steer a defender in any direction he chooses. However, this technique is not easy to establish on a moving defender and it is common for offensive players to have poor hand placement, which leads to holding penalties or poor control over the

opponent. Some offensive players lack the size, confidence, or understanding of the benefit of this technique and don't even attempt to sustain blocks with hand placement. **Point Value: RB(1), TE (2), and WR (0.5)**

Can deliver a punch on stand up blocks: One of the most effective ways to establish good hand placement on a stand up block is to deliver a swift, powerful, and compact punch to the defender's chest. This technique is designed to get past the hands and arms of the defender, knock the defender off balance, and then give the blocker a chance to gain control through good hand placement before the defender recovers his balance. However a good punch can be simply a well-placed hit with the shoulders or forearms to knock a defender off balance and far enough from the flow of the play that the opponent cannot recover. College blockers at the RB, TE, and WR positions are often good punchers or have decent to good hand placement, but rarely both. **Point Value: RB (1), TE (2), and WR (0.5)**

Mirrors/Moves feet effectively on stand up blocks: In order to deliver a good punch or maintain good hand placement, a blocker has to exhibit the ability to move his feet so that he can maintain a good position to execute his block. This frequently occurs before an offensive player engages in a block, but it can also happen after a the first punch or placement of the hands as the defender tries to move past the blocker. Strong footwork is one of the biggest things that separates a potentially good blocker from a very good technician. **Point Value: RB (1), TE (2), and WR (0.5)**

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The 2011 ROOKIE SCOUTING PORTFOLIO ABBREVIATED DRAFT GUIDE

Draft Value Charts By League Size

**Cheat Sheets With Height, Weight, Score, Comments, &Workout
Numbers**

Draft Value Charts For Dynasty League Rookie Drafts

The values assigned to each pick create a direct relationship between the higher picks and the corresponding point value. If you plot the numbers on a graph it's a classic relationship that you'd see in a math class. This is modeled after the values of a draft chart used in NFL war rooms.

This chart could also help you with re-draft leagues where you can trade picks. For instance, if someone offers you their second and third round picks from the their position in exchange for your 10th pick in the first round, you can see if the values are close enough to consider the deal. For instance in a 14-team league here's how a trade would appear on a draft value chart between the owner offering his 2nd and 3rd round picks from the 4th spot for the owner's 1st round pick from the 10th spot.

Picks 2.04 (201 pts) + 3.04 (101 pts) = 302 pts
Pick 1.10 = 329 pts

The values are close enough that they should consider the trade. One could even negotiate a 5th round pick and claim that makes the deal less lopsided in their favor and according to the chart they'd be right. Of course if the value is within 20-40 points with picks this high in the draft, one may not want to make a 5th round pick the deal breaker.

Just remember, these are generic value charts and they might not serve as a good guide for your league.

Dynasty Rookie Draft Value Chart for an 8-Team League

Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4	
1.01	956	2.01	130	3.01	68	4.01	36
1.02	690	2.02	122	3.02	64	4.02	34
1.03	562	2.03	116	3.03	60	4.03	32
1.04	434	2.04	108	3.04	56	4.04	30
1.05	306	2.05	100	3.05	52	4.05	28
1.06	242	2.06	92	3.06	48	4.06	26
1.07	178	2.07	84	3.07	44	4.07	24
1.08	146	2.08	76	3.08	40	4.08	22
3514		828		432		232	
Round 5		Round 6		Round 7		Round 8	
5.01	20	6.01	14	7.01	8	8.01	2
5.02	19	6.02	13	7.02	7	8.02	2
5.03	19	6.03	13	7.03	7	8.03	2
5.04	18	6.04	12	7.04	6	8.04	2
5.05	17	6.05	11	7.05	5	8.05	2
5.06	17	6.06	10	7.06	4	8.06	1
5.07	16	6.07	10	7.07	4	8.07	1
5.08	15	6.08	9	7.08	3	8.08	1
141		92		44		13	

Dynasty Rookie Draft Value Chart for a 10-Team League

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Dynasty Rookie Draft Value Chart for a 12-Team League

Dynasty Rookie Draft Value Chart for a 14-Team League

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Quarterback Scouting Checklist

Name: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Colin Kaepernick"/>	School: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Nevada"/>	Opponent: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Boston College"/>	Surface: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Grass"/>
Height: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="6-4"/>	Year: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Senior"/>	Score: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="20-13"/>	Climate: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Night"/>
Weight: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="234"/>	Date: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="1/9/2011"/>	Location: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="San Francisco"/>	Temperature: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Temperate"/>

Overall Score:

Category Scores

Accuracy Score: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="12"/>	BHandling Score: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="1"/>
Arm Strength Score: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="11"/>	Pocket Presence Score: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="11"/>
Delivery Score: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="6"/>	Scrambling Ability Score: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="5"/>
Decisions Score: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="10"/>	Durability Score: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="6"/>

Game Stats

PAtt: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="33"/>	Sacked: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="1"/>
Comp: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="20"/>	Deflections: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="1"/>
Pyds: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="192"/>	Fumbles: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="1"/>
PTds: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="1"/>	RAtt: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="9"/>
Ints: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="1"/>	RYds: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="22"/>
Dropped: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="2"/>	RTds: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="0"/>

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career--2 pts:

Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part)--2 pts:

Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career--2 pts.:

Accuracy

High completion rate (>60%) - 5pts:

Deep accuracy - 2pts:

Intermediate accuracy - 7pts:

Short accuracy - 5pts:

Accuracy moving right - 2 pts:

Accuracy moving left - 2pts:

Decisions

Avoids locking onto one receiver - 3pts:

Plays with controlled aggression - 2pts:

Manipulates defense with eyes - 2pts:

Makes effective presnap reads - 2pts:

Throws ball away to avoid sacks - 3pts:

Checks down judiciously - 2pts:

Ball handling

Play fakes - 1pt:

Center exchange - 2pts:

Pump fakes - 1pt:

Ball security while running - 1pt:

Maintains security when hit - 2pts:

Delivery

Delivers from a variety of platforms - 2pts:

Catchable ball (touch, spirals, etc) - 4pts:

Quick release - 4pts:

Compact delivery - 4pts:

Good drop depth - 2pts:

Arm Strength

Deep velocity - 2pts:

Deep distance (> than 40 yds) - 2pts:

Intermediate velocity - 5pts:

Velocity on the move - 2pts:

Pocket Presence

Climbs pocket effectively - 5pts:

Willing to take hit to delivery ball - 2pts:

Senses pass rush - 5pts:

Manages outside pressure - 3pts:

Manages pressure up the middle - 3pts:

Scrambling

Positive yards when breaking the pocket - 2pts:

Positive yards when pocket collapses - 1pt:

Capable of big gains as a runner - 2pts:

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name: Colin Kaepernick **Date:** 1/9/2011 **Opponent:** Boston College

Overall Strengths:

Kaepernick has good arm strength and although not consistent enough yet, he flashes some nice touch and timing in traffic on intermediate routes on the perimeter. As a runner he has some burst and change of direction to get nice gains or make defenders miss in the pocket. He demonstrates nice accuracy to his left, especially on the run. He can make the first defender miss in the pocket and he will use the occasional pump fake to create time as he scrambles. He wisely throws the ball away when no receiver is open and he flashes the ability to go through progressions or look off defenders before targeting his primary receiver. He's a talented, but raw prospect that could develop into a solid starter if he demonstrates the work ethic and mental acumen to read defenses and execute.

Overall Weaknesses:

Kaepernick's wind up is elongated and his release is far from compact. He frequently throws the ball with a three-quarter delivery, which invites more deflections than his 6-6 frame would suggest. When moving around the pocket or breaking the pocket, he has a tendency to carry the ball loosely from his body and with his long limbs, it's an inviting target for defenders to swipe the ball. He also needs to learn to carry the ball high and tight as a runner because of those long limbs. Even when he tucks the ball he tends to leave too much space for the ball to come loose when hit. As a runner he has some speed and change of direction, but he runs out of control, which will make him prone to big hits and turnovers. He waits too long to check the ball down and he needs to learn how to climb the pocket and not just try to break free repeatedly. His footwork needs to improve. As it becomes more consistent, his accuracy should also get better. He tends to throw the ball high and away and his throws are frequently just a half-beat late. His anticipation should also improve with better footwork.

Accuracy:

His first pass was a WR screen to the left flat after a play action fake to his RB in the Pistol. The receiver was targeted behind the line of scrimmage and the ball arrived on time and at the receiver's back shoulder on 1st and 10 with 14:53 in the first quarter. He really doesn't have a rhythm or set footwork to get his feet in position to deliver a pass. On the next play he implied a play fake of an end around before turning to his right to hit his receiver in the right flat on a short hook route. He never got his feet set under his body and they were too far apart as he delivered the pass. The ball arrived in the general area of the receiver, but it was high throw and the receiver was forced to leap into the air and make an adjustment for the reception, which gave the defender plenty of time to recover and make the tackle before the receiver could turn up field with 14:30 in the first quarter. He showed enough arm strength to hit his receiver on an out at the left sideline on a ball thrown from the right hash on 3rd and 7 with 7:00 in the first quarter, but the ball took a while to get there and the pass was wobbly. It did reach the receiver's back shoulder accurately for the 10-yard gain at the sideline. That high, deliberate release resulted in a high throw on an open out route 15 yards downfield at the left sideline on 2nd and 7 with 4:48 in the third quarter - too high for a reception. Nice accuracy over two defenders five yards ahead of his linebacker on a 3rd and 7 out route to his TE 16 yards downfield to the left sideline. The TE had to make a sliding grab at the boundary, but the ball was placed only where he could make the catch. Kaepernick got flushed to his left on a 2nd and 7 play action pass and did a fine job of buying time to his left, getting his feet under him and throwing a touch pass to a wide open receiver 25 yards from his release point to the five yard-line for a 27-yard score. Kaepernick was smart to take something off the ball and let his receiver turn back to him and wait for it behind the zone with 3:42 in the first quarter. He put some air under the ball on a drag route to his receiver in the right flat during a designed roll to the right, but he overshot the receiver anyhow on a 2nd and 7 play pass to begin the second quarter. Good velocity and placement of the ball 13 yards to the right sideline on a designed roll right on 2nd and 8 with 8:49 in the half. Kaepernick delivered the ball on a line to the back shoulder of his receiver in stride. He showed decent touch on the run to his RB in the flat, swinging the ball a few yards to him with 7:00 in the half. Nice accuracy between two defenders in zone on a 12-yard cross on 2nd and 1 with 3:53 in the half. He got the ball to the receiver's back shoulder but ahead of the trailing defender, giving the receiver time to avoid contact as the ball arrived and gain an extra yard. On-time with a 12-yard out to the left sideline with 2:40 in the half, hitting the WR at the back shoulder just ahead of the oncoming safety. He was high and away on a sideline comeback on a designed roll to the right with 1:41 in the half. The ball reached the WR too close to the boundary in tight coverage. He needed to release the ball a step earlier. He was high and away on the next play, a deep out to the right sideline on 3rd and 7 with 1:36 in the half. The receiver could only get his outside hand on the ball. Good placement of a sideline curl on a half-roll left for an eight-yard gain with 9:48 in the third quarter. This was a quick throw and placed low enough so the receiver could make a sliding grab ahead of the defensive back for an eight-yard gain. He made an excellent throw on a deep out in tight coverage that hit his receiver in the hands ahead of the trailing defender, but the receiver could not hold on after contact on 3rd and 4 with 8:10 in the third quarter. His slot receiver dropped a crossing route in the right flat on 2nd and 10 with 2:24 in the third quarter. The ball was well placed over his shoulder, but the receiver let it go through his hands. He was on time with a deep seam route 25 yards downfield to his TE on 3rd and 10 with 2:19 in the third quarter, hitting his receiver just ahead of one safety trying to jump the route and in front of the other safety coming across and applying the hit. The catch was better than the pass, but the pass was well thrown.

Arm Strength:

He showed enough arm strength to hit his receiver on an out at the left sideline on a ball thrown from the right hash on 3rd and 7 with 7:00 in the first quarter, but the ball took a while to get there and the pass was wobbly. It did reach the receiver's back shoulder accurately for the 10-yard gain at the sideline. The 16-yard out on 3rd and 7 over two defenders five yards ahead of the TE was thrown with excellent velocity and just over their outstretched arms. Good velocity on the move on a 16-yard attempt on a sideline comeback while rolling right.

Delivery:

Kaepernick's first pass was a wide receiver screen in the left flat off play action from the Pistol with 14:53 in the first quarter. Kaepernick threw the ball with a three-quarter delivery, no real movement of his feet after the play fake other than turning to the flat to deliver the ball. The pass was accurate with a tight spiral and little arc. He really doesn't have a rhythm or set footwork to get his feet in position to deliver a pass. On the next play he implied a play fake of an end around before turning to his right to hit his receiver in the right flat on a short hook route. He never got his feet set under his body and they were too far apart as he delivered the pass. The ball arrived in the general area of the receiver, but it was high throw and the receiver was forced to leap into the air and make an adjustment for the reception, which gave the defender plenty of time to recover and make the tackle before the receiver could turn up field with 14:30 in the first quarter. On intermediate and deep passes, Kaepernick has a long, delivery windup that culminates in a fast release. On 3rd and 16 with 12:18 in the first quarter, Kaepernick had his feet more than a yard apart with his front arm completely straight, pointing to the receiver with his back arm holding the ball a good yard away from his head before it began coming forward. This is as far from a compact delivery as you can get. The way he brings the ball back takes longer than the actual time of the ball coming forward, but how far apart his entire body is in the act of throwing really opens him to hits, interceptions, tipped passes, and fumbles because he's so exposed. The pass was thrown high and behind the receiver on the play. Kaepernick got flushed to his left on a 2nd and 7 play action pass and did a fine job of buying time to his left, getting his feet under him and throwing a touch pass to a wide open receiver 25 yards from his release point to the five yard-line for a 27-yard score. Kaepernick was smart to take something off the ball and let his receiver turn back to him and wait for it behind the zone with 3:42 in the first quarter. He seems to do a better job of getting his feet under him on the run rather than on play action passes from the Pistol or spread offense, which tends to be the case for a lot of spread quarterbacks. His slow wind up and three-quarter delivery on a 3rd and 8 pass was deflected at the line of scrimmage with 1:30 in the third quarter.

Decisions:

Kaepernick did a nice job of looking off the linebacker at the left hash before turning back to the right hash to throw the shallow cross to his TE on 3rd and 7 with 9:51 in the half. The look-off gave the TE room to run and he ultimately made an excellent play after the catch to get the first down, although this check-down in theory didn't really look like a good decision in this situation. He did a nice job of looking right to left before throwing the ball to his WR at the left sideline for a 12-yard gain on a 2nd and 11 out with 2:40 in the half. He stared down his slot receiver on a deep curl on 2nd and 10 with 12:45 in the third quarter and combined with his elongated throwing motion, the linebacker had time to undercut the pass and make the interception, returning the football 31 yards to the Nevada six yard-line. Good decision to throw the ball out of the end zone when primary receiver was covered in the end zone on a 2nd and 8 with 1:31 in the third quarter. He was quick enough to avoid pressure up the middle and run to this right, execute a pump fake to buy a little more time and then throw the ball out of bounds when no one came open on a 1st and 10 with 0:52 in the third quarter. He made the first lineman miss coming from the outside on 3rd and 6 with 10:34 left. He tried to continue running in the direction of the lineman coming at him and then reversed his field. He eventually checked down to his RB at the left sideline well after he first had the opportunity as the pressure was coming on the play. Good athleticism, but late decision making.

Ball Handling:

Kaepernick's first pass came off play action from the Pistol. He executed the play fake thoroughly, but really didn't sell it with his body. It was a quick fake setting up a quick WR screen on 1st and 10 with 14:53 in the first quarter. On a seven-yard scramble around right end with 14:14 in the first quarter, Kaepernick ran with the ball very low and loose from this body. He runs with an angular, jerky style that appears out of control and could make him prone to fumbling the football. He lost the ball on a 3rd and 6 scramble to the left flat and took a hit from the LB. He did tuck the ball before the contact, but the hit was right on the ball and Kaepernick needs to learn how to carry the ball high and tight - especially with his long limbs. He did a better job extending the ball on a 1st and 10 play fake before delivering a WR screen in the right flat for a seven-yard gain with 6:42 in the first quarter.

Pocket Presence:

Kaepernick was sacked by backside pursuit on a designed half-roll left on 2nd and 7 with 12:55 in the first quarter. He didn't sense the pressure from his blindside until it was very close and he didn't have the acceleration to outrun him to the flank. Kaepernick felt pressure up the middle as he looked left on a 3rd and 6 pass play with 8:45 in the first quarter. He broke the pocket up the middle, made a nice change of direction to the left, but as he reached the left hash he got hit head-on by a linebacker and lost the ball. Boston College made the recovery. Good job sensing pressure and a decisive move to avoid it, but he immediately went for the run in a congested area over the middle rather than climb the pocket and make a quick throw. Kaepernick got flushed to his left on a 2nd and 7 play action pass and did a fine job of buying time to his left, getting his feet under him and throwing a touch pass to a wide open receiver 25 yards from his release point to the five yard-line for a 27-yard score. Kaepernick was smart to take something off the ball and let his receiver turn back to him and wait for it behind the zone with 3:42 in the first quarter. He was quick enough to avoid pressure up the middle and run to this right, execute a pump fake to buy a little more time and then throw the ball out of bounds when no one came open on a 1st and 10 with 0:52 in the third quarter. Excellent first move to use his ball-carrying shoulder to swim over the pass rusher and then sidestep him up the middle before breaking the pocket up the middle for a three-yard gain on 2nd and 10 with 11:21 left. He made the first lineman miss coming from the outside on 3rd and 6 with 10:34 left. He tried to continue running in the direction of the lineman coming at him and then reversed his field. He eventually checked down to his RB at the left sideline well after he first had the opportunity as the pressure was coming on the play. Good athleticism, but late decision making. Good pump fake with pressure coming up the middle to create space to slide between them. He then ran through a wrap from the backside pursuit as he climbed the pocket and rolled left and threw the ball to his RB at the left sideline but his receiver fell as he tried to come back to the ball on 3rd and 14 with 5:37 left.

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name: Colin Kaepernick

Date: 1/9/2011

Opponent: Boston College

Scrambling Ability:

Nice speed around right end on 1st and 10 with 14:14 in the first quarter. He gained seven yards before running out of bounds. He was brought down for a loss of one on 2nd and 5 with 9:37 in the first quarter on a keeper to right tackle where the creases were filled as he approached the line of scrimmage. Kaepernick felt pressure up the middle as he looked left on a 3rd and 6 pass play with 8:45 in the first quarter. He broke the pocket up the middle, made a nice change of direction to the left but as he reached the left hash he got hit head-on by a linebacker and lost the ball. Boston College made the recovery. He's fast, but he has long-striding speed and decent agility. He can't change directions as smoothly as a Cameron Newton, but his feet are better than average for a quarterback. Although he gained eight yards after breaking the pocket up the middle with 0:45 in the third quarter, he looked awkward and slower than his timed-speed indicates as he weaved behind blockers for the yardage. He's faster when he's running in a straight line or around the edge than changing directions.

Durability:

Character:

Nevada coach Chris Alt says Kaepernick is the most ferocious competitor he's ever seen in all of his 26 years of coaching. Good effort after throwing the interception to undercut the linebacker's legs at the six to prevent a touchdown with 12:45 in the third quarter. Nevada's defense was able to hold Boston College to a field goal, which was a big difference in this game. He was adopted and he worked as an intern over the summer at a department store in Nevada. He actually had the humility to not tell an elderly woman that he was Kaepernick when she asked him to help find his own jersey in the store.

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Quarterback Scouting Checklist

Name: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Greg McElroy"/>	School: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Alabama"/>	Opponent: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Auburn"/>	Surface: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Grass"/>
Height: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="6-1"/>	Year: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Senior"/>	Score: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="27-28"/>	Climate: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value=""/>
Weight: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="220"/>	Date: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="11/26/2010"/>	Location: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Alabama"/>	Temperature: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text" value="Temperate"/>

Overall Score:

Category Scores

Accuracy Score: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="21"/>	BHandling Score: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="6"/>
Arm Strength Score: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="5"/>	Pocket Presence Score: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="18"/>
Delivery Score: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="14"/>	Scrambling Ability Score: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="2"/>
Decisions Score: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="9"/>	Durability Score: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="6"/>

Game Stats

PAtt: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="37"/>	Sacked: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="5"/>
Comp: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="27"/>	Deflections: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/>
Pyds: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="377"/>	Fumbles: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="1"/>
PTds: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="2"/>	RAtt: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="8"/>
Ints: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/>	RYds: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="-10"/>
Dropped: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="2"/>	RTds: <input style="width: 50px;" type="text" value="0"/>

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career--2 pts:

Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part)--2 pts:

Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career--2 pts.:

Accuracy

High completion rate (>60%) - 5pts:

Deep accuracy - 2pts:

Intermediate accuracy - 7pts:

Short accuracy - 5pts:

Accuracy moving right - 2 pts:

Accuracy moving left - 2pts:

Decisions

Avoids locking onto one receiver - 3pts:

Plays with controlled aggression - 2pts:

Manipulates defense with eyes - 2pts:

Makes effective presnap reads - 2pts:

Throws ball away to avoid sacks - 3pts:

Checks down judiciously - 2pts:

Ball handling

Play fakes - 1pt:

Center exchange - 2pts:

Pump fakes - 1pt:

Ball security while running - 1pt:

Maintains security when hit - 2pts:

Delivery

Delivers from a variety of platforms - 2pts:

Catchable ball (touch, spirals, etc) - 4pts:

Quick release - 4pts:

Compact delivery - 4pts:

Good drop depth - 2pts:

Arm Strength

Deep velocity - 2pts:

Deep distance (> than 40 yds) - 2pts:

Intermediate velocity - 5pts:

Velocity on the move - 2pts:

Pocket Presence

Climbs pocket effectively - 5pts:

Willing to take hit to delivery ball - 2pts:

Senses pass rush - 5pts:

Manages outside pressure - 3pts:

Manages pressure up the middle - 3pts:

Scrambling

Positive yards when breaking the pocket - 2pts:

Positive yards when pocket collapses - 1pt:

Capable of big gains as a runner - 2pts:

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name: Greg McElroy **Date:** 11/26/2010 **Opponent:** Auburn

Overall Strengths:

McElroy has decent short-range accuracy and moves reasonably well to his left on designed plays. He has a solid drop and set up from center and he is patient in the pocket. He has good follow through with his delivery and throws the ball with some touch. I like that he can make accurate throws in the short-range while off balance or on the move. He also has a nice start to reading coverage. He immediately identified a blown coverage for a 68-yard score in the first quarter and found good opportunities both with his arm and his legs in the early second quarter to exploit the defense when it dropped its linebackers into coverage. He showed on few occasions the ability to look off the safety to set up passes downfield. He also displayed sound judgment to throw the football away when heavily pressured without an available escape route or check down. What I really like most is his poise in the pocket. He will stand tall and deliver the ball in the face of pressure but he also has good presence to move away from pressure and find the open area.

Overall Weaknesses:

When defenses drop seven defenders, he has a tougher time finding the open man. Most of his targets were on the left side of the field and he seemed to have a slight accuracy issue where he threw the ball just behind his targets on a consistent basis. He didn't demonstrate velocity on the deep out and he didn't have a throw over 35 yards today. Although he looked off the safety on some plays, he glued himself to Julio Jones way too often in the red zone in the fourth quarter and missed opportunities to find the open man for an easier play and the score. If McElroy can show the pro quality arm to deliver high-velocity passes in tight spaces, he has the smarts, pocket presence and toughness to become a starter. If not, he has enough talent to develop into caretaker/backup. At this point, I need to see more of his arm to ascertain whether he has upside or his talents are capped.

Accuracy:

McElroy showed good zip on a back shoulder throw to his receiver Hanks on a 2nd and 1 flat route for six yards on the second play of the game. The quarterback made the throw while executing a half roll to the left off a play fake with two defenders in his face. Although he could have lead Darius Hanks a little more on the play, his accuracy was still solid on a play with a high degree of difficulty in the short range. McElroy showed good touch and accuracy on a post route near the end zone on the opening drive. He didn't throw the ball with a lot of velocity, but had really nice arc and anticipation on the throw to his receiver in single coverage, who drew a pass interference penalty on the play. The receiver actually stopped running too early and tried to leap for the pass rather than run under it. If the receiver runs under the ball, he catches it in stride and well in front of the defensive back for the touchdown. McElroy had very good accuracy on this 35-yard pass; just a poor finish to the route that luckily drew a penalty in favor of the offense. The offense also got a break because the receiver never completely came to a stop before the snap when he motioned across the formation, but the officials did not notice this illegal motion. He made another nice half roll and throw on a play-action boot from the Pistol to his tight end on a short drag route that turned into a 13-yard gain with 9:13 in the first quarter. The ball was placed at helmet level of the TE, and the TE nearly lost the ball when he didn't get his hands up quickly as he turned back to the quarterback. McElroy was slightly behind Jones on a 2nd and 7 slant for a nine-yard gain with 5:39 in the first quarter. It was a decent pass, but McElroy seems to be slightly behind his players on passes to the left where he should have led them a bit more to give them a chance to break past the defender in coverage. Another display of short-range accuracy on the move on 4th and 4 with 3:37 in the first quarter, when he climbed the pocket to his left and delivered the ball to his receiver at the sideline as he took a hit from backside pursuit. He hit Jones again on this drive on a slant for 11 yards to get Alabama inside the red zone, following up with a 12-yard score on a nicely, arced fade route to Hanks in the end zone. It was excellent anticipation and touch to give his receiver time to run under the football thrown from the opposite hash. McElroy's first incomplete pass of the day came with 9:33 in the half, on a play action roll left that he had to throw out of bounds due to the DE off the left side in his face as he turned to throw. McElroy had his RB Richardson for a certain touchdown on a flat route off a play action roll left, but the RB let the ball get too close to his body and the pass bounced off his thigh pad while trying to haul it in with 8:54 in the half. McElroy missed Darius Hanks on a short out in the end zone due to tight coverage and leading the receiver just a little far with 8:10 in the half. Good accuracy with a defender hitting him in the chest on a designed roll right and throw to his TE on a drag route for two yards with 4:51 in the half. McElroy continued to put the ball a little too behind his receivers in areas where they had to make small adjustments to catch and run with the ball, including a 2nd and 4 curl to his TE, who made a spinning grab for an 11-yard catch and run to the Auburn seven with 1:44 in the half. His first attempt in the second half seemed under thrown to the outside but judging from the two defenders that nearly undercut the pass, its more likely the receiver didn't break soon enough in his route. McElroy showed excellent accuracy on a skinny post to Julio Jones on 2nd and 11 with 3:41 in the third quarter. He threaded the needle between the linebacker and safety about 18 yards downfield, but Jones could not hold onto the ball before the impending hit from the safety because the linebacker got a hand on the ball to punch it loose from Jones' grip. McElroy once again put the ball on the back shoulder of his receiver on the left side of the field for a 15-yard gain and a first down with 2:35 in the third quarter. Good zip on the pass and placed where the receiver could tap both feet inbounds. He was a little high and away on the short hook for five yards with 2:10 in the third quarter. He put poor placement of a crossing route to Jones on 2nd and 5 with 1:22 in the third quarter. McElroy put the ball high and away, towards the defender over top, rather than low and at the back shoulder to give Jones a chance at a sliding grab.

Arm Strength:

The first high-velocity throw I needed to see McElroy make came with 11:00 in the third quarter against a six-man blitz. He targeted his receiver Darius Hanks on an out to the opposite flat and the ball didn't have the zip to beat the underneath coverage undercutting the pass, incomplete. Once again the pass was a little high and behind the receiver on the left side of the field; a common accuracy issue that seemed to be occurring with his throws throughout this game. McElroy showed excellent accuracy on a skinny post to Julio Jones on 2nd and 11 with 3:41 in the third quarter. He threaded the needle between the linebacker and safety about 18 yards downfield, but Jones could not hold onto the ball before the impending hit from the safety because the linebacker got a hand on the ball to punch it loose from Jones' grip. McElroy once again put the ball on the back shoulder of his receiver on the left side of the field for a 15-yard gain and a first down with 2:35 in the third quarter. Good zip on the pass and placed where the receiver could tap both feet inbounds.

Delivery:

He has a pretty clean delivery from the shotgun. On a six-yard curl to begin the game, he had his feet well spaced in his set up, and he showed good weight shift from his back foot to his front foot as he delivered the football over the top and on time to his receiver in the flat. His technique also looked pretty good on a half roll to his left on a six-yard flat route on 2nd and 1 to his receiver Darius Hanks against the safety. He had his feet pointed in the right direction on the throw and he demonstrated a quick release in the face of pressure from two defensive linemen. His footwork could be more precise to get better placement on the pass. He got the ball on the back shoulder of Hanks, who had to slow down to catch the ball and this helped the trailing defender wrap him to minimize the gain. The footwork and weight distribution during his five-step drop on a post route to his receiver near the end zone on the opening drive was a fine demonstration of proper technique. When he finished his plant off his fifth step, he had both feet under him and a bit of a bounce on the balls of his feet as he set to throw the ball. He does tend to pop up from center a little high and early as he begins his drop, adding a slight hop before he begins his drop. This needs to be corrected. Ingram had to get on his toes and make a slight jump pass over the middle to his RB Ingram on a hook route after he initially looked left and didn't find anyone open. Good adjustment and ability to create an open lane to throw the football accurately with 12:34 in the half. Good presence of mind in the pocket to shovel pass the ball to Richardson over the middle for a nine-yard gain on 1st and 10 with 10:24 left after climbing the pocket under pressure and getting tripped in the process.

Decisions:

McElroy's first pass was a predetermined read to begin the game. He came to the line in a three-receiver, shotgun set, sent Julio Jones in motion across the formation against the zone to overload one quadrant with three receivers, and then threw the ball to Jones on a six-yard curl in the soft spot. Good recognition of the defense and an easy gain of what turned out to be nine yards. McElroy did a nice job of initially looking off the safety on a 35-yard post to his receiver near the end zone on the opening drive of the game. He looked right as he took his drop from a two-back, two-receiver set. As he took his final two steps in his five-step drop, he turned back to his receiver on the post and delivered the ball immediately after his back foot hit the ground - very good timing. McElroy's first touchdown was 68-yard pass to Julio Jones on a streak where the wide receiver took an inside release against the cornerback, who thought he had short zone responsibility but quickly after Jones ran past him that the assignment was man-to-man. McElroy recognized this blown coverage immediately and hit Jones in stride about 25 yards down field on a 30-yard throw, resulting in an easy score. McElroy read all three linebackers dropping deep on 1st and 10 with 13:13 in the half, so he slid to the open area to his right and then tucked the ball at the line of scrimmage for a 10-yard gain up the right flat. Good decision on 1st and 10 with 12:34 in the half to turn back to the middle of the field and check the ball down to his receiver Ingram on a short hook route after he initially looked left. Although Ingram fumbled the ball away, the initial result was a 41-yard gain. Excellent decision to throw away a 1st and 10 pass off a play action boot left when the defensive end was in his face as he turned to throw. He delivered a high-velocity throw out of bounds to avoid the sack and turnover. McElroy saw six defenders at the line of scrimmage on a 1st and 10 pass with 5:00 in the half. He determined his hot read would be the slot receiver on a slant in the left flat, but he did not accurately predict the linebacker dropping into coverage and coming across the middle to defend the pass, incomplete. Although he led his receiver into a shot by the safety in the middle of the field, he showed good patience to throw the ball to the receiver's second window on the route rather than the short break on the hook in tight coverage. This extra beat he waited allowed the receiver to float to the inside for more separation and a four-yard gain to set up a 4th and 1 situation rather than a 4th and 3, which would have been the case if he didn't wait. I'm not sure McElroy made the best choice on a 3rd and 10 play from a 2x2 shotgun formation against a six-man blitz up the middle with 11:00 in the third quarter. He tried to hit his receiver on an out in the left flat, but tipped off the underneath coverage. He either needed to look off the coverage or put more velocity on the throw. Excellent job spotting a 3rd and 6 hot read of his slot receiver on a deep seam route in single coverage, but the six-man Auburn blitz forced McElroy to rush the throw, just enough that the pass was five yards over top with 7:47 in the third quarter. McElroy missed his slot receiver on a crossing route in the red zone with 1:22 in the third quarter because he stared down Julio Jones for the fourth straight attempt. If he showed more patience not to force the ball, he throws a touchdown. He waited too long to deliver a deep curl in zone coverage in the right flat about 20 yards downfield which resulted in coverage getting over the top to defend the pass.

Ball Handling:

Good extension of the football away from his body on a play action boot left from the Pistol on a 1st and 10 pass for 13 yards with 9:13 in the first quarter.

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name:

Greg McElroy

Date:

11/26/2010

Opponent:

Auburn

Pocket Presence:

McElroy didn't seem bothered by pressure to deliver two first-quarter passes on boots to the left and he was patient in a constricting pocket to deliver a swing pass to his receiver Jones for an 11-yard gain off end-around action with 7:02 in the first quarter. McElroy lacks great feet to turn away from pressure coming up the middle. The DE taking an inside track on the left tackle on a safety blitz to the same side on 3rd and 8 with 4:06 in the first quarter sacked him. He tried to back away from the defender and dip outside while keeping his eyes downfield, but he had no chance. However, the defender that sacked McElroy was called for unsportsmanlike conduct, which was a very questionable call, giving the offense a 4th and 4 that he converted under pressure on a short out to his receiver Maze tip-toeing the sideline. He made the throw while getting hit from the backside as he climbed the pocket to his left, delivering the pass on the move. Excellent job slipping to the right of pressure up the middle by DE No. 45, who beat Trent Richardson's block in the pocket. McElroy slid to the right when he saw the pressure, looked to his right and found Julio Jones adjusting his slant to a corner route, hitting the receiver in stride on the receiver's back shoulder 15 yards downfield on this 3rd and 5 with 9:28 in the half. The pass was good enough for Jones to get another 27 down the sideline to the Auburn three, setting up a field goal. Good pass to Richardson in the flat on a roll left, taking a hit as he finished his delivery, but Richardson dropped the three-yard scoring opportunity. Once again, McElroy stood in the face of pressure to deliver the ball on the final drive of the half for the Crimson Tide. He took a hit to the chest while rolling right to deliver a short flat route to Dial and a few plays later, he stood tall and delivered a flat route to Hanks for a first down as the DE tried to bull rush the RB into the QB's delivery lane. McElroy took the back of Ingram's helmet to his facemask as he delivered the ball but this impending hit didn't move him an inch from his release. McElroy got sacked on a 2nd and goal pass play from the seven when the Auburn DT (No.90) took an inside move past the Alabama RG untouched and met McElroy in mid drop, knocking the QB into the RB and forcing a fumble with 1:00 in the half. This was the kind of play that any quarterback would have a tough time holding onto the football. The RB actually came from behind to force the fumble trying to help block the DT. McElroy was sacked a third time when Auburn dropped seven into coverage with 9:00 in the third quarter. McElroy just had enough time to make a play fake to Ingram, look at his first option and turn away from the option as he got blindsided by DE. He probably held onto the ball a little long, but it was a nitpicky play to complain about this because the sack was a coverage sack due to a nice job of the defense dropping quickly into good position. Nice job standing in the pocket against a six-man rush to attempt to hit his receiver on a slant in single coverage. Good presence of mind in the pocket to shovel pass the ball to Richardson over the middle for a nine-yard gain on 1st and 10 with 10:24 left after climbing the pocket under pressure and getting tripped in the process. He took a clothesline at the end of the play as well. Good pocket presence on 3rd and 5 with 8:32 left to climb the pocket just enough to elude the grasp of a defender on the ground, look away from his first crosser and hit Maze on the opposite cross for a four-yard gain. The line made a nice call to pick up a corner blitz on 3rd and 12 with 5:42 left, but the right tackle was too slow to get to the edge and the corner came free to wrap and slam McElroy to the turf, injuring him enough that he could not return to the game. He was slammed on his throwing shoulder.

Scrambling Ability:

McElroy's first scramble was a 1st and 10 gain of 10 yards after he noticed all three Auburn linebackers drop into coverage. He slid to his right in the pocket and continued looking downfield, but he did not find anyone open so he took the huge opening up the right flat, avoiding the cornerback in the flat for the gain in the second quarter. He was sacked a fourth time trying to side away from the RDE to the left flat, but he was run down, leading to a 33-yard field goal with 1:06 in the third quarter.

Durability:

When he was slammed on his throwing shoulder he appeared woozy as if he suffered a concussion or an arm injury. The trainers didn't even look at his arm on the sidelines.

Character:

Great hustle on a 3rd and 9 screen play when his RB reversed his field. The QB cut the backside defender to attempt to help his runner get positive yardage.

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Quarterback Scouting Checklist

Name: <input type="text" value="Tyrod Taylor"/>	School: <input type="text" value="Virginia Tech"/>	Opponent: <input type="text" value="Stanford"/>	Surface: <input type="text" value="Grass"/>
Height: <input type="text" value="6-0"/>	Year: <input type="text" value="Senior"/>	Score: <input type="text" value="12-40"/>	Climate: <input type="text" value="Night"/>
Weight: <input type="text" value="217"/>	Date: <input type="text" value="1/3/2011"/>	Location: <input type="text" value="Miami"/>	Temperature: <input type="text" value="Temperate"/>

Overall Score:

Category Scores

Accuracy Score:	<input type="text" value="14"/>	BHandling Score:	<input type="text" value="4"/>
Arm Strength Score:	<input type="text" value="11"/>	Pocket Presence Score:	<input type="text" value="10"/>
Delivery Score:	<input type="text" value="14"/>	Scrambling Ability Score:	<input type="text" value="5"/>
Decisions Score:	<input type="text" value="8"/>	Durability Score:	<input type="text" value="6"/>

Game Stats

PAtt:	<input type="text" value="31"/>	Sacked:	<input type="text" value="7"/>
Comp:	<input type="text" value="16"/>	Deflections:	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Pyds:	<input type="text" value="222"/>	Fumbles:	<input type="text" value="0"/>
PTds:	<input type="text" value="1"/>	RAtt:	<input type="text" value="16"/>
Ints:	<input type="text" value="1"/>	RYds:	<input type="text" value="22"/>
Dropped:	<input type="text" value="1"/>	RTds:	<input type="text" value="0"/>

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career--2 pts:

Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part)--2 pts

Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career--2 pts.:

Accuracy

High completion rate (>60%) - 5pts:

Deep accuracy - 2pts:

Intermediate accuracy - 7pts:

Short accuracy - 5pts:

Accuracy moving right - 2 pts:

Accuracy moving left - 2pts:

Decisions

Avoids locking onto one receiver - 3pts

Plays with controlled aggression - 2pts:

Manipulates defense with eyes - 2pts:

Makes effective presnap reads - 2pts:

Throws ball away to avoid sacks - 3pts:

Checks down judiciously - 2pts:

Ball handling

Play fakes - 1pt:

Center exchange - 2pts:

Pump fakes - 1pt:

Ball security while running - 1pt:

Maintains security when hit - 2pts:

Delivery

Delivers from a variety of platforms - 2pts:

Catchable ball (touch, spirals, etc) - 4pts:

Quick release - 4pts:

Compact delivery - 4pts:

Good drop depth - 2pts:

Arm Strength

Deep velocity - 2pts:

Deep distance (> than 40 yds) - 2pts:

Intermediate velocity - 5pts:

Velocity on the move - 2pts:

Pocket Presence

Climbs pocket effectively - 5pts:

Willing to take hit to delivery ball - 2pts:

Senses pass rush - 5pts:

Manages outside pressure - 3pts:

Manages pressure up the middle - 3pts:

Scrambling

Positive yards when breaking the pocket - 2pts:

Positive yards when pocket collapses - 1pt:

Capable of big gains as a runner - 2pts:

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name: **Tyrod Taylor**

Date: **1/3/2011**

Opponent: **Stanford**

Overall Strengths:

Taylor sees the short area of the field very well and he can make last-second throws with good accuracy - even on the move. He's a highly mobile player capable of buying time in the pocket with his legs or breaking the pocket for a big gain with his speed. He has a very strong arm and throws the ball with a nice tight spiral and a lot of velocity. There is a lot about Taylor that compares with a Michael Vick or Joe Webb in terms of his athleticism and arm strength. He has excellent acceleration, stop-start moves and lateral agility as a runner and scrambler. As an improviser, Taylor keeps his eyes downfield and can make impressive plays on the move. When he has time in the pocket, he has enough accuracy to hit receivers downfield in zone coverage. He is very good with the skinny post and has the velocity and accuracy on these stick throws to make a very worthwhile project with a lot of upside.

Overall Weaknesses:

Taylor throws a nice spiral, but he needs to learn how to deliver the ball with more touch. His deep passes sometimes have too much of a line-drive quality and he could give his receivers a better chance to make a play on the ball if he put more arc on these types of passes. One of the issues with Taylor's deep passes is that he throws them a beat late - waiting to find the receiver open after he's downfield rather than anticipating the open man a beat earlier and having the time to throw the ball with more arc and less velocity. He throws the ball as if he thinks he can hit the receiver at the last moment with his strong arm, but that's not how it works on deep routes. Taylor has the same kind of issue most highly athletic quarterbacks have: rather than create big plays, they destroy their pass protection and they are forced to take lesser plays. Until he learns how to consistently slide or climb the pocket with more controlled movements so he can make a player miss and then find a receiver downfield, he's going to struggle throwing the ball from the pocket, especially from under center where he has to make reads in a tighter pocket and show some anticipation. One issue with his delivery is the three-quarter or sidearm release he consistently has with most passes. Rich Gannon was 6-1, athletic and a three-quarter or sidearm thrower and he was an NFL MVP, so it's not a fatal flaw in his game, but he'll need to be extremely knowledgeable of his offense to consistently execute it in order to approach that level of skill. Taylor does not throw the ball with good anticipation, frequently waiting to release the ball after the receiver makes his break in the short range of the field, which creates situations where the receiver cannot optimize his gains after the catch. His drops, play fakes and skill at reading the defense before the snap will need to improve substantially when he's under center. Most of his negative plays of this nature came from snaps under center in this game.

Accuracy:

His first pass was a quick swing to the WR in the slot from a three receiver (1x2) set from the shotgun against a 3-4 look. Taylor hit the receiver at the back shoulder and the receiver turned up field for three yards to the sideline on 1st and 10 with 12:20 in the first quarter. Taylor threw the ball 40 yards in the air with the flick of the wrist on a 2nd and 8 deep streak down the left sideline with 8:21 in the first quarter. He placed the ball to the outside so the receiver could veer away from the corner covering him to the inside, but he also threw the ball about 3-4 yards too far. One of the issues with Taylor's deep passes is that he throws them a beat late - waiting to find the receiver open after he's downfield rather than anticipating the open man a beat earlier and having the time to throw the ball with more arc and less velocity. He throws the ball as if he thinks he can hit the receiver at the last moment with his strong arm, but that's not how it works on deep routes. This arm does come in handy on intermediate routes. On the next play, Taylor hit his WR Boykin on a skinny post with perfect timing and accuracy 18 yards downfield with 5:31 in the first quarter. The pass hit Taylor in stride and on his hands at chest level near his back shoulder - a perfect throw. Although he didn't hit Davis in stride, he threw the ball to the back shoulder of the WR in the right flat on a quick look-in on 2nd and 7 to begin the second quarter. His WR caught the ball five yards downfield and gained another five after the catch. Taylor's one touchdown was a 3rd and goal pass where he slid left and he then rolled out of the pocket to the left flat. As he came within a couple of yards of the sideline, the LB in pursuit closed fast enough for Taylor spin inside of the reach of the defender and plant his legs just short of the boundary to deliver a pass 20 yards in front of him to the running back working to Taylor in the end zone for an 11-yard score. Good placement of the ball to put the ball only where the RB could catch the ball in bounds with a diving attempt. He threw the ball a little late on an eight-yard curl to the TE on 3rd and 9 with 3:15 in the half. If he began his delivery as the TE went into his break, the ball would have arrived in time for the receiver to catch the ball and possibly turn up field for the first down. Instead, Taylor waited until the break was made and forced the TE to make an adjustment to catch the ball with the safety looming over top, only gaining eight on the play. He overshot his WR on a deep post over the middle with 0:25 in the half. He underthrew his WR Boykin on a deep post down the middle with 0:09 in the half, but the receiver beat the defender enough to turn back to the ball and make the catch over the defender's outstretched arms, falling to the earth for a 32-yard gain. When Taylor has time in the pocket, he can deliver the ball accurately. He delivered a 19-yard deep crossing route behind the shallow zone on a play action throw back to the left side from a half-roll right with 7:48 in the third quarter. The ball arrived over the defenders for the waiting receiver, who turned it up field for another 23 yards for a 42-yard gain. Taylor threw a perfect skinny post for 16 yards on 2nd and 10 with 12:09 in the game, hitting the receiver in stride under the safety. On the next play, too much arc on a deep streak down the left sideline to his RB Wilson, who made an incredible catch out of bounds, slowing down and arching his back to catch the ball directly overhead.

Arm Strength:

Taylor threw the ball 40 yards in the air with the flick of the wrist on a 2nd and 8 deep streak down the left sideline with 8:21 in the first quarter. He placed the ball to the outside so the receiver could veer away from the corner covering him to the inside, but he also threw the ball about 3-4 yards too far. Taylor once again missed an open receiver down the left sideline on a deep streak. This time it was a 2nd and 10 throw with 5:35 in the first quarter. The QB was about 2-3 yards ahead of the receiver with the pass. As mentioned in the delivery section of this analysis, Taylor doesn't throw these passes with enough arc and as a result he doesn't give his receiver enough time to run under the pass. This ball traveled 40 yards and should have traveled closer to 36-38.

Delivery:

Taylor throws the ball with a compact flick of the wrist and he can complete short passes with accurate results despite throwing from an off-balanced position. He hit his slot receiver Coale at the left sideline after reversing his field on a scramble on 3rd and 6 with 11:31 in the first quarter. Taylor did set his feet, but he leaned back as he released the ball, trying to avoid a hit from an oncoming DE that never came. Taylor's release on a 2nd and 8 deep streak to his receiver down the left flat was a compact delivery, but the ball came out at a three-quarter angle. He could have improved his accuracy with a pass that had more arc and less velocity. The pass had more of a line-drive quality and a higher arching throw would have given the receiver an opportunity to veer outside of the cornerback in tight coverage with inside position, especially with the nice placement Taylor had with the throw. Taylor slid away from 3rd and 8 pressure up the middle after looking to his right on a designed play in the shallow right flat. However he encountered the LDE in his face, and hurried a pass to his WR in the left flat in a tight zone. The pass was thrown so quickly that the WR didn't get his hands up in time and the pass bounced off him incomplete. Virginia Tech was very fortunate the pass wasn't intercepted. The WR should have caught the ball that was thrown with a side arm delivery around the DE's arms. Taylor has a very quick release and he did a good job of seeing his outlet receiver, but his teammate simply wasn't prepared. The delivery was a little more over the top on a skinny post 18 yards downfield with 5:31 in the first quarter. However, the ball never really comes over his head on any throw; his motion is generally a three-quarter delivery with some sidearm thrown in. Taylor's first snap from center came with 0:51 left in the first quarter. He executed a five-step drop, looked downfield and quickly broke the pocket. His drop was uneven and ended with him hopping into position with both feet in a way where his feet didn't seem to be consciously placed where they needed to be for a set up. Taylor missed the tight end versus the safety blitz on a 2nd and 6 play from the shotgun with 13:23 in the half because he was off balance with his delivery. Both feet were on the ground, but he had this funky lean away from the direction of the receiver. The ball snapped out of his hand but the alignment of his body from feet to head had a strange curve/lean as he delivered the ball. His second snap from center was a play action boot right from the offset I formation with 6:22 in the half. His play fake was very cursory - a quick extension of the ball as he was already beginning his turn on the roll and looking downfield. Part of the problem is that his drop wasn't deep enough to execute a good fake in the first place. He underthrew his WR Boykin on a deep post down the middle with 0:09 in the half, but the receiver beat the defender enough to turn back to the ball and make the catch over the defender's outstretched arms, falling to the earth for a 32-yard gain. Although the pass should have been over the head of the WR and might have given his teammate a chance to score, the touch and arc on the throw was something he didn't show at any other time in the first half. If he can learn to combine the arc and the accuracy in the same throws in the deep range of the field, he could become a very good deep ball thrower. On this pass, he leaned back a little too much as he released the ball.

Decisions:

Taylor recognized the corner blitz look from the left slot on a 3rd and 6 pass play with 11:34 in the first quarter. The offense was in a four-receiver shotgun set (2x2) with the RB flanking Taylor's right side. The blitzing safety was slot right and both the safety behind that CB and the CB wide right had an 8-9 yard cushion on the receivers to that side. Taylor's slot left receiver had a linebacker in zone responsibility and the far left receiver had a corner eight yards off the line. Taylor's first decision was to look to his slot receiver away from the blitz rather than make a quick read to throw towards the blitz. This is something he'll need to do a better job of learning to do. The slot receiver was covered so Taylor turned to his right. If he simply turned and threw the ball to his slot right receiver the QB would have completed a five-yard flat route that might have gone for more yards and a first down. Since Taylor recognized the blitz, he should have adjusted the route with the slot right receiver to a hook, curl or seam route. Instead, Taylor looked right and began rolling towards the blitzing CB, forcing the CB tight to the line. Taylor's roll prevented him from delivering a pass and he had to make a quick spin to his left and into the face of a DE coming off his block. This is the same kind of issue most highly athletic quarterbacks have: rather than create big plays, they destroy their pass protection and they are forced to take lesser plays. Taylor was able to complete his spin, set his feet, look to his left and hit his slot receiver sitting down under the zone at the left sideline for a four-yard completion as he was hit in the back by the corner. Taylor had the same corner blitz coming from slot right on a 2nd and 8 pass play from a 2x1 shotgun formation with 8:21 in the first quarter. This time Taylor gave a quick look to his right and then looked downfield to his single receiver split left and releasing down the sideline on a deep streak. Taylor threw the ball to the receiver 37 yards downfield, but overshot his target by three yards. On 2nd and 6 with 13:22 in the half, Taylor made a nice read of the safety blitz off left end and threw the ball to the TE on that side of the field, but he rushed the throw and placed the ball behind the receiver. Taylor saw a layered blitz with the LB and S about to come off RG and the QB made the adjustment by throwing the ball to the side of the blitz, drawing a pass interference play with 13:16 in the half. Unless it's a deeper route, Taylor tends to stare down his receivers. Even on a deeper route Taylor's look to the other side of the field tends to be very brief. He stared down his receiver in the right flat on a 2nd and 7 pass with 12:29 in the half, hitting the open man underneath zone for a 13-yard gain. Good decision to throw the ball out of bounds after encountering pressure in the right flat on a play action boot with 6:22 in the half. Taylor made a superb dip away from pressure after climbing the pocket to his left on a 2nd and 10 pass play from the shotgun with 0:22 in the half. Taylor got to the left flat and gained 19 yards on the play. However, Taylor had a chance to run out of bounds about five yards earlier and dipped the play back to the inside and ran head-on into a defender. On a 3rd and 5 on the opening drive of the second half, Taylor read the safety blitz coming to his right side and made the correct throw to his WR on a deep streak, but either Taylor over threw the ball or his receiver cut inside on the wrong route with 13:25 in the third quarter. On 3rd and 15 with 4:45 in the third quarter, Taylor hung in the pocket looking down the middle of the field before turning to his right to his single receiver in the right flat. The formation was a 3x1 shotgun look and before Taylor released the ball to his receiver running a 15-yard comeback, Taylor made a quick turn left before turning right once again to release the ball. He's still too herky-jerky and hurried as a pocket passer to really get all the benefits that he could out of movement in the pocket, but he flashes moments where one can see potential for him to learn. He delivered an on-time comeback to his receiver 16-yards downfield under the zone for a 17-yard gain and a first down.

The Gut Check's QB Scouting Recap

Name:

Tyrod Taylor

Date:

1/3/2011

Opponent:

Stanford

Ball Handling:

Taylor does what a lot of running backs do with elusive skills, when he's in traffic that he sees he keeps the ball tighter to his body, but when he doesn't see or feel traffic and he's changing direction he swings the ball too loose from his body and makes himself vulnerable to a backside rip or punch of the football. On a 22-yard scramble to the left flat on 1st and 10 with 0:51 in the first quarter, Taylor carried the ball under his right arm the entire time. His second snap from center was a play action boot right from the offset I formation with 6:22 in the half. His play fake was very cursory - a quick extension of the ball as he was already beginning his turn on the roll and looking downfield. Part of the problem is that his drop wasn't deep enough to execute a good fake in the first place. Taylor tried to break the pocket off left guard on a 1st and 10 pass play from the shotgun with 0:44 in the half, but he was sacked from behind by the LDE. As Taylor approached the crease he was holding the ball in his right arm with it extended far in front of him just before he was wrapped - dangerous. He followed that up a few plays later with a 19-yard gain up the left flat with the ball under his right arm. Although he gained five yards on an option around right end, he tried to swim away from the back of a player on a tight cut inside and did so with the ball carrying arm, bring the ball away from his chest with 7:01 in the third quarter. He made another cursory play fake on a drop from center on 2nd and 11 with 5:04 in the third quarter. The drop wasn't deep enough, quick enough, and he extended the ball haphazardly to the outside of where the RB was actually running.

Pocket Presence:

Taylor recognized the corner blitz look from the left slot on a 3rd and 6 pass play with 11:34 in the first quarter. The offense was in a four-receiver shotgun set (2x2) with the RB flanking Taylor's right side. The blitzing safety was slot right and both the safety behind that CB and the CB wide right had an 8-9 yard cushion on the receivers to that side. Taylor's slot left receiver had a linebacker in zone responsibility and the far left receiver had a corner eight yards off the line. Taylor's first decision was to look to his slot receiver away from the blitz rather than make a quick read to throw towards the blitz. This is something he'll need to do a better job of learning to do. The slot receiver was covered so Taylor turned to his right. If he simply turned and threw the ball to his slot right receiver the QB would have completed a five-yard flat route that might have gone for more yards and a first down. Since Taylor recognized the blitz, he should have adjusted the route with the slot right receiver to a hook, curl or seam route. Instead, Taylor looked right and began rolling towards the blitzing CB, forcing the CB tight to the line. Taylor's roll prevented him from delivering a pass and he had to make a quick spin to his left and into the face of a DE coming off his block. This is the same kind of issue most highly athletic quarterbacks have: rather than create big plays, they destroy their pass protection and they are forced to take lesser plays. Taylor was able to complete his spin, set his feet, look to his left and hit his slot receiver sitting down under the zone at the left sideline for a four-yard completion as he was hit in the back by the corner. Taylor slid away from 3rd and 8 pressure up the middle after looking to his right on a designed play in the shallow right flat. However he encountered the LDE in his face, and hurried a pass to his WR in the left flat in a tight zone. The pass was thrown so quickly that the WR didn't get his hands up in time and the pass bounced off him incomplete. Virginia Tech was very fortunate the pass wasn't intercepted. The WR should have caught the ball. Taylor had difficulty figuring out how to deal with pressure up the middle on a 2nd and 9 pass play with 4:21 in the first quarter. He hesitated with his first reaction and this created a sack. When felt the LDT come up the middle and his first reaction was to spin to his left and get to the perimeter, but he stopped his spin after backing away from the pocket with two steps because he thought he saw an open receiver to his right out of the corner of his eye. When he didn't make this throw, the LB up the middle was in his face and wrapped Taylor before he could slide to his left. Backing pedaling in the pocket against pressure up the middle rarely creates a good outcome. On the next play, a 3rd and 20 with 3:33 in the first quarter, Taylor felt the pressure high and outside from right end and did a good job climbing the pocket a couple of steps. This is the type of thing he needs to do more consistently. However, he was still frenetic with his movements and he needs to demonstrate more poise and make his adjustments with more control and grace. After Taylor climbed the pocket, the LB came up the middle on a delayed blitz and Taylor did an excellent job of dipping his shoulder away from the hit and breaking the pocket up the middle. Taylor saw the DT at the line waiting for him and felt the RDE coming from his right in backside pursuit. He did a great job of stopping, cutting and spinning away from the RDE and finding a lane to his right that he bent back to the middle at the line of scrimmage, accelerating past a linebacker's ankle wrap and then sidestepping a safety over the top about 12 yards downfield before he was wrapped by two players over top. This was an excellent display of athleticism for a 15-yard gain. Once again, he appeared jittery in the pocket on a 2nd and 9 pass play with 4:00 in the half. He saw pressure flash across the middle, although not close enough to present a threat, and Taylor made a sudden jab step backwards then tried to settle himself quickly to throw a deep wheel route but his feet weren't set and he threw the ball off balance. He rushed this entire process and overthrew the receiver down the left sideline. Taylor was wrapped from behind and sacked by the LDE after he took a shotgun snap, looked right and then tried to break the pocket off LG with 0:44 in the half. Where Taylor is going to have difficulty during his transition to the NFL is from the pocket when he has to start under center. When he executed a play action fake and a five-step drop under center on a 1st and 10 with 8:36 in the third quarter, Taylor did not recognize a safety blitz. It was a well-disguised blitz, but he didn't make the read until the safety got into the backfield, forcing Taylor to his left where he was cut off by the LDE. The safety sacked Taylor from behind on the play. Taylor climbed the pocket from edge pressure on either side on 2nd and 5 pass play from the shotgun with 6:24 in the third quarter, but he didn't slide forward. He made a very fast move up field, dropping his head from coverage. When he looked back downfield, he missed the safety in the middle of the field on a post route that he thought was coming open near the end zone. Taylor threw the deep post and it was undercut by the safety for an interception inside the five yard-line. Taylor missed his RB wide open down the field because he doesn't know how to make smaller adjustments to elude pressure. Although Taylor avoided getting tackled in the backfield after a 2nd and 11 play action pass that he began from under center with 5:02 in the third quarter, he still took a sack when he rolled to the right flat and stepped out of bounds behind the line of scrimmage. Yet again, a great job moving in the pocket to avoid defenders, but not smooth enough or controlled enough to keep his eyes downfield, spinning away from pressure and then throwing quickly over the middle - short-hopping a pass to his TE on 1st and 10 with 12:14 left. Nice job back-pedaling from the blitz up the middle by the safety, kept his eyes downfield and found his receiver over the middle were the safety was for a 16-yard gain on 2nd and 10 with 11:35 left. He's more poised on quick throws. He side armed a pass around the pressure in his face with a quick pass that led his WR over the middle for a three-yard gain on a cross on 3rd and 3 with 10:00 left. Taylor tried to back away from A-gap blitz on 3rd and 24 with 8:30 left. He made the LB miss the first time around, but his back pedal while looking downfield invited LB back into the play for the sack. He was trying to make something happen to get back into this game that was a 12-33 blowout at this point. He was sacked three times in his final two possessions in this game - one trying to break the pocket in the face of a blitz.

Scrambling Ability:

There is no question that Taylor is a mobile and athletic threat to break the pocket for a significant gain. He also has the quick movement to elude defenders in the pocket and buy time. The greatest impediment that he has as a passer is how to wisely use this athleticism in the pocket to create positive plays at a much higher rate than destroying the pass protection and settling for less positive or even negative outcomes. On a 3rd and 20 with 3:33 in the first quarter, Taylor displayed great athleticism and running ability. After Taylor climbed the pocket to avoid pressure off the right corner, the LB came up the middle on a delayed blitz and Taylor did an excellent job of dipping his shoulder away from the hit and breaking the pocket up the middle. Taylor saw the DT at the line waiting for him and felt the RDE coming from his right in backside pursuit. He did a great job of stopping, cutting and spinning away from the RDE and finding a lane to his right that he bent back to the middle at the line of scrimmage, accelerating past a linebacker's ankle wrap and then sidestepping a safety over the top about 12 yards downfield before he was wrapped by two players over top. This was an excellent display of athleticism for a 15-yard gain. Taylor felt pressure from his right side after a five-step drop from a two-TE set with 0:51 in the first quarter. He broke the pocket through an opening off left guard and veered to the sideline for a 22-yard gain, beating two defenders just as he crossed the line of scrimmage to get into the open field. He demonstrated fine acceleration from the pocket. Taylor's one touchdown was a 3rd and goal pass where he slid left and he then rolled out of the pocket to the left flat. As he came within a couple of yards of the sideline, the LB in pursuit closed fast enough for Taylor spin inside of the reach of the defender and plant his legs just short of the boundary to deliver a pass 20 yards in front of him to the running back working to Taylor in the end zone for an 11-yard score. Good placement of the ball to put the ball only where the RB could catch the ball in bounds with a diving attempt. When scrambling from the pocket, he carried the ball low and away from his body, which will invite attempts to jar it loose and increase the risk of it happening. Taylor made a superb dip away from pressure after climbing the pocket to his left on a 2nd and 10 pass play from the shotgun with 0:22 in the half. Taylor got to the left flat and gained 19 yards on the play.

Durability:

Character:

Likes to stay out of the spotlight. Lives along on campus. Doesn't eat red meat.

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Running Back Scouting Checklist

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

Overall Score:

Category Scores

Game Stats

Balance Score : <input type="text" value="6"/>	Power Score : <input type="text" value="17"/>
BHandling Score : <input type="text" value="11"/>	Vision Score: <input type="text" value="17"/>
Blocking Score : <input type="text" value="5"/>	Speed Score : <input type="text" value="12"/>
Durability Score : <input type="text" value="4"/>	Elusiveness Score : <input type="text" value="8"/>
Receiving and Routes Score : <input type="text" value="8"/>	

Attempts: <input type="text" value="14"/>	Rec Yds: <input type="text" value="59"/>
Rush Yds: <input type="text" value="45"/>	Rec Tds: <input type="text" value="1"/>
1st Downs: <input type="text" value="6"/>	Fumbles: <input type="text" value="0"/>
Rush Tds: <input type="text" value="0"/>	Broken Tackles: <input type="text" value="3"/>
Target: <input type="text" value="2"/>	BLKs Assigned: <input type="text" value="4"/>
Rec: <input type="text" value="2"/>	BLKs Made: <input type="text" value="4"/>

Power

Leg Power, drives through arm tackles - 3pts:	Yes
Effective stiff arm - 1pt:	Yes
Initiates contact and punishes defenders - 1pt:	Yes
Runs behind pads/Good pad level - 5 pts:	Yes
Second effort runner/Keeps legs moving - 7pts:	Yes

Elusiveness

Lower body jukes - 1pt:	Yes
Upper body jukes - 1pt:	No
Avoids direct shots - 7pts:	Yes
Can strings moves together in space - 1pt:	No
Can make sharp lateral cuts - 3pts:	No

Balance

Maintains footing when making cuts - 3pts:	Yes
Maintains balance when hit head-on - 3pts:	Yes
Balance when hit from an indirect angle -2pts:	No

Ball Handling

Carries ball with correct arm - 1pt:	Yes
Demonstrates ball security - 3pts:	Yes
Maintains control of ball when hit - 7pts:	Yes

Speed

Effective short area burst - 7pts:	Yes
Separates from 1st ,2nd level defenders - 3pts:	Yes
Separates from defensive backs - 1pt:	No
Speed to turn the corner on outside runs - 2pts:	Yes

Vision

Good decisions - 7pts:	Yes
Patience - 7pts:	Yes
Good line reads ,anticipates defense - 3pts:	Yes
Good angles in the open field - 1pt:	No

Receiving

Catches ball with proper hands technique--2pts:	Yes
Can make difficult catch--1pt:	Yes
Catches ball w/back to the quarterback--1pt:	Yes
Used in the intermediate/deep passing game--1pt:	Yes
A consistent target in the passing game--1pt:	Yes
Consistent receptions on catchable passes--2pts	Yes

Blocking

Correct diagnosis of blocking assignments - 2pts:	Yes
Effective cut blocking technique - 1pt:	No
Good hand placement on stand up blocks - 1pt:	Yes
Can deliver a punch on stand up blocks - 1pt:	Yes
Mirrros/moves feet on stand up blocks - 1pt:	Yes

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career--2pts:	No
Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part)--2pts:	Yes
Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career--2pts:	Yes

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Profile

Name: Brandon Saine

Date: 1/1/2010

Opponent: Oregon

Blocking:

Saine's first assignment was a 3rd and 6 pass from a three-receiver (2x1) shotgun set versus Oregon's 3-4. Oregon's slot CB tipped off a cornerblitz from the left side where Saine was flanking the QB in the shotgun. This blitz was a layered one with the CB and LB coming off the same side with the CB leading the way. Saine got square to the CB almost immediately after the snap, took a step forward to close the gap, and dropped his shoulders with his head still up to deliver a blow to the CB. The hit immediately stopped the CB in his tracks and Saine showed the awareness to slide off that hit and attempt to double-team the blitzing LB with the LT at the corner. Saine's work helped his QB break the pocket up the middle for a 24-yard gain with 14:10 in the first quarter. Saine released downfield to follow his QB and look for an opportunity to continue blocking for him in the open field. On a fumbled snap at the Oregon four-yard line, Saine curled to left end to try to lead his scrambling QB down the sideline. Good improvisation on this 1st and goal play with 2:20 in the first quarter. On 3rd and 12 with 4:36 in the half, Saine was used in the backfield with the other RB Herron. Saine flanked the QB's left and Herron the QB's right. Herron released into a route and Saine blocked. Saine did a great job of spotting the LB coming free behind the QB off the right side of the line and he slid across the formation and not only helped out the TE but he delivered a great block to drive the defender outside the right hash and completely eliminate the defender from the play to give the QB room to roll right and deliver a pass downfield to Herron for a 15-yard gain and a first down. This was an excellent effort by Saine and very good diagnoses to stick with the TE and the LB. On a ball fake to Saine from the shotgun on 1st and 15 with 2:44 in the half, Saine carried out the fake to right end and set his sights on a DB coming off right end. When the DB saw Saine heading in his direction, he reversed his field and backed away from pressure. Saine moved his feet well enough to slide to left end and continue sliding laterally until he could get a push on the LB coming off the edge on a 3rd and 7 pass play with 2:00 in the half. Saine never got completely square to the LB but he was never at the angle to make up ground to do so. He got enough of a push on the LB to slow that defender's progress long enough for Saine's QB to break the pocket to the right flat for a six-yard gain, setting up a 4th and 1 gain by Saine on the next play for the first down. On two straight passes from the shotgun with 7:20 and 6:41 in the third quarter, Saine did a good job sliding across the formation to the left side to get square and pick up the LB blitzing up the middle to give his QB time to throw the ball.

Vision:

Saine's first carry was an 11-yard gain with 12:20 in the first quarter from a three-receiver (2x1) shotgun formation versus a nickel defense on 2nd and 3. Saine flanked the QB's left side and took the exchange towards right tackle as the Buckeye offensive line used its tackles and center to take on the DE's and the guards to double-team before peeling to the second level to take on the LBs. Saine was quick enough to the corner to beat the DT to RT and he made a good lateral cut inside his RT through a crease at the line of scrimmage to get downhill and run for the first down. He continued straight ahead behind the back of his RG with a nice burst for another eight yards until he was cut off by the safety, dropping for Saine's knees as the pursuing corner from the opposite side of the field came over top to wrap the off-balance Saine after the safety's hit. Saine carried the ball under his right arm on the play. Saine showed good patience on a 2nd and 1 gain behind his pulling right guard for a two-yard gain from the I-formation. He took the ball heading towards the right side of the line as the right guard pulling to left end and the FB veered to left end. Saine did a good job dipping to the left of a defender slicing three yards into the backfield and diving for the RB's feet. As he cleared this diving attempt, Saine kept his pads low and bent the run downhill and into the middle of the line to get the first down. He was met-head on and pushed backwards because a defender in the pile got Saine's legs before he could deliver a hit but this bend back to the inside essentially got him the first down before his progress was stopped. Saine got the first down on 4th and 1 with 1:55 in the half from a short-yardage I-formation against an Oregon short yardage defense. Ohio State sent a wing back behind RG before the snap and the LG pulling to the right side as the FB sealed right end. Saine burst behind them through a huge hole for a gain of four to get the first down, hitting the hole hard with his pads low. Saine's first gain of the second half was the opening offensive play for the Buckeye's in the third quarter a 1st and 10 gain of five yards from a three-receiver (2x1) shotgun set where he began the play flanking the QB's right side. Saine did a good job reading the LDE taking an outside rush off LT and he headed straight for the crease inside LT as he received the ball on this zone read. He hit the line of scrimmage and bent the run downhill as he ran through a wrap by the DL and then lowered his pads under the LB to get two additional yards. His next attempt came two plays later from the I formation against nine defenders in the box on 1st and 10 with 10:00 in the third quarter. He took the exchange with his LG pulling to RG and the FB sealing right end. Saine did a good job reading the safety blitzing off RG/RT and dipped the run to the middle of the field and just plowed forward for maximum yardage once he also read that the left corner was not available. He didn't dance - just a quick decision, but you could tell he scanned each corner. Saine gained four yards on 2nd and 5 with 8:20 in the third quarter from an I-formation run against eight in the box (four down linemen). Saine showed good patience around left end, staying behind his FB on a play that was stretched pretty well to the sideline by the Oregon defense. He slipped under a wrap to his back shoulder as he turned the corner and gained four yards, getting hit by the safety at the first down marker to come up just a few feet shy of the conversion as he was pushed out of bounds. Good job carrying the ball under his left arm on this play. Saine got the first down on a 3rd and 1 with 8:00 in the third quarter from a short-yardage I-formation set with one receiver to the right side against nine Oregon defenders in the box. Good job hitting the hole hard behind his pulling RG through a small crease off left guard to get a little more than a yard as he punched through the line and knocked the DL back two steps with the force of his pads coming at him low through the hole. Saine gained five yards from the I formation against seven in the box on 1st and 10 with 1:22 in the third quarter. He dipped through LG, veering away from his lead blocker as he approached the line of scrimmage and got three yards through the crease before running through a hit by the safety by delivering a good forearm shiver that put the DB on the ground. Saine ran over him for two more yards as he was wrapped on the play. He showed good patience and maturity to pick his way for two yards against eight in the box when the safety he ran over the play before was now crowding the line of scrimmage on this same I-formation set to end the third quarter. He tried to cutback to the left side on an I formation run to right end because the defense got good penetration at the end. It was a quick decision before he got to the corner, but the LB's run blitzed and wrapped him as he tried to make the cutback and he lost two yards with 5:03 left. He followed that up with a 10-yard gain on the next play from a shotgun three-receiver (1x2) set against a 4-3 look. He took an option pitch to right end, receiving the ball four yards behind the line in the right flat with a good block at the edge by his WR in the right flat. Saine got outside his WR's block for a 10-yard gain. His final carry was a two-yard carry for a first down on 3rd and 1 with 2:41 left. He took the ball from the I formation with eight Oregon defenders in the box and plowed over a defender hitting his legs at the line of scrimmage for two yards.

Receiving:

Saine's first target was a 3rd and 10 reception for a 13-yard score on the initial drive of the game with 11:47 in the first quarter. Saine flanked the QB's right side in a shotgun (1x2) receiver set versus a three-man front and eight in coverage. The play was a swing pass to Saine running to the right flat behind the two clear-out receivers on that side. He was the check-down player and once he waited long enough to draw a DB into the flat at the line of scrimmage, he released down the sideline as his QB decided to look his way. Saine was targeted at the right sideline with a high and hard pass that he had to leap to catch with his hands at his front shoulder with his feet about a foot from the boundary. He did a good job staying inbounds with a corner curling towards him and his back to the sideline. He caught the ball and turned up field before his feet returned to the ground to beat the corner downfield at the Oregon eight. Saine took the run five yards up the sideline before lowering his right shoulder into the chest of the CB over top and then spun of the hit to the inside to cross the goal line for the score - an excellent play on his part. On his next opportunity to play a series (he alternated with Dan Herron in the first quarter), Saine gained 46 yards on a 1st and 10 reception with 3:18 in the opening quarter from a shotgun two-receiver (2x0) set with the FB flanking the QB's left and Saine behind the RT and TE on the right of the QB. Oregon played a three-man front with three LBs and a safety in the box outside the hash to Saine's side. Before the snap, the slot CB showed blitz off the left corner. Saine released to the right flat and curled up the flat on a wheel route past the LB, getting four yards of separation on the defender by the time he got 25 yards downfield. Saine made an excellent catch, tracking the ball over his inside shoulder on a full sprint with his arms extended fully to catch the ball inches from the sideline with his hands near his outside shoulder. It was as good of an over the shoulder catch that you would see from a WR in this situation. Saine managed to keep his feet inbounds as he tight roped the sideline for another 20 yards. This slowed his gait and allowed the LB to recover and drag the RB down at the four yard-line. With two targets in the first quarter, Saine pretty much showed one needs to see from an RB with the exception of him catching the ball after contact or running possession receiver routes. Saine was targeted one more time in the first half on a release through the middle of the line, but the QB did not look his way initially. Saine then got picked up by the LB and tried to work outside to get open and it was at that time the QB looked his way, throwing the ball near him just to get rid of it with 0:19 in the half.

Durability:

He missed two games recovering from knee surgery his freshman year.

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Running Back Scouting Checklist

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

Overall Score:

Category Scores

Balance Score :

Power Score :

BHandling Score :

Vision Score:

Blocking Score :

Speed Score :

Durability Score :

Elusiveness Score :

Receiving and Routes Score :

Game Stats

Attempts:

Rec Yds:

Rush Yds:

Rec Tds:

1st Downs:

Fumbles:

Rush Tds:

Broken Tackles:

Target:

BLKs Assigned:

Rec:

BLKs Made:

Power

Leg Power, drives through arm tackles - 3pts: Yes
 Effective stiff arm - 1pt: No
 Initiates contact and punishes defenders - 1pt: Yes
 Runs behind pads/Good pad level - 5 pts: Yes
 Second effort runner/Keeps legs moving - 7pts: Yes

Elusiveness

Lower body jukes - 1pt: Yes
 Upper body jukes - 1pt: No
 Avoids direct shots - 7pts: Yes
 Can strings moves together in space - 1pt: No
 Can make sharp lateral cuts - 3pts: Yes

Balance

Maintains footing when making cuts - 3pts: Yes
 Maintains balance when hit head-on - 3pts: Yes
 Balance when hit from an indirect angle -2pts: No

Ball Handling

Carries ball with correct arm - 1pt: Yes
 Demonstrates ball security - 3pts: No
 Maintains control of ball when hit - 7pts: No

Speed

Effective short area burst - 7pts: Yes
 Separates from 1st ,2nd level defenders - 3pts: Yes
 Separates from defensive backs - 1pt: No
 Speed to turn the corner on outside runs - 2pts: No

Vision

Good decisions - 7pts: Yes
 Patience - 7pts: Yes
 Good line reads ,anticipates defense - 3pts: No
 Good angles in the open field - 1pt: Yes

Receiving

Catches ball with proper hands technique--2pts: No
 Can make difficult catch--1pt: No
 Catches ball w/back to the quarterback--1pt: No
 Used in the intermediate/deep passing game--1pt: No
 A consistent target in the passing game--1pt: No
 Consistent receptions on catchable passes--2pts: Yes

Blocking

Correct diagnosis of blocking assignments - 2pts: Yes
 Effective cut blocking technique - 1pt: No
 Good hand placement on stand up blocks - 1pt: Yes
 Can deliver a punch on stand up blocks - 1pt: Yes
 Mirrors/moves feet on stand up blocks - 1pt: Yes

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career--2pts: Yes
 Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part)--2pts: Yes
 Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career--2pts: Yes

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Profile

Name: Damien Berry

Date: 10/9/2010

Opponent: Florida State

Overall Strengths:

Berry is the type of back that could surprise at the NFL level with more development, but right now he's a little raw. He is a downhill runner who follows his blocks to their conclusion. Berry flashes some burst and the ability to make one cut. He runs through arm tackles and gets his pads down when in the hole, often getting through the line of scrimmage after breaking a wrap attempt. He's runs with a lot more wiggle on delays and draws where the holes are much bigger. If he can learn to recognize holes or back side cuts and learn to press these creases, he has the physical skills to contribute.

Overall Weaknesses:

Although FSU filled the gaps at the line of scrimmage well early in this game, Berry missed opportunities for cutbacks that were very prevalent, and often available behind the fullback if he chose to follow him. He doesn't read what's going on at the level ahead and this prevents this rugged player from really taking the next step as a between the tackles runner. His acceleration is pretty good, but not good enough to become a big play threat on a consistent basis. He doesn't always catch the ball with his hands and he drops passes that he shouldn't - especially in tighter coverage.

Power:

Berry demonstrated decent pad level on a 1st and 15 run off left guard for three yards with 13:29 in the first quarter. Not a big run, but the defense did a good job filling the rushing lanes. Berry showed good patience off left tackle on an I formation run behind a lead FB and a pulling RG, taking good steps to wait for the hole to develop and then cutting up field for a gain of 12 yards with 3:46 in the first quarter. He demonstrated a decent burst once he got downfield - nothing special - but he was quick enough to run through a wrap attempt from an LB in pursuit as he was running through the lane for the yardage. Berry has the size and rugged style to get tough yards in tight spaces when plowing ahead, such as a seven-yard gain off left tackle behind his pulling guard with 14:35 in the half. He can bounce off a hit or two. He stepped over a defender while getting wrapped, finishing the run well. Berry ran through a wrap in the middle of the line of scrimmage after cutting back a counter play designed to go off left guard when the defense got good penetration to that side. Berry got some contact on a stiff arm to ward off a defender shooting past the line of scrimmage on a swing pass to the flat, but he missed on his stiff arm of a cornerback a few steps later and was brought down for a short loss with 13:19 in the half. Good job dragging a defender that wrapped him about four yards into the hole for another five yards up the middle on 1st and 10 with 7:18 in the third quarter.

Ball Handling:

Good job carrying the football under his left arm on a run off left tackle for a 12-yard gain with 3:44 in the first quarter. He did the same on a seven-yard gain off left guard with 14:35 in the half. On a counter play off left guard from the spread, Berry dipped away from the penetration back to the middle and ran through a wrap attempt. But just as he was running through the wrap, a linebacker came through the lane and slapped the ball away from Berry who didn't have the ball tight to his body. FSU recovered. Excellent job switching the ball from his right arm to his left in the middle of a 26-yard touchdown run so he could ward off the cornerback coming from the right side.

Elusiveness:

Nice slashing cut outside of a defender in the open field to finish a seven-yard gain to begin the second quarter. Nice cut back to the inside on a 3rd and 10 counter play from the shotgun towards the left with 14:06 in the half. When he felt the penetration off the edge, he cut behind his guard to the middle of the field. Nice little hop outside the penetration up the middle to get through a big hole of right guard for a gain of 13 yards with 7:36 in the third quarter.

Balance:

Berry can run through direct hits or stay upright long enough for yardage after contact. He did this repeatedly when he got into a crease or exiting a crease in this game.

Speed:

Berry showed good patience off left tackle on an I formation run behind a lead FB and a pulling RG, taking good steps to wait for the hole to develop and then cutting up field for a gain of 12 yards with 3:46 in the first quarter. He demonstrated a decent burst once he got downfield - nothing special - but he was quick enough to run through a wrap attempt from an LB in pursuit as he was running through the lane for the yardage.

Blocking:

Good chip of the RDE on a 1st and 10 QB scramble up the middle for 29 yards. Berry released from the backfield to the right flat on this shotgun formation pass play, but lowered his inside shoulder into the pads of the DE trying to take the edge off RT. His hit forced the DE to take the RT with a bull rush. On 2nd and 12, Berry did well to slide to the left edge and help pick up the stunting DT coming off LT. Berry didn't initiate a hit, but he did hold his ground well enough with his pads low when he met the collision with the defender and prevent pressure on the QB to complete a three-yard pass on the play. On 3rd and 9 Berry did a good job drifting out of the pocket into the right flat to block a defensive lineman releasing from his block to pursue the quarterback rolling to the right. Berry's effort gave the QB time to complete a 16-yard pass and get the team inside the FSU 10 yard line with 12:01 in the first quarter.

Vision:

Berry's first carry was an I-formation run off left guard for a two-yard gain with 14:35 in the first quarter. The offensive line got an initial push off left guard as he received the ball, but as he approached the line, there appeared to be a good opportunity to bounce the run off left end due to the pile up at left guard and left tackle. But Berry ran into the back of the line and leaned forward for every possible yard. His next carry was a three-yard gain off left guard behind his pulling center and right guard, taking the run behind the guard, keeping his pads low and bursting up the middle until he was hit in the back and wrapped for the gain on 1st and 15 with 13:29 in the first quarter - a decisive run against a defense filling the rushing lanes early. Berry didn't gain anything from an I formation run against 11 in the box, five of the defenders on the line. But the reason he was stopped for no gain was the fact that he missed a three-yard wide hole off left guard, following his lead FB through a smaller crease off RG where the backside pursuit from the corner hit him in the legs a yard behind the line of scrimmage. If Berry just veered towards left guard, the backside pursuit doesn't catch up to him and he has a one-on-one with the safety about 2 yards past the line of scrimmage with an opportunity to score if he makes the defender miss. If he runs with good pad level at the defender, he gains at least four yards on this 1st and goal play with 11:48 in the first quarter. On 3rd and goal from a three receiver (2x1) set, Berry ran out of his shoe during the exchange, slipping to the ground as he tried to run outside his pulling left guard to get to right end with 11:16 in the first quarter. Even if he doesn't slip, or lose his shoe, the penetration disrupted the flow of the pulling action and cut of the edge for Berry to run towards, a loss of four. Berry only gained a yard on a spread formation hand off towards left guard, but he should have trusted his fullback and followed the lead blocker towards left tackle where a crease opened off left end into the flat. Berry charged up left guard and lowered his pads into the back of the line, but stood up for no gain. Berry showed good patience off left tackle on an I formation run behind a lead FB and a pulling RG, taking good steps to wait for the hole to develop and then cutting up field for a gain of 12 yards with 3:46 in the first quarter. Berry doesn't do a good job of setting up defenders at the second level. He tends to pick a crease he sees (or thinks is best) and charges through it. A good example was a 1st and 10 run with 0:08 in the first quarter for a two-yard gain. He took the ball behind two pulling linemen to the right side and the linemen were in position to set up good blocks. If Berry pressed the hole to the inside before bouncing it outside, he would have slowed the pursuit to the edge and helped his blockers seal and give him room for a nice gain. Instead, Berry cut the play well inside of his pulling linemen before they engaged the edge defenders and tried to turn it up field, but he had to leap over a fallen lineman directly ahead of him and into contact. On the next play, he gained seven yards on a delay that opened the field at the line of scrimmage, giving him a nice swath of open field before he had to make any change of direction decisions. He gained seven yards on the next play behind his pulling right guard off left guard, running behind his back and bouncing off a hit to get the yardage. He found a big hole off center on 4th and 1 with 8:01 due to some excellent blocking up front. He gained seven yards through a huge crease for a short-yardage run of this type. He had another nice gain on a delay with 1:48 in the half down 24-6. Berry scored on a 26-yard run on 1st and 10 with 10:50 in the third quarter from the I formation off a hug lane off right guard where the right side of the line got into the second level quickly. Berry dipped to his right when he saw it, bounced it further outside as he got through the lane and then planted his foot to go downhill when he got to the middle of the field and saw the cornerback. He put a stiff arm on the safety to ward him off as he split the seam, outrunning that defender to the end zone. However, the cornerback gave up on the play and didn't make an effort against this stiff arm or chased hard in pursuit. Berry gained 13 yards on 1st and 10 with 7:40 in the third quarter from the I formation, finding a big hole off right guard after dipping outside of penetration up the middle that reached for his ankles behind the line of scrimmage.

Receiving:

Berry was split wide on 2nd and 8, running a slant, but he was not targeted on the play with 14:11 in the first quarter. On 2nd and goal with 11:20 in the opening quarter, Berry was split wide left again and ran a slant. This time he was targeted and the ball was too high out of Berry's break and even the defensive back behind Berry had to leap for the ball. He got his hands on the ball, but could not secure it. It is possible Berry did not run a deep enough route; he certainly rounded it off but the throw was high regardless. Berry technically only had one reception, but the other was a swing pass behind the line of scrimmage that he caught with his hands at his back shoulder and tried to turn the corner to the right side, but he was brought down at the legs with 13:17 in the half. He dropped a pass on a circle route on 2nd and 4. The pass led Berry well, but he juggled the pass just before the safety delivered a strong hit and plant. Berry was slow to get up on the play. His only catch of the night was a shovel pass on a curl route in good coverage, making the reception by trapping it to his body as he was wrapped and brought down over the middle for a gain of four yards with 12:23 in the third quarter.

Durability:

Berry missed two games this year due to a leg injury. He also tore his ACL and MCL in high school. I'm not counting this against him because the injury occurred before his college career.

The Gut Check's RB Scouting Profile

Name: Brandon Saine

Date: 1/1/2010

Opponent: Oregon

Overall Strengths:

Saine is an underrated runner in this draft because he split time with other backs during his career and played with a running quarterback that often meant using the backs in spread formations. Saine runs with good pad level and he makes mature decisions at the line of scrimmage. He has good speed to the corner and enough burst to make big plays. He runs through wraps and can run over defenders head-on. He's an excellent receiver out of the backfield, capable of catching the ball with his hands and making receiver-like adjustments to the football. He's a strong blocker capable of sliding across the line of scrimmage to square up a defender and deliver a blow.

Overall Weaknesses:

I didn't see him make any sharp lateral cuts and though he is known for his speed, I didn't see him have a chance to outrun DBs in this game. Other than that, I thought Saine looked like an NFL runner. I don't think he's as physical as he could be, but the fundamentals are there and when Ohio State needed short yardage or pass protection, he was the best back on the field for them. He simply spent time in the shadow of Chris Wells and T. Pyrro. He might not be a big-time prospect, but I think he can deliver big-time production as a situational player if he can stay healthy. If he had more height, he might make a better H-back or wide receiver. He could become a nice utility player along the lines of a FB/HB combo player used in third down situations if he cannot demonstrate the agility to perform as an every down runner. Nagging injuries have made him a sporadic performer and not a player the coaching staff could count on as a full-time starter.

Power:

Saine's first target was a 3rd and 10 reception for a 13-yard score on the initial drive of the game with 11:47 in the first quarter. Saine flanked the QB's right side in a shotgun (1x2) receiver set versus a three-man front and eight in coverage. The play was a swing pass to Saine running to the right flat behind the two clear-out receivers on that side. He was the check-down player and once he waited long enough to draw a DB into the flat at the line of scrimmage, he released down the sideline as his QB decided to look his way. Saine was targeted at the right sideline with a high and hard pass that he had to leap to catch with his hands at his front shoulder with his feet about a foot from the boundary. He did a good job staying inbounds with a corner curling towards him and his back to the sideline. He caught the ball and turned up field before his feet returned to the ground to beat the corner downfield at the Oregon eight. Saine took the run five yards up the sideline before lowering his right shoulder into the chest of the CB over top and then spun of the hit to the inside to cross the goal line for the score - excellent play on his part. Saine showed good patience on a 2nd and 1 gain behind his pulling right guard for a two-yard gain from the I-formation. He took the ball heading towards the right side of the line as the right guard pulling to left guard and the FB veered to left end. Saine did a good job dipping to the left of a defender slicing three yards into the backfield and diving for the RB's feet. As he cleared this diving attempt, Saine kept his pads low and bent the run downhill and into the middle of the line to get the first down. He was met-head on and pushed backwards because a defender in the pile got Saine's legs before he could deliver a hit but this bend back to the inside essentially got him the first down before his progress was stopped. Saine's first gain of the second half was the opening offensive play for the Buckeye's in the third quarter a 1st and 10 gain of five yards from a three-receiver (2x1) shotgun set where he began the play flanking the QB's right side. Saine did a good job reading the LDE taking an outside rush off LT and he headed straight for the crease inside LT as he received the ball on this zone read. He hit the line of scrimmage and bent the run downhill as he ran through a wrap by the DL and then lowered his pads under the LB to get two additional yards. Saine showed good patience around left end, staying behind his FB on a play that was stretched pretty well to the sideline by the Oregon defense. He slipped under a wrap to his back shoulder as he turned the corner and gained four yards, getting hit by the safety at the first down marker to come up just a few feet shy of the conversion as he was pushed out of bounds. Good job carrying the ball under his left arm on this play. He didn't get the first down because he was yanked backwards by the collar (something the officials should have called if they saw it) just as he was getting hit overtop by the safety. Otherwise, Saine easily runs through the DB for the necessary yard. Saine gained five yards from the I formation against seven in the box on 1st and 10 with 1:22 in the third quarter. He dipped through LG, veering away from his lead blocker as he approached the line of scrimmage and got three yards through the crease before running through a hit by the safety by delivering a good forearm shiver that put the DB on the ground. Saine ran over him for two more yards as he was wrapped on the play. The defender he ran over was T.J. Ward, who also lost his helmet on the play.

Ball Handling:

Saine's first target was a 3rd and 10 reception for a 13-yard score on the initial drive of the game with 11:47 in the first quarter. Saine flanked the QB's right side in a shotgun (1x2) receiver set versus a three-man front and eight in coverage. The play was a swing pass to Saine running to the right flat behind the two clear-out receivers on that side. He was the check-down player and once he waited long enough to draw a DB into the flat at the line of scrimmage, he released down the right sideline as his QB decided to look his way. Saine was targeted at the right sideline with a high and hard pass that he had to leap to catch with his hands at his front shoulder with his feet about a foot from the boundary. He did a good job staying inbounds with a corner curling towards him and his back to the sideline. He caught the ball and turned up field before his feet returned to the ground to beat the corner downfield at the Oregon eight. Saine took the run five yards up the sideline before lowering his right shoulder into the chest of the CB over top and then spun of the hit to the inside to cross the goal line for the score - an excellent play on his part. Saine carried the ball with his sideline arm on the play and covered the ball with both arms as he lowered his shoulder into the DB at the three yard-line to bull over the defender to the end zone. Saine's first gain of the second half was the opening offensive play for the Buckeye's in the third quarter a 1st and 10 gain of five yards from a three-receiver (2x1) shotgun set where he began the play flanking the QB's right side. Saine did a good job reading the LDE taking an outside rush off LT and he headed straight for the crease inside LT as he received the ball on this zone read. He hit the line of scrimmage and bent the run downhill as he ran through a wrap by the DL and then lowered his pads under the LB to get two additional yards. Good job carrying the football under his left arm on the play. Saine showed good patience around left end, staying behind his FB on a play that was stretched pretty well to the sideline by the Oregon defense. He slipped under a wrap to his back shoulder as he turned the corner and gained four yards, getting hit by the safety at the first down marker to come up just a few feet shy of the conversion as he was pushed out of bounds. Good job carrying the ball under his left arm on this play.

Elusiveness:

Saine's first carry was an 11-yard gain with 12:20 in the first quarter from a three-receiver (2x1) shotgun formation versus a nickel defense on 2nd and 3. Saine flanked the QB's left side and took the exchange towards right tackle as the Buckeye offensive line used its tackles and center to take on the DE's and the guards to double-team before peeling to the second level to take on the LBs. Saine was quick enough to the corner to beat the DT to RT and he made a good lateral cut inside his RT through a crease at the line of scrimmage to get downhill and run for the first down. He continued straight ahead behind the back of his RG with a nice burst for another eight yards until he was cut off by the safety, dropping for Saine's knees as the pursuing corner from the opposite side of the field came over top to wrap the off-balance Saine after the safety's hit. Saine carried the ball under his right arm on the play. Saine showed good patience on a 2nd and 1 gain behind his pulling right guard for a two-yard gain from the I-formation. He took the ball heading towards the right side of the line as the right guard pulling to left guard and the FB veered to left end. Saine did a good job dipping to the left of a defender slicing three yards into the backfield and diving for the RB's feet. As he cleared this diving attempt, Saine kept his pads low and bent the run downhill and into the middle of the line to get the first down. He was met-head on and pushed backwards because a defender in the pile got Saine's legs before he could deliver a hit but this bend back to the inside essentially got him the first down before his progress was stopped. Saine lost three yards on a zone read on 1st and 10 with 7:30 in the third quarter because the defense got to the exchange point as the QB and RB were completing it. Saine actually ducked under the wrap but his TE, who got blown into the backfield was on the ground in front of Saine's legs and the runner had nowhere to run which helped the defender maintain his grasp long enough for Saine to trip over the TE and fall backwards.

Balance:

Saine's first target was a 3rd and 10 reception for a 13-yard score on the initial drive of the game with 11:47 in the first quarter. Saine flanked the QB's right side in a shotgun (1x2) receiver set versus a three-man front and eight in coverage. The play was a swing pass to Saine running to the right flat behind the two clear-out receivers on that side. He was the check-down player and once he waited long enough to draw a DB into the flat at the line of scrimmage, he released down the sideline as his QB decided to look his way. Saine was targeted at the right sideline with a high and hard pass that he had to leap to catch with his hands at his front shoulder with his feet about a foot from the boundary. He did a good job staying inbounds with a corner curling towards him and his back to the sideline. He caught the ball and turned up field before his feet returned to the ground to beat the corner downfield at the Oregon eight. Saine took the run five yards up the sideline before lowering his right shoulder into the chest of the CB over top and then spun of the hit to the inside to cross the goal line for the score - and excellent play on his part. Saine gained five yards from the I formation against seven in the box on 1st and 10 with 1:22 in the third quarter. He dipped through LG, veering away from his lead blocker as he approached the line of scrimmage and got three yards through the crease before running through a hit by the safety by delivering a good forearm shiver that put the DB on the ground. Saine ran over him for two more yards as he was wrapped on the play.

Speed:

Saine's first carry was an 11-yard gain with 12:20 in the first quarter from a three-receiver (2x1) shotgun formation versus a nickel defense on 2nd and 3. Saine flanked the QB's left side and took the exchange towards right tackle as the Buckeye offensive line used its tackles and center to take on the DE's and the guards to double-team before peeling to the second level to take on the LBs. Saine was quick enough to the corner to beat the DT to RT and he made a good lateral cut inside his RT through a crease at the line of scrimmage to get downhill and run for the first down. He continued straight ahead behind the back of his RG with a nice burst for another eight yards until he was cut off by the safety, dropping for Saine's knees as the pursuing corner from the opposite side of the field came over top to wrap the off-balance Saine after the safety's hit. Saine carried the ball under his right arm on the play. Good burst. On his next opportunity to play a series (he alternated with Dan Herron in the first quarter), Saine gained 46 yards on a 1st and 10 reception with 3:18 in the opening quarter from a shotgun two-receiver (2x0) set with the FB flanking the QB's left and Saine behind the RT and TE on the right of the QB. Oregon played a three-man front with three LBs and a safety in the box outside the hash to Saine's side. Before the snap, the slot CB showed blitz off the left corner. Saine released to the right flat and curled up the flat on a wheel route past the LB, getting four yards of separation on the defender by the time he got 25 yards downfield. Saine made an excellent catch, tracking the ball over his inside shoulder on a full sprint with his arms extended fully to catch the ball inches from the sideline with his hands near his outside shoulder. It was as good of an over the shoulder catch that you would see from a WR in this situation. Saine managed to keep his feet inbounds as he tight roped the sideline for another 20 yards. This slowed his gait and allowed the LB to recover and drag the RB down at the four yard-line. With two targets in the first quarter, Saine pretty much demonstrated what a receiver at the RB position should look like, with the exception of him catching the ball after contact or running possession receiver routes. Saine has excellent speed for a runner his size. Saine got the first down on a 3rd and 1 with 8:00 in the third quarter from a short-yardage I-formation set with one receiver to the right side against nine Oregon defenders in the box. Good job hitting the hole hard behind his pulling RG through a small crease off left guard to get a little more than a yard as he punched through the line and knocked the DL back two steps with the force of his pads coming at him low through the hole.

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Wide Receiver Scouting Checklist

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

Overall Score:

Category Scores

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

Game Stats

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

Routes

Gets appropriate route depth - 4pts: Yes
 Works back to the quarterback - 2pts: Yes
 Breaks back to the football - 4pts: Yes
 Awareness of sideline - 2pts: Yes
 Sinks hips into breaks - 5pts: No
 Finds soft area of zone coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Doesn't tip off routes - 3pts: Yes
 Sets up breaks - 2pts: Yes
 Uses body to shield defender from pass - 3pts: Yes

Receiving

Catches ball with hands away from body - 5pts: Yes
 Adjusts body to the flight of the ball - 1pt: Yes
 Catches ball w/back to the line of scrimmage-1pt: No
 Catches ball in tight coverage - 3pts: No
 Catches ball after contact - 5pts: Yes
 Catches ball cleanly - 7pts: Yes
 Makes difficult catches - 1pt: No
 Gets head around and hands up quickly out of the break - 3pts: Yes

Separation

Uses hands to release from press - 5pts: No
 Uses feet effectively to release from press - 5pts: No
 Separation on intermediate/deep routes - 1pt: Yes

Ball Handling

Carries ball under correct arm - 1pt.: Yes
 Demonstrates ball security - 2pts.: Yes
 Maintains control of ball when hit - 3pts.: Yes

Elusiveness

Lower body jukes - 1pt: Yes
 Upper body jukes - 1pt: No
 Avoids direct shots - 1pt: Yes
 Can string moves together in space - 1pt: No
 Makes sharp lateral cuts - 1pt: No

Blocking

Diagnoses blocking assignments correctly - 1pt: Yes
 Effective cut block technique - 0.5pt: No
 Good hand placement on stand up blocks - 0.5pt: No
 Can deliver a punch on stand up block - 0.5pt: Yes
 Mirrors/moves feet effectively on stand up blocks - 0.5pt: No

Vision

Good decisions - 2pts: Yes
 Patience - 1pt: Yes
 Open field - 2pts: Yes

Power

Leg power, drives through arm tackles - 2pts: Yes
 Effective stiff arm - 1pt: No
 Runs behind pad/Has good pad level - 1pt: No
 Second effort/keeps legs moving after contact - 1pt: Yes

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career - 2pts: N/A
 Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part) - 2pts: N/A
 Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career - 2pts: N/A

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Chris Matthews

Date: 10/16/2010

Opponent: South Carolina

Overall Strengths

Matthews is an intriguing option because he has the body type to become a strong possession receiver capable of making plays in the intermediate range of the field. He has enough speed with his long strides to get 15-25 yards downfield and the hands to make catches as he adjusts his body to the football. He doesn't seem to have issues catching the football and dealing with contact. In fact, he often makes the first man miss with a quick turn or bouncing off the initial hit. He has the strength to drag defenders for extra yards. He works back to the football as a route runner and he generates enough speed to drive defenders to bail and run. He has good awareness of the sideline when making catches on the perimeter. He's a project, but if he can display enough vertical speed and a little more fluidity as an athlete, he might have a shot to contribute down the line.

Overall Weaknesses

Matthews doesn't break with a great deal of fluidity and he is not a sudden athlete. He lacks strong, initial acceleration and he doesn't have the ability to run through as many arm tackles as one might expect. He didn't have an opportunity to demonstrate skills to make catches in tight coverage or difficult catches. He also didn't face press coverage in this game.

Separation

He did a decent job of driving his cornerback off the line to turn the defender's hips to the sideline, setting up a back shoulder fade of 17 yards with 1:26 in the first quarter. Matthews got behind his defender on a corner fade in the end zone with 4:39 in the half, but the pass was underthrown and the trailing defender swatted the ball away. If the quarterback throws the ball higher, Matthews has a chance to high-point the ball over the top of the corner that was in excellent position to defend the route. He's a long-striding receiver that covers ground quickly once he can get started, but he lacks suddenness to his running style. He did manage to beat the safety in pursuit on a 28-yard run after the catch of a 10-yard comeback for a 38-yard score down the left sideline with 14:45 left. He got open about 30 yards downfield against single coverage with a nice turn towards the sideline with 12:00 in the game. The pass was over thrown.

Routes

Matthews turned his head back the football a little too early on a back shoulder fade with 1:26 in the first quarter, which could have tipped off most cornerbacks he'd face in the NFL. His hook route was crisp against the corner playing zone on 1st and 10 with 10:11 in the third quarter, and he got open underneath to catch the ball for a seven-yard gain. He made a quick turn on a 3rd and 3 look-in four yards downfield and then turned the catch up field for another four yards with 9:25 in the third quarter. He could do a better job of driving the defender off the ball and sinking his hips into his breaks. Good job coming back to the quarterback on his break on a deep out at the right sideline for a 13-yard gain on 3rd and 10 with 8:13 in the third quarter. He got the defender to turn his hips and drive him back on this deep out route. Good comeback route, breaking and charging back to the pass at the first down marker at the 28 yard-line and then turning inside his cornerback for the final 28 yards and the score. He did another nice job driving his defender to turn and run before breaking back to the football on a deep out at the right sideline for a 13-yard gain with 6:54 left.

Receiving

Good catch of a back shoulder fade with 1:26 in the first quarter, catching the ball close to his chest with his hands at the left sideline and turning inside of the cornerback in tight coverage to gain another seven yards after the catch. Matthews got open in the shallow zone on a pivot route to the outside with 4:53 in the half, but he dropped the ball after the defensive back came over Matthews' back to dislodge the ball. Matthews got his hands under the low throw as he was falling back towards the quarterback to scoop the ball, but the contact from the defense disrupted his concentration. He then shoved his hand into the facemask of the defender after the play and knocked Kentucky out of field goal range on this third down opportunity, forcing a punt. He caught a 1st and 10 sideline curl with his hands extended from his body as the ball arrived at belt level at the sideline for a seven-yard gain with 10:11 in the third quarter. He caught a quick look-in with his hands four yards downfield to gain eight on the play with 9:25 in the third quarter. Good job coming back to the quarterback on his break on a deep out at the right sideline for a 13-yard gain on 3rd and 10 with 8:13 in the third quarter. He caught the ball at the sideline with his hands extended near his back shoulder and kept his feet inbounds while maintaining possession of the ball as he took a hit from the cornerback on the play. Matthews converted a 3rd and 14 target for a 24-yard gain with 0:21 in the third quarter, finding the open zone underneath the safeties after releasing from slot left up the hash. He caught the ball at his back shoulder with his hands 13 yards downfield and then made a stutter move on the defensive back to get further inside of him for another 11 yards on the play. Good job catching a 2nd and 11 pass 13 yards downfield at the right sideline with his hands and tapping both feet at the boundary before he was hit in the back with 6:54 left in the game. Matthews made a nice catch on a curl route in the left flat about six yards downfield, snaring the ball at chest level just as he took a hit in the back. He spun off the hit to gain a few more yards with the defender wrapped around his legs for a nine-yard gain on 3rd and 3 with 3:19 left.

Eloquence

He made an effective stutter move on the defensive back over top of him on a 13-yard in-cut on 3rd and 14 with 0:12 in the third quarter. This enabled him to get inside the defender's pursuit and gain another 11 yards on the play.

Ball

Matthews showed the ability to carry the ball under either arm depending on his location on the field of play. He took two catches up the middle with the ball in his left arm on third quarter targets. In the fourth quarter, he tucked the ball under his left arm on a 28-yard run up the left sideline for a 38-yard score with 14:45 left.

Balance

Good balance to run through a hit to his leg to stay upright in the left flat on a short hook with 6:30 in the game. He turned that up field for another three yards for a nine-yard play. Although the play was already a touchdown, Matthews showed similar balance when hit in the back of the legs as he ran into the end zone on a 38-yard score to begin the quarter. Matthews made a nice catch on a curl route in the left flat about six yards downfield, snaring the ball at chest level just as he took a hit in the back. He spun off the hit to gain a few more yards with the defender wrapped around his legs for a nine-yard gain on 3rd and 3 with 3:19 left.

Blocking

He turned back to the cornerback covering him deep down field and delivered a punch to free his teammate Russell for another 25 yards down the sideline. Although Matthews could not get into the pads of the defender to sustain the block and open the sideline completely for the RB on this pass reception, he pushed the defender backwards and this delayed that corner's pursuit another 25 yards. Good effort.

Vision

Good job turning a look-in up field to gain another four yards between three defenders in the area on a 3rd and 3 for eight yards with 9:25 in the third quarter. Good, quick turn inside the cornerback at the sideline on a 10-yard sideline comeback on 1st and 10 with 14:45 in the game. He made the defender miss and turned up the sideline for the score.

Power

He flashed a decent stiff arm on the cornerback just over top of him on a 17-yard back shoulder fade that he took inside of the defender for another seven yards, dragging the same defender wrapped around his leg to finish the play with 1:26 in the first quarter. He's a tall, somewhat high-waisted receiver that doesn't run with great fluidity after the catch. He gets is feet cut from him pretty easily and I did not see him run out of a tackle on the receptions I was able to watch. Another decent stiff arm with 0:13 in the third quarter on a 13-yard in-cut on 3rd and 14 that he took up field through the safety to gain a total of 24 yards on the play. The safety dragged him down after the stiff arm earned him about five additional yards.

Durability

Character

Matthews shoved a defender in the facemask after that defender broke up a third down target with 4:53 in the half, taking UK away from field goal range and forcing a punt. He did the same thing later in the year on a run block against Pittsburgh that also resulted in a personal foul. He has a temper that gets the best of him at times and he needs to learn to keep this under control.

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Wide Receiver Scouting Checklist

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

Overall Score:

Category Scores

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

Game Stats

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

Routes

Gets appropriate route depth - 4pts: Yes
 Works back to the quarterback - 2pts: No
 Breaks back to the football - 4pts: Yes
 Awareness of sideline - 2pts: Yes
 Sinks hips into breaks - 5pts: No
 Finds soft area of zone coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Doesn't tip off routes - 3pts: Yes
 Sets up breaks - 2pts: No
 Uses body to shield defender from pass - 3pts: Yes

Separation

Uses hands to release from press - 5pts: No
 Uses feet effectively to release from press - 5pts: No
 Separation on intermediate/deep routes - 1pt: Yes

Elusiveness

Lower body jukes - 1pt: Yes
 Upper body jukes - 1pt: Yes
 Avoids direct shots - 1pt: Yes
 Can string moves together in space - 1pt: Yes
 Makes sharp lateral cuts - 1pt: Yes

Vision

Good decisions - 2pts: Yes
 Patience - 1pt: Yes
 Open field - 2pts: Yes

Receiving

Catches ball with hands away from body - 5pts: Yes
 Adjusts body to the flight of the ball - 1pt: Yes
 Catches ball w/back to the line of scrimmage-1pt: No
 Catches ball in tight coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Catches ball after contact - 5pts: No
 Catches ball cleanly - 7pts: Yes
 Makes difficult catches - 1pt: Yes
 Gets head around and hands up quickly out of the break - 3pts: No

Ball Handling

Carries ball under correct arm - 1pt.: No
 Demonstrates ball security - 2pts.: Yes
 Maintains control of ball when hit - 3pts.: Yes

Blocking

Diagnoses blocking assignments correctly - 1pt: Yes
 Effective cut block technique - 0.5pt: No
 Good hand placement on stand up blocks - 0.5pt: Yes
 Can deliver a punch on stand up block - 0.5pt: Yes
 Mirrors/moves feet effectively on stand up blocks - 0.5pt: Yes

Power

Leg power, drives through arm tackles - 2pts: No
 Effective stiff arm - 1pt: No
 Runs behind pad/Has good pad level - 1pt: No
 Second effort/keeps legs moving after contact - 1pt: Yes

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career - 2pts: Yes
 Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part) - 2pts: Yes
 Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career - 2pts: No

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Denarius Moore

Date: 12/31/2009

Opponent: Virginia Tech

Overall Strengths

Moore is a game-breaking receiver with the ability to get vertical separation on defensive backs. He adjusts well to the football in the air and demonstrates the ability to catch the ball with his hands away from his body. He breaks well back to the football and shows awareness of the sideline. He also uses his body to shield the ball from the defender. He's threat as a ball carrier due to his vision, speed and agility.

Overall Weaknesses

Moore needs to work on setting up his breaks and making sharper breaks to create separation against defenders. He didn't face press coverage in this game and he'll need to show he can get a quick release against it. I didn't see him catch the ball after contact and he had two drops of passes on routes with his back to the football - one occurred in tighter coverage with the prospect of a head-on collision.

Separation

Moore's next catch was a 40-yard gain with 11:20 in the half from an I-formation look. He was split slot left against zone coverage and he got deep on a play action post where he made an excellent adjustment on the ball thrown a outside of his break inside and a little behind him. Moore leaped for the ball and caught the pass with his hands over his head, arching his back to adjust to the ball as he was not even a yard ahead of the trailing DB 35 yards downfield. He secured the ball and landed five yards further downfield before the DB touched Moore down on the play. Difficult, athletic catch in tight coverage. Very good speed to get behind the safety in deep zone coverage. Moore scored on a two-yard pass on 2nd and goal pass from an offset I formation with 0:25 in the half. Moore was tight to right end and got behind the CB and S on a post off the play fake. He faked the block outside on the CB, actually getting his hands on the defender and squaring the opponent before releasing quickly upfield and then turning inside on his break to the post. Moore caught the ball in the back of the endzone with his hands as he turned back to the face the QB.

Routes

Moore's next catch was a 40-yard gain with 11:20 in the half from an I-formation look. He was split slot left against zone coverage and he got deep on a play action post where he made an excellent adjustment on the ball thrown a outside of his break inside and a little behind him. Moore leaped for the ball and caught the pass with his hands over his head, arching his back to adjust to the ball as he was not even a yard ahead of the trailing DB 35 yards downfield. He secured the ball and landed five yards further downfield before the DB touched Moore down on the play. Difficult, athletic catch in tight coverage. The WR ran an effective out and up, turning his head towards the sideline to force the DB to bite on the out. There really was no sell of the break but Moore's speed after the first turn outside was good enough in this situation. He'll need to refine his set ups of breaks to be this effective in the NFL. Moore scored on a two-yard pass on 2nd and goal pass from an offset I formation with 0:25 in the half. Moore was tight to right end and got behind the CB and S on a post off the play fake. He faked the block outside on the CB, actually getting his hands on the defender and squaring the opponent before releasing quickly upfield and then turning inside on his break to the post. Moore caught the ball in the back of the endzone with his hands as he turned back to the face the QB. Moore's next target was the first play of the second half, an 11-yard gain with 15:00 in the third quarter from an offset I formation play with play action. Moore was wide right with the CB giving seven yards of cushion. Moore ran a sharp sideline comeback, getting enough depth on the route to work back to the QB and the ball and still catch the pass a yard beyond the first down marker with his hands and a couple of feet from the sideline. His next catch was a 14-yard gain on 3rd and 6 with 6:30 in the third quarter. Moore was split wide left against a CB giving 10 yards of cushion. He ran a seven-yard hook under the coverage, getting his hands up early to tatch the ball out of his quick turn. He snared the ball with his hands eight yards downfield and turned quickly outside the CB for another six before that CB dragged him down at the legs. Good route depth. Moore was targeted on a 1st and 10 pass with 12:50 left from an offset I formation with his receivers tight to the formation. Moore was slot right and he got about four yards behind the DB on a deep post that he dropped 40 yards downfield. The arrived at his hands over his inside shoulder and Moore simply let the ball pass through his hands as he ran in stride with the pass. This would have been a 60-yard touchdown. Moore got his safety turned around with a fly patter with a double move after his initial release faking the out.

Receiving

Moore's first opportunity was an eight-yard rush on 2nd and 7 with 10:55 in the first quarter. The rush was actually a swing pass to him in the right flat from the slot that he caught with his hands while facing the QB and backing into the flat about four yards behind the line of scrimmage. After the catch, Moore tucked the ball under his right arm and dragged the safety wrapping him at the ankle a few yards to extend the ball across the first down marker. Moore was targeted on the next play, a 1st and 10 pass from an I-formation set with Moore split wide from the right side of the line against a 4-3 with a safety tight to left end. The CB gave Moore seven yards of cushion from the line. Moore ran a deeper route than the QB expected and the pass traveled well short of target. It appeared moore was running a streak and the QB threw a short comeback or out. Moore was targeted on a 3rd and 7 pass with 5:39 in the first quarter from a three-receiver (2x1) shotgun set versus a 4-3. Moore was slot left with a DB giving him an eight-yard cushion. The QB audibled to a singleback set under center and then threw the ball to Moore in the left flat for a quick pass, but the ball was high and Moore was late getting his hands up and he let the ball pass through his mitts, incomplete. Moore's next catch was a 40-yard gain with 11:20 in the half from an I-formation look. He was split slot left against zone coverage and he got deep on a play action post where he made an excellent adjustment on the ball thrown a outside of his break inside and a little behind him. Moore leaped for the ball and caught the pass with his hands over his head, arching his back to adjust to the ball as he was not even a yard ahead of the trailing DB 35 yards downfield. He secured the ball and landed five yards further downfield before the DB touched Moore down on the play. Difficult, athletic catch in tight coverage. Moore scored on a two-yard pass on 2nd and goal pass from an offset I formation with 0:25 in the half. Moore was tight to right end and got behind the CB and S on a post off the play fake. He faked the block outside on the CB, actually getting his hands on the defender and squaring the opponent before releasing quickly upfield and then turning inside on his break to the post. Moore caught the ball in the back of the endzone with his hands as he turned back to the face the QB. Moore's next target was the first play of the second half, an 11-yard gain with 15:00 in the third quarter from an offset I formation play with play action. Moore was wide right with the CB giving seven yards of cushion. Moore ran a sharp sideline comeback, getting enough depth on the route to work back to the QB and the ball and still catch the pass a yard beyond the first down marker with his hands and a couple of feet from the sideline. His next catch was a 14-yard gain on 3rd and 6 with 6:30 in the third quarter. Moore was split wide left against a CB giving 10 yards of cushion. He ran a seven-yard hook under the coverage, getting his hands up early to tatch the ball out of his quick turn. He snared the ball with his hands eight yards downfield and turned quickly outside the CB for another six before that CB dragged him down at the legs. Moore was targeted on a 1st and 10 pass with 12:50 left from an offset I formation with his receivers tight to the formation. Moore was slot right and he got about four yards behind the DB on a deep post that he dropped 40 yards downfield. The arrived at his hands over his inside shoulder and Moore simply let the ball pass through his hands as he ran in stride with the pass. This would have been a 60-yard touchdown but he tried to trap the ball to his chest. Moore was targeted on a 2nd and 10 pass with 1:07 left from a three-receiver (2x1), singleback set. He ran a skinny post breaking to the goal line, but the receiver let the ball bounce off his hands and chest in tight coverage as he was breaking towards the safety with the CB in tight coverage.

Elusiveness

Ball

Moore's first opportunity was an eight-yard rush on 2nd and 7 with 10:55 in the first quarter. The rush was actually a swing pass to him in the right flat from the slot that he caught with his hands while facing the QB and backing into the flat about four yards behind the line of scrimmage. After the catch, Moore tucked the ball under his right arm and dragged the safety wrapping him at the ankle a few yards to extend the ball across the first down marker. His next catch was a 14-yard gain on 3rd and 6 with 6:30 in the third quarter. Moore was split wide left against a CB giving 10 yards of cushion. He ran a seven-yard hook under the coverage, getting his hands up early to tatch the ball out of his quick turn. He snared the ball with his hands eight yards downfield and turned quickly outside the CB for another six before that CB dragged him down at the legs. He carried the ball under his right arm on this run after the catch up the left sideline.

Balance

Blocking

Good square and punch of the safety three yards downfield after slanting inside to make the block on a 1st and 10 I-formation run with 11:30 in the first quarter. He generated enough of a push to keep the safety away from the flow of the play coming behind them. He missed the cutblock split wide left from an I-formation on 1st and 10 with 5:54 in the third quarter. Moore dove too low at the legs of the CB and the CB was able to work inside and tackle the RB on the play after a short gain.

Vision

Moore's first opportunity was an eight-yard rush on 2nd and 7 with 10:55 in the first quarter. The rush was actually a swing pass to him in the right flat from the slot that he caught with his hands while facing the QB and backing into the flat about four yards behind the line of scrimmage. After the catch, Moore tucked the ball under his right arm and dragged the safety wrapping him at the ankle a few yards to extend the ball across the first down marker. Moore made a good diving hit at the ankles of the CB intercepting a 2nd and 10 deep seam route with 10:10 in the first quarter. His next catch was a 14-yard gain on 3rd and 6 with 6:30 in the third quarter. Moore was split wide left against a CB giving 10 yards of cushion. He ran a seven-yard hook under the coverage, getting his hands up early to tatch the ball out of his quick turn. He snared the ball with his hands eight yards downfield and turned quickly outside the CB for another six before that CB dragged him down at the legs. Fluid decision-making after the catch on this play.

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Denarius Moore

Date: 12/31/2009

Opponent: Virginia Tech

Power

Moore's first opportunity was an eight-yard rush on 2nd and 7 with 10:55 in the first quarter. The rush was actually a swing pass to him in the right flat from the slot that he caught with his hands while facing the QB and backing into the flat about four yards behind the line of scrimmage. After the catch, Moore tucked the ball under his right arm and dragged the safety wrapping him at the ankle a few yards to extend the ball across the first down marker. Moore made a good diving hit at the ankles of the CB intercepting a 2nd and 10 deep seam route with 10:10 in the first quarter. His next catch was a 14-yard gain on 3rd and 6 with 6:30 in the third quarter. Moore was split wide left against a CB giving 10 yards of cushion. He ran a seven-yard hook under the coverage, getting his hands up early to catch the ball out of his quick turn. He snared the ball with his hands eight yards downfield and turned quickly outside the CB for another six before that CB dragged him down at the legs - fluid decision-making after the catch on this play.

Durability

He had foot surgery the summer before his senior year but didn't miss any time.

Character

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Wide Receiver Scouting Checklist

Name: Leonard Hankerson **School:** Miami **Opponent:** Ohio State **Surface:** Grass
Height: 6-1 **Year:** Senior **Score:** 24-36 **Climate:** Overcast/R
Weight: 209 **Date:** 9/11/2010 **Location:** Ohio State **Temperature:** Temperat

Overall Score: 78.5

Category Scores

Separation Score: 6 **Balance Score:** 4 **Receiving Score:** 26 **Vision Score:** 5 **BHandling Score:** 5
Routes Score: 16 **Blocking Score:** 2 **Elusiveness Score:** 5 **Power Score:** 4 **Durability Score:** 6

Game Stats

Target: 11 **Dropped After Contact:** 1 **Rec Yards:** 90 **Yards per Td:** 0
Missed Target: 3 **Rec:** 7 **Yards After Catch:** 13 **Rush Att:** 0
Drops: 0 **Rec After Contact:** 1 **Yards per Catch:** 0 **Rush Yds:** 0
Juggles: 0 **Difficult Rec:** 1 **Rec Tds:** 0 **Rush Tds:** 0
Fumbles: 0

Routes

Gets appropriate route depth - 4pts: Yes
 Works back to the quarterback - 2pts: Yes
 Breaks back to the football - 4pts: No
 Awareness of sideline - 2pts: Yes
 Sinks hips into breaks - 5pts: No
 Finds soft area of zone coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Doesn't tip off routes - 3pts: Yes
 Sets up breaks - 2pts: Yes
 Uses body to shield defender from pass - 3pts: No

Receiving

Catches ball with hands away from body - 5pts: Yes
 Adjusts body to the flight of the ball - 1pt: Yes
 Catches ball w/back to the line of scrimmage-1pt: Yes
 Catches ball in tight coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Catches ball after contact - 5pts: Yes
 Catches ball cleanly - 7pts: Yes
 Makes difficult catches - 1pt: Yes
 Gets head around and hands up quickly out of the break - 3pts: Yes

Separation

Uses hands to release from press - 5pts: No
 Uses feet effectively to release from press - 5pts: Yes
 Separation on intermediate/deep routes - 1pt: Yes

Ball Handling

Carries ball under correct arm - 1pt.: No
 Demonstrates ball security - 2pts.: Yes
 Maintains control of ball when hit - 3pts.: Yes

Elusiveness

Lower body jukes - 1pt: Yes
 Upper body jukes - 1pt: Yes
 Avoids direct shots - 1pt: Yes
 Can string moves together in space - 1pt: Yes
 Makes sharp lateral cuts - 1pt: Yes

Blocking

Diagnoses blocking assignments correctly - 1pt: Yes
 Effective cut block technique - 0.5pt: No
 Good hand placement on stand up blocks - 0.5pt: No
 Can deliver a punch on stand up block - 0.5pt: Yes
 Mirrors/moves feet effectively on stand up blocks - 0.5pt: No

Vision

Good decisions - 2pts: Yes
 Patience - 1pt: Yes
 Open field - 2pts: Yes

Power

Leg power, drives through arm tackles - 2pts: Yes
 Effective stiff arm - 1pt: No
 Runs behind pad/Has good pad level - 1pt: Yes
 Second effort/keeps legs moving after contact - 1pt: Yes

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career - 2pts: Yes
 Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part) - 2pts: Yes
 Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career - 2pts: Yes

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Leonard Hankerson

Date: 9/11/2010

Opponent: Ohio State

Overall Strengths

Hankerson shows some refinement with his footwork coordinated with his head and shoulders as a route runner in single coverage to set up releases and breaks to gain separation by fooling the defender. He catches the ball with his hands and has the ability to adjust to the football in the air and secure the pass while taking punishment. There is potential for Hankerson to develop into a quality starting receiver. My concern is that he tends to be the type of player that impresses observers in practice with his physical skills and hands but will he work on the little things to go from a Michael Jenkins type of receiver to a potential Reggie Wayne?

Overall Weaknesses

Hankerson needs to improve his understanding of how to execute and prioritize game situations to avoid poor plays. Although he runs some sophisticated intermediate and deep routes, his short-breaking routes need more work. He doesn't drop his hips to make sharp breaks and he rounds off his breaks, which gives his opponents time to make plays on the ball. At this stage he's a better perimeter receiver than he is a fully dimensional weapon. The potential is there, but he has to have the right work ethic and mindset to develop this aspect of his game. While he'll work back to the quarterback on obvious routes like the comeback, he needs to make it a habit to break back to the football if he's sat down on a zone route and the ball isn't coming directly out of his break and coverage is close by. This is where he isn't playing smart football on a consistent basis.

Separation

Hankerson needs to do a better job of lowering his pads under the jam. On a 3rd and 6 pass play with 2:26 in the first quarter, Hankerson came off the line against bump and run, turned his pads and used his hands to shove the defender out of his path. While this worked, he wasted movement and speed when he could have dipped under the attempted contact and got on top of the defender quicker. Hankerson showed the speed to get on top of the cornerback in tight coverage at the line on 2nd and 8 with 4:56 in the half, but the pass was overthrown. Hankerson got the CB to slip with a quick jab step outside and release to the inside as he came off the line. Hankerson was too quick off the line for the CB playing tight to left end to come across and jam the slot receiver on a 3rd and 11 pass play with 6:53 in the third quarter. Hankerson once again chose to initiate contact with the CB off the line from the slot on a 1st and 10 pass with 0:34 in the third quarter. The CB had inside position and Hankerson threw a forearm at the chest of the defender just prior to his break outside. If he released hard up field, forced the CB into a backpedal or ducked under the CB's attempt to hit. He could have gotten more depth on the route, and force the CB to try to recover just as Hankerson executed his break. This would have earned him more separation downfield as well as after his break. His catch wouldn't have been contested.

Routes

Hankerson's first target came when he motioned from slot right across the formation in a three-receiver shotgun set before the snap on 3rd and 6 with 10:39 in the first quarter. The ball was snapped as he cleared the opposite side of the line and Hankerson ran a short flat route against the zone linebacker, catching the ball with his hands tight to his chest two yards past the line of scrimmage and just outrunning the diving tackle attempt of the CB coming off his receiver to make the play. Hankerson's turn to the outside was rounded off. His QB threw an interception on a 3rd and 9 pass intended for Hankerson with 8:43 in the first quarter but the CB came over the back of the receiver, cutting just over the inside shoulder and deflecting the ball into the arms of the LB. The WR did a poor job of breaking back to the football, sitting on his break. Hankerson was more concerned about his route depth than working back to the ball, which should not be the priority in this down and distance situation early in the game and deep in the offense's territory. Hankerson's route had a quick turn, but he saw the location of the CB and he did not make the type of break that would shield the CB. If he sank his hips and turned back to the ball, he might have driven off the CB or at least came back to the ball enough to shield the defender. Good technique would have prevented an interception. Hankerson did a nice job setting up his break on a skinny post for 25 yards with 3:51 in the first quarter. He released from the line of scrimmage against a CB giving Hankerson seven yards of cushion and playing outside protection. Hankerson accelerated off the line and seven yards downfield he executed a stutter step with his hips dropped and his hand and shoulders facing the outside to fake an out. This forced the CB to break down and gave Hankerson time to accelerate up field, get even with the CB and create addition separation horizontally to catch the pass away from the CB. He took a hard shot from the safety, but the catch was partially earned with his well-run route. Hankerson did a nice of setting up his deep corner route with 4:58 in the half with a jab step outside before releasing inside off the line in tight, man coverage. This forced the CB to stumble and Hankerson followed up that move with a turn inside that included a nice head fake inside before making a smooth turn back to the corner. This nicely run route got him a yard in front of the CB to make the catch. He dropped an outward breaking pivot route in the middle of the field on a release from slot right on 2nd and goal with 11:24 in the third quarter. He got his hands on the ball and initially secured the pass with a defender wrapped around his back, but the safety coming across was able to lower his shoulder into the ball at full speed to break the pass up. Hankerson's route was not the best. He struggled with dropping his hips into the initial part of the break and this slowed his turn and gave the safety a chance to read the route and come across to make the play. Hankerson caught a four-yard hook from slot left on 2nd and 18 with 7:29 in the third quarter. He made the catch under zone with his hands. Once again, Hankerson did not execute a crisp break - rounding off the route. Hankerson rounded off his break on a 3rd and 11 in-cut with 6:53 in the third quarter, but there was enough cushion in zone coverage for him to find the open spot for a 16-yard gain. Good job breaking back to the football on a comeback route in the right flat, getting his arms under the pass for an 11-yard gain on 1st and 10 with 1:25 in the third quarter. He trapped the ball to his chest on the play, but it was the first one I've seen and he falling forward back to a low-thrown ball. Hankerson and his QB were on the same page when they read the formation on 3rd and 11 and the WR ran up the open seam from the slot, curling at the first down marker to present a target for a quick throw 11 yards downfield with 0:34 in the third quarter.

Receiving

Hankerson's first target came when he motioned from slot right across the formation in a three-receiver shotgun set before the snap on 3rd and 6 with 10:39 in the first quarter. The ball was snapped as he cleared the opposite side of the line and Hankerson ran a short flat route against the zone linebacker, catching the ball with his hands tight to his chest two yards past the line of scrimmage and just outrunning the diving tackle attempt of the CB coming off his receiver to make the play. Hankerson turned up field and tried to stiff arm the LB in pursuit, but he was minimally successful because the LB clipped Hankerson's legs and forced the WR off balance. However, Hankerson managed to get the favorable spot as he fell forward to the first down marker for a gain of six yards. His QB threw an interception on a 3rd and 9 pass intended for Hankerson with 8:43 in the first quarter but the CB came over the back of the receiver, cutting just over the inside shoulder and deflecting the ball into the arms of the LB. The WR did a poor job of breaking back to the football, sitting on his break. Hankerson made an excellent leaping catch on a ball thrown high to his back shoulder on a skinny post 25 yards downfield on a play action pass from a single receiver formation with an unbalanced line. He snared the ball with both hands as his momentum carried him directly into a great hit by the safety into the chest of Hankerson. The receiver did a good job holding onto the football in tight coverage, with his back to the quarterback and after contact. This is one of the most difficult catches to make in football on a designed route and he did it with 3:51 in the first quarter. Hankerson nearly stayed in bounds as he fell backwards to catch a pass tipped 3-4 yards in front of him by the CB on a 3rd and 8 sideline comeback with 2:26 in the first quarter. Good reaction, but just not enough to stay in the field of play. He juggled the ball as he went out of bounds and his first foot hit the boundary before his second foot tapped down on the field. Hankerson did a good job getting his head around to the QB and hands up on his break of a deep corner route, but the pass was overthrown with 4:58 in the half. He dropped an outward breaking pivot route in the middle of the field on a release from slot right on 2nd and goal with 11:24 in the third quarter. He got his hands on the ball and initially secured the pass with a defender wrapped around his back, but the safety coming across was able to lower his shoulder into the ball at full speed to break the pass up. Hankerson caught a four-yard hook from slot left on 2nd and 18 with 7:29 in the third quarter. He made the catch under zone with his hands. He initially turned inside and then made a nice move to duck under the safety as he cut up field for another three yards. Hankerson caught a 3rd and 11 square in just outside the left hash in a nice opening in the zone with 6:53 in the third quarter for a 16-yard gain. He caught the ball 14 yards downfield with his hands away from this front shoulder and fell forward for another two yards. Good job breaking back to the football on a comeback route in the right flat, getting his arms under the pass for an 11-yard gain on 1st and 10 with 1:25 in the third quarter. He trapped the ball to his chest on the play, but it was the first one I've seen and he falling forward back to a low-thrown ball. Hankerson and his QB were on the same page when they read the formation on 3rd and 11 and the WR ran up the open seam from the slot, curling at the first down marker to present a target for a quick throw 11 yards downfield with 0:34 in the third quarter. Hankerson caught the ball with his hands away from his back shoulder and ducked under the oncoming safety to get another four yards for a total of 15 and a first down. Good concentration and awareness of the sideline on a 10-yard out caught with his hands in tight coverage trying to undercut the 1st and 10 pass with 0:16 in the third quarter.

Elasticity

Hankerson caught a four-yard hook from slot left on 2nd and 18 with 7:29 in the third quarter. He made the catch under zone with his hands. He initially turned inside and then made a nice move to duck under the safety as he cut up field for another three yards. Nice quickness and agility on display in a tight space to gain extra yardage.

Ball

Hankerson's first target came when he motioned from slot right across the formation in a three-receiver shotgun set before the snap on 3rd and 6 with 10:39 in the first quarter. The ball was snapped as he cleared the opposite side of the line and Hankerson ran a short flat route against the zone linebacker, catching the ball with his hands tight to his chest two yards past the line of scrimmage and just outrunning the diving tackle attempt of the CB coming off his receiver to make the play. Hankerson turned up field and tried to stiff arm the LB in pursuit, but he was minimally successful because the LB clipped Hankerson's legs and forced the WR off balance. However, Hankerson managed to get the favorable spot as he fell forward to the first down marker for a gain of six yards. When Hankerson was hit, he lost some control of the ball as he fell to the ground, slipping loose from his hand but pinned against his stomach with his forearm. If he were hit by a second defender, he might have lost possession.

Balance

Hankerson's first target came when he motioned from slot right across the formation in a three-receiver shotgun set before the snap on 3rd and 6 with 10:39 in the first quarter. The ball was snapped as he cleared the opposite side of the line and Hankerson ran a short flat route against the zone linebacker, catching the ball with his hands tight to his chest two yards past the line of scrimmage and just outrunning the diving tackle attempt of the CB coming off his receiver to make the play. Hankerson turned up field and tried to stiff arm the LB in pursuit, but he was minimally successful because the LB clipped Hankerson's legs and forced the WR off balance. However, Hankerson managed to get the favorable spot as he fell forward to the first down marker for a gain of six yards. Good job planting his free hand on the ground to propel himself forward to get that favorable spot.

The Gut Check's WR Scouting Profile

Name: Leonard Hankerson

Date: 9/11/2010

Opponent: Ohio State

Blocking

Good hit on the safety from the backside of a teammates catch up the middle for an eight-yard gain with 9:00 in the thrid quarter.

Vision

Good effort to come across the flat to bump the CB out of bounds on an interception by OSU with 0:50 in the half.

Power

Hankerson's first target came when he motioned from slot right across the formation in a three-receiver shotgun set before the snap on 3rd and 6 with 10:39 in the first quarter. The ball was snapped as he cleared the opposite side of the line and Hankerson ran a short flat route against the zone linebacker, catching the ball with his hands tight to his chest two yards past the line of scrimmage and just outrunning the diving tackle attempt of the CB coming off his receiver to make the play. Hankerson turned up field and tried to stiff arm the LB in pursuit, but he was minimally successful because the LB clipped Hankerson's legs and forced the WR off balance. However, Hankerson managed to get the favorable spot as he fell forward to the first down marker for a gain of six yards.

Durability

Hankerson had trouble getting up after taking the hit in the chest from the safety on a 25-yard skinny post with 3:51 in the first quarter, but he managed to trot off the field under his own power. He was back to finish the series.

Character

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Tight End Scouting Checklist

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

Overall Score:

Category Scores

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

Game Stats

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

Routes

Awareness of sideline - 2pts: No
 Gets appropriate route depth - 5pts: Yes
 Works back to quarterback - 1pt: No
 Breaks back to football - 5pts: Yes
 Sinks hips into breaks - 5pts: Yes
 Finds soft area of zone coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Doesn't tip off route - 3 pts: Yes
 Sets up breaks - 1pt: Yes
 Uses body to shield defender from the ball - 3pts: Yes

Separation

Uses hands effectively to release from press - 3pts: Yes
 Uses feet effectively to release from press - 3pts: No
 Gets vertical separation on intermediate/deep routes - 1pt: Yes

Elusiveness

Lower body jukes - 1pt: Yes
 Upper body jukes - 1pt: No
 Avoids direct shots - 1pt: Yes
 Can string moves together in space - 1pt: Yes
 Makes sharp lateral cuts - 1 pt: Yes

Vision

Good decisions - 2pts: Yes
 Patience - 1pt: No
 Open field - 2pts: No

Receiving

Gets head around and hands ups quickly out of break - 3pts: Yes
 Adjusts body to the football - 1pt: Yes
 Catches ball with hands away from body - 5pts: Yes
 Catches ball cleanly - 7pts: Yes
 Catches ball with back to the line of scrimmage - 1pt: Yes
 Catches the ball after contact - 5pts: No
 Catches ball in tight coverage - 3pts: No
 Makes difficult catches - 1pt: No

Ball Handling

Carries ball under correct arm - 1pt.: Yes
 Demonstrates ball security - 2 pts: Yes
 Maintains control of ball when hit - 3 pts: Yes

Blocking

Diagnoses blocking assignments correctly - 1pt: Yes
 Effective cut block technique -1pt: No
 Good hand placement on stand up blocks - 2pts: Yes
 Can deliver a punch on stand up blocks - 2pts: No
 Mirrors/moves feet effectively on stand up blocks - 1pt: Yes

Power

Leg power, drives through arm tackles - 2pts: Yes
 Effective stiff arm - 1pt: Yes
 Runs behind pad/Has good pad level - 1pt: Yes
 Second effort/keeps legs moving after contact - 1pt: Yes

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career - 2pts: N/A
 Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part) - 2pts: N/A
 Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career - 2pts.: N/A

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Cameron Graham

Date: 10/15/2010

Opponent: Cincinnati

Overall Strengths:

Graham has the tools to develop into a committee move-tight end for an NFL team. He has the acceleration to stretch the intermediate seam and the agility to make the first man miss. He catches the ball well with his hands and he sets up his routes with good footwork and flexible hips to sink them into his breaks to create separation. He was effective in this game as a run blocker, consistently firing off the line of scrimmage, getting his hands into the defender and turning them away from the flow of the play. He also used his hands well to release from the line of scrimmage either after an initial block or against the jam.

Overall Weaknesses:

Graham appears a little skinny for his frame and will need to add more muscle, especially if he hopes to have the same success as an in-line blocker. I didn't see him have to make receptions in traffic or after contact from a defender. He has some agility, but it didn't translate as well as a ball carrier in this game. If he can't add muscle, he might not see the field.

Separation

Good job using his hands effectively to release from right end on the first play of the game, delivering a punch as he turned outside and then accelerating up field of the defender into his route. He then delivered a nice punch off left end on the next play, knocking the linebacker off balance and to the ground on a run around right end on the next play. Cameron flashed a quick release from right end at the line of scrimmage on a 1st and 10 double-throw screen to the QB to begin the second quarter. He finished the play with a nice reach block on the safety downfield, pushing him to the sideline and away from the quarterback on his 27-yard gain.

Routes

Good job sinking his hips into an outside-breaking pivot route on 3rd and 19 with 10:40 in the first quarter. He got good separation against the zone defender to make the catch for a gain of seven on the play. Graham released from the slot, ran to the end zone and broke outside but this 3rd and 7 pass arrived as if he were running a nine-yard hook, which meant it was low and inside of Graham's outside break and it gave the defensive back trailing Graham the position to come from behind and swat the ball away before Graham could get his hands on the ball. Graham made a nice adjustment to the low and away pass, but it appears he was not on the same page with the quarter on the route. Graham ran an excellent pivot route breaking outside from the slot right against a safety in single coverage. He sunk his hips after turning inside to get separation on his break to the outside and did it as smoothly as any tight end as I have seen all year, catching the football five yards downfield in the right flat and turning to the sideline for another seven yards for a 12-yard gain on 3rd and 7 with 9:35 in the half.

Receiving

Graham's first catch was a six-yard pivot route breaking outside from slot right on 3rd and 9 with 10:34 in the first quarter. Graham caught the ball at helmet level with his hands away from his body and turned up field to find a corner a yard ahead of the first down marker with a good angle on him and another defensive back closing fast from the left. Graham should have lowered his 253-lbs frame and either split the defenders or take on the corner for the first down that was three yards away. Instead, he tried to juke the corner with an off balanced give a leg-take a leg move to the outside. He was cut down where he planted for a seven-yard gain. Graham caught a shallow cross on a free release from the line on 3rd and 7 with 7:24 in the first quarter. He caught the ball with his hands extended near his back shoulder as he run away from the QB, turning towards the left hash from the reception point (the line of scrimmage), stiff-armed the linebacker to the ground as he turned the corner two yards downfield and gained a total of nine yards before he was gang tackled. Graham released from the slot, ran to the end zone and broke outside but this 3rd and 7 pass arrived as if he were running a nine-yard hook, which meant it was low and inside of Graham's outside break and it gave the defensive back trailing Graham the position to come from behind and swat the ball away before Graham could get his hands on the ball. Graham made a nice adjustment to the low and away pass, but it appears he was not on the same page with the QB on the route. The TE ran a perfect outside breaking pivot route to the right flat against a safety in single coverage on 3rd and 7, catching the ball at helmet height with his hands and turning to the sideline for another seven yards, gaining 12 on the play with 9:35 in the half. His next catch was a crossing route seven yards downfield that he caught with his hands on the run with a trailing defender on him. He dragged the defender two yards for a nine-yard gain on 3rd and 15 with 1:33 in the half. His final catch of the day came with 2:43 in the third quarter on a 1-yard drag route caught a yard behind the line of scrimmage while turning his back shoulder to the QB, catching the ball with his hands and turning up field. He could only manage to drag a linebacker a yard after the defender took a great angle to wrap his leg and twist Graham to the boundary. He had a 3rd and 7 catch on a crossing route called back due to an illegal shift, but I'm counting it in his stats (box score was 5-38, not 6-44) just to talk about the fact he once again caught the ball with his hands while on the run away from the quarterback. He nearly broke a tackle to get to the first down marker, but came up a yard shy.

Elusiveness

Graham's first catch was a six-yard pivot route breaking outside from slot right on 3rd and 9 with 10:34 in the first quarter. Graham caught the ball at helmet level with his hands away from his body and turned up field to find a corner a yard ahead of the first down marker with a good angle on him and another defensive back closing fast from the left. Graham should have lowered his 253-lbs frame and either split the defenders or take on the corner for the first down that was three yards away. Instead, he tried to juke the corner with an off balanced give a leg-take a leg move to the outside. He was cut down where he planted for a seven-yard gain.

Ball Handling

Graham did a good job tucking the ball under his left arm on a 3rd and 7 crossing pattern caught at the line of scrimmage with 7:24 in the first quarter, stiff-arming the linebacker to the ground with his right arm as he turned the corner for a nine-yard gain. He carried the ball under his left arm on drag route with 2:38 in the third quarter. He carried the ball under his left arm for a six-yard gain on a crossing route on 3rd and 7 with 11:56 left.

Balance

Blocking

Good job firing off the line low and turning the defensive end to the inside on a 1st and 10 run to his end for a seven-yard gain. His ability to move with the defender and keep his hands in the chest of the end helped him turn the defender and seal the edge from the inside. On the next play, he was able to seal the linebacker inside on another to that side for an 11-yard gain with 11:56 in the first quarter. The linebacker took an inside rush and it gave Graham an easy angle to push the outside shoulder to turn him further inside. He didn't deliver a great punch off the line on a 2nd and 5 run with 8:03 in the first quarter. Graham was able to get his hands on the linebacker but he couldn't control the defender, leaning too far forward and giving the linebacker the chance to throw Graham to the side to tackle the running back behind the line of scrimmage for a loss. Excellent job squaring and moving with the defensive end on play action pass where his QB rolled to his side on 1st and 10 with 0:38 in the first quarter. He got his hands placed inside the defender long enough to keep the end at the line of scrimmage so his QB could roll out. Then Graham released the defender to run a drag route as a check-down. Another nice block to seal the inside on a run around right end for a five-yard gain with 0:05 in the first quarter. He got his hands into the body of the defensive end, turned him inside and the defender was dropped when his legs were cut from behind by the wash. Cameron flashed a quick release from right end at the line of scrimmage on a 1st and 10 double-throw screen to the QB to begin the second quarter. He finished the play with a nice reach block on the safety downfield, pushing him to the sideline and away from the quarterback on his 27-yard gain. Good downfield effort. Nice job moving his feet laterally to keep the linebacker inside so he could help seal the corner for a five-yard gain with 12:00 in the half. Decent punch on the right defensive end on a 2nd and 7 run to right end with 10:06 in the half, but he could not sustain the block and the DE was able to force the RB outside earlier than he wanted to go and the result was a minimal gain. Good seal inside with a reach block, mostly due to moving his feet to prevent the DE taking the inside move to turn back to the outside on an 11-yard gain through the hole he sealed. He didn't show great hand placement or drive, but he shielded the defender well with 8:50 in the half. He made another decent reach block to move the edge defender inside so his RB could get around right end for a nine-yard score with 5:33 in the half. He could not generate much of a push on the linebacker on a run to his end on 1st and 10 gain for just one yard with 3:09 in the half. The defender was able to come off Cameron to get into the tackle. He wasn't able to prevent the defender from getting outside on a run to left end on the next play and he held the defender, getting called for it. Graham sealed the outside linebacker on a 46-yard run inside his of his block on 1st

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Cameron Graham

Date: 10/15/2010

Opponent: Cincinnati

and 10 with 12:09 in the third quarter. The TE held the linebacker's jersey near the collar, but penalty was not called and the placement of his hands was good enough to disguise it from the officials. He also got a good initial push on the defender after establishing contact. Good effort to come off right end and get a backside block on the linebacker to prevent pursuit of his RB on a seven-yard run around right end. He got his feet square to the LB and generated enough of a push to disrupt the linebacker's start to the flat with 14:50 in the game. He got under the linebacker on a run off right end with 12:35 in the game, turning the defender inside to clear a small space for the RB to get a crease on 2nd and 10. He came off the line low and took the right defensive end out of the running play of right end on 1st and 10 with 8:20 in the game, turning him inside and to the ground.

Vision

Graham's first catch was a six-yard pivot route breaking outside from slot right on 3rd and 9 with 10:34 in the first quarter. Graham caught the ball at helmet level with his hands away from his body and turned up field to find a corner a yard ahead of the first down marker with a good angle on him and another defensive back closing fast from the left. Graham should have lowered his 253-lbs frame and either split the defenders or take on the corner for the first down that was three yards away. Instead, he tried to juke the corner with an off balanced give a leg-take a leg move to the outside. He was cut down where he planted for a seven-yard gain.

Power

Graham caught a shallow cross on a free release from the line on 3rd and 7 with 7:24 in the first quarter. He caught the ball with his hands extended near his back shoulder as he ran away from the QB, turning towards the left hash from the reception point (the line of scrimmage), stiff-armed the linebacker to the ground as he turned the corner two yards downfield and gained a total of nine yards before he was gang tackled. As Graham was getting dragged down from behind by a safety on an outside breaking pivot route on 3rd and 7 with 9:33 in the half, Graham lowered his shoulder into the corner coming up the sideline to bounce off the hit and continue falling forward to gain 12 yards on the play. Graham tried to ward off the linebacker in the left flat with a stiff arm, but the defender got to the TE's leg and dragged him down for only a yard on a flat route with 2:38 in the third quarter. He missed his stiff arm attempt on the linebacker as he turned the corner to the left flat on 3rd and 7 and was dragged down a yard shy of the first down with 11:56 in the game. An illegal shift penalty nullified the completion.

Durability

Character

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Tight End Scouting Checklist

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

Overall Score:

Category Scores

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

Game Stats

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

Routes

Awareness of sideline - 2pts: Yes
 Gets appropriate route depth - 5pts: No
 Works back to quarterback - 1pt: Yes
 Breaks back to football - 5pts: Yes
 Sinks hips into breaks - 5pts: No
 Finds soft area of zone coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Doesn't tip off route - 3 pts: Yes
 Sets up breaks - 1pt: Yes
 Uses body to shield defender from the ball - 3pts: Yes

Separation

Uses hands effectively to release from press - 3pts: No
 Uses feet effectively to release from press - 3pts: No
 Gets vertical separation on intermediate/deep routes - 1pt: Yes

Elusiveness

Lower body jukes - 1pt: Yes
 Upper body jukes - 1pt: No
 Avoids direct shots - 1pt: Yes
 Can string moves together in space - 1pt: No
 Makes sharp lateral cuts - 1 pt: No

Vision

Good decisions - 2pts: Yes
 Patience - 1pt: Yes
 Open field - 2pts: Yes

Receiving

Gets head around and hands ups quickly out of break - 3pts: Yes
 Adjusts body to the football - 1pt: Yes
 Catches ball with hands away from body - 5pts: Yes
 Catches ball cleanly - 7pts: Yes
 Catches ball with back to the line of scrimmage - 1pt: Yes
 Catches the ball after contact - 5pts: Yes
 Catches ball in tight coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Makes difficult catches - 1pt: Yes

Ball Handling

Carries ball under correct arm - 1pt.: Yes
 Demonstrates ball security - 2 pts: Yes
 Maintains control of ball when hit - 3 pts: Yes

Blocking

Diagnoses blocking assignments correctly - 1pt: Yes
 Effective cut block technique -1pt: No
 Good hand placement on stand up blocks - 2pts: Yes
 Can deliver a punch on stand up blocks - 2pts: No
 Mirrors/moves feet effectively on stand up blocks - 1pt: No

Power

Leg power, drives through arm tackles - 2pts: Yes
 Effective stiff arm - 1pt: Yes
 Runs behind pad/Has good pad level - 1pt: Yes
 Second effort/keeps legs moving after contact - 1pt: Yes

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career - 2pts: N/A
 Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part) - 2pts: N/A
 Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career - 2pts.: N/A

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Collin Franklin

Date: 9/2/2010

Opponent: Northern Illinois

Overall Strengths:

Franklin has the receiving skills you want from an NFL TE. He catches the ball very well with his hands away from his body and he adjusts to high and low throws as well as tracks the ball with his back to the passer. He moves well in the open field and dips inside and outside blocks fluidly and protects the ball well with where he carries the football as well as his pad level to finish runs. He's big enough to break arm tackles and fall forward and quick enough to threaten the seam on some routes. He makes the effort as a blocker and if he can add more muscle and develop more consistent technique, he might surprise as a reserve TE who grows into a starter with value in an offensive that emphasizes the pass and the TE as a frequent check-down option.

Overall Weaknesses:

Franklin has above average speed for a TE, but he's not a burner. He needs work as a blocker. He tends to get knocked off balance and he doesn't close the gap with his feet to maintain any leverage. I didn't see Franklin route routes against press coverage. As a runner, his power is a little below average for his size but he does execute his pad level and fall forward on a consistent basis. I could see Franklin sticking with a team and developing into a reliable reserve capable of decent production as a receiver if needed, but he's not a superstar in the making unless he's paired with a highly precise quarterback that can exploit defenses with his pass catching talents in the way a Jacob Tamme was used with Peyton Manning.

Separation

Routes

The TE's first catch was a short out from slot right from a four-receiver, shotgun set on 1st and 10 with 15:00 in the first quarter. He made a diving catch of the football at the right sideline, extending his arms fully for the football and dragging both feet at the boundary as he was wrapped at the legs by the safety. Good set up of his break outside by initially turning inside and pivoting out with a fluid turn to keep the safety from jumping the route. Franklin's next target was a 3rd and 8 pass for 16 yards with 4:35 in the first quarter from a four-receiver (1x3) shotgun set. Franklin was the inside slot receiver of the three receivers on the left side against a three-man NIU front. Franklin ran a drag route to the empty left flat and as he passed the numbers about five yards downfield, he turned back to the QB and broke towards the pass as the ball was released. He caught the ball with his hands about five yards from the CB in zone at the sideline and turned inside the CB to get the first down as the CB lost his balance on the turn. Franklin gained another eight yards up the left sideline and lowered his pads underneath the safety's hit over top as they reached the boundary. Good job breaking back to the ball and working back to the QB on this drag route to the opposite flat. Franklin's third catch was another 16-yard gain on the same drive (1st and 10 with 3:31 in the first quarter). Franklin was slot left on the near side of the field in a four-receiver (2x2) Pistol set versus a 4-3 defense. Franklin ran an outside-breaking pivot route with a smooth turn outside and caught the ball with his hands just as the safety came over his inside shoulder to defend the pass. Franklin ran out of the DB's diving wrap attempt four yards downfield as he turned up field to the sideline and warded off the LB in pursuit with a stiff arm just long enough to gain another 12 yards before that LB pushed Franklin out of bounds.

Receiving

The TE's first catch was a short out from slot right from a four-receiver, shotgun set on 1st and 10 with 15:00 in the first quarter. He made a diving catch of the football at the right sideline, extending his arms fully for the football and dragging both feet at the boundary as he was wrapped at the legs by the safety. Franklin's next target was a 3rd and 8 pass for 16 yards with 4:35 in the first quarter from a four-receiver (1x3) shotgun set. Franklin was the inside slot receiver of the three receivers on the left side against a three-man NIU front. Franklin ran a drag route to the empty left flat and as he passed the numbers about five yards downfield, he turned back to the QB and broke towards the pass as the ball was released. He caught the ball with his hands about five yards from the CB in zone at the sideline and turned inside the CB to get the first down as the CB lost his balance on the turn. Franklin gained another eight yards up the left sideline and lowered his pads underneath the safety's hit over top as they reached the boundary. Franklin's third catch was another 16-yard gain on the same drive (1st and 10 with 3:31 in the first quarter). Franklin was slot left on the near side of the field in a four-receiver (2x2) Pistol set versus a 4-3 defense. Franklin ran an outside-breaking pivot route with a smooth turn outside and caught the ball with his hands just as the safety came over his inside shoulder to defend the pass. Franklin ran out of the DB's diving wrap attempt four yards downfield as he turned up field to the sideline and warded off the LB in pursuit with a stiff arm just long enough to gain another 12 yards before that LB pushed Franklin out of bounds. Franklin's next catch was a five-yard gain from slot right in a four-receiver (2x2) formation with 8:48 in the game. The route was a slot screen that he caught with his hands a yard behind the line of scrimmage with his WR blocking in the right flat. He turned up field, dipped inside his block and then unsuccessfully tried to juke the safety as he fell forward after the wrap for the five yards. Franklin's final catch was a 34-yard gain on 1st and 10 with 6:30 left as the TE off RT from a three-receiver (1x2) shotgun set. He got a clean release on an intermediate cross thrown about 15 yards downfield and he caught the ball over his outside shoulder with his arms fully extended and his back to the QB and gained another 19 yards up the left side of the field, dipping outside a receiver's block along the way.

Elusiveness

Franklin's next target was a 3rd and 8 pass for 16 yards with 4:35 in the first quarter from a four-receiver (1x3) shotgun set. Franklin was the inside slot receiver of the three receivers on the left side against a three-man NIU front. Franklin ran a drag route to the empty left flat and as he passed the numbers about five yards downfield, he turned back to the QB and broke towards the pass as the ball was released. He caught the ball with his hands about five yards from the CB in zone at the sideline and turned inside the CB to get the first down as the CB lost his balance on the turn. Franklin gained another eight yards up the left sideline and lowered his pads underneath the safety's hit over top as they reached the boundary. Franklin has some quickness for a TE and he made a nice turn inside after his catch. It was tight enough to force the CB to take an angle that he couldn't manage. The route was a slot screen that he caught with his hands a yard behind the line of scrimmage with his WR blocking in the right flat. He turned up field, dipped inside his block and then unsuccessfully tried to juke the safety as he fell forward after the wrap for the five yards. Franklin's final catch was a 34-yard gain on 1st and 10 with 6:30 left as the TE off RT from a three-receiver (1x2) shotgun set. He got a clean release on an intermediate cross thrown about 15 yards downfield and he caught the ball over his outside shoulder with his arms fully extended and his back to the QB and gained another 19 yards up the left side of the field, dipping outside a receiver's block along the way.

Ball Handling

Franklin's next target was a 3rd and 8 pass for 16 yards with 4:35 in the first quarter from a four-receiver (1x3) shotgun set. Franklin was the inside slot receiver of the three receivers on the left side against a three-man NIU front. Franklin ran a drag route to the empty left flat and as he passed the numbers about five yards downfield, he turned back to the QB and broke towards the pass as the ball was released. He caught the ball with his hands about five yards from the CB in zone at the sideline and turned inside the CB to get the first down as the CB lost his balance on the turn. Franklin gained another eight yards up the left sideline and lowered his pads underneath the safety's hit over top as they reached the boundary. Franklin carried the ball under his right arm up the left flat because his first move was to get inside the CB. He did protect the ball by getting low as the pursuit closed on him, diving forward and under a hit over top. Franklin's third catch was another 16-yard gain on the same drive (1st and 10 with 3:31 in the first quarter). Franklin was slot left on the near side of the field in a four-receiver (2x2) Pistol set versus a 4-3 defense. Franklin ran an outside-breaking pivot route with a smooth turn outside and caught the ball with his hands just as the safety came over his inside shoulder to defend the pass. Franklin ran out of the DB's diving wrap attempt four yards downfield as he turned up field to the sideline and warded off the LB in pursuit with a stiff arm just long enough to gain another 12 yards before that LB pushed Franklin out of bounds. He carried the ball under his left arm on the run. Franklin's final catch was a 34-yard gain on 1st and 10 with 6:30 left as the TE off RT from a three-receiver (1x2) shotgun set. He got a clean release on an intermediate cross thrown about 15 yards downfield and he caught the ball over his outside shoulder with his arms fully extended and his back to the QB and gained another 19 yards up the left side of the field, dipping outside a receiver's block along the way. Good job carrying the ball under his left arm.

Balance

Franklin's third catch was another 16-yard gain on the same drive (1st and 10 with 3:31 in the first quarter). Franklin was slot left on the near side of the field in a four-receiver (2x2) Pistol set versus a 4-3 defense. Franklin ran an outside-breaking pivot route with a smooth turn outside and caught the ball with his hands just as the safety came over his inside shoulder to defend the pass. Franklin ran out of the DB's diving wrap attempt four yards downfield as he turned up field to the sideline and warded off the LB in pursuit with a stiff arm just long enough to gain another 12 yards before that LB pushed Franklin out of bounds.

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Collin Franklin

Date: 9/2/2010

Opponent: Northern Illinois

Blocking

Good punch and hand placement to stand up the RDE on a run off RG on 2nd and 6 with 14:33 in the first quarter. Franklin missed his cut block attempt to the LB from his spot slot left on a 1st and 10 pitch to his RB around left end with 13:39 in the first quarter. Franklin misjudged his angle and landed at the feet of the defender, diving too low. Franklin didn't move his feet fast enough to get downfield and execute a good reach block on the LB at the second level during a 63-yard TD run by the RB up the middle, but he did get his hands extended enough to make contact and slow the LB just a step, which did help on this run early in the second quarter. Franklin was used as a wingback in a shotgun formation run on 1st and 10 with 5:12 in the half and he did a good job of bending back to the right end to deliver a shot with his shoulder to the RDE to seal the backside on the run. Good initial punch as the slot receiver got into the flat for 2nd and 7 gain of eight with 6:50 in the left. He didn't run well with the DB to sustain the block the entire play, but he did get a push that helped the ball carrier.

Vision

Franklin's next target was a 3rd and 8 pass for 16 yards with 4:35 in the first quarter from a four-receiver (1x3) shotgun set. Franklin was the inside slot receiver of the three receivers on the left side against a three-man NIU front. Franklin ran a drag route to the empty left flat and as he passed the numbers about five yards downfield, he turned back to the QB and broke towards the pass as the ball was released. He caught the ball with his hands about five yards from the CB in zone at the sideline and turned inside the CB to get the first down as the CB lost his balance on the turn. Franklin gained another eight yards up the left sideline and lowered his pads underneath the safety's hit over top as they reached the boundary. Good decision in the open field to turn inside the CB as well as get under the hit of the safety. The route was a slot screen that he caught with his hands a yard behind the line of scrimmage with his WR blocking in the right flat. He turned up field, dipped inside his block and then unsuccessfully tried to juke the safety as he fell forward after the wrap for the five yards. Franklin's final catch was a 34-yard gain on 1st and 10 with 6:30 left as the TE off RT from a three-receiver (1x2) shotgun set. He got a clean release on an intermediate cross thrown about 15 yards downfield and he caught the ball over his outside shoulder with his arms fully extended and his back to the QB and gained another 19 yards up the left side of the field, dipping outside a receiver's block along the way.

Power

Franklin's next target was a 3rd and 8 pass for 16 yards with 4:35 in the first quarter from a four-receiver (1x3) shotgun set. Franklin was the inside slot receiver of the three receivers on the left side against a three-man NIU front. Franklin ran a drag route to the empty left flat and as he passed the numbers about five yards downfield, he turned back to the QB and broke towards the pass as the ball was released. He caught the ball with his hands about five yards from the CB in zone at the sideline and turned inside the CB to get the first down as the CB lost his balance on the turn. Franklin gained another eight yards up the left sideline and lowered his pads underneath the safety's hit over top as they reached the boundary. Good pad level to finish this run. Franklin's third catch was another 16-yard gain on the same drive (1st and 10 with 3:31 in the first quarter). Franklin was slot left on the near side of the field in a four-receiver (2x2) Pistol set versus a 4-3 defense. Franklin ran an outside-breaking pivot route with a smooth turn outside and caught the ball with his hands just as the safety came over his inside shoulder to defend the pass. Franklin ran out of the DB's diving wrap attempt four yards downfield as he turned up field to the sideline and warded off the LB in pursuit with a stiff arm just long enough to gain another 12 yards before that LB pushed Franklin out of bounds.

Durability

Character

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Tight End Scouting Checklist

Name: Luke Stocker **School:** Tennessee **Opponent:** Florida **Surface:** Grass
Height: 6-4 **Year:** Senior **Score:** 17-31 **Climate:** _____
Weight: 258 **Date:** 9/18/2010 **Location:** Tennessee **Temperature:** _____

Overall Score: 69

Category Scores

Separation Score: 6 **Receiving Score:** 19 **BHandling Score:** 6 **Blocking Score:** 6 **Power Score:** 4
Routes Score: 16 **Elusiveness Score:** 0 **Balance Score:** 4 **Vision Score:** 2 **Durability Score:** 6

Game Stats

Target: 10 **Dropped After Contact:** 0 **Rec Yards:** 41 **Yards per Td:** 0
Missed Target: 2 **Rec:** 5 **Yards After Catch:** 9 **Rush Att:** 0
Drops: 1 **Rec After Contact:** 4 **Yards per Catch:** 0 **Rush Yds:** 0
Juggles: 1 **Difficult Rec:** 0 **Rec Tds:** 0 **Rush Tds:** 0
Fumbles: 0

Routes

Awareness of sideline - 2pts: Yes
 Gets appropriate route depth - 5pts: Yes
 Works back to quarterback - 1pt: No
 Breaks back to football - 5pts: No
 Sinks hips into breaks - 5pts: No
 Finds soft area of zone coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Doesn't tip off route - 3 pts: Yes
 Sets up breaks - 1pt: No
 Uses body to shield defender from the ball - 3pts: Yes

Separation

Uses hands effectively to release from press - 3pts: Yes
 Uses feet effectively to release from press - 3pts: Yes
 Gets vertical separation on intermediate/deep routes - 1pt: No

Elusiveness

Lower body jukes - 1pt: No
 Upper body jukes - 1pt: No
 Avoids direct shots - 1pt: No
 Can string moves together in space - 1pt: No
 Makes sharp lateral cuts - 1 pt: No

Vision

Good decisions - 2pts: Yes
 Patience - 1pt: No
 Open field - 2pts: No

Receiving

Gets head around and hands ups quickly out of break - 3pts: Yes
 Adjusts body to the football - 1pt: Yes
 Catches ball with hands away from body - 5pts: No
 Catches ball cleanly - 7pts: Yes
 Catches ball with back to the line of scrimmage - 1pt: No
 Catches the ball after contact - 5pts: Yes
 Catches ball in tight coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Makes difficult catches - 1pt: No

Ball Handling

Carries ball under correct arm - 1pt.: Yes
 Demonstrates ball security - 2 pts: Yes
 Maintains control of ball when hit - 3 pts: Yes

Blocking

Diagnoses blocking assignments correctly - 1pt: Yes
 Effective cut block technique -1pt: Yes
 Good hand placement on stand up blocks - 2pts: Yes
 Can deliver a punch on stand up blocks - 2pts: Yes
 Mirrors/moves feet effectively on stand up blocks - 1pt: No

Power

Leg power, drives through arm tackles - 2pts: Yes
 Effective stiff arm - 1pt: No
 Runs behind pad/Has good pad level - 1pt: Yes
 Second effort/keeps legs moving after contact - 1pt: Yes

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career - 2pts: N/A
 Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part) - 2pts: N/A
 Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career - 2pts.: N/A

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Luke Stocker

Date: 9/18/2010

Opponent: Florida

Overall Strengths:

Stocker is a reliable short (and sometimes intermediate) range threat for the Volunteers. He routinely makes catches after contact in the middle of the field. He has good enough athleticism to get down the seam or run into the flat and gain yardage with build up speed after the catch. He can generate a push as a run blocker and he sometimes does a good job of getting his hands into the pads of the defender to initially control the opponent as both a run and pass blocker. He flashes some athleticism to turn towards the ball and adjust to it in the air. He finishes plays with good pad level as a ball carrier. He has the size and the hands to develop into a decent short range No.2 TE in the NFL.

Overall Weaknesses:

Stocker lacks the speed for a primary TE in the NFL. He doesn't break tackles, generally going down on first contact. His a high-waisted player that gets knocked off balance as a runner and blocker. He can be bull rushed by smaller opponents and he doesn't move his feet well enough against quick athletes. He doesn't sustain his hand position well. He's not a sudden athlete.

Separation

Every release up the seam or into the flat that I saw for the first 35 minutes of the game were plays where the Florida defense let Stocker go untouched. But when he had to make a break across the field or up field, he would get tied up with a defender and not break loose. Stocker used his hands well to release from an LB after the initial block to set up a flea flicker with 12:31 in the game. The pass was thrown behind him down the seam and he could not make the spinning adjustment to the ball as the safety hit him in the back.

Routes

Stocker began a 3rd and 3 with 3:03 in the first quarter split wide right as a receiver with two tight ends at the line. He motioned across the formation and then back to the wing on the right side, delivering a weak push to the DE and then turning back to the right flat on a drag route, catching the ball at the line of scrimmage with his hands near his back shoulder as he turned up field for a gain of five.

Receiving

Stocker's first catch was a 2nd and 7 cross four yards downfield as the slot receiver among three lined to the left side of the formation with 3:45 in the first quarter. Stocker and the innermost slot receiver had one zone defender in the area and the TE ran a short route inside to get under the defender to make the catch. He trapped the body to his chest just before the defender hit him in the back. The ball bounced around a little but he managed to hold on as he hit the ground. Stocker began the next play - a 3rd and 3 - split wide right as a receiver with two tight ends at the line. He motioned across the formation and then back to the wing on the right side, delivering a weak push to the DE and then turning back to the right flat on a drag route, catching the ball at the line of scrimmage with his hands near his back shoulder as he turned up field for a gain of five. Stocker was open on a sideline route with 3:34 in the third quarter, but the QB had to throw the ball off his back foot under pressure and it landed short of Stocker and out of bounds. Stocker caught a shallow cross on the next play with a defender over his back, gaining four yards from the reception, no yards after the catch as he was taken to the ground immediately. His next catch came on 3rd and 25 with 14:52 left as an outlet receiver at the sideline as the QB rolled right from his own end zone, zipping the ball hard into Stocker's chest. He made the grab inbounds just as he took a hit by the linebacker for a nine-yard gain. Stocker got a free run up the seam on 1st and 10 with 13:13 in the game and was open but the QB threw the ball a little high and Stocker could not make the leaping grab 19 yards downfield as the ball flew threw his hands. Stocker got open as a receiver slot left on 3rd and 20 from a 1x2 spread look with 12:18 in the game. He sat down in the middle of the field, made the catch underneath two defenders, taking a hit to back and turning inside of it to drag the defender a couple of yards for a 19-yard gain. He caught a quick 7-yard hook under the zone in the middle of the field on 1st and 10 with 6:06 left, securing the ball just as he took a hit, falling forward for two yards more.

Elusiveness

Nice job hurdling a defender shooting for his legs in the flat on a 3rd and 3 play action drag route with 3:03 in the first quarter. He didn't maintain his balance on the play, but his leap helped him gain a first down and a few extra yards.

Ball Handling

Balance

Blocking

On his first assignment, a pass block against the left end with 14:51 in the opening quarter, Stocker delivered a good punch to the chest of the lineman and kept his hands in the defender's pads for a brief time until that defender turned the corner, running through Stocker's position. However, Stocker was able to push the defender's trajectory behind the quarterback, giving the passer time to throw the ball. On the next play, Stocker made a solid cut block of the defensive end on the backside, knocking the feet out and dropping the defender to the ground immediately at the line of scrimmage. Good punch and initial push on the left defensive end on a run to right guard with 7:18 in the first quarter. He wasn't able to sustain his grip on the defender but the beginning of his assignment was good. Stocker nearly got pushed into the quarterback on a 3rd and 7 pass blocking assignment against the linebacker off the right side with 6:41 in the first quarter. The smaller, lighter linebacker was able to bull rush Stocker, driving the TE seven yards backwards and nearly into the quarterback as he delivered his pass. He did not get his hands under the pads off the defender with his initial hit and that linebacker got into Stocker's pads, pushing the tight end upright and ruining his leverage to regain any control. Stocker appeared pretty quick on a draw play where he released across the formation after the snap, turned back to and LB in the middle of the field and delivered a punch to the player's chest to drive him away from the flow of the play. He got under the LB on a 2nd down run to his side, clearing the defender away from the crease off LT long enough for a runner to pass if not for other penetration at the line. He was knocked off balance on a 2nd and 7 run play by the linebacker with 10:56 in the half. He does not deliver a strong enough initial punch and when a defender takes the aggressive role, he's knocked off balance easily. Good job sustaining a block on the linebacker on a 2nd and goal formation off left end with 8:30 in the half. He kept his pads and back low off the line and drove him back. Good initial hit off right end and then peeling off the hit to the middle for a second hit on the linebacker, staying low on a seven-yard gain with 4:30 in the half. When Stocker was paired up with the smaller linebacker, he did a good job against him. But an equally strong or more athletic player would dominate him.

Vision

Power

Durability

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name:

Luke Stocker

Date:

9/18/2010

Opponent:

Florida

Character

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Tight End Scouting Checklist

Name: Luke Stocker **School:** Tennessee **Opponent:** Georgia **Surface:** Grass
Height: 6-4 **Year:** Senior **Score:** 14-41 **Climate:** Sunshine
Weight: 258 **Date:** 10/9/2010 **Location:** Georgia **Temperature:** Hot

Overall Score: 70

Category Scores

Separation Score: 4 **Receiving Score:** 20 **BHandling Score:** 5 **Blocking Score:** 3 **Power Score:** 4
Routes Score: 23 **Elusiveness Score:** 0 **Balance Score:** 0 **Vision Score:** 5 **Durability Score:** 6

Game Stats

Target: 3	Dropped After Contact: 1	Rec Yards: 36	Yards per Td: 0
Missed Target: 0	Rec: 2	Yards After Catch: 17	Rush Att: 0
Drops: 0	Rec After Contact: 0	Yards per Catch: 0	Rush Yds: 0
Juggles: 0	Difficult Rec: 0	Rec Tds: 0	Rush Tds: 0
			Fumbles: 0

Routes

Awareness of sideline - 2pts: Yes
 Gets appropriate route depth - 5pts: Yes
 Works back to quarterback - 1pt: Yes
 Breaks back to football - 5pts: Yes
 Sinks hips into breaks - 5pts: No
 Finds soft area of zone coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Doesn't tip off route - 3 pts: Yes
 Sets up breaks - 1pt: Yes
 Uses body to shield defender from the ball - 3pts: Yes

Separation

Uses hands effectively to release from press - 3pts: No
 Uses feet effectively to release from press - 3pts: Yes
 Gets vertical separation on intermediate/deep routes - 1pt: Yes

Elusiveness

Lower body jukes - 1pt: No
 Upper body jukes - 1pt: No
 Avoids direct shots - 1pt: No
 Can string moves together in space - 1pt: No
 Makes sharp lateral cuts - 1 pt: No

Vision

Good decisions - 2pts: Yes
 Patience - 1pt: Yes
 Open field - 2pts: Yes

Receiving

Gets head around and hands ups quickly out of break - 3pts: Yes
 Adjusts body to the football - 1pt: Yes
 Catches ball with hands away from body - 5pts: Yes
 Catches ball cleanly - 7pts: Yes
 Catches ball with back to the line of scrimmage - 1pt: Yes
 Catches the ball after contact - 5pts: No
 Catches ball in tight coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Makes difficult catches - 1pt: No

Ball Handling

Carries ball under correct arm - 1pt.: No
 Demonstrates ball security - 2 pts: Yes
 Maintains control of ball when hit - 3 pts: Yes

Blocking

Diagnoses blocking assignments correctly - 1pt: Yes
 Effective cut block technique -1pt: No
 Good hand placement on stand up blocks - 2pts: Yes
 Can deliver a punch on stand up blocks - 2pts: No
 Mirrors/moves feet effectively on stand up blocks - 1pt: No

Power

Leg power, drives through arm tackles - 2pts: Yes
 Effective stiff arm - 1pt: No
 Runs behind pad/Has good pad level - 1pt: Yes
 Second effort/keeps legs moving after contact - 1pt: Yes

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career - 2pts: N/A
 Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part) - 2pts: N/A
 Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career - 2pts.: N/A

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Luke Stocker

Date: 10/9/2010

Opponent: Georgia

Overall Strengths:

Stocker is a tall, rangy tight end capable of turning his body to adjust to the ball in the air while on the run. He has good enough hands to catch the football with them extended from his body. He has enough build up speed to threaten the intermediate seam and the size to box out defenders from the football in tight coverage. When he gets the ball in space, he can make decent gains. If he can develop more as a blocker, he could become an all-around tight end in the NFL, but he'll need to work hard on his run blocking.

Overall Weaknesses:

Stocker's build reminds me of Leonard Pope and the way he uses it is not a good thing. Stocker has a lot of difficulty moving his feet quickly enough to work against edge rushers or defenders in the run game. His effort as a run blocker is lacking as well. He simply doesn't get into good position consistently and when he does, he does not deliver a strong punch or sustain his effort. For a player with his size this should be his strength, but it is a glaring weakness. He dropped the only pass where he had to take a hit after the catch. His speed is not hybrid-TE like and he's not impressively agile. He did not have to show any skill at releasing from the line of scrimmage against contact. He has promise, but his draft status might be higher than his refinement.

Separation

On 3rd and 4 with 7:07 in the first quarter, Stocker released from right end on a shallow cross, doing a good job to get his hands on the linebacker before the linebacker jammed him. Stocker generated good speed once he got moving on a three-yard drag route that he took another 11 yards up the flat at the top of the second quarter. Stocker got good separation down the seam for a 16-yard catch on the run for a 22-yard gain.

Routes

Good, fluid turn to the outside on a drag route that he set up with an inside release as if he were going to block down on a defender on this play action pass that he caught three yards downfield for another 11 yards with 14:55 in the half.

Receiving

Stocker's first target was a drag route where he released inside and pivoted to the outside as the QB rolled to that side. He caught the ball with his hands at chest level on the run in the flat about three yards downfield with a linebacker and defensive end in pursuit at the top of the second quarter. He gained 14 yards on the play. Stocker's next target came in the early fourth quarter from freshman Tyler Bray with Tennessee down by 27 with 12:45 left. Stocker made a nice twisting catch down the seam 16 yards downfield with his hands extended ahead of the trailing linebacker, gaining another six as he turned up field into the oncoming safety. Stocker's final target came on 2nd and goal from the eight yard line with 8:50 left. He was the slot receiver from a bunch formation to the right of the line. He released up field, pushed off the defender five yards downfield and turned inside, but dropped the pass in tight coverage.

Elusiveness

Ball Handling

Excellent job tucking the ball tightly to his body after turning back to the pass on a 16-yard seam route that he took upfield into a safety's hit on his ball-carrying arm with 12:38 in the game.

Balance

Blocking

Stocker's first block was an I formation run on the first play of the game. He motioned across the formation, released off left end and targeted on the OLB, getting his hands on the defender. He overran his angle just enough that he couldn't generate a push on the defender, shielding him from the play. He used his hands to deliver a solid punch on the OLB on I formation pass to the opposite sideline to a receiver for a short gain with 8:00 in the first quarter. He overran his assignment on the ILB on a bunch formation run off the right side with 7:30 in the first quarter. He was able to get his hands on the shoulder of the ILB, but his positioning was so bad that the ILB easily shot the gap and dropped the runner for a loss. Stocker does not have quick feet as a blocker on edge defenders. On two plays in the first half he was beat the edge but the QB already got the pass off before the defender could generate pressure. On a 1st and 10 pass play, Stocker was asked to come across the formation from his spot as the wing back off left tackle and block the edge rusher from the right side with 14:30 in the half. Stocker bit on an inside move of the OLB and then could not move his feet fast enough to prevent the defender from getting around him to the quarterback for a sack. Stocker came out of his stance as the wing back on the right side of the formation and got position on the OLB but did not deliver a punch. The OLB then dipped away from Stocker, leaving the TE behind to pursue the backside of a run. Stocker did not attempt to block anyone else or give chase on this 1st and 10 play with 11:54 in the half. He missed another block trying to get his hands on an OLB around the edge as a slot receiver in a bunch formation with 10:00 in the third quarter. He got his hands on the OLB on coming off the left end on a pitch around that side for a two-yard score with 7:07 in the third quarter, but he didn't get into the body of the defender and sustain it. He did manage to shield a linebacker about 15 yards down the sideline after running a route that cleared the path for a screen pass for nine yards with 2:50 in the third quarter. Stocker pass blocked the ROLB on a 3rd and 1 pass play with 2:00 in the third quarter, getting his hands into the defender and continuing to replace his hands as the defender knocked them away, but the quarterback held onto the ball a long time, rolling to Stocker's side and the OLB immediately ripped the TE's hands away and got outside of Stocker for the sack.

Vision

Power

Stocker finished his 11-yard gain up the right flat by lowering his pads into the hit of the safety at the sideline for total of 14 yards with 14:58 in the half.

Durability

Character

The Rookie Scouting Portfolio Tight End Scouting Checklist

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

Overall Score:

Category Scores

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

Game Stats

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

Routes

Awareness of sideline - 2pts: Yes
 Gets appropriate route depth - 5pts: Yes
 Works back to quarterback - 1pt: Yes
 Breaks back to football - 5pts: Yes
 Sinks hips into breaks - 5pts: No
 Finds soft area of zone coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Doesn't tip off route - 3 pts: Yes
 Sets up breaks - 1pt: No
 Uses body to shield defender from the ball - 3pts: Yes

Separation

Uses hands effectively to release from press - 3pts: No
 Uses feet effectively to release from press - 3pts: No
 Gets vertical separation on intermediate/deep routes - 1pt: Yes

Elusiveness

Lower body jukes - 1pt: No
 Upper body jukes - 1pt: No
 Avoids direct shots - 1pt: No
 Can string moves together in space - 1pt: No
 Makes sharp lateral cuts - 1 pt: No

Vision

Good decisions - 2pts: Yes
 Patience - 1pt: No
 Open field - 2pts: No

Receiving

Gets head around and hands ups quickly out of break - 3pts: No
 Adjusts body to the football - 1pt: Yes
 Catches ball with hands away from body - 5pts: Yes
 Catches ball cleanly - 7pts: Yes
 Catches ball with back to the line of scrimmage - 1pt: Yes
 Catches the ball after contact - 5pts: No
 Catches ball in tight coverage - 3pts: Yes
 Makes difficult catches - 1pt: Yes

Ball Handling

Carries ball under correct arm - 1pt.: Yes
 Demonstrates ball security - 2 pts: Yes
 Maintains control of ball when hit - 3 pts: Yes

Blocking

Diagnoses blocking assignments correctly - 1pt: Yes
 Effective cut block technique -1pt: No
 Good hand placement on stand up blocks - 2pts: Yes
 Can deliver a punch on stand up blocks - 2pts: Yes
 Mirrors/moves feet effectively on stand up blocks - 1pt: Yes

Power

Leg power, drives through arm tackles - 2pts: Yes
 Effective stiff arm - 1pt: No
 Runs behind pad/Has good pad level - 1pt: Yes
 Second effort/keeps legs moving after contact - 1pt: Yes

Durability

Missed fewer than 10% of opportunities to play thus far in college career - 2pts: N/A
 Without chronic injuries throughout college career (Two or more injuries to same body part) - 2pts: N/A
 Without injuries requiring extensive rehabilitation during college career - 2pts.: N/A

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name: Luke Stocker

Date: 12/30/2010

Opponent: UNC

Overall Strengths:

Despite the fact that Stocker could use another 10-15 pounds to fill out his tall, lanky frame, he is effective as a run blocker. He fired off the line quickly and routinely turned defensive tackles, defensive ends and linebackers away from the play with a solid punch and good hand position, which he established quickly. This is what will earn him an opportunity to contribute in the NFL right away. He probably will be asked to add more weight to his frame, which could keep him in a reserve role early in his career. However, he has the hands, vertical leaping ability and initial burst to develop into a decent pass-catching tight end in an offense that uses play action or is willing to split Stocker outside where he can use his height to his advantage on short-to-intermediate routes.

Overall Weaknesses:

Stocker is not a tackle breaker or dynamic run after the catch threat with the ball in his hands. He may struggle against bigger DLs and LBs in the NFL because of his tall, lanky frame. Despite a good punch, he might lack the leverage to sustain blocks in the run game. He might be limited to a slot receiver or move-TE spot in a passing game that functions like the Chargers, Saints or Packers. However, his deep speed is a question mark. I didn't see him handle press coverage in this game and that will be a very important factor with any analysis on him. He needs to improve his concentration to catch the football after contact and he dropped a pass in this game because his hands came up too late out of his break. His score is lower than his potential, but he has to add more muscle mass and perform with greater consistency in the passing game against tight coverage.

Separation

Stocker got down the left seam from his starting spot slot left in the flat on 2nd and 12 with 12:33 in the first quarter getting behind the safety, but the QB threw the ball straight down the field as if the route were a seam and Stocker angled inside as if it were a post. Stocker got behind the safety again on the next play as he went down the right seam, but the QB threw the ball behind the TE.

Routes

On 2nd and 11 with 14:19 in the first quarter, Stocker motioned to right end with his team in a shotgun, three-receiver set (2x1) against a nickel look. Stocker ran a simple flat route underneath the zone, catching the pass two yards downfield with his hands near his back shoulder and turned up field for another seven yards. Stocker got down the left seam from his starting spot slot left in the flat on 2nd and 12 with 12:33 in the first quarter getting behind the safety, but the QB threw the ball straight down the field as if the route were a seam and Stocker angled inside as if it were a post. He made a very quick turn on the run on a hook up the right seam from the slot on 1st and 10 to create a nice target for his QB for a five-yard reception that he took another three yards up field with 5:40 in the first quarter. Stocker tried to work his way open in the middle of the field for the QB on 3rd and 4 with 2:57 in the half, but the QB could not get the pass off cleanly and the ball was deflected after his release. Stocker did a nice job catching a pass thrown above his head as he came back to the ball 10 yards downfield in tight coverage to snare the ball with his hands and then turn inside the DB for another four, dragging the defender with him on 1st and 10 with 5:47 in the third quarter. He ran a seam route from slot left on the play and then worked his way back to the QB to get open, coming back to the passer and the ball to shield the defender in tight coverage.

Receiving

On 2nd and 11 with 14:19 in the first quarter, Stocker motioned to right end with his team in a shotgun, three-receiver set (2x1) against a nickel look. Stocker ran a simple flat route underneath the zone, catching the pass two yards downfield with his hands near his back shoulder and turned up field for another seven yards. He made a very quick turn on the run on a hook up the right seam from the slot on 1st and 10 to create a nice target for his QB for a five-yard reception that he took another three yards up field with 5:40 in the first quarter. Good effort to get his hands away from his chest to catch the ball before turning up field. Stocker dropped a 3rd and 10 slant with 12:03 in the half when he tried to catch the ball with his hands very close to his body and the CB in coverage did a fine job of hitting Stocker in the back and wrapping the TE to the ground. The ball bounced out of Stocker's hands before he could secure the reception and into the arms of a UNC LB for an interception. Stocker did a good job of getting his head around on the break of the slant, but he was lazy getting his hands up and it cost his team the football. Stocker caught a three-yard flat route from left end with his hands near his back shoulder and turned up the sideline for another three yards with 10:10 in the third quarter. Stocker did a nice job catching a pass thrown above his head as he came back to the ball 10 yards downfield in tight coverage to snare the ball with his hands and then turn inside the DB for another four, dragging the defender with him on 1st and 10 with 5:47 in the third quarter. Stocker's final catch was a 20-yard TD on 2nd and 5 in OT. He got behind the LB down the right hash from the slot and did a beautiful job of high-pointing the ball thrown over his head ala Lynn Swann against tight coverage in the end zone for the score. One of the best catches I've seen by a TE this year.

Elusiveness

Stocker isn't a very fluid runner after the catch. He can get his pads low to deliver a hit, but he's not going to consistently make the first defender miss, hurdle a play or elude full contact shots. He lowered his pads into a safety on a 1st and 10 hook route five yards downfield, getting the first hit and falling head over feet for a total of eight yards with 5:35 in the first quarter.

Ball Handling

Good job falling on the fumble of a CB that lost the ball after returning a 2nd and 14 interception up the flat with 10:02 in the first quarter. Stocker did a nice job catching a pass thrown above his head as he came back to the ball 10 yards downfield in tight coverage to snare the ball with his hands and then turn inside the DB for another four, dragging the defender with him on 1st and 10 with 5:47 in the third quarter. He carried this attempt under his left arm and protected the ball well.

Balance

Blocking

Stocker motioned to right end from the I formation and at the snap delivered a decent punch to the RDE on a run to that side, pushing the defender away from the flow of the play on the first offensive snap of the game. He used another nice punch to drive the LDE back on a 1st and 15 run for three yards with 13:00 in the first quarter. Good effort to go after the LB once he got past the DE on a 1st and 10 running play off RG with 9:50 in the first quarter. He didn't get a great hit, but he did work hard to get there and deliver a blow. Excellent job firing off the ball, hitting the DT first and turning him outside on a six-yard gain inside his block on a 2nd and 7 run with 4:33 in the first quarter. He showed impressive quickness off the line and a quality punch. Stocker attempted a cut block on the LDE on the backside of a 1st and 10 end around with 14:05 in the half. He dropped too low (below the knees) of the defender, which only forced the DE backwards on the play. At the same time, Stocker didn't flop to the ground so he was able to retain his feet and continue to move with the flow of the play. Good hustle to move with the CB and stay square to the defender to turn the player and shield him outside of the swing pass to the RB on 1st and 10 with 9:20 in the half. He made another nice initial punch on the RDT after motioning to right end on a 2nd and 9 run to that side with 3:36 in the half. Stocker finished the block by dipping under the defender to stay in front of his opponent as they moved towards the flow of the play. This subtle move helped him shield the defender from the ball carrier. Excellent job getting low enough to take the hit of the OLB off left end and use his hands and feet in sync to drive the LB off the ball for five yards to help his RB gain eight on a 1st and 10 run to his size from deep in their own territory with 12:08 in the third quarter. On a short post for a TD with 5:16 left, Stocker got a good shot on the inside shoulder of the safety off left end, knocking the defender to the ground and then getting on top of the defender to keep him down.

Vision

Power

On 2nd and 11 with 14:19 in the first quarter, Stocker motioned to right end with his team in a shotgun, three-receiver set (2x1) against a nickel look. Stocker ran a simple flat route underneath the zone, catching the pass two yards downfield with his hands near his back shoulder and turned up field for another seven yards. He finished the play by lowering his pads into the safety and bounced off the hit out of bounds. Stocker did a nice job catching a pass thrown above his head as he came back to the ball 10 yards downfield in tight coverage to snare the ball with his hands and then turn inside the DB for another four, dragging the defender with him on 1st and 10 with 5:47 in the third quarter.

The Gut Check's TE Scouting Analysis

Name:

Luke Stocker

Date:

12/30/2010

Opponent:

UNC

Durability

Character