

# WELCOME BACK!

A lot has gone down since this guide was first published. Rory McIlroy got it done at the Masters, the *Severance* season finale had us at the edge of our seats, and people started using AI to make action figures of themselves or something?

Oh, right, the NFL Draft happened, too!

With the draft now in the rearview, this guide is looking a whole lot different. The Year 2 section looks the exact same, but take a look at the changes made since the pre-draft version was published:

- The running back and wide receiver prospect models are now incorporating **mock draft big board data**. You can learn more about this from [Episode 977 of The Late-Round Podcast](#).
- All draft profiles now include an **updated ZAP Model score** along with their **Draft Capital Delta** risk profiles. (Only drafted players have Draft Capital Delta risk profiles.)
- Relevant, **higher-end rookies have an updated profile breakdown** that talks about the player's new outlook. On a player's profile page, you'll see the word "update" before their blurb, designating new information about the player.
- **Tight end ZAP scores** are now part of the guide. You can find them in the Prospect Profiles section.
- The **rookie rankings cheatsheet** is redone, and the **rookie rankings notes** are updated, too.
- A **new ZAP Model cheatsheet** was created to provide a snapshot of how the models view each player.

It's time to rock and roll.

# LATE-ROUND PROSPECT GUIDE

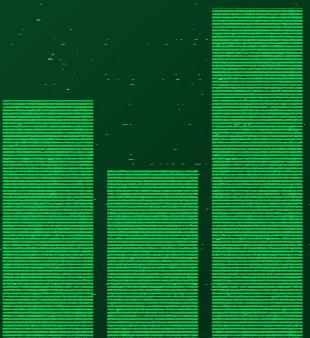


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Specific cells are highlighted with yellow outlines:

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# Introduction

Eight men were placed in a room together for an experiment in 1951. The psychologist running things, Solomon Asch, showed the participants two separate cards. The first card had one line on it. The second card had three, with the lines labeled A, B, and C.

The card with three lines on it – the ones categorized as A, B, and C – had a line that was identical in length to the single one on the other card. The men were then told to say, out loud and in order, which line corresponded with the line on the first card.

The catch? Seven of the eight men were actors. And that eighth person was positioned to always answer last.

The subjects completed 18 rounds of trials. During the first couple of series, all participants gave the obvious, right answer. But, as the experiment moved forward, the actors began providing the *wrong* answer. And each one would align with one another, saying the exact same incorrect thing.

This was repeated with many different groups, and the results were kind of staggering.

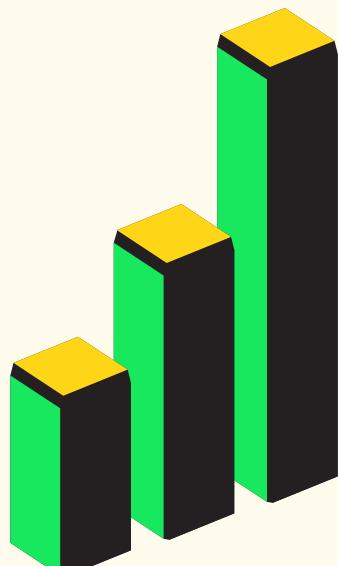
Despite the answers to the line question being painfully clear each round, nearly 36% of the responses from the non-actors were incorrect. In a control group with zero actors involved, the error rate was less than 0.7%.

The pressure to conform is very, very real.

And, to be honest, that pressure is one of the reasons you're reading this guide right now.

I started analytically prospecting collegiate running backs and wide receivers in 2017. With not a whole lot of confidence.

I had read about metrics that seemed to correlate to NFL success, and I leaned on some of those numbers when evaluating players who were looking to transition to the pros. When the data would



say one thing and the consensus would say another, though, I'd freeze. There was never enough substance for me to hold my ground and self-assuredly blast my takes into the draft conversation.

Just like the non-actor in the Asch experiment, I'd follow the herd.

But what good does that do?

That was a question I asked myself after the 2019 season. My rookie rankings that year were pitiful. My NFL Draft analysis was an abomination.

Something had to change.

That “something” ended up being a more comprehensive prospect model. I needed a method that I could firmly rely on. I needed to test and find the best ways to spot the top players in a draft class, or else I’d be in this vicious and obnoxious cycle of blindly following groupthink each year.

Over the last handful of years, that needed confidence has been built. The Zachariason-Adjusted Prospect Model, or ZAP Model for short, has spotted late-round gems like Isiah Pacheco and Tyrone Tracy. It knew to not overstate Chris Olave’s declare status when he came out. It was on top of Brian Thomas Jr. last year as a high-ceiling player, it had Jayden Reed as a solid selection, and it saw that Velus Jones was going to...well, everyone saw that coming.

The ZAP Model has morphed and transformed since its inception, and there are even more changes to it here in 2025.

But, at its core, it’s given me -- us -- the necessary assurance to do less following and more leading.

What’s the point in conforming when the NFL Draft can be such a crapshoot anyway?

# The ZAP Model

## Overview

The goal of the ZAP Model is pretty straightforward.

**It's trying to predict how well an offensive player will perform in fantasy football across his first three seasons in the league.**

The thought process behind this mission is that you're going to have a general idea of how good a player is after his first three years as a pro. Late-career breakouts happen, but not frequently.

You can measure three-year success in plenty of ways. Should the focus be on a player's raw fantasy total during that timeframe? His average points per game across the three seasons?

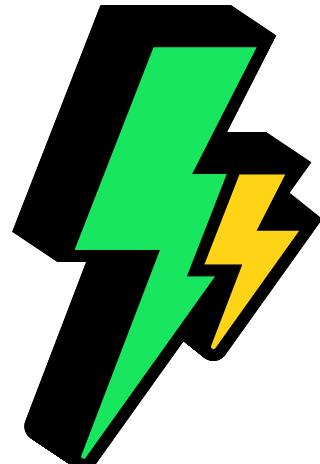
There's no clear-cut answer to those questions, but I've always used what I call "B2S" to help determine a player's worth.

You sick of the acronyms yet?

B2S creatively means "best two seasons". It looks at a player's first three years in the NFL, takes his top-two seasons in points per game in point per reception (PPR) leagues, and it averages those seasons together.

Imagine a world where a wide receiver scored 11 points per game as a rookie, 12 points per game as a second-year player, and 15 points per game as a third-year one. With B2S, we'd throw out the rookie-season number, and we'd average the 12 and 15 rates together. His B2S, then, would be 13.5.

One obvious problem with B2S is that a points per game calculation can be skewed by someone only playing in a couple of games. What if some wide receiver started a season off hot,



played three games with 21 points per game, but then blew out his knee before his fourth contest? Should we count that season as a 21-point-per-game one?

That doesn't seem all that logical.

In order to get genuine, reasonable averages, there's a minimum threshold of eight games that needs to be met by a player for his season to count. Otherwise, the player is taking a zero for that season.

So, going back to our example, if that wideout had only played five games during his second year in the league and at least 12 in his other two, then his B2S wouldn't be 13.5. It'd be 13. Rather than taking his second season as one of the data points to average, we'd toss that and look at his rookie season where he played more than eight games.

That's B2S. And that's what the model is attempting to predict.

But...how?

*Great question.*

I've worked with a lot of college football data over the years. With that experience, I've been able to put together formulas at running back, wide receiver, and tight end that do effectively tell us who the best prospects are in each class for fantasy purposes.

And I know that because of testing.

With any model, you need to make sure it works.

**Anyone can throw some numbers together and claim to have an answer. If those numbers aren't meaningful-- if they're not solving anything -- **then they're not valuable.****

You also should ensure the model is better than something that's

already readily available to anyone.

We've all filled out a March Madness bracket before, right?

Consider a world where the lower, worse seed never won a game in that tourney. After decades of the NCAA Tournament, we always saw number-one seeds in the Final Four.

If that were the case, not only would college basketball be a whole lot more boring -- there wouldn't be much "madness" -- but there would be no reason to depart from the top seeds when filling out your bracket. There wouldn't be much use for a model to help sift through the most undervalued and overvalued teams in the tournament. Literally anyone could pick a perfect bracket by just selecting only the favorites.

This same idea can be carried over to the NFL Draft with prospects. Rather than analyzing a team's seed, though, we'd be looking at a player's draft capital.

For those unfamiliar with the term, draft capital is simply where a player was selected in the NFL Draft. Malik Nabers and Marvin Harrison Jr. had high draft capital in 2024, while Malik Washington was a Day 3 pick. His draft capital wasn't nearly as strong.

If player success followed draft capital perfectly, then there'd be no need for a ZAP Model. We could just look at an NFL Draft board and select players based on where they were picked. The first running back would be the RB1, the second running back selected would be the RB2, and so on.

When testing the prospect models, draft capital is the first thing I test against. It's the first thing I look at to know whether or not the models are worthwhile. If the model is no better at predicting B2S than draft capital itself, then that model is useless.

Thankfully, that's not the case. Each of the models you'll be reading about in this guide are better at predicting B2S than draft capital itself.



This is probably a good time to point out *who* is being tested.  
Which players am I actually looking at with these formulas?

The wide receiver and running back models analyze all players who were invited to the NFL Combine or who were drafted since 2011. There's typically a ton of overlap there -- if a player gets drafted, he usually was a combine participant. But we get one or two guys each season who sort of slip through the cracks and get drafted out of nowhere.

The tight end model is a bit different, as it looks only at drafted players at the position. More on that later.

Like I was saying, though: The models are more helpful to look at for B2S purposes than draft capital itself. But what really takes them to the next level is when draft capital becomes an actual input into the models.

Maybe that's a turnoff for you, but my goal isn't to predict where a running back or wide receiver will get drafted. It's not to tell you if a player should get scooped up in Round 2 or Round 5 of the NFL Draft. There are plenty of analysts who are *great* at that.

## My goal is to help you win at fantasy football. **Period.**

The last time I checked, there's no medal awarded for ignoring draft capital when making a selection during your rookie draft. Some rookie drafts do happen before the NFL Draft goes down, sure, but the vast majority of league drafts occur when Roger Goodell's bro hugs are in the rearview.

Why wouldn't we use that information?

Draft capital is the single most important factor in each ZAP Model. NFL teams are putting millions and millions of dollars in their draft-day decisions. They have teams of scouts and analytics people helping them optimize those choices. I'm just a dude living in my mom's basement.

Ignoring that input just seems silly.

With draft capital being such an important piece, there's naturally going to be a strong correlation between where a player was drafted and his overall ZAP score. This is by design.

## Really, the models exist to show you when to deviate from draft capital.

To be clear, though, we're not trying to just beat the NFL during our fantasy drafts. Being more predictive than draft capital alone is great, but it's more helpful to be better than our actual competition -- our leaguemates.

Fortunately, every ZAP Model is better at predicting B2S than rookie average draft position (ADP) as well. In other words, if you were to blindly follow the ZAP Model instead of some ADP data -- which is formulated by the fantasy football masses -- then you'd come out on top more often than not.

Cool? Cool.

You ready to learn about what goes into these things now?

## The Wide Receiver ZAP Model

The positional ZAP Models get tweaked each year. Not only does our sample of players to test become larger, but my brain sometimes just thinks of some new ideas from one iteration to the next.

Take last year's version as an example. For years, the Breakout Age metric was an input in the wide receiver model. Breakout Age, for those unfamiliar, is a number that represents the age of a player when he hit a certain threshold in Dominator Rating. And Dominator Rating, for those unfamiliar, is essentially the percentage of team receiving production a player was able to accumulate in college.

The idea behind Breakout Age is valid. When a player produces early in his collegiate career, he's likely better than a player who only produces late. If a 10-year-old can play *Canon in D* on the piano the same way a 17-year-old can, chances are, when both piano players hit 20, the 10-year-old will be better.

(I used that analogy in last year's guide, and it felt like a good one to stick with.)

Breakout Age got signal in earlier models, but I've always had issues with it. Mainly that it's far too binary. It's too black and white. A wideout could be *this* close to hitting the proper threshold, but, if he didn't, he'd be lumped in with the random pass-catcher who had three receptions all season long.

To that point, Breakout Age doesn't account for the degree of the breakout. It's like if you were trying to find the richest person in a room full of 500 people, and you just asked for people to raise their hand if they had a net worth over one million dollars. Google tells me that 12% of United States households have that net worth, so, chances are, you'd get multiple people raising their hands.

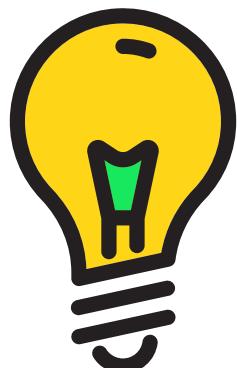
So, uh, who's the richest?

This frustration with Breakout Age led me to *Breakout Score* a year ago. Like Breakout Age, Breakout Score is attempting to look at age-adjusted collegiate production. Unlike Breakout Age, it's not using one singular threshold. It's also not messing with Dominator Rating, a metric that has flaws of its own.

Breakout Score analyzes a player's adjusted receiving yards per team pass attempt at various ages throughout his collegiate career.

I need to explain that a little more, don't I?

OK. Receiving yards per team pass attempt. That looks at a player's receiving yards and divides it by the number of pass



attempts his team had in a given season. The ZAP Model uses a prorated version, so, if a player misses a little time, that helps account for it. If he plays fewer than six games in a season, though, then that season won't count towards his Breakout Score.

The "adjusted" piece is all about strength of competition. And that's where some changes were made from last year to this one.

In the past, receiving yards per team pass attempt was adjusted with a conference multiplier. A wideout playing in the SEC would get more juice than one who played in the SWAC. It's easier to be a stat compiler on South Alabama than it is Alabama, after all.

There wasn't anything wrong with that conference multiplier methodology, but there's a lot of change that's happened in college football, making it a little difficult to manage. So, here in 2025, rather than using that multiplier, the model is leveraging Sports Reference's strength of schedule numbers. Those are then translated to the proper multiplier for a player's receiving yards per team pass attempt.

Every wide receiver will amass a prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt figure each season. That number then gets adjusted for strength of schedule. Once that's done, the ZAP Model looks at the player's age during said season, and it generates a Breakout Score based on all of the wide receiver's seasons. That score is what gets inputted into the model.

**Breakout Score has a much stronger correlation to B2S than Breakout Age does. And it makes the ZAP Model a lot more effective.**

The only other production-focused metric that gets thrown into the wide receiver ZAP Model is related to rushing. This is a change from last year's model, where fantasy points per game

was also an input. That's been tossed out: less is often more with modeling.

Rushing production at wide receiver oddly -- but also not oddly -- gets some signal. When a player is used in a lot of different ways at the collegiate level, it's likely because his coaches want to put the ball in his hands. In college football, you'll often see some of the best players return kicks and punts. Or you'll see top wide receivers get more work than usual as runners. That's because those are low-risk ways to give playmakers the rock.

This is probably why something as simple as rushing yards helps the model. Because it's not only telling us that a player is versatile. It's telling us that he's talented.

Breakout Score gets a whole lot more weight in the model than rushing production does, but the latter still has a place.

There are a handful of other factors that help formulate a wideout's ZAP score, too.

Early-declare status is one of them.

Through the years, there's been some controversy around the predictiveness of early-declare status. Maybe that chatter doesn't make it to your family dinner table, but it's out there.

The big-brained thinking around early-declare status isn't much different than the thinking around Breakout Age: If a player decides to leave college early -- if he declares early for the draft -- then that player is probably better than one who chooses to stick around another year.

Why would a wide receiver want to forgo his Senior season for the NFL? Likely because he's projected to get drafted fairly high, right? And the only way he'd be slotted to go early in the NFL Draft is if he was good at the game.

That's why early-declare status gets a little bit of weight.

Name, image, and likeness (NIL) deals are shifting this importance a bit. When a player can make millions in college, he may actually want to just hang out there for a minute rather than going pro. So there's a chance early-declare status becomes more and more obsolete with future model fixes.

But, for now, it's something that the wide receiver ZAP Model cares about. It's not as vital as some in the fantasy football analytics world views it, but it's something.

Teammate Score is another factor in this thing. When a wide receiver plays alongside high-caliber pass-catcher teammates in college, it seems to matter. Calculating Teammate Score is imperfect, but it does use draft capital of teammates drafted in the current year and previous seasons.

Lastly, a wide receiver's size gets a little bit of...weight. (See what I did there?)

Small wide receivers aren't incapable of being great fantasy assets, but, the smaller they are, the better that Breakout Score needs to be in order to get a high ZAP score.

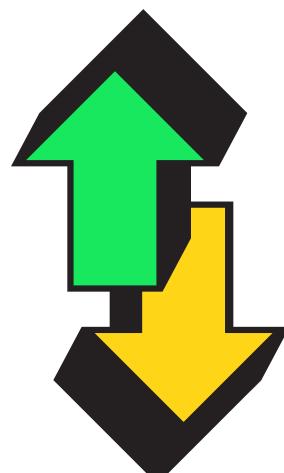
After combining these inputs -- Breakout Score, rushing production, early-declare status, Teammate Score, and size -- draft capital gets layered on top. Those factors, then, create a wide receiver's ZAP score.

Oh, right. *Athleticism*. You're probably wondering why I haven't talked about NFL Combine measurables yet.

It's because they don't matter at wide receiver.

Seriously.

You'd assume physically-gifted wide receivers would be better than the alternative. I mean, subjectively, you probably would want an enormous and athletic wide receiver on your team over a tiny and slow one.



**But it's very rare for completely unathletic wide receivers to get drafted highly in the first place.**

Part of the reason size and athleticism aren't a big deal in the wide receiver model is because those things are likely already captured in draft capital. And draft capital itself is in the model.

Not only that, but wide receivers do different jobs on a football field. Mike Evans doesn't win the same way Ladd McConkey does. Both can be productive in fantasy football in very different ways.

If a player completely bombs the NFL Combine, you'd probably think about removing that player from your consideration set. Most likely, though, that same player won't have good draft capital. And he likely wouldn't have had the best college production profile. So, in the end, the lack of athleticism doesn't matter much because more important dynamics weren't going his way.

Don't overstate the NFL Combine. At least at wide receiver.

## **The Running Back ZAP Model**

This is going to sound extremely strange. It'll even sound *wrong* to some of you.

The running back ZAP Model no longer has any rushing metrics in it.

Is that bad? It seems bad.

Look, I'm as shocked as you are, but it's true: The 2025 version of the running back ZAP Model includes zero rushing production.

After doing some testing with the new strength-of-schedule methodology that was referenced earlier, it became obvious that adjusted receiving yards per team pass attempt not only works best for wide receiver Breakout Score, but it does for running back

Breakout Score as well.

With these prospect models, it's important to remember that there are multiple inputs working together to create a player's overall score. Some of those inputs may be capturing attributes we don't even know they're capturing.

What's happening here, more than likely, is that something like draft capital -- one of the main things that gets pushed into the running back ZAP Model -- is accounting for a player's rushing success. Or, it's accounting for *enough* of it.

The running back model is *really* focused on the receiving side of a player's game as a result. Remember, we're measuring against full PPR production at the NFL level, so receiving is going to play a bigger role. And pass-catching is another one of those traits that indicates talent.

**The more well-rounded a running back is, the better he'll probably be at playing the position at the next level.**

Going back to what was said earlier, the ZAP Model is attempting to show you when to stray away from draft capital. It's become increasingly clear, after years of doing this, that draft capital isn't valuing the receiving portion to a running back's profile quite enough. That's why Breakout Score at running back is represented by adjusted receiving yards per team pass attempt, just like it is at wide receiver.

There are other items being placed into the running back ZAP Model, not just Breakout Score. Prorated best-season reception share is one. That's the only other production-related metric that gets tossed in, and it's one that's consistently been in the ZAP Model for years.

Reception share is self-explanatory: It measures the percentage of team receptions a running back gobble up. The model includes a

player's top season within the metric, and it looks at it on a per-game basis, minimum six games played.

Just like the wide receiver model, the running back one has a Teammate Score. It's not always fair to penalize running backs when they're playing alongside studs.

Age is another thing the running back model looks at. The adjusted numbers in the wide receiver model appear to capture the age element better than they do with the running back one. It's that simple.

And then, lastly, we've got a couple of controversial contributions to the model. Both of them have to do with size.

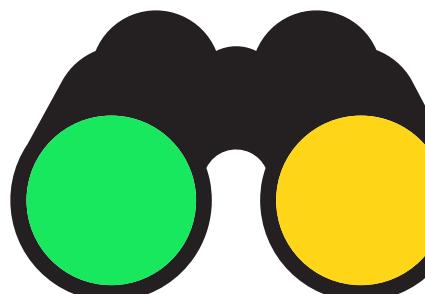
Over the last few years, we've seen an uptick in higher-end running backs who come in on the lower end of the size spectrum. James Cook. De'Von Achane. Jahmyr Gibbs. Kyren Williams. Bucky Irving. All of those guys were *great* in 2024 from a fantasy perspective. And all of those guys are on the smaller side from a weight perspective for a typical running back.

It's really easy to knock the idea that "bigger is better" -- for running backs, of course -- when we've seen the recent results that we've seen. But it's *incredibly* important to remember that we're not looking at running back size and running back size only. It's just a piece to the puzzle.

Take Jahmyr Gibbs. There are a whole lot of people in the fantasy space who think that someone like yours truly doesn't like Gibbs because he weighed in at 199 pounds at the NFL Combine. He didn't hit the 200-pound threshold, so surely he was a bad prospect.

You're telling me that had Jahmyr Gibbs not done his bathroom business in the morning that day, his NFL outlook would've completely flipped?

Folks, using a strict threshold of 200 pounds is bad analysis. And you have to remember that all of these numbers in the prospect model work together. There's draft capital. There's Breakout Score. There's reception share. There's all of the things we've



been talking about for the last 4,000 words of this guide.

The ZAP Model *loves* Jahmyr Gibbs. It's totally cool with De'Von Achane and James Cook. And, with the upgrades made this offseason, it even likes Kyren Williams and Bucky Irving more than it used to!

That's because each of those successful small running backs weren't zeroes when it came to the other inputs in the model. Gibbs has *the* best Breakout Score in the database. Achane had an *elite* best-season reception share. James Cook's Breakout Score was really good, too. And Williams and Irving, as Day 3 picks, were also really strong receivers in college.

Don't take this the wrong way: When it comes to someone like Bucky Irving, who was a player the model really did not like last season, it's not as though everything is now looking pretty. That's because he was on the smaller side, and he *also* ran a slow 40-yard dash.

That brings me to controversial input number two: Speed Score.

Back in the day, Bill Barnwell developed Speed Score after correctly understanding and realizing that not all 40-yard dashes are alike. A guy running a 4.4 40 at 200 pounds is a lot different than a player doing the same thing at 230 pounds.

And the model mostly agrees.

A solid Speed Score is typically around 100. The ZAP Model begins to ding a player when he's below the 92 mark, and a running back who gets into the upper percentiles in Speed Score receives extra points to his overall score. The majority of running backs in the ZAP Model will see no impact whatsoever with Speed Score.

Bucky Irving wasn't one of those players, though.

Irving's Speed Score was only 89.6 thanks to his weighing in at 192 pounds at the NFL Combine last year. His top-season in reception share was solid, and his Breakout Score of 78.4 looks decent for a Day 3 pick, too. So there were some marks to his

profile that could've pointed to him being an undervalued player. But his score, in sum, was pretty ordinary.

If it were up to me, running back size would be irrelevant. It just doesn't seem irrelevant to coaches. Smaller backs aren't usually seeing the massive workloads we'd want them to see for fantasy purposes. And volume is what we're after in fantasy football.

The good news is that smaller backs can *absolutely* make up for their size in the ZAP Model with strong numbers elsewhere. Especially with this year's iteration of the formula. Irving went from being a total red flag last season to a pretty neutral selection. Kyren Williams, who's known for his atrocious 40 time, looks like a *good* draft pick.

That's all because the model is properly -- in my analytical eyes and mind, at least -- utilizing pass-catching metrics.

But that's it. That's the running back model. You've got Breakout Score, which is driven by schedule-adjusted receiving yards per team pass attempt. There's best-season reception share, too. And then it's also looking at weight, Speed Score, Teammate Score, and age. After draft capital gets placed on top, we're ready to rock.

## **The Tight End ZAP Model**

My efforts with prospecting have focused primarily on running backs and wide receivers through the years. Those positions mean more to fantasy football, and, honestly, there's just more you can do with their collegiate production.

Tight end is a little different. I mean, the position itself is *really* different. Unlike wide receivers, tight ends aren't typically running a high number of routes. There are fewer players at the position giving us flashy receiving totals. They're blocking more.

And NFL teams are drafting them to not just be dynamic pass-catchers, but to also be an offensive line extension.

## In other words, what we're trying to solve in fantasy football isn't always what an NFL team is trying to solve.

That creates a little more difficulty when prospecting. Draft capital, for example, ends up influencing the tight end prospect score a little less compared to running back and wide receiver.

All of these things -- and some data limitations -- led me to working with a different overall sample compared to running back and wide receiver. Rather than analyzing all tight ends who've been to the NFL Combine since 2011, the tight end model assesses tight ends who've been drafted since 2015.

The tight end model is arguably more simplistic than the other two as well. Because they're normally not giving us monster rookie seasons, measuring off of B2S isn't as useful. The model, instead, measures against a tight end's top season in PPR points per game across his first three in the league.

I mentioned draft capital, and that does get a good bit of love in the model. But, unlike running back and wide receiver, athleticism matters a whole lot at tight end. Speed Score in particular.

## The bigger and faster the tight end, the higher probability of that tight end being a stud in fantasy football.

Look at it this way: Since 2015, which is the timeframe the tight end model dates back to, the average tight end in the ZAP Model database has a Speed Score of about 101. Roughly 10% of the

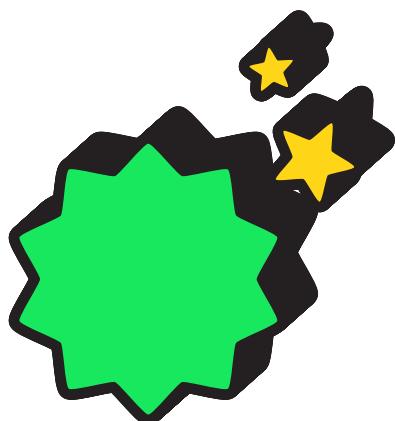
model's tight ends have been able to score 10 or more PPR points per game in a season from Year 1 to Year 3 of their career. Among those elite 10%, the average Speed Score is 109.5.

That's significantly higher than the standard tight end.

Because Speed Score matters.

There's no Breakout Score in the tight end ZAP Model. Draft-day age is a factor, but age-adjusted production is calculated a little differently. Rather than using receiving yards per team pass attempt, the model looks at a tight end's career yards per route run rate.

But, uh, that's really it. The tight end model really just consists of draft capital, Speed Score, yards per route run, and draft-day age. There's more to it -- there are particular combinations and thresholds a tight end can hit to boost his score. Like, for instance, a tight end being drafted in the top-150 with a favorable Speed Score...he gets a bump in his prospect score for that. Those are the types of things the model is analyzing. But those four inputs make up the model in totality.



## Interpreting the Data

The various models take all of these inputs, and they spit out a prospect score. That tally helps predict how well a player is going to perform in fantasy football during the first three years of his career.

But how are you, the person who *didn't* create these models, supposed to interpret the different score results? What does a ZAP score of 75 really mean? What's the difference between a score of 97 and 92?

In the past, this interpretation has been aided by probability tables. On the left side of the table, you'd have a ZAP score range. Then, using the information in said table, you could see the percentage of players in that ZAP score range to hit different PPR point per game thresholds during their first three years in the league.

That's changing. Kind of.

My goal isn't to just make this guide entertaining for all you nerds out there. It's to make it *actionable*. And, frankly, the old method of displaying historical hit rates from the model wasn't the most accurate way of doing things.

Let me explain this a little further. Imagine Player A has a ZAP score of 96.7. Player B's ZAP score is 96.2. The difference between those two players is, then, 0.5.

A dude with a ZAP score of 76.7 and another with one of 76.2 shows the same 0.5-point change. But, for a player who scores in the 70s, the significance of that 0.5 isn't nearly as dramatic.

The tabular data that helped you guys out in the past didn't properly reflect this, since each ZAP score bucket had the same range. One group was for players with scores from 95 to 100, then 90 to 95, and so on. That's not actually capturing things properly, because there's a big difference between a player with a score of 95 and one with a score of 100, when that's not really the case for someone with a score of 60 versus a player with a score of 65.

To help with this, rather than dividing players up in evenly-distributed ZAP score buckets, I've started to split them up into different fantasy football categories. These categories should give you a better idea of what you're working with when presented with a player's ZAP score.

The six categories -- along with their descriptions -- are below:

**Elite Producer:** The best of the best. There's a legitimate shot at getting a cornerstone piece with this type of player.

**Weekly Starter:** Won't have as high of a ceiling as the Elite Producers, but should provide stability in your starting lineup.

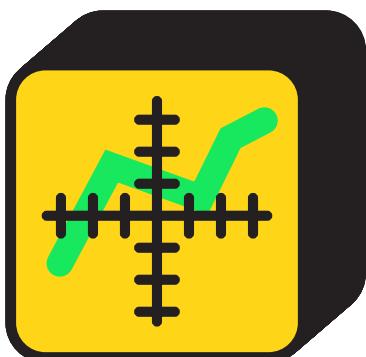
**Flex Play:** Rarely become league-winning players. They can, however, provide usable production.

**Benchwarmer:** Perfect to throw on your bench as insurance.

**Waiver Wire Add:** Probably doesn't need to be rostered, but can, at times, be usable.

**Dart Throw:** Very little chance for success.

Since the ZAP Models are analyzing every player who was either drafted or at the NFL Combine since 2011, most prospects end up being Waiver Wire Adds or Dart Throws. Fewer players are Elite Producers and Weekly Starters, since we don't have a huge number of those types of players impacting fantasy football.



With that all straightened out, here's a look at how the running back model has performed historically through the lens of these categories.

	Running Back (Best Two-Year Average; Years 1-3)					
	>10	>12	>14	>16	>18	>20
Elite Producer	87.5%	79.2%	70.8%	41.7%	25.0%	16.7%
Weekly Starter	61.0%	36.6%	24.4%	17.1%	7.3%	2.4%
Flex Play	25.0%	13.5%	5.8%	5.8%	3.8%	0.0%
Benchwarmer	10.8%	6.3%	1.8%	0.9%	0.9%	0.0%
Waiver Wire Add	2.6%	2.6%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Dart Throw	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The table above represents all ZAP Model running backs since 2011 who have completed three years in the NFL -- we need them to have the full B2S sample locked up to be included. To put that another way, it's every ZAP Model back who was drafted from 2011 through 2022.

The left column represents the different categories that were just introduced to you. As you move your eyes to the right, you'll see the rate that said category was able to hit a particular B2S bucket.

For example, 87.5% of Elite Producers have provided a B2S of 10 or more points per game during the ZAP Model's existence. That number falls as the threshold gets higher, since it's more difficult to score more points.

The table shows us that the model's had success. But there are, of course, some misses. Chris Carson was once a Waiver Wire Add prospect who averaged nearly 15 PPR points per game in B2S. Trent freaking Richardson was an Elite Producer.

No model will be perfect. What's important is knowing that the scores and categorization of said scores is reliable.

Take a look at that same table for the wide receivers:

Wide Receiver (Best Two-Year Average; Years 1-3)						
	>10	>12	>14	>16	>18	>20
Elite Producer	72.2%	52.8%	52.8%	19.4%	11.1%	5.6%
Weekly Starter	37.1%	28.6%	18.6%	8.6%	1.4%	0.0%
Flex Play	20.7%	14.6%	7.3%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Benchwarmer	4.4%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%
Waiver Wire Add	2.3%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Dart Throw	1.9%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Again, the results, in general, look good. But there are some natural, inevitable L's. Tyreek Hill was labeled as a "Benchwarmer", and he...well, he broke football. And some of the guys who looked like sure things ended up not being sure things at all.

No one should be selling you perfection when it comes to prospecting.

Lastly, there's the tight end table. Because our sample size is smaller, there are only four categories for the position.

Tight End (Max Season; Years 1-3)						
	>8	>10	>12	>13	>14	>15
Elite Producer	91.7%	66.7%	41.7%	25.0%	8.3%	8.3%
Weekly Starter	46.7%	20.0%	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%
Waiver Wire Add	10.6%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Dart Throw	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Generally speaking, we should be really hesitant to invest in a tight end who's in the Waiver Wire Add or Dart Throw groups. The Elite Producers and Weekly Starters are fair game, though.

These tables are important to keep in mind as you read through the guide. I'll be providing both ZAP scores *and* ZAP score categories for each prospect, but this will give you an idea of what to expect from a probability standpoint across their first three seasons in the NFL.

## Draft Capital Delta

As I said earlier, since draft capital is a big input in each ZAP Model, there's a natural connection between how one of the models sees a player and where that player was drafted.

Not only that, but good players are often beloved in both film evaluation *and* numbers-based analysis. Ja'Marr Chase has one of the best ZAP scores in the database, but traditional scouting saw Chase as an insanely good prospect, too. There's an obvious overlap in the way the model may view a player and the way the NFL -- draft capital -- does.

What about when there's not?

That's where Draft Capital Delta enters the picture.

Draft Capital Delta measures the difference between a player's ZAP score and where he was selected in the NFL Draft. It's essentially showing us how the models view a player when draft capital isn't a factor.

For example, Stefon Diggs was drafted in 2015, and he was a Flex Play, largely due to the fact that he was selected 146th overall. Since draft capital is a key input to the model, it's going to be difficult for a fifth-round selection to be more than just a Flex Play.

Diggs had a ZAP Score of 71.3. Or, I should say, his score *would've been* 71.3 had the ZAP Model been around back then.

But Diggs' draft capital score, based on him going 146th in the draft, was 60.5. The difference -- the delta -- between those two numbers is +10.8.

That's Stefon Diggs' raw Draft Capital Delta.

Favorable Draft Capital Deltas tend to lead to better outcomes in expected B2S. Which, honestly, shouldn't be a surprise. If that weren't the case, then something would be up with the model. In a really, really bad way.

To me, Draft Capital Delta is kind of a way of measuring risk. A player may have a good ZAP score, but if his Draft Capital Delta is unusually low, it's warning you that there are some negative parts to that player's profile that we typically don't see at that draft capital. That makes the player a more volatile rookie draft selection.

Via this neat invention called math, I've developed a simple Draft Capital Delta system that helps determine whether a player is a high-risk or low-risk player. If the Draft Capital Delta is super high and favorable, then that player comes with less risk. He gets tagged with a "low risk" profile. If it's incredibly low, then there's more of a danger, so he'll be deemed a "high risk" player. Someone whose Draft Capital Delta lands more in the middle has just a "neutral" profile.

Draft Capital Delta can help us find gems, but just remember that it's not the key metric we should be working off of. ZAP score will always be the top priority.

## Adding Subjectivity

I don't know about you, but, when I'm working, I have a hard time listening to songs with lyrics. They distract me. Especially when I'm writing.

While putting together this guide, I've, at times, used Spotify's "song radio" feature. I'll take one of my favorite non-lyrical songs -- maybe *The Light* by Album Leaf -- and I'll let Spotify do its thing and create a playlist for me based on that song.

Most of the time -- 9 times out of 10 -- I'll be pleased with whatever tune the computer plays for me next. But, every now and again, I've got to skip it. It's just not doing it for me.

That's the attitude you should have with this guide. That's how you should look at the ZAP Model.

You may lean on all of this math as you put together your rankings and make selections in your rookie draft.

**Just remember that you don't have to blindly follow everything no matter what.**

It's OK to move on to the next song.

These prospect models should be helpful. They've been tested, and they've been successful in the past, too. But they're not capturing everything. There may be an off-the-field issue that you don't like about a player. Maybe you see something on film that appeals to you. You should allow yourself to consider those things with your evaluation.

I would never tell you to stop at a ZAP score.

I just wouldn't ignore it.

# 2025 Prospect Profiles

## Overview

It's rare for a running back or wide receiver to emerge as a star in the league without an NFL Combine invite. It certainly happens -- Austin Ekeler and Adam Thielen both became studs after being skipped over. But just because there are exceptions to the rule doesn't mean the rule is invalid.

Strictly from a probability perspective, for fantasy football purposes, we should care most about the players who were invited to the NFL Combine. Period. That shouldn't be debated.

So that's where the focus is at for these prospect profiles.

There were 49 wide receiver invites to this year's NFL Combine. There were 31 running backs who were awarded the same honor.

**I profiled them. Every single one of them.  
I looked at their analytical profiles, and I studied  
the type of player they may be at the next level.**

These outlooks are going to change post-draft -- and, when they do, I'll send you an updated version of this guide -- but it's never a bad idea to have a good grasp on a class before the draft happens.

Tight end scores will be published post-draft, too. For now, the focus is on running back and wide receiver.

## Key Terms

**ZAP Score:** The score given to an incoming rookie in the ZAP Model. It's based on the factors outlined in the ZAP Model Overview section of this guide. For pre-draft scores, the draft capital input is based on projected draft capital from NFLMockDraftDatabase.com. All scores range from 0 to 100.

**ZAP Score Category:** Every player's ZAP score coincides with one of six categories, which were talked about earlier. Those categories will be listed on every player's prospect page.

**Breakout Score:** The score given to a player for his age-adjusted production. This is based on yards per team pass attempt for both wide receivers and running backs. All scores range from 0 to 100.

**B2S:** The ZAP Model attempts to predict how well a player will do in fantasy football across his first three years in the league. In doing this, it tests against the average of a player's top-two seasons in PPR points per game during his first three years as a pro. This is referred to as B2S (Best Two Seasons).

**Draft Capital Delta:** The difference between a player's ZAP score versus where he was drafted in the actual NFL Draft. A very low Draft Capital Delta will be displayed as a "high risk" profile. A very high one will be shown as a "low risk" profile. Most players will simply be "neutral". *Draft Capital Deltas will be published in the post-draft version of the guide.*

**Speed Score:** A concept developed by Bill Barnwell to help appropriately weight 40-yard dash times based on a player's size.

**Statistical Comparables:** Players in history who appear to have similar analytical profiles to the player being analyzed. This is based on things like size, age, Breakout Score, and other production metrics.

# Wide Receiver

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# TRAVIS HUNTER • WR



97.1

ZAP Score

COLORADO	ELITE PRODUCER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'0	Weight: 188	NFL Team: Jaguars	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Calvin Ridley • John Ross • Justin Jefferson

**Update:** Statistically, Travis Hunter's profile isn't totally there. He's got a 66.9 Breakout Score, which is a 15th percentile one compared to other first-rounders in the ZAP Model's database. His top year in receiving yards per team pass attempt came in at 2.61, a 20th percentile mark. Hunter's best season in yards per route run, per PFF, was 2.51, which happened during his final campaign at Colorado. There are 27 wideouts in this year's class who topped that in one of their collegiate seasons.

In most cases, this would be a profile to avoid. Travis Hunter, though, isn't "most cases."

Hunter played on both offense and defense throughout his college career, typically taking reps and getting practice in as a cornerback. That certainly didn't make stat compiling at wide receiver any easier on him.

Colorado's pass-heavy offense also often deployed many wide receivers on the field on each play. When that's the case, each individual wideout is going to have a tougher time posting crazy numbers, since they're competing with more capable bodies than what's typical. To that point, according to analysis from PFF's Jonathon Macri, Hunter's expected yards per route run based on Colorado's personnel was actually one of the lowest of any wide receiver entering the league since 2019. He had a lot to overcome.

Hunter's ZAP score could definitely be better when you consider he was selected second overall, but there are reasons to believe his model inputs are underselling his ability. He's already shown us that he's an outlier.

Talent aside, the big fantasy football question we're all wondering is, "How much wide receiver will Hunter actually play in Jacksonville?"

Well, considering the Jags needed help both in the secondary and at wide receiver, the trade up and pick itself made a ton of sense. Jacksonville's wide receiver depth chart was borderline atrocious after Brian Thomas Jr. pre-draft, so Hunter is already the second-best pass-catcher on that team. Even if he plays limited snaps, he'll probably be on the field for the high-leverage ones that matter most for fantasy purposes. And that's in an offense that should see an upgrade with head coach Liam Coen in town.

Speaking of Coen, post-draft, he did say that Hunter will "play primarily on offense to start." That should give us more confidence when selecting him in rookie drafts.

If we were to remove all restrictions from Hunter -- if we just assumed he was playing wide receiver -- he'd easily be a top-three player in rookie drafts. Even conservative drafters should recognize the unique upside and place him in a tier with the non-Ashton Jeanty studs in this class. Because Travis Hunter is truly a unicorn.

# TETAIROA MCMILLAN • WR

 **96.0**

ZAP Score

ARIZONA

ELITE PRODUCER

Height: 6'4 | Weight: 219 | NFL Team: Panthers

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Tee Higgins • Courtland Sutton • Mike Williams

**Update:** There's a lot to like about Tetairoa McMillan. He's an early-declare wideout with a lot of size who gave Arizona multiple seasons of really solid production. He mostly played the perimeter in college, but he, per PFF, still lined up in the slot on nearly one-quarter of his routes run. And he had a top-five yards per route run rate in this class from that area of the field.

His new team, the Panthers, will definitely be able to deploy him all over the formation.

McMillan was able to get to a 3.0 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate in two of his three collegiate seasons, which is super impressive. Breakout Score, however, adjusts for strength of schedule, so his playing at Arizona lowered those marks, resulting in a good-but-not-amazing 83.1 Breakout Score. Prior to this year's draft, the only wide receivers in the ZAP Model who were selected in the top-10 with a Breakout Score below 90 were Tavon Austin, Kevin White, Corey Davis, John Ross, and Mike Williams. It's admittedly a little nerve-racking seeing Williams as one of McMillan's statistical comps.

Most successful first-round wide receivers have slightly higher Breakout Scores than McMillan's, but he's clearly not doomed. A 96.0 tally still places him in the Elite Producer category, and he instantly becomes Bryce Young's top target in Carolina. He, at least, is the most talented one.

The Panthers have last year's end-of-the-first-rounder Xavier Legette, a player the Year 2 Model isn't super into. Legette was also outplayed by undrafted free agent Jalen Coker a season ago, with Coker doing a little more work out of the slot. And Adam Thielen's still there, too.

It's tough to imagine all three of those guys consistently beating McMillan for snaps across the 2025 season. Perhaps they'll get more work early on, but T-Mac should be able to slide into any of those roles, limiting the upside of the existing wideouts in the Panthers offense. His inside-out versatility will allow Carolina to rotate their wide receivers more frequently, too, creating proper mismatches and, hopefully, a more efficient offense.

To put that all another way, you shouldn't let someone like Xavier Legette shift your fantasy football perception of Tet McMillan. Those two wideouts are in different universes as prospects.

# EMEKA EGBUKA • WR

 **95.8**

ZAP Score

OHIO STATE	ELITE PRODUCER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'1	Weight: 202	NFL Team: Buccaneers	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Robert Woods • Chris Godwin • Nelson Agholor

**Update:** Emeka Egbuka was expected to get drafted at the tail-end of Round 1 -- maybe into Round 2 -- so his 19th overall draft capital was a bit of a surprise.

The ZAP Model is into it.

Egbuka is a great prospect. Thanks to a Sophomore season where he had a prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt rate of 2.81 -- and that number looked even better when adjusted for strength of opponent -- Egbuka has the second-best Breakout Score in this year's wide receiver class. He also saw rushing production and special teams work throughout his four years at Ohio State, signaling to us that the dude is talented. His coaches wanted to get him the rock.

Unfortunately, injuries, some really tough opponents, and teammate competition meant Egbuka never got back to that Sophomore year production. But don't mistake his mediocre final-season 2.22 receiving yards per team pass attempt as horrible or anything. The truth is, when proper adjustments are made, it looks just fine. And that was while playing alongside some studly teammates at a place that produces some seriously good wide receivers.

Egbuka profiles as a slot player in the NFL, but it wouldn't be shocking to see the Bucs use him a good bit on the outside, similar to what we saw with Tampa Bay's Jalen McMillan, a college slot player, last year. According to PFF data, Egbuka had a well-above-average career yards per route run rate when lined up on the perimeter in college. Like his statistical comps, he can hypothetically play a versatile inside-out role in Tampa Bay.

Funny enough, one of those comparables is his new teammate, Chris Godwin. Some are definitely going to think Egbuka is going to Tampa to replace him, but Godwin is likely to be a Buccaneer until at least 2027. This move more so signals that Mike Evans, who's a free agent next year, could be looking at his final season in Tampa Bay.

This landing spot does bring some risk, though. Coming off a major injury, maybe Godwin won't be totally ready to start the 2025 season, despite what the team is currently saying. That would really help Egbuka. But what if Godwin is good to go? What if Evans sticks around after 2025? It could be a slow-developing situation for Egbuka, which isn't ideal for fantasy football purposes.

What we do know, at least, is that Egbuka is a very talented player.

# LUTHER BURDEN • WR

 **95.2**

ZAP Score

MISSOURI

ELITE PRODUCER

Height: 6'0 | Weight: 206 | NFL Team: Bears

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** DJ Moore • Brandon Aiyuk • Jarvis Landry

**Update:** As you read in the pre-draft version of the guide, if the ZAP Model had a baby, it'd probably name it Luther. Because the model loves it some Luther Burden.

Even with second-round draft capital, Burden finds himself in the Elite Producer category. There've only been five other Day 2 wide receivers in the ZAP Model to achieve that status: Jordan Matthews, JuJu Smith-Schuster, Tyler Boyd, Marqise Lee, and Elijah Moore. That may seem like a pretty mid cohort, but three of the five provided fantasy managers with at least one WR2 season across one of their first three seasons in the league. That's a strong hit rate for non-first-round wideouts.

No player in this year's class has a better Breakout Score than Burden. That's due to an insane Sophomore year at Missouri where he captured a 3.21 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate. Unfortunately, he never got close to that mark in his other two campaigns, leading to more questions than answers.

Burden was deployed in an unconventional way throughout his time at Mizzou. He was used a lot in the slot, and over 32% of his targets came from behind the line of scrimmage, per PFF. There have been four other wideouts drafted in the first two rounds since 2011 with career behind-the-line target rates at or above 30%: Parris Campbell, Kadarius Toney, Rondale Moore, and Wan'Dale Robinson. Not great.

Where Burden separates himself from those players is a combination of Breakout Score -- he had better production than all of them aside from maybe Robinson -- and size. At 6'0", 206 pounds, he can do a lot of damage after the catch.

Landing in Chicago is both good and bad. On the plus side, he'll find himself in an offense led by a young quarterback with loads of potential, and head coach Ben Johnson's brain is a huge plus for fantasy football purposes. Especially if he deploys Burden out of the slot, a position where Amon-Ra St. Brown dominated with Johnson in Detroit.

The downside is the competition. Rome Odunze and DJ Moore are, at least contractually, going to be with the Bears for a few more years. They've also got Cole Kmet and now Colston Loveland, too. Will Burden be able to consistently see high target totals?

To me, he's still worth drafting due to the talent and scheme advantage. And fantasy managers may be turned off by the competition, leading to too low of a cost in drafts.

# MATTHEW GOLDEN • WR

 **89.6**

ZAP Score

TEXAS

WEEKLY STARTER

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 5'11 | Weight: 191 | NFL Team: Packers

**Statistical Comps:** Ladd McConkey • Roman Wilson • Curtis Samuel

**Update:** We don't see Matthew Golden-like profiles in the first round of the draft very often. And that's not necessarily a good thing.

Golden's now just the third Round 1 wide receiver since 2011 to enter the league with a best-season receiving yards per team pass attempt rate below 2.0, joining Cordarrelle Patterson and Henry Ruggs. His 51.4 Breakout Score is technically above average in the ZAP Model, but the list of first-round wide receivers with sub-60 Breakout Scores doesn't provide much hope: Cordarrelle Patterson, Kelvin Benjamin, Breshad Perriman, Kevin White, Josh Doctson, Zay Flowers, Xavier Legette, and Ricky Pearsall.

We could go on and on looking at different thresholds that Golden failed to reach in college, but one thing that needs to be noted is his early-declare status. As we know, a college wideout who decides to jet early for the NFL is almost definitely doing so because the talent profile is strong. They're expecting to get drafted -- typically drafted highly.

What often goes unnoticed with early-declare status, though, is that the player will naturally have a harder time putting up strong raw production totals. They played fewer seasons than other wide receivers. Had Golden played another year at Texas, would we have the same concerns with his profile? What if his Senior season saw him get to a 3.0 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate? That may not change his Breakout Score dramatically -- which is why Breakout Score can be so helpful -- but it certainly might shift our narrative.

Pre-draft fantasy football mocks have shown us that the community isn't very high on Golden. He was expected to be a first-round selection for weeks, and consensus average draft position wasn't really budging. Considering his draft capital, even with a weak profile, his overall ZAP score isn't fade-worthy or anything.

And the landing spot in Green Bay is pretty great. We watched the Packers frustratingly rotate their wide receivers last season, resulting in up-and-down production from the entire group. But what if they did that because they didn't have a player worthy of seeing consistent looks?

Christian Watson is coming off a major late-season knee injury that will probably sideline him for much of the 2025 season. Romeo Doubs is on the final year of his rookie deal. Green Bay likes to use Jayden Reed in the slot, when Golden is likely to be a perimeter player.

Why can't Golden be productive in 2025 while seeing even more upside beyond this season? This Packers wideout room could look totally different in 2026.

There are tons of red flags here analytically. Don't take any of this the wrong way. But there's a chance a lot of that will be baked into Golden's average draft position. Don't ignore him simply because he's not an ideal first-round pick. He's still in the Weekly Starter category for a reason.

# JAYDEN HIGGINS • WR

 88.1  
ZAP Score

IOWA STATE	WEEKLY STARTER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'4	Weight: 214	NFL Team: Texans	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Cedric Tillman • Denzel Mims • Nico Collins

**Update:** The Texans might have a type.

At the top of Round 2, Houston ended up going with Jayden Higgins. He'll now be playing alongside one of his top ZAP Model comps, Nico Collins.

Collins looked a little better in the model -- aside from draft capital -- with a slightly higher Breakout Score (77.8 versus 74.7) alongside early-declare status. Even still, Higgins has identical size, the age-adjusted production isn't far off from one another, and they each tested well athletically.

One main difference that the ZAP Model won't pick up on is that Higgins was deployed a little differently compared to Collins in college. While Collins only ran 3.7% of his routes from the slot, Higgins -- despite his 6'4'' frame -- had closer to a 24% slot rate.

That's not nothing. Matt Harmon's work with Reception Perception pointed to Higgins being more of a power slot instead of a perimeter receiver, and playing alongside Collins could give Higgins more flexibility along the formation. According to PFF, Higgins saw a 2.77 yards per route run out of the slot in college, when that number was 2.25 on the outside.

Higgins, for those unaware, started his collegiate journey at Eastern Kentucky before transferring to Iowa State. His numbers weren't impressive at EKU, but things got a lot better at Iowa State, where he was able to hit at least a 2.50 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate in both seasons there. And he did that while playing alongside wide receiver Jaylin Noel...who was also selected by the Texans in this draft.

That's where the whole "Higgins could play more in the slot" thing could collapse. Noel was the primary slot guy at Iowa State, so reuniting the wide receivers may mean the Texans simply use them as they were used in college. In fact, that's the likely outcome here, which is unfortunate for Higgins' floor.

We've seen some mixed results from big-bodied early-second-round wide receivers with moderately good Breakout Scores in the past. There's been Tee Higgins, but there's also been players like Chase Claypool. And, to be honest, there have been more misses than hits.

That, along with question marks about how Higgins will be used, makes him a high-risk, high-reward option in rookie drafts.

# TRE HARRIS • WR

 **80.9**

ZAP Score

OLE MISS

FLEX PLAY

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'2 | Weight: 205 | NFL Team: Chargers

**Statistical Comps:** Terrance Williams • Cecil Shorts • Cedric Tillman

**Update:** Tre Harris had an absolutely wild 2024 season. Analytically, of course.

On paper, a 60-catch, 1,030-yard campaign may not look like much, but he amassed that in just eight games. Those tallies led to a prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt rate of 3.86. When adjusted for strength of opponent, that's the best single-season mark in this class.

Harris' yards per route run rate last year was even crazier. According to PFF, it was over five yards. Not only was that by far the best figure in this year's class, but it was the highest PFF has ever recorded from a Power Five wideout with 100 or more routes run. That dates back to 2014.

The late-career production is there for Harris, but the early-career stuff? Not as much. He played three seasons at Louisiana Tech, and he didn't really break out until Year 3. After transferring to Ole Miss for his final two seasons, he started seeing stronger production.

Harris' production profile is pretty rare. Since his numbers were so good at the tail-end of his career, he ended up having an impressive 83.4 Breakout Score. But he's entering the NFL as a 23-year-old. With Breakout Score focusing on age, high totals usually don't come from older players.

In the ZAP Model database, there've only been two Round 2 wideouts with Breakout Scores above 70 and draft-day ages of 23 or older: Sterling Shepard and Jayden Reed. It's a super small sample, but it's nice to know that neither player completely flopped at the next level.

The Chargers needed a perimeter presence with the loss of Josh Palmer this offseason, and Harris is exactly that. He only ran about 11% of his routes from the slot throughout college, and he's a big body who can secure targets at every area of the field. He'll hypothetically work great in tandem with Ladd McConkey. Drafters just have to hope that the lack of early-career breakout isn't predictive. Unfortunately, it often is.

# JACK BECH • WR

 79.2

ZAP Score

TEXAS CHRISTIAN	FLEX PLAY	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'1	Weight: 214	NFL Team: Raiders	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Ricardo Louis • Amara Darboh • Michael Thomas

**Update:** It's really easy to root for Jack Bech. He tragically lost his brother, Tiger, in the New Orleans terrorist attack on New Year's Day. Tiger was a football player himself -- he played at Princeton.

To honor his brother, Jack wore Tiger's number at the Senior Bowl. He then went out and scored the game-winning touchdown on fourth down in that game, securing the Senior Bowl MVP.

Bech is a fun player to watch. (Yes, I watch these guys, too.) He's sort of like Puka Nacua in the way he just throws his body around the field, so it's no surprise that a head coach who's been around football for as long as Pete Carroll has would be into him. And, on the Raiders, Bech immediately becomes a starter -- Jakobi Meyers was the only established wide receiver there pre-draft.

Unfortunately, the model doesn't see Bech as some can't-miss player. That's because his production profile is pretty average for a second-round pick. He has a 42.5 Breakout Score, and the ZAP Model hasn't seen many second-round successes with sub-50 Breakout Scores. In fact, in the database, Michael Thomas -- one of Bech's comps -- is the only hit out of the 10 Round 2 wide receivers with Breakout Scores below 50.

There are some more subjective things to like about Bech's profile, though. He started his collegiate career at LSU, where he played more on the inside, often lining up as a tight end. As a Freshman, he caught 43 passes for 489 yards on a team with Brian Thomas Jr. and Malik Nabers. He had a better prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt rate than both of them. Yes, he played a different type of position compared to those guys, but that can't be a *bad* thing.

After posting poor production as a Sophomore, Bech transferred to TCU, where he finished his collegiate career. His Junior season was uneventful, but he reached 1,000 yards last year, resulting in a 2.30 receiving yards per team pass attempt mark. Not great, but not bad, either.

One interesting aspect to that final year was that it was Bech's first as an outside receiver. He had seen slot rates into the 80% range across his first three seasons, but that fell to just 27% last year, per PFF data. And that happened to be the season where he saw the most production.

Bech does profile as more of a shifty, powerful slot guy in the NFL, but there's a lot of intriguing versatility to the profile. Dynasty managers weren't in on Bech pre-draft, and, because his production profile isn't super strong, they may not be as into him post-draft, either. But even though his numbers are lacking, there's no need to full-on fade him. There's more than enough to work with, and it's a great landing spot for immediate production.

# JAYLIN NOEL • WR

 **76.8**

ZAP Score

IOWA STATE	FLEX PLAY	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'10	Weight: 194	NFL Team: Texans	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Randall Cobb • Skyy Moore • Devin Duvernay

**Update:** Jaylin Noel was an easy player to fall in love with pre-draft. His numbers weren't out of control or anything, but he just seemed to do everything. And he seemed to do everything really well.

According to the ZAP Model, Noel's 57.2 Breakout Score is over 10 points higher than the 2025 class average. He had rushing production and saw special teams work at Iowa State. He'd mostly line up in the slot, and his average depth of targets were typically lower as a result of that. But he also got downfield -- he actually had more 20-plus-air-yard targets than teammate Jayden Higgins last year.

Speaking of Higgins, Noel is reuniting with his Iowa State friend in Houston. The Texans, as we all know, already have Nico Collins, and he's not going anywhere. They've got a whole bunch of wide receivers on the roster right now, but the only other notable wideout is Christian Kirk, who was traded to Houston for next to nothing earlier in the offseason.

Maybe Kirk is able to play a starting role for the Texans this year out of the slot, but Noel is more than capable of taking over that spot. Houston's not tied to Kirk at all, and, as you just read, Noel's analytical profile is super well-rounded.

The downside for Noel at the moment is that Houston spent more draft capital to get his college teammate, and they've already got Nico Collins gobbling up a large target share in the offense. There's a lot to overcome in order to see fantasy-worthy numbers.

With all that being said, Noel's still someone to look at in rookie drafts. We're not flawless at predicting the future, and there's a non-zero chance that Noel ends up as the better pro than Jayden Higgins. As you read earlier, Higgins' outlook has a really wide range of outcomes. Noel's versatility and athleticism could force the Texans to put him on the field sooner than the consensus expects.

And we always want to draft talented players regardless of situation, don't we?

# KYLE WILLIAMS • WR

 **76.6**

ZAP Score

WASHINGTON STATE	FLEX PLAY	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'11	Weight: 190	NFL Team: Patriots	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Ronnie Bell • Terry Godwin • Cade Johnson

**Update:** When the pre-draft version of this guide launched, Kyle Williams was a total afterthought for most analysts. Since his projected draft capital, at that time, was so low, his ZAP score followed. It screwed up his list of comparables, too.

Now, things aren't looking all that bad.

Williams has one of the better Breakout Scores in this class at 78.0. That's driven by a pandemic-filled Freshman season that brought forward a prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt rate of 2.17. Standalone, that's not a super strong number, but, as a Freshman, it's solid.

The issue with Williams' production profile is that his stats didn't get a whole lot better throughout his five-year collegiate career. His first three seasons were at UNLV, and that aforementioned Freshman campaign was his best. Williams then played two more at Washington State, where he hit prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt rates of 1.65 and 3.00. When adjusted for strength of opponent, though, those numbers didn't show anything special.

Essentially, Williams has a decent Breakout Score but a not-so-decent best-season schedule-adjusted receiving yards per team pass attempt rate. The only way that happens is if a wide receiver does something at a young age -- likely as a Freshman -- and then doesn't really improve on that something. It's not really a common occurrence.

In fact, among all top-100 wide receivers since 2011, there've only been six (now seven) wide receivers who had a best-season adjusted (for strength of schedule) receiving yards per team pass attempt rate below 2.2 and a Breakout Score above 70. Fortunately for us fantasy managers, that list of wideouts isn't terrible: TY Hilton, Christian Kirk, Henry Ruggs, Tee Higgins, Alec Pierce, and Keon Coleman.

Williams played a perimeter role in college, and, in New England, he has a real shot to be a starter right away opposite of Stefon Diggs. He's not a flashy player, so dynasty managers may not be aggressive in drafting him, so maybe he slips through the cracks. He's pretty solid.

# SAVION WILLIAMS • WR

 **76.6**

ZAP Score

TEXAS CHRISTIAN	FLEX PLAY	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'4	Weight: 222	NFL Team: Packers	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Jalen Hurd • Kenny Golladay • Mohamed Sanu

**Update:** One of the more unique prospects in the class found a home in Round 3 of the draft. And that home is in Green Bay.

Savion Williams is not like any other wide receiver -- or offensive player in general -- in this class. He's 6'4'', 222 pounds, and he ran the ball over 50 times for TCU last season. Yes, this is a wide receiver profile, and, no, you're not reading that incorrectly: A 6'4'', 220-plus pound football player had 51 carries in 2024. And those totes went for 322 yards and 6 scores!

On the receiving side of things, there's a lot to be desired. Williams is one of eight wide receivers who were invited to this year's combine who failed to register a Breakout Score in the ZAP Model. His top season in receiving yards per team pass attempt yielded just a 1.36 rate. There've been 13 top-100 wide receiver picks since 2011 who didn't have a Breakout Score, and the only one to give us even bench-worthy production was Terry McLaurin.

As you may have read earlier with Matthew Golden, Green Bay is going through a wide receiver transition right now. Romeo Doubs is on the last year of his rookie deal, and Christian Watson is probably going to miss most of the 2025 season. He could be gone in 2026, too. And then there's Jayden Reed, who the Packers refuse to use as a full-time player -- he's their slot guy.

From that perspective, Williams does have a long-term shot to see meaningful work in the Packers offense. The problem is that he projects to be more of a gadgety player than a high target share getter. And, typically, these tweener types are just better bets in real football than fantasy football.

The model is giving Williams a little bit of love for his versatile skill-set, but without the receiving production -- and Williams had five collegiate seasons to do something as a pass-catcher -- there aren't many reasons to be bullish. He just seems like an exciting player who's going to be inconsistent as a producer.

# PAT BRYANT • WR

 73.2

ZAP Score

ILLINOIS	FLEX PLAY	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'2	Weight: 204	NFL Team: Broncos	Draft Capital Δ	

**Statistical Comps:** Javon Baker • Tamorrion Terry • Dez Fitzpatrick

**Update:** Pat Bryant was one of the ZAP Model's top wide receiver sleepers in this draft, but that status was wiped away when the Broncos took him in Round 3. Now, more people are going to be in on him.

Denver did seem to reach on Bryant. NFL Mock Draft Database's big board data saw Bryant as a clear-cut Day 3 selection, but the Broncos picked him 74th overall. When looking at the value difference between the two draft capital inputs, Bryant comes in as one of the 10 biggest reaches at wide receiver since the creation of the mock draft data back in 2016. Nearly all of those players ended up busting, or playing well below expectation.

That's one pretty scary angle to all of this. Generally, when a team disagrees this harshly with the consensus -- when the team reaches this hard for a player -- it's a bad move.

On the bright side, Bryant was a pre-draft sleeper for a reason. He saw good progression each year at Illinois, and his Senior season was really underrated. Not only did he hit a prorated 3.02 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate, but that number looked even better when adjusted for strength of opponent. That helped him beef up his Breakout Score a bit -- it was a solid 72.4, a top-10 number in the class.

The Broncos just have a lot of dudes at wide receiver. Courtland Sutton is good, but he's inching closer to 30 years old. Troy Franklin didn't show us much as a rookie, Marvin Mims may max out as a 15% to 20% target share player, and Devaughn Vele is more or less replaceable out of the slot. The Broncos are a destination where a wide receiver could theoretically step in and make fantasy football noise, and we shouldn't lose sight of that.

It just would be a moderate surprise if Bryant is that dude.

The thing is, when situations like this occur in the fantasy football world, managers tend to hesitate to draft the out-of-nowhere reach. So if Bryant falls to a respectable spot in your rookie drafts, you can still take him on situation -- and pre-draft sleeper status -- alone. There's just no real reason to be aggressive in snagging him, especially with his high-risk Draft Capital Delta.

# ISAAC TESLAA • WR



72.1

ZAP Score

ARKANSAS

FLEX PLAY

Height: 6'4 | Weight: 214 | NFL Team: Lions

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Jalen Robinette • Isaiah Hodgins • Ventell Bryant**Update:** Let's say it again: Shoutout to Hillsdale College!

That's where Isaac TeSlaa spent his first three seasons of college ball. There, he, predictably, crushed his competition. He had a freaking 5.22 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate in 2022. Remember, anything over 3.00 is typically pretty great.

5.22!

TeSlaa eventually transferred to Arkansas, where he played two seasons. Neither of them were incredible, with his receiving yards per team pass attempt numbers maxing out at just 1.32. TeSlaa's Hillsdale numbers, even when mega-adjusted for opponent, are keeping him afloat in the ZAP Model.

You could very easily argue that TeSlaa was the most surprising pick of the entire draft. At least when it comes to the fantasy-relevant positions. According to NFL Mock Draft Database, TeSlaa was expected to get drafted around 200th overall when the pre-draft version of this guide dropped. That's part of the reason why his comparables are so weak -- those statistical comps loosely include draft capital. He then went 70th to the Lions, making him the third-biggest wide receiver reach since 2016, which is where the mock draft data dates back to. It was a Tyquan Thornton-esque reach, for anyone who wants some context. That did hurt TeSlaa's overall ZAP score.

You may be wondering what the Lions saw in TeSlaa that hundreds of mock drafters didn't. And the answer is likely physicality and athleticism. TeSlaa is a beastly 6'4'', 214 pounds, and he ran a 4.43 40 at the NFL Combine. That alone is extremely unique, and it's something Detroit apparently values.

If we were talking about a Day 3 dart throw, all of this would be enough to buy into TeSlaa. Now, with a likely increased pricetag, it's a little bit more difficult. The production profile has a lot of holes, and, historically, reaches like this have flopped at a really high rate. You can draft him, just don't do it early in your rookie drafts.

# ELIC AYOMANOR • WR

 **68.6**

ZAP Score

**STANFORD**

**FLEX PLAY**

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'2 | Weight: 206 | NFL Team: Titans

**Statistical Comps:** Torrey Smith • Leonard Hankerson • DeVier Posey

**Update:** When comparing projected draft capital via NFL Mock Draft Database to actual draft capital, Elic Ayomanor ends up looking like the biggest wide receiver value of this year's draft.

Too bad that doesn't matter. The ZAP Model only cares about wide receiver reaches, not values.

Since 2011, we've had 12 wide receivers selected after Pick 100 who were considered a value by four or more points according to Chase Stuart's draft pick value chart. None of them have given fantasy managers a season of 10-plus PPR points per game.

The names on that list are all the players the draft community loved before watching them get passed on over and over again. Hakeem Butler. Troy Franklin. Kelvin Harmon. AT Perry.

Elic Ayomanor.

Look, he's one of six early-declare wide receivers in this year's class, and he only played two genuine seasons of college football. His Breakout Score is a solid 76.7. And he finds himself on a Titans team that should have opportunity for him in the short- and long-term.

It's just hard to buy into his fall in the draft, even if some of the numbers paint a favorable picture. And there's a very real chance that dynasty managers are anchoring to his pre-draft projection. We have to adjust to new information.

# TAI FELTON • WR

 **66.4**

ZAP Score

MARYLAND

BENCHWARMER

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'1 | Weight: 183 | NFL Team: Vikings

**Statistical Comps:** Cedrick Wilson • Devontez Walker • Ihmir Smith-Marsette

**Update:** Tai Felton isn't a big wide receiver -- his BMI is on the lower end in this class -- but he can make dudes miss. He ranked fifth in college football last year in missed tackles forced, and that led to him finishing fourth, per PFF, in yards after the catch.

Felton played four years at Maryland, and he mostly was a perimeter receiver. His production got better each year, which can't be a bad thing, but his top season in receiving yards per team pass attempt ended up at just 2.28. It was better when adjusted for strength of schedule, so his Breakout Score is a respectable-enough 56.3, but Felton didn't do anything to stand out in the ZAP Model. He looks like a totally average receiver -- maybe slightly above average -- when trying to project fantasy production.

The good news for Felton and his new team, the Vikings, is that they won't need to rely heavily on him in the offense. With Justin Jefferson and Jordan Addison there, the selection of Felton was likely to add to the depth chart, sure, but Felton can also open up the offense a bit vertically. His 4.37 40-yard dash time at the combine showed that he's capable of beating defenders deep.

Everything in the ZAP Model with Felton is ordinary, though. His Breakout Score is completely average compared to wideouts who've been selected between Pick 80 and Pick 120 since 2011, he's not an early-declare wideout, and it's not like his individual production metrics are going to get you super excited. He's fine. And he at least fits in with what the Vikings already have.

You don't need to prioritize him in rookie drafts. Or, at least, I wouldn't.

# JAYLIN LANE • WR



61.1

ZAP Score

VIRGINIA TECH

BENCHWARMER

Height: 5'10 | Weight: 191 | NFL Team: Commanders

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Jha'Quan Jackson • Dwayne Harris • Kealoha Pilares

**Update:** The Commanders enhanced their wide receiver room when they added Deebo Samuel earlier in the offseason, but they don't have a lot of young and capable bodies beyond him and Terry McLaurin on the depth chart. They tried with Luke McCaffrey last year, and maybe he becomes something, but his production tells us that it's likely not going to happen.

Jaylin Lane, come on down!

Lane played five years of college football -- three with Middle Tennessee State and two with Virginia Tech. He failed to register a Breakout Score, reaching a 1.70 receiving yards per team pass attempt once. That was during his third year at Middle Tennessee State, and he was only at 2.17, so it wasn't enough for Breakout Score to care post-adjustments.

This all sounds pretty bad -- and it is -- but Lane at least brought a good amount of rushing production to the table. He ran the ball 46 times for 264 yards in college, something we don't get from a lot of wide receivers.

Lane saw a large number of his targets close or behind the line of scrimmage. Only two wideouts in the class had a higher percentage of career targets come behind the line, and Lane -- who played a lot of slot at Virginia Tech -- had higher than an 8.0 average depth of target in just one season.

It's almost like they drafted a player who could play a Deebo Samuel-esque role for the moments where Samuel isn't available.

After an impressive NFL Combine, it's not surprising that Lane found himself in the early parts of Day 3. His receiving work tells us that he's highly unlikely going to be a fantasy football star, but he's a dynamic player who could have spiked weeks.

# CHIMERE DIKE • WR

 **58.4**

ZAP Score

FLORIDA	BENCHWARMER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'2	Weight: 196	NFL Team: Titans	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Marvin Jones • Trey Palmer • Cam Phillips

**Update:** This year's draft had a lot of reaches at wide receiver, at least according to the ZAP Model's methodology. Chimere Dike was projected to get drafted past Pick 220, but the Titans selected him 103rd overall. Based on Chase Stuart's draft value chart, Tennessee lost about "five points" in value with the pick. Dike joins Dez Fitzpatrick and Ricardo Louis as the biggest later-round reaches in ZAP Model history.

That did ding Dike's prospect score a bit, and it gave him a "high risk" Draft Capital Delta. Really, though, his profile isn't horrible. He was at Wisconsin for four years before transferring to Florida for his fifth and final season. Over those five campaigns, he only found the end zone 11 times. But, as we know, touchdowns aren't impacting a player's ZAP score. Receiving yards per team pass attempt? That's a different story.

And Dike not only was able to get to a 2.11 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate in 2022 as Junior, but he was up to a 2.29 rate last year. That number looks even better when adjusted for strength of schedule.

That led to a surprisingly OK Breakout Score of 72.2, a mark that's nearly in the top-10 within the class.

Other advanced metrics like yards per route run don't necessarily favor Dike. He did have a higher average depth of target than most, likely due to his 4.34 speed, but his depth profile -- where he saw his targets -- was nothing out of the ordinary.

Dike can line up anywhere, but he did run about 50% of his routes out of the slot throughout college. The Titans have Calvin Ridley and signed Tyler Lockett this offseason, so there's at least some chance we see similar deployment for Dike right away.

Overall, it's an interesting landing spot with Cam Ward quarterbacking Tennessee, but Dike's profile isn't one that typically hits. And, as we know, Day 3 wide receivers rarely work out in general.

# DONT'E THORNTON • WR

 57.7

ZAP Score

TENNESSEE	BENCHWARMER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'5	Weight: 205	NFL Team: Raiders	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Matt Landers • Martavis Bryant • Alonzo Russell

**Update:** When a team is drafting on Day 3, they're often looking for individual unique traits. There aren't going to be sure-fire bets in Rounds 4 through 7, so latching onto a competitive attribute makes sense.

The Raiders took Dont'e Thornton towards the top of the fourth round, nearly 70 picks higher than where he was expected to go. They likely did so to get some speed in the offense -- Thornton, at 6'5", 205 pounds, ran a ridiculous 4.30 40 at the combine a couple of months ago.

Thornton didn't get a ton of run in college, and that resulted in a Breakout Score of zero. The ZAP Model has seen 17 wide receivers get selected between Pick 100 and Pick 150 who didn't register a Breakout Score, and Hunter Renfrow was the only one who scored more than 8 PPR points per game in one of his first three years in the league.

On the plus side, thanks to his 29% deep-ball rate in college, Thornton is top-three in this class in career yards per route run. When looking at wideouts in the model since 2020, his career yards per route run rate ranks in about the 90th percentile.

To me, the pairing of Thornton with second-rounder Jack Bech is super logical. One player will work underneath, while the other one stretches the field. Bech, though, has the high target total potential, whereas Thornton may just be someone who helps the Raiders more than your fantasy team.

# JALEN ROYALS • WR

 **56.9**

ZAP Score

UTAH STATE	BENCHWARMER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'0	Weight: 205	NFL Team: Chiefs	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Rashee Rice • Greg Salas • Shaquelle Evans

**Update:** It's fitting that the player in this class who compared closest to Rashee Rice ends up getting drafted by the Chiefs. Funny how that happens, isn't it?

Jalen Royals kicked off his college football life at Georgia Military College, a military junior college in Milledgeville, Georgia (thanks, Wikipedia). After only catching a handful of balls there as a Freshman, he transferred to Utah State, where he spent three seasons. One of those three -- his Sophomore year -- saw Royals catch zero passes.

Things really turned around for him as a Junior. Royals had 71 catches for 1,080 yards and 15 scores, triggering the ZAP Model to give him a Breakout Score. His 2.48 prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt as a Junior rose to 3.12 across his seven games as a Senior, beefing up that score even more.

It just wasn't enough. Utah State isn't some massive, competitive football program -- for purposes of what we're looking at -- so Royals' Breakout Score ended up being an ordinary 43.9.

Royals seeing Day 3 capital is less than ideal, and he compares less favorably to Rashee Rice because of that alone. But he's athletic (former track athlete; ran a 4.42 at the combine), he can hypothetically play all over the field, and he did a pretty good job at making guys miss across his two productive seasons at Utah State. He didn't have quite the yards-after-the-catch profile as Rice did coming out, but it was still strong.

There are definitely red flags to this profile, and the ZAP Model never really understood Royals' projected third-round draft capital to begin with. But this type of player has worked historically in Andy Reid's offense, so if you want to throw a late-round dart his way and cross your fingers, be my guest.

# JIMMY HORN • WR

 **55.9**

ZAP Score

COLORADO	BENCHWARMER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'8	Weight: 174	NFL Team: Panthers	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Isaiah Williams • Scott Miller • Jameon Lewis

Jimmy Horn is a 175-pounder who played a lot of slot receiver in college. According to PFF's data, no player in this year's class ran a higher percentage of routes out of the slot than Horn. That resulted in a career average depth of target that was well under 10 yards, and almost 28% of his career targets came from behind the line of scrimmage. That's one of the highest marks in the class.

Horn's size is one reason he was glued to the slot. He's 174 pounds, the fourth-lightest player among the wideouts invited to this year's combine.

A Breakout Score of 59.6 isn't bad for Horn, but that comes with needed context. His top year in receiving yards per team pass attempt was just 1.84, and he was north of a 1.20 rate in only that season. Yes, some of that is simply the product of the type of role he played out of the slot. But, as mentioned earlier, we haven't had many hits at all from players with best-season receiving yard per team pass attempt marks under 2.0. And, of the ones who have hit, there weren't the size concerns that we have for Horn.

Think of it this way: In the ZAP Model database, there've been eight wide receivers who weighed in under 180 pounds with a best-season receiving yards per team pass attempt rate below 2.0. None of those players even scored eight PPR points per game during one of their first three seasons.

This all isn't looking great for Horn, even if some numbers like him in the ZAP Model.

# TORY HORTON • WR

 **55.8**

ZAP Score

COLORADO STATE	BENCHWARMER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'2	Weight: 196	NFL Team: Seahawks	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Josh Reynolds • Tajae Sharpe • Dyami Brown

**Update:** The expectation was that Tory Horton had a shot to go on Day 2 of the draft, but that definitely didn't happen. Instead, the Seahawks snagged him in the middle of Round 5.

And it was a solid, intriguing pick.

Horton looked pretty good through four years of college ball, and then he played in 2024, his fifth campaign. He suffered a season-ending knee injury in October, totally derailing the season. Because he played that extra year and didn't get any production out of it, the ZAP Model only saw that last season as an L. It did nothing but hurt his score.

Back in 2020, Horton was at Nevada. He gave us a little production during his two years there, but he really started to cook when he transferred to Colorado State in 2022. That year -- his first season after transferring -- saw him reach a 3.51 prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt rate. That helped produce a Breakout Score of 70.4, the 11th-best mark in the class. Only three wide receiver combine invitees had a season with as strong of a receiving yards per team pass attempt mark, too.

Horton had a yards per route run against man that ranked 22nd in college football during his high-end 2022 season, and he can line up all over the field. He doesn't have a thick build, but there's good length. He can definitely play a role in the NFL.

The question is, will he be good to go coming off of a season-ending injury? Well, this is where the NFL Combine can be helpful. Horton participated in the event, and he ran an impressive 4.41 40. He also did that at 196 pounds, when his listed weight in college was over 10 pounds below that.

To me, that subjectively makes Horton even more impressive. And on a team that could use wide receiver depth, he's someone to at least have on your waiver wire radar.

# JORDAN WATKINS • WR

 **54.2**

ZAP Score

OLE MISS

BENCHWARMER

Height: 5'11 | Weight: 196 | NFL Team: 49ers

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Bo Melton • Ronald Johnson • LaVon Brazill

**Update:** It was surprising to see Jordan Watkins get picked up by the 49ers at the end of the fourth round, since he had projected draft capital that was essentially in undrafted territory.

Watkins is one of three Ole Miss wideouts who was invited to this year's combine. Tre Harris was the team's top wideout last year by a decent gap -- when healthy, at least -- and Watkins had a solid margin over Antwane Wells. The latter has better production metrics in the model because of some early-career production outside of Mississippi.

Watkins, though, has a pretty ordinary profile. He stayed around and played college football for five seasons -- two were with Louisville, three Ole Miss -- and only his fifth and final season saw him with a receiving yards per team pass attempt rate above the 2.0 mark. He did have a 2.54 yards per route run rate last year, but that probably was messed with a bit by a high 15.6 average depth of target.

Prior to his 2024 season with Ole Miss, Watkins played pretty heavily in the slot. He had, according to PFF, slot rates of 79.9% and 84.2% in 2022 and 2023, respectively. Last year, that number fell to 29.3%. So there's some versatility with his alignment, something Kyle Shanahan typically likes to see.

Even with some future opportunity in the 49ers wide receiver room, Watkins doesn't really get it done analytically. He's already past his 23rd birthday, his Breakout Score is nothing special at 42.7, and we know Day 3 wide receivers don't produce very frequently at all. You can ignore him in four-round rookie drafts.

# KEANDRE LAMBERT-SMITH • WR

 **52.3**

ZAP Score

AUBURN

BENCHWARMER

Height: 6'1 | Weight: 190 | NFL Team: Chargers

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Rodney Adams • Tavarres King • Jamari Thrash

**Update:** KeAndre Lambert-Smith has above-average production marks across the board. His 54.4 Breakout Score is better than the norm, and his best-season yards per route run of 2.70 (shoutout PFF) is north of the class average, too.

KLS played a decent amount of college ball. He spent four years at Penn State with ordinary production before transferring to Auburn and putting together his best season. Last year as a Tiger, Lambert-Smith caught 50 balls for 981 yards, leading to an adjusted receiving yards per team pass attempt rate of 2.53. Not terrible.

Despite being a little smaller, Lambert-Smith didn't play a ton in the slot in college. Now with the Chargers, who have Ladd McConkey, he's probably not going to line up in the slot much in the NFL, either.

And that could be somewhat of a problem, because many have pointed out that he struggled a bit against press coverage in school. He'll have to win with speed on the outside -- he ran a 4.37 40 -- but that's not something easily bankable.

From a fit perspective, he does mesh well with McConkey and newcomer Tre Harris. If he's able to find the field, Lambert-Smith can stretch things out and allow the other two pass-catchers to do work underneath. But, with Quentin Johnston still around, it may not be super easy for KLS to get on the field.

You can keep an eye on Lambert-Smith when waivers run, but he probably doesn't need to be drafted in most rookie drafts.

# DOMINIC LOVETT • WR

 **46.7**

ZAP Score

GEORGIA

WAIVER WIRE ADD

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 5'10 | Weight: 185 | NFL Team: Lions

**Statistical Comps:** Dazz Newsome • Tayvion Robinson • Kayshon Boutte

For a projected late-round selection, Dominic Lovett has a strong Breakout Score of 76.4. That's because, as a Sophomore at Missouri, he saw a prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt rate of 2.32. After transferring to Georgia for his final two seasons, he never got close to that number, but the model is giving him love for it.

This sounds like Diet Luther Burden, doesn't it?

Lovett actually did see a similar target depth profile to Burden throughout college. The difference is that Burden saw a little more deep-ball action, while Lovett stayed closer to the line out of the slot. Lovett ran 76% of his routes from the slot in his college career, with a class-high 33.7% of his targets coming behind the line of scrimmage, per PFF data.

Lovett's lack of size will likely keep him in the slot throughout his NFL career, but he's not a bad late-round prospect, per the model's inputs. He'll just have a pretty limited ceiling if he continues to not see deep work. A team could work on that, though, considering he ran the 40 at the combine in 4.40 seconds.

# ISAIAH BOND • WR

 **43.6**

ZAP Score

TEXAS	WAIVER WIRE ADD	Draft Capital ▲
Height: 5'11   Weight: 180	NFL Team: Undrafted	Low Risk Neutral High Risk

**Statistical Comps:** Henry Ruggs • John Metchie • Mecole Hardman

**Update:** It's very clear that Isaiah Bond went undrafted due to off-the-field issues. You can still read his pre-draft profile below.

Isaiah Bond started playing college football at Alabama, and he wasn't able to do a whole lot as a Freshman. Not that it's easy to do much at Alabama as a first-year wideout.

Bond's Sophomore campaign as a member of the Crimson Tide wasn't as unfortunate. A 48-catch, 668-yard, 4-touchdown stat line looks kind of whatever, but that comes out to a Sophomore prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt of 2.06, which is decent. Adjust that for the fact that Bond was playing at Bama, and that figure is more like 2.36.

That gave Bond a Breakout Score of 77.7, the sixth-highest mark in this year's class.

After his Sophomore year, Bond transferred to Texas, where he played alongside fellow 2025 NFL Combine invite Matthew Golden. Bond was out-produced by Golden, but, due to his work at Alabama, his Breakout Score is cleaner. We can't just look at one season and automatically say one dude is better than the other.

Just like Golden, Bond has plenty of question marks. His top season in yards per route run was just 2.02, giving him a bottom-10 mark in the class. Bond's career-long yards per route run was just as bad. Since 2017, among all first- and second-round wide receivers, only Adonai Mitchell and Van Jefferson had worse best-season yards per route run rates than Bond. Both of those guys had far worse Breakout Scores, but yikes...

On the plus side, Bond gave us a little bit of rushing production, and he showed he was capable of playing both inside and outside of the formation at both Alabama and Texas. He has elite speed -- maybe not as elite as he thinks -- and he should be able to get by defenders in the NFL. Many have compared him to Jaylen Waddle from that perspective.

There's no chance I'll be going that far.

With a pretty good Breakout Score and stops at two prestigious programs, Bond has a shot in the NFL. But, like his Texas teammate, Matthew Golden, we should be cognizant of his analytical shortcomings.

# ARIAN SMITH • WR

 42.6

ZAP Score

GEORGIA

WAIVER WIRE ADD

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'0 | Weight: 179 | NFL Team: Jets

**Statistical Comps:** Quez Watkins • Scotty McKnight • Trevor Davis

**Update:** One of the biggest head-scratching picks of the draft was when the Jets took Arian Smith in Round 4. His profile is...well, it's not great.

Smith has a bottom-five top-season receiving yards per team pass attempt rate in this year's class, and his Breakout Score of 27.1 is certainly below average. He played five years at Georgia, topping 200 yards in only his fifth and final season. Not that it's that important, but he also scored just 10 touchdowns in college. Again, that's across five years.

Smith has a below-average size profile, and he moved all over the formation at Georgia. He also used his 4.36 40-yard dash speed to see one of the highest deep-ball rates across his career in this class. Maybe the Jets panicked after seeing the field-stretching Dont'e Thornton fall off the board in the fourth, so they reached for Smith.

It's just hard to get excited about a player who, as a fourth-year wideout at Georgia, saw fewer receiving yards than teammate Marcus Rosemy-Jacksaint, a wideout the ZAP Model really disliked, and Daijun Edwards, a running back who went undrafted last year. Are we expecting that production to get so much better against much tougher competition in the NFL?

Smith is over 23-and-a-half years old, too.

No thanks.

# RICKY WHITE • WR

 **36.6**

ZAP Score

NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'1 | Weight: 184 | NFL Team: Seahawks

**Statistical Comps:** Jamari Thrash • Jalen Tolbert • Dax Milne

Ricky White has one of the best unadjusted production profiles in this year's class. His best season in yards per route run was 3.83, third-best in the group. His 3.67 top-season receiving yards per team pass attempt also ranks third. He secured a first down on nearly 11% of his routes run in college, per PFF data, which is seventh-best. The list goes on and on.

But here in the Late-Round Prospect Guide, we adjust. We adjust *hard*.

White played his Freshman season at Michigan State, sitting behind NFL pros Jayden Reed and Jalen Nailor. He then didn't appear in any games in 2021 before transferring to UNLV after some off-the-field stuff.

At UNLV, White balled out. His first year there was kind of whatever, but, in 2023 and 2024, White had seasons with a 3.67 and 3.63 receiving yards per team pass attempt. Keep in mind, anything over the 3.0 mark is usually great.

But we must adjust. White's opponents at UNLV included teams out of the Mountain West Conference, like San Jose State and Wyoming. Hitting those monstrous marks was necessary for him to sustain fantasy football life. It at least shows he can dominate lesser competition. He did what he had to do.

When all of the adjusting -- age, opponent strength -- was said and done, White's Breakout Score ended up at 45.2. He's now just the 10th wideout in the ZAP Model's history to have a Breakout Score below 50 and a best-season receiving yards per team pass attempt above 3.50. It's a rare combination, because think about it: Breakout Score is driven by receiving yards per team pass attempt. If a player is high within the metric, you'd expect them to be high in Breakout Score. But when that player accomplished the feat at an older age, and when that player did it at a smaller school, his receiving yards per team pass attempt suffers, and, in turn, his Breakout Score does, too.

That's what's happening with White.

John Brown was sort of a hit out of that group of guys, and it remains to be seen with Christian Watson. So this isn't to say that White is bound to go down a devastating path.

We just need to stay grounded. The fantasy football world thinks analytically, and, often times, those numbers-driven takes aren't giving enough context. If no context was given here, we'd think White, a wideout capable of playing all receiver positions, would be a smash target. Knowing the context, we can say to simply watch him to make sure his cost doesn't get out of hand.

But, yeah, analytically, he's a super fun prospect to monitor.

# LAJOHNTAY WESTER • WR

 **32.0**

ZAP Score

**COLORADO**

**WAIVER WIRE ADD**

Low Risk   Neutral   High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Height:** 5'10   **Weight:** 163   **NFL Team:** Ravens

**Statistical Comps:** JJ Nelson • Tahj Washington • Jakeem Grant

LaJohntay Wester played a lot in the slot. During his four years at Florida Atlantic before he transferred to Colorado for his final campaign, Wester was finding himself in the slot on 85% to 90% of his snaps. That stayed consistent at Colorado in 2024.

We have just one high-end season from Wester, which came during his final season at FAU. That year -- 2023 -- he caught 108 passes for 1,168 yards and 8 scores. His receiving yards per team pass attempt rate was a solid 2.83, but, adjusted for strength of opponent, it didn't look as rosy.

Considering his slot role, Wester only had one season with an average depth of target above 10 yards. He, like his Colorado teammate Jimmy Horn, saw a high percentage of targets at or behind the line of scrimmage. Both guys were quintessential slot receivers.

Wester outperformed Horn in 2024, the only season they were teammates, but Horn has a slight edge in the model in Breakout Score. Realistically, they analytically look a lot alike: They're shifty slot players who lack size and, in turn, ceiling at the next level. You could just follow draft capital to see which one to prefer in deep fantasy formats. Chances are, neither will be giving you big fantasy moments over the next three years.

# KADEN PRATHER • WR

 30.1  
ZAP Score

MARYLAND

WAIVER WIRE ADD

Height: 6'3 | Weight: 204 | NFL Team: Bills

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Statistical Comps: Nigel King • Rodney Smith • Joseph Ngata

If you're having problems buying into Tai Felton, then you've got to feel the same way about his teammate, Kaden Prather.

Prather started playing college ball at West Virginia before transferring to Maryland for his final two seasons. He saw some production, but his receiving yards per team pass attempt maxed out at 1.40. In turn, he didn't register a Breakout Score.

Prather also finished college with a best-season yards per route run rate of 1.82. That was second-worst in the class.

Prather does have a big frame with lots of speed, so maybe a team will be searching specifically for that in the draft. It's just a tough sell. The only three wide receivers in the ZAP Model database with a Breakout Score of zero to give us a season of more than 12 PPR points per game across their first three in the league have been Tyreek Hill, Hunter Renfrow, and Terry McLaurin. Hill is an outlier of a player who went through a really weird collegiate journey, and, at the very least, Renfrow and McLaurin competed with higher-quality teammates at the programs they were at.

Never say never, but there's a very low chance Prather becomes the fourth on that list. It's shocking that his projected draft capital is inching close to 100th overall, because he profile doesn't suggest that whatsoever. Each of his comps went undrafted.

# KONATA MUMPFIELD • WR

 **27.2**

ZAP Score

PITTSBURGH

DART THROW

Height: 5'11 | Weight: 186 | NFL Team: Rams

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Damian Copeland • Walt Powell • Josh Cooper

As much as I want to be an obnoxious Pitt alum with this write-up, Konata Mumpfield is making it tough. He played three years at Pitt after transferring from Akron, and his highest receiving yards per team pass attempt rate was 1.76 there. That's not going to cut it.

There's a chance that some analytics systems will give Mumpfield favorable breakout-related marks because his Freshman season at Akron wasn't too shabby. He had a receiving yards per team pass attempt of 2.13. His yards per route run of 1.67 was respectable for a Freshman.

The ZAP Model doesn't see it that way, since playing at Akron is not close to the same thing as playing for a program that the majority of these wide receivers came from.

That all resulted in Mumpfield failing to record a Breakout Score. And, as you've probably seen throughout the guide, that's really bad news. There've been well over 150 wide receivers in the ZAP Model database who either went undrafted or were selected after Pick 100 without a Breakout Score. Of those players, only Tyreek Hill and Hunter Renfrow scored more than 12 PPR points per game in a season across their first three in the league.

#Hail2Pitt and all, but I'm going to have a hard time drafting Mumpfield.

# ISAIAH NEYOR • WR



19.4

ZAP Score

NEBRASKA	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'4	Weight: 218	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Cornelius Johnson • Sage Surratt • Jalen Robinette

Isaiah Neyor is another Dart Throw wideout in this class with a good bit of size. But, of course, the reason he's a Dart Throw is because his collegiate production was lacking.

For the most part, that's true, but because Neyor was in the college football system for six years -- playing for Wyoming, Texas, and Nebraska -- he has some OK best-season marks. His top year in receiving yards per team pass attempt, for instance, is 2.96, 11th-best in the class. His career yards per route run is at least over the 2.0 mark.

Neyor did register a Breakout Score of 56.4, too. That's because his third season at Wyoming -- his first normal year as a college football player, thanks to injury and the pandemic -- was decent, even when adjusted for strength of schedule.

Unfortunately, Neyor combined for just 469 yards over the 13 games he played at Texas and Nebraska, which came after Wyoming. His production just wasn't there. Unable to get it done against tougher competition is definitely a red flag. As is the fact that my man is about to be 24 years old.

# DANIEL JACKSON • WR



19.2

ZAP Score

MINNESOTA	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'11	Weight: 193	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Michael Campanaro • Johnny Johnson • Reggie Roberson

It's almost becoming rare these days to see a player stick around the same school for many years of college ball, but we've got that with Daniel Jackson. He played five years of college football, each of them for the University of Minnesota.

Jackson didn't really get things going until his fourth campaign, but that season was pretty strong. His 831 receiving yards translated to a 2.66 yards per team pass attempt rate, and that was boosted a little bit by strength of opponent. His best-season adjusted receiving yards per team pass attempt was top-10 in the class, leading to a solid 60.7 Breakout Score.

At this moment, analysts think Jackson may not get drafted. Let's work under the assumption that he at least gets selected after Pick 200. In the ZAP Model database, there've only been six wide receivers to score 10 or more PPR points per game in either Year 1, Year 2, or Year 3 who were drafted past Pick 200. So this includes undrafted guys, too.

Of those six, each one recorded a Breakout Score, and the average score among them is 55.3. Meanwhile, the hundreds of wide receivers who failed to get to 10 or more PPR points averaged a Breakout Score of less than 35.0.

This is just another way of showing the importance of having a good Breakout Score. Even in the late rounds, having a solid score is way better than not having one at all.

Jackson can serve as solid perimeter depth at the next level.

# XAVIER RESTREPO • WR



17.3

ZAP Score

MIAMI

DART THROW

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 5'10 | Weight: 209 | NFL Team: Undrafted

**Statistical Comps:** Amari Rodgers • Josh Boyce • Bruce Ellington

When we talk about slot wide receivers, we're really just referring to players who typically line up in the slot. Not always.

Emeka Egbuka, for example, would be labeled a "slot", but he still ran 19% of his routes last season outside of that area. In previous years, that number was closer to 30%.

Some wideouts *do* play almost exclusively out of the slot, and that's what we've got with Miami's Xavier Restrepo. According to PFF data, Restrepo lined up in the slot on over 90% of his collegiate routes. He ranked second in this year's class in that category.

Restrepo is currently projected to get selected in the top-100. Maybe he will, maybe he won't. It'd be pretty uncommon if he did, though. Since 2020, only three wide receivers have been selected in the top-100 while capturing a career slot rate above 90%. For what it's worth, none of those three have hit -- KJ Hamler, Tre Tucker, and Malachi Corley -- but the sample size is too tiny to draw any sort of strong conclusions.

Let's just look at the production profile instead. Restrepo only caught one pass as a Freshman at Miami, and he wasn't overly productive until his fourth year there. But, over his final two seasons, he had adjusted receiving yards per team pass attempt rates around 2.40, giving him a Breakout Score of 48.9.

Many film watchers seem to like Restrepo's spatial awareness and route-running, and that's necessary for a slot player to thrive at the next level. The thing giving me some trouble is that most higher-end slot guys -- Josh Downs, Christian Kirk, Cooper Kupp -- had far better production profiles than Restrepo has. Those three players each had Breakout Scores of at least 64, and Downs and Kirk were both early-declare receivers. Restrepo had five seasons to compile his numbers.

There's probably a good chance that Restrepo gives us some sort of production in the NFL, especially if he gets the draft capital many are currently projecting. Slot players can do that, even with more mediocre production profiles. My question is the ceiling. Will he be a game-changer in fantasy football? The numbers say probably not.

# KOBE HUDSON • WR

 17.0  
ZAP Score

CENTRAL FLORIDA	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'1	Weight: 193	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Romeo Doubs • Stacy Coley • Chad Hansen

We never saw a massive season from Kobe Hudson in college, but he was pretty good from his Sophomore season onward. He played five years of college ball -- two with Auburn before transferring to UCF and playing three more -- and reached a best-season prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt rate of 2.48. That's better than over half of this year's class. When thrown into the Breakout Score Machine™, a score of 55.2 comes out. Not great, but definitely not something we always see from clear Day 3 picks.

Hudson truly played all over the field. He had some seasons with a higher slot rate -- it was at 79.3% in 2021 -- and then some all the way down at 24%. We usually see wide receivers with fairly static alignments, so that was interesting to view in the spreadsheets.

What's also interesting is that most scouting reports will tell you that he lacks the long speed to win vertical routes. His 40 time matched that, with him barely breaking a 4.60 40 at the combine. Meanwhile, among all wideouts in this class, he ranked fifth in percentage of collegiate targets to travel 20 or more air yards. That's courtesy of Pro Football Focus' data.

That's a little confusing. It's probably not a bad thing that Hudson won on routes he may not be elite at, but it also makes his role at the next level more challenging to project. We at least know he could probably play a bit in the slot.

Analytically, Hudson looks like more of a depth player in the NFL. Having Romeo Doubs as a top comparable could be a whole lot worse, but even a player like Doubs is a "hit" from this type of draft capital range. Or, in this case, *projected* draft capital range.

I don't totally mind Hudson, but I'll probably only buy into him if he finds a top landing spot.

# SAM BROWN • WR



16.8

ZAP Score

MIAMI

DART THROW

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'2 | Weight: 200 | NFL Team: Undrafted

**Statistical Comps:** DeMarkus Lodge • Ka'Raun White • Kevin Austin

Another late-round wide receiver, another story of a dude who played at three different colleges.

Sam Brown started at West Virginia, played two seasons, transferred to Houston, played two more, and then finished things off in 2024 at Miami. Those are all reasonable programs, but he never provided us fantastic results.

You could maybe point to his 2023 in Houston as an NFL-worthy -- analytically speaking, obviously -- season. He had a 2.00 prorated receiving yards per team play rate, and that was the year that really drove his Breakout Score to a little bit over 50. But only three years of moderate production out of five isn't what we're looking for.

Meanwhile, Brown's top season in yards per route run ranks third-worst in this class. His ability to gain first downs per route run is in the bottom-five, too.

Brown played very little out of the slot -- less than 10% of his college routes came from there, per PFF -- but he was often used closer to the line of scrimmage. Only 17% of his career targets went 20 or more air yards, a mark that's lower than the class average. It's a little disappointing that he wasn't able to do more on the production front with a decent amount of shorter looks.

Brown's profile isn't one you need to focus on right now. That's what the numbers are telling us.

# TEZ JOHNSON • WR



16.4

ZAP Score

OREGON

DART THROW

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 5'10 | Weight: 154 | NFL Team: Buccaneers

**Statistical Comps:** Derius Davis • Jalen Saunders • Tank Dell

We've seen smaller wide receivers get drafted early over the last decade and a half. John Brown had top-100 draft capital. KJ Hamler was a top-50 pick. Hollywood Brown was a first-rounder. Elijah Moore, Devonta Smith, Xavier Worthy, Jahan Dotson, Tutu Atwell...each of those guys weigh less than some really large dogs, but teams invested in them.

Tez Johnson may have ruined his chances at that kind of draft capital with a poor NFL Combine showing, but we'll see. Some team could fall in love with him, too.

Lighter wide receivers can be successful in fantasy football. I'd argue their upside isn't as strong as the alternative, but we've seen Devonta Smith, at 166 pounds, crush it in Philly. Jordan Addison's gotten it done in Minnesota. The list goes on and on.

Here's the thing, though. (There's always a thing.) Pre-2025, the ZAP Model database only had 14 wide receivers who weighed in under 170 pounds at the NFL Combine. Johnson's 154-pound weight is the second-lowest the model's seen, ahead of only Tutu Atwell.

Of those 14, Hollywood Brown, Tank Dell, Devonta Smith, and Xavier Worthy have been able to score double-digit PPR points per game in one of their first three seasons. The problem? It's easy to argue that each of those guys had better production profiles than Johnson. And each one had draft capital backing them that Johnson may not totally get.

Johnson played five years of college football, running out of the slot on 87% of his routes run. Three of those seasons were with Troy, and the final two were at Oregon, where we got more of the production that mattered. Johnson saw middling receiving yard per team pass attempt rates of 1.95 and 2.30 there, but his 2023 campaign resulted in 3.45 yards per route run. Only four wideouts in this class had a season with a yards per route run rate that high. He led in first downs per route run, too.

Receiving yards per team pass attempt correlates pretty well to yards per route run, but, every once in a while, we'll see good wide receivers not play full-time roles. They'll thrive when on the field, but they'll lose out a bit in receiving yards per team pass attempt. So if there's anything to grab hold of with Johnson's production, it's that. We've seen Ladd McConkey and Puka Nacua become hits in recent seasons when this yards per route run thing has happened.

We shouldn't bank on those outcomes for Johnson, but at least there's some substance. Odds aren't exactly in his favor to hit a huge ceiling, though, given his size. Unlike Hollywood Brown, Devonta Smith, Xavier Worthy, and Tank Dell before him, Johnson doesn't have much experience at all as a perimeter player. Those guys did.

# ELIJHAH BADGER • WR



16.3

ZAP Score

FLORIDA	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'1	Weight: 200	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Jordan Whittington • Cody Thompson • Jester Weah

The 2024 Florida Gators were helped in the ZAP Model by a tough strength of schedule. Elijah Badger, who transferred there after four years at Arizona State, saw a decent 2.55 prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt rate. For a Day 3 pick, that's not bad at all. Adjusted for opponent, that number was inching closer to 3.00.

It did take Badger five years to give us the goods, though. His production profile at Arizona State was lacking, even if he was leading his team's pass-catchers by a healthy margin in every statistical category. The 2024 season was what the model seems to care about most, and it gave him a Breakout Score of 49.4.

Badger had an average depth of target of 17.3 last year at Florida after being below the 10.0 mark at Arizona State. That played a role in leading to his 2.96 yards per route run rate, a best-season number that ranks in the top-10 in the class. Per PFF, 32.8% of Badger's targets were on 20-plus-air-yard throws. That's squarely in the higher end for a wide receiver. Meanwhile, his career targets, thanks to his time at Arizona State, were frequently close to or behind the line of scrimmage. You have to wonder if his production numbers would look a whole lot better if Arizona State used him more like Florida did.

Badger will be almost 24 years old when the draft rolls around, which is definitely a red flag. The profile, however, isn't bad if we're talking depth pieces. And Badger did see some special teams work in college as well, which is something that we can give some weight.

# ANTWANE WELLS • WR



16.1

ZAP Score

OLE MISS

DART THROW

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'1 | Weight: 201 | NFL Team: Undrafted

**Statistical Comps:** Cody Thompson • Ty Fryfogle • Dillon Mitchell

Antwane “Juice” Wells played at three schools in college. He started things off at James Madison, predictably saw good production, transferred to South Carolina, played there for two years, then finished things off at Ole Miss. My man has been around.

Like I said, Wells’ production at James Madison was great. His Freshman year saw him get a 3.30 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate, which, without context, is kind of bonkers. With context -- a lesser program, making it easier to hit such a high number -- it’s kind of not that big of a deal.

Wells’ best season in the model came in 2022 at South Carolina, where he hit a 2.20 yards per team attempt value. His 2023 season was derailed by a foot injury before he joined Tre Harris at Ole Miss.

It may or may not be important since it was his first year with the Rebels, but Wells was fourth on Ole Miss last year in wide receiver receptions. All three of those wideouts had more yards than him, too. That doesn’t exactly boost my confidence with him.

A 48.1 Breakout Score could be worse, and, like I said, his James Madison production was pretty crazy. Maybe that’s enough to make him interesting. To me, he’s just in a long line of wide receivers in this class who could do something in the right spot.

# BRU MCCOY • WR

 12.6

ZAP Score

TENNESSEE	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'2	Weight: 209	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Colton Dowell • Dontario Drummond • Anthony Johnson

Bru McCoy has a lot of size, but he does not have a lot of production.

McCoy was a five-star recruit who went through quite the collegiate journey. He started things off at Southern California back in 2019 after graduating early from high school, but quickly decided to transfer to Texas because, as Wikipedia put it, “he felt betrayed by Kliff Kingsbury.” At the time, Kingsbury was USC’s offensive coordinator, and he’d just taken a job with the Arizona Cardinals.

McCoy then decided to spend spring practice with Texas before transferring back to USC that summer. He took a redshirt season in 2019 before finally making his debut with the Trojans in 2020.

McCoy’s Freshman season was limited due to the pandemic, but he caught 21 balls across six games. He missed 2021 entirely because USC kicked him off the team for a domestic violence arrest. Those charges were dropped, but he never rejoined the team.

Instead, McCoy spent his final three years of college at Tennessee. There, he saw a best-season receiving yards per team pass attempt rate of just 1.71, and, despite his size, he never surpassed four touchdowns in a season. McCoy actually has the worst top-season touchdown share in the entire class. That’s alarming at 6’2”, 209 pounds.

McCoy has a size advantage for sure, but his best-season marks are troubling. Not only do we very rarely get wins from players with top-season yards per team pass attempt rates as low as McCoy’s, but his yards per route run numbers are poor, too. In fact, only five wide receivers from this class have a worse career yards per route run rate, and McCoy is dead last in best-season yards per route run.

It’s always good when a late-round wideout has some trait we can get excited about -- in this case, it’s McCoy’s size -- but when the rest of the profile is lacking as much as McCoy’s is, it’s a tough sell.

# JACOLBY GEORGE • WR



12.3

ZAP Score

MIAMI

DART THROW

Height: 5'11 | Weight: 172 | NFL Team: Undrafted

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Whop Philyor • Travis Benjamin • Jeff Thomas

Well, considering Xavier Restrepo played so much in the slot at Miami, any other wide receiver coming from the U probably struggled to get work there. And, despite Jacolby George's thinner frame, that's exactly the case. During his two seasons at Miami with more than 100 routes run, George ran just 6.3% and 16.3% of his routes from the slot.

George trailed the aforementioned Restrepo in receptions and receiving yards by a healthy margin in each of the last two seasons. So if the ZAP Model isn't *in love* with Restrepo -- it merely thinks he's a solid slot guy -- then there's no chance it'll like George.

And it doesn't. George did give us a Breakout Score of 52.5 thanks to a decent-enough Junior campaign, and his per-route-run numbers could be worse. But I'm concerned about how his slender build will translate to the NFL. Without much to see from him out of the slot, what type of role is he going to be able to play in the league?

It'd be a surprise if George makes a fantasy football impact.

# THEO WEASE • WR



11.7

ZAP Score

MISSOURI	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'3	Weight: 200	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Van Jefferson • Jehu Chesson • Cornell Powell

Theo Wease started playing college football at Oklahoma.

With CeeDee Lamb.

Wease was an NCAA pigskin player for six seasons. Four of those were with Oklahoma, and he finished things off with Missouri. Even with all of the experience, he never reached 1,000 yards in a season, and he was above the 2.0 yards per team pass attempt mark just once.

Wease played with 2025 draft favorite Luther Burden over the last couple of years, and, in 2024, he actually out-produced him in receiving yards. Wease, like Burden, was seeing a good amount of short-distance work, but he didn't get any of the manufactured rushing stuff.

There's no huge size advantage with Wease, and his production profile is totally mediocre. Having played six collegiate seasons, he's also older -- only six wideouts in the class have been around longer.

This isn't the typical profile that hits. In the ZAP Model database, we've had tons of wide receivers enter the league after turning 23-and-a-half years old. Just four of those wide receivers gave us any sort of usability during the first three years of their career: John Brown, Cooper Kupp, Terry McLaurin, and Tank Dell. Brown, Kupp, and Dell each had better Breakout Scores than Wease's 32.6, and McLaurin at least had draft capital backing him.

You can, right now, ignore Wease in your rookie drafts.

# DA'QUAN FELTON • WR



11.3

ZAP Score

VIRGINIA TECH	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'5	Weight: 213	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Jake Bobo • Marcell Ateman • Marquez Valdes-Scantling

Da'Quan Felton didn't see sincere production until 2021, his third year at Norfolk State. He can (kind of) thank the pandemic for that.

Even at the smaller program, Felton failed to reach a 2.0 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate. When he got to Virginia Tech in 2023, that number hit a high at 1.87, but that's still not anything to write home about.

In the end, Felton finished college with a 29.2 Breakout Score, and he's one of 10 wide receivers in the class who failed to get to a 2.0 receiving yards per team pass attempt.

Both colleges used Felton vertically. His average depth of target never fell below 13.0 in any relevant season of his collegiate career, and over 32% of his all-time targets were on 20-plus-air-yard throws, the third-highest rate in the class. At 6'5'', 213 pounds, an NFL team may see a specialist role for him on their team.

That, to me, is the only way the 24-year-old Felton could find fantasy value.

# ANDREW ARMSTRONG • WR

 10.3  
ZAP Score

ARKANSAS	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'4	Weight: 202	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Jordan Taylor • Devin Street • Matt Landers

Andrew Armstrong is one of the oldest wide receivers in this class. He's more than three years older than Luther Burden and Isaiah Bond. That's because he played six years of college football, three with Texas A&M-Commerce -- which I've discovered is the same thing as East Texas A&M -- and then three more with Arkansas.

I mean, aside from the fact that Armstrong had the benefit of playing extra time, his production profile isn't bad for a late-round dart throw. He only has a 28.6 Breakout Score, but we did see him get to a 3.25 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate last year as a Razorback. When adjusted for strength of schedule, that's the fourth-best number in the class.

Armstrong's a perimeter player who saw a lot of short and intermediate area throws throughout his time at Arkansas. With his size, there's a chance an NFL team is intrigued enough to draft him.

The age thing could get in the way here, though. The only player in the ZAP Model database over 24 to give us relevancy in their first three years in the league is John Brown. And Brown had a better production profile, wasn't quite as old as Armstrong, and had top-100 draft capital.

Andrew Armstrong is not John Brown.

# JOSH KELLY • WR



10.2

ZAP Score

TEXAS TECH

DART THROW

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'1 | Weight: 186 | NFL Team: Undrafted

Statistical Comps: Tyron Johnson • Kenbrell Thompkins • Josh Harper

You're a sicko if you're reading Josh Kelly's ZAP Model profile. Just know that.

Kelly, of course, isn't someone you should be thinking about right now. He played six seasons of college football, and while he did reach 1,000 yards last year at Texas Tech -- his third school -- he needed that season to get over the 2.0 receiving yards per team pass attempt mark.

Last year was Kelly's first playing almost entirely out of the slot. He's got a pretty typical wide receiver build, and he didn't have a ton of slot experience in his five seasons leading up to 2024. But PFF charted Kelly with almost a 92% slot rate for Texas Tech, leading to a career low (by far) 7.3 average depth of target.

That leads to more questions than answers about Kelly, in my opinion. If a team is going to draft him as a slot player, there are plenty of slot-only options in this class who could fit that role better. If they want the versatility, I'm not sure going after an older prospect is the way to go.

# TRAESHON HOLDEN • WR

 10.2  
ZAP Score

OREGON	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'2	Weight: 205	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Corey Fuller • Tony Brown • Jaray Jenkins

In the ZAP Model's database, we've had 52 wide receivers get drafted after Pick 100 (or go undrafted), fail to reach a receiving yards per team pass attempt of 2.0, and enter the league after turning 23. One of those players score more than 9 PPR points per game in one of their first three years in the league. One. And it was Hunter Renfrow, who kind of did his thing and peaced out in a hurry. (Whatever happened to him, anyway?)

Traeshon Holden is 21 years old, and he has a max-season receiving yards per team pass attempt of 3.05. Just kidding. He'll be 23-and-a-half when the draft happens, and his best year in receiving yards per team pass attempt produced a 1.68 rate, well below the threshold used above.

Holden played at Alabama for three years before he moved to Oregon. He didn't reach 500 receiving yards until his fifth year of college ball, which is where he had the 1.68 receiving yards per team pass attempt figure. He's one of seven wideouts in the class with a top-season yards per route run rate under 2.0, and his career first downs per route run is below average as well.

Size is a plus for Holden, but, for an "X" receiver, he rarely got down the field. Just 13.6% of his career targets traveled 20 or more air yards, per PFF data, ranking third-lowest in the class.

This isn't the kind of profile you want to invest in.

# ROC TAYLOR • WR



7.3

ZAP Score

MEMPHIS	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'2	Weight: 213	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Bub Means • Keelan Doss • JJ Worton

Roc Taylor is built like a rock. (I don't even know what that means. Give me a break, I've written like 40 wide receiver profiles by now.) He's 6'2'', 213 pounds and capable of playing a physical boundary role for an NFL team.

It'd just be nice if there was a strong production profile backing him up. Taylor is one of eight wideouts in this class without a Breakout Score. His, at least, was because of some adjustments that were made due to his playing at Memphis. He had a best-season receiving yards per team pass attempt of 2.25, but that was adjusted down due to strength of schedule.

We know that wideouts without a Breakout Score generally fail at the next level. Taylor, at least, had OK-enough route run numbers, and his size may interest some teams. He's more attractive than others with poorer production in this class. He's just not someone I'd confidently bet on.

# JA'COREY BROOKS • WR



5.7

ZAP Score

LOUISVILLE

DART THROW

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'2 | Weight: 184 | NFL Team: Undrafted

**Statistical Comps:** John Hightower • Rico Bussey • Jamari Staples

Ja'Corey Brooks was at Alabama for three years before he transferred to Louisville for his final one. His Freshman year saw some important late-season action, setting the stage for a potentially good Sophomore campaign. And "good" is how I'd probably describe the result. He caught 39 passes for 674 yard and 8 touchdowns, including a 1.54 prorated receiving yards per team pass attempt.

After a shoulder injury ruined his Junior year, Brooks went to Louisville. That's where his top collegiate season happened. His 2.57 receiving yards per team pass attempt allowed for him to record a Breakout Score, albeit a low one, and his 2.57 yards per route run rate that season was respectable.

Brooks saw a high 15.1-yard average depth of target last season, ranking in the top-20 across college football in deep-ball targets. He can produce a lot of speed on the outside, and that could be his "in" to finding some playing time in the NFL.

To sum it all up, Brooks, a five-star recruit, is an OK player to keep in the back of your mind as you watch Day 3 of the NFL Draft. In the right spot, he could be fine.

# NICK NASH • WR



5.2

ZAP Score

SAN JOSE STATE	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'2	Weight: 203	NFL Team: Undrafted		
Statistical Comps: Jason Brownlee • DeMarco Sampson • Aaron Parker		Draft Capital Δ		

We've got another six-year player in Nick Nash, but, unlike some of the other wide receivers who've been in the same boat, Nash switched positions halfway through his college career. He actually started as a quarterback at San Jose State, did that for three seasons without much opportunity, and then pivoted to wide receiver in his fourth season.

Nash played three years of wideout at the same school, with 2024 being by far his most productive campaign. He not only was a Biletnikoff Award finalist alongside Travis Hunter and Tetairoa McMillan, but Nash won the triple crown in college football: He led everyone in receptions, receiving yards, and receiving touchdowns.

The ZAP Model must love him, right?

Not to be a downer at the Nash party, but it feels like there's a chance people are taking his production a little too far. What Nash has done is impressive: He converted positions and then dominated his competition. But his competition is also the Mountain West Conference. And while he did put up amazing raw numbers, his receiving yards per team pass attempt rate last year was 2.71. There were 13 wide receivers in this year's class to do that in a season. Nash's yards per route run was 2.71, too. Of the wideouts who were invited to the combine, 17 got to *that* mark.

Nash is also almost 25 years old. The only wideout from the ZAP Model who entered the NFL at his age to give us any sort of production is basically Devaughn Vele. It doesn't make hitting impossible, it just means there's even more variability to Nash's profile.

Nash's age and the program strength of San Jose State led to him receiving a Breakout Score of...zero. He had productive games against bigger programs in 2024, but, again, raw data isn't telling the entire story here.

Overall, Nash has pretty good size, and we should definitely give his numbers the context they need: He hasn't been playing wide receiver very long. And his 2024 was exciting. There are just folks out there who love Nash because of last year's numbers, when they're really not as good as they look.

# BEAUX COLLINS • WR



4.8

ZAP Score

NOTRE DAME

DART THROW

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'3 | Weight: 201 | NFL Team: Undrafted

**Statistical Comps:** Darius White • Chris Lacy • Stephen Guidry

Beaux Collins may have the least desirable production profile in this year's draft class. I mean, to be fair to him, he's one of just 49 wideouts who were invited to the NFL Combine this year. He clearly did something right. But, man, there are definitely wideouts in this class who were better in college.

Collins played three years at Clemson and one at Notre Dame. Through those four seasons, he maxed out at a 1.28 receiving yards per team pass attempt rate, the absolute lowest mark in the class. Obviously, he didn't register a Breakout Score as a result.

Collins was also third-worst in best-season yards per route run, fifth-worst in career yards per route run, and third-worst in career first downs per route run, per PFF data.

That's not what we're looking for.

Needless to say, this profile legitimately has less than a 1% chance of hitting in fantasy football.

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# ASHTON JEANTY • RB

 **99.7**

ZAP Score

BOISE STATE	ELITE PRODUCER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'8	Weight: 211	NFL Team: Raiders	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Mark Ingram • D'Andre Swift • Jonathan Taylor

**Update:** There's only one running back in the ZAP Model database who received a higher score than Ashton Jeanty's 99.7. And that running back, Christian McCaffrey, once broke fantasy football.

Jeanty could very easily do the same.

Although Jeanty's a little shorter than most stud running backs, he still has the size to shoulder a big workload. His top year in prorated reception share is sixth-best in the ZAP Model's history. His Breakout Score is 94.3. He's one of six players in the model's database to have a best-season total yards per team play above 2.8.

You could argue Boise State's strength of schedule beefed up Jeanty's numbers, but that's all reflected in his draft capital. The Raiders knew that -- teams knew that -- and he still was selected sixth overall in the draft.

Prior to Jeanty, since 2011, the NFL had nine running backs get drafted in the front half of the first round. Every single one of them have given fantasy managers an RB1 season in one of their first three years in the league. And, for the record, that list includes Trent Richardson.

Two-thirds of them had a season of 20 or more PPR points per game!

Perhaps Jeanty's statistical comparables are turning you off, but you shouldn't let them get to you. His size alone makes him a unique prospect, so there aren't many strong matches analytically.

This isn't one to overthink. The Raiders at least now have a reasonable quarterback under center in Geno Smith for the immediate future, and there are no established running backs in Jeanty's way (not that it would matter). He should see a massive workload immediately.

Jeanty's a true cornerstone dynasty piece who can do everything on a football field.

# OMARION HAMPTON • RB

 **98.2**

ZAP Score

NORTH CAROLINA	ELITE PRODUCER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'0	Weight: 221	NFL Team: Chargers		
Statistical Comps: Todd Gurley • Ezekiel Elliott • Rashaad Penny		Draft Capital	Δ	

**Statistical Comps:** Todd Gurley • Ezekiel Elliott • Rashaad Penny

**Update:** From a real football standpoint, the Omariion Hampton fit in LA makes plenty of sense. Chargers offensive coordinator Greg Roman loves his big-bodied power backs, which is exactly what Hampton is.

Roman's offense will give a player like Hampton a nice floor, but you do need to question the ceiling a bit. Roman's been a coordinator in 10 completed NFL seasons, and, in those campaigns, his team backfields have never ranked in the top-10 in PPR scoring. You may want to blame that on the fact that he's coached a lot of mobile quarterbacks who steal work from their running backs, but a bigger point to drive home is that his backfields have never ranked higher than 19th in target share during the timeframe. They've actually averaged a yearly ranking of 26.3 (26th to 27th) in target share.

Hampton may not have been someone who was projected to see loads of work as a receiver in the NFL, but his pass-catching profile, to the ZAP Model, is understated. Among all backs in this loaded class, Hampton had the fourth-best top-season reception share. His Breakout Score was an above-average 61.7. He's not TreVeyon Henderson, but he could be a 12% target share player at the next level.

That potential took a hit with this landing spot, as long as Roman is coordinator.

The Chargers also signed Najee Harris to a one-year deal this offseason, so that could cause some friction for Hampton in 2025. Harris, however, is not nearly as explosive (Hampton has an elite Speed Score), and much of Harris' contract is incentive-based anyway. Don't let that be the reason you avoid Hampton in rookie drafts. Please.

It seems like this is more negative than positive, but history really does favor Hampton. There've been hits and misses from back-half first-round running backs since 2011, but, of the nine that we've seen, five have given us RB1 campaigns in the NFL. Expand that into the early parts of Round 2, and that hit rate continues.

In the end, Hampton himself has a chance to just be an undeniable talent if things hit. The ZAP Model database has seen, prior to this year's draft, just four running backs with top-100 draft capital, a 110-plus Speed Score, and a best-season reception share north of 15%: DeMarco Murray, Todd Gurley, Saquon Barkley, and Jahmyr Gibbs.

Omariion Hampton has now officially joined that awesome group.

# TREVEYON HENDERSON • RB

 94.1

ZAP Score

OHIO STATE	WEEKLY STARTER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'10	Weight: 202	NFL Team: Patriots	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** David Wilson • James Cook • JK Dobbins

**Update:** TreVeyon Henderson got some first-round consideration, and rightfully so. As a Freshman at Ohio State, he had 1,248 yards and 15 touchdowns on just 183 carries. What's more impressive is that he caught 27 passes for 312 yards and 4 more touchdowns that year...on a team with Jaxon Smith-Njigba, Garrett Wilson, Chris Olave, Marvin Harrison Jr., and Emeka Egbuka.

Henderson's Breakout Score is a solid 86.4. He does get knocked down a tad in the ZAP Model due to a best-season reception share of just 9.7%, and that would typically be somewhat of a red flag. For Henderson, you shouldn't be worried. Among all backs drafted in the top-50 since 2011, just five had a best-season reception share below 11% and a Breakout Score above 80. Those backs include David Wilson, who had to retire early due to injury, Nick Chubb, Josh Jacobs, Jonathan Taylor, and Kenneth Walker. Those players are stylistically not like Henderson, but they've obviously provided us with fantasy goodness.

It's definitely odd that Henderson had a lower reception share total when he's projected to be a top pass-catching back at the next level. But, again, he was playing on a team with insane wide receiver competition. And this is where teammate score can help -- he shared a backfield last year with Quinshon Judkins, another high-end back in this class.

Henderson may never be a 250-plus attempt player in the NFL, and he'll probably not be asked to carry a massive workload right away in New England. Rhamondre Stevenson is still under contract, and there's a good chance he's there until 2027.

But let's not pretend like Stevenson is a special, can't-miss player. He also isn't a back that this particular coaching staff worked on and developed. Henderson is the far better prospect -- he's more explosive, he's an elite pass protector, and he has crazy potential as a pass-catcher within an offense that lacks receiving threats. Josh McDaniels, New England's offensive coordinator, is no stranger to heavily utilizing his backs as receivers.

Alongside an up-and-coming talent in Drake Maye, it's not a bad spot for Henderson to go to at all. There's elite target share potential here.

# QUINSHON JUDKINS • RB

 93.4

ZAP Score

OHIO STATE	WEEKLY STARTER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'0	Weight: 221	NFL Team: Browns	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Derrius Guice • Melvin Gordon • Trey Benson

**Update:** When looking at Cleveland's running back depth chart pre-draft, it was clear that they needed a player who could grind out work between the tackles. Jerome Ford and Pierre Strong were the only backs on the roster, and both of them are more change-of-pace players.

Snagging Quinshon Judkins towards the top of Round 2 made a lot of sense from a fit perspective.

Judkins has one of the more impressive age-adjusted rushing profiles in this class. He ran for 1,567 yards as a Freshman at Ole Miss, had another big year as a Sophomore there, and then he did his thing in a shared backfield with TreVeyon Henderson at Ohio State last season. It would've been nice to see better avoided tackles per rush attempt numbers from Judkins -- his career rate was pretty average compared to the rest of the class -- but his 220-pound frame and strong Speed Score come together to do a lot on the ground.

The issue is on the receiving side. Judkins never reached a 9% reception share in any collegiate season. And, despite seeing big workloads throughout college, he has just a 46.5 Breakout Score, driven by a mediocre 0.38 best-season receiving yards per team pass attempt. He's now the fifth second-round running back with a top-season receiving yards per team pass attempt rate below 0.5, joining Derrick Henry, Ronald Jones, Miles Sanders, and Derrius Guice. Considering Henry is an outlier of a human being, that's not the most encouraging list to see.

On top of all of that, since 2011 and prior to this draft, the ZAP Model had seen 22 running backs get drafted in the top-100 with sub-60 Breakout Scores and sub-10% best-season reception shares. Of those 22, just 2 were able to reach a target share per game rate in the NFL (minimum 8 games played) above 9%. And one of those backs was Jerick McKinnon, who wasn't a traditional running back prospect.

The best way to picture Judkins' probable higher-end workload in the NFL is to think about a diet Jonathan Taylor. Or, honestly, Nick Chubb. He likely won't be a consistent double-digit target share back, but there's no doubt that he could see 250-plus carries for a team like Cleveland. And, in the short term, he does fit in pretty nicely with Jerome Ford.

# KALEB JOHNSON • RB

 86.5

ZAP Score

IOWA	WEEKLY STARTER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'1	Weight: 224	NFL Team: Steelers	Draft Capital Δ	

**Statistical Comps:** Le'Veon Bell • James Conner • Daniel Thomas

**Update:** Kaleb Johnson was meant to be a Steeler. Not only did he play for Iowa, a team with identical uniform colors as Pittsburgh's, but his top-two comps in the ZAP Model are Le'Veon Bell and James Conner, two backs drafted by Mike Tomlin's team.

Pittsburgh needed running back help, and they drafted the perfect Jaylen Warren complement.

Johnson played three years at Iowa, getting work in all three seasons. Things didn't really pop off for him until 2024, though, where he ran the ball 240 times for 1,537 yards and 21 touchdowns. Yes, that's correct: 21 rushing touchdowns.

Some will say that Johnson isn't a capable receiver after catching just 29 balls during his time as a Hawkeye. The more advanced numbers disagree. Iowa's been one of the most run-heavy teams in college football, making it difficult to put up a ton of receiving production. The truth is, Johnson was totally fine last year, securing a 14.6% reception share. His Breakout Score, in turn, is a solid 75.8. He may not be a plus in the receiving game, but he's likely not a minus.

Johnson's long speed is a bit of a concern, but, again, let's not make it a bigger deal than it needs to be. Was his 4.57 40-yard dash slower than desired? Sure. But, at 224 pounds, he still crossed the finish line with a respectable 102.7 Speed Score.

Prior to Johnson getting scooped up by Pittsburgh, the ZAP Model had seen 11 running backs get drafted after Pick 64 and through Pick 100 with a "Low Risk" Draft Capital Delta label. Of those 11, 10 have had a chance to play three NFL seasons. And, of those 10, half gave fantasy managers at least one RB2 season during their first three years in the league. When looking at all other Draft Capital Delta profiles in that draft range, that rate of securing an RB2 season falls to about 15%.

Jaylen Warren will likely take a good chunk of work from Johnson in 2025 -- especially as a receiver -- but Warren's set to be a free agent next year. What if Johnson shows that he can be the Steelers bell-cow, and he completely takes over in 2026? It certainly wouldn't be the first time a Mike Tomlin-led team went with that approach.

The ZAP Model likes Johnson, and the situation is pretty solid overall. Don't ignore him in your rookie drafts.

# BHAYSHUL TUTEN • RB

 84.9

ZAP Score

VIRGINIA TECH	WEEKLY STARTER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'9	Weight: 206	NFL Team: Jaguars	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Kenneth Walker • Darrynton Evans • Jerick McKinnon

**Update:** Since 2011, only seven running backs taken in the top-200 had a best-season reception share of 10% or better and a Speed Score at or above 115: Leonard Fournette, Saquon Barkley, Kalen Ballage, Latavius Murray, Antonio Gibson, Jonathan Taylor, and Breece Hall.

Bhayshul Tuten's top-season reception share was well above that 10% mark. And his Speed Score? 118.3.

The ZAP Model really likes Tuten. Like, a lot. That's because of the aforementioned insane Speed Score, but also a 72.6 Breakout Score and a top-season reception share north of 17%. That reception share was from his time at North Carolina A&T, so maybe it was easier to hit that number there, but, at Virginia Tech, where he played two seasons, he was able to get over the 13% mark.

A top comp of Kenneth Walker is certainly the upside case for Tuten, but the two had similar size profiles, they ran fast 40s, and they have stronger Breakout Scores. Walker was definitely the better prospect -- like, multiple tiers ahead of Tuten -- but Tuten's home-run hitting ability is similar.

Jacksonville seems like a bad destination with Travis Etienne and Tank Bigsby there, but Etienne is set to be a free agent next year, and Bigsby isn't some undeniable talent. If Tuten's potential ends up hitting, he can eventually pass him on the depth chart.

The fantasy community likes Tuten, but the consensus may let the immediate situation -- the crowded backfield -- push him down draft boards. If that happens, we all should be drafting him. A lot. Because in the non-premium parts of your draft, you want to take shots on high-variance profiles like this one.

# RJ HARVEY • RB

 84.2

ZAP Score

CENTRAL FLORIDA

WEEKLY STARTER

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 5'8 | Weight: 205 | NFL Team: Broncos

**Statistical Comps:** Chase Brown • Jordan Todman • Anthony McFarland

**Update:** As you read about earlier, mock draft data is now being used in both the running back and wide receiver ZAP Models. For running backs, the draft capital input is now a mixture of actual capital and projected capital, with the actual capital getting a lot more weight.

That's bad news for RJ Harvey. He was projected to go 105th overall, but Denver selected him 60th. It was, for all intents and purposes, a reach by the Broncos. And that did hurt Harvey's ZAP score a bit.

Now, don't get me wrong: This is a fun match. The Broncos don't have dynamic playmakers in the backfield. Harvey, meanwhile, is a well-built back who ran a 4.40 40 at the combine a couple of months back. His career explosive run rate is also top-five in this year's class.

Sean Payton's backfields typically see a ton of looks through the air. Many analysts will say Harvey's receiving profile is a plus, but the ZAP Model's inputs see it more as just fine. He reached a double-digit percentage reception share in just one collegiate season, and his Breakout Score is an almost completely average 50.9. He looks like a player who can handle the easy stuff out of the backfield, but it'd be a surprise to see him as a 15% target share back in the NFL.

The big, glaring weakness to Harvey's profile is his age. He's already 24 years old after starting his college career as a quarterback at Virginia in 2019. He quickly transferred to UCF where he'd switch to running back, but the pandemic didn't help him get playing time. Then, in 2021, he tore his ACL. He made up for the missed time by posting strong production to close out his collegiate career.

Harvey's a solid player who will bring big-play ability to the Denver backfield, something they desperately need. And that's what the Broncos likely saw in him when they made him the first 24-plus-year-old running back drafted in the top-100 in the ZAP Model's history.

We're really in new territory here. Maybe, in the end, age won't matter all that much when the draft capital is so strong. Harvey should be able to see work right away in a pretty wide-open backfield, so feel free to draft him if you need points in 2025. Just know that, historically, players like this have some volatility.

# CAM SKATTEBO • RB

 79.8

ZAP Score

ARIZONA STATE	FLEX PLAY	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'9	Weight: 219	NFL Team: Giants	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Kareem Hunt • Zack Moss • Ke'Shawn Vaughn

**Update:** Cam Skattebo may have the second-best production profile in this year's class. His best season in prorated reception share is 20.7%, trailing only Ashton Jeanty among the combine invitees. He has a Breakout Score of 87.4, fifth-best in the class. He's third in the class in career missed tackles forced per attempt, and he's fourth in yards after contact per attempt.

What's not to like?

Well, Skattebo ran a 4.65 40 at his pro day, and the model adds a little bit of time to that, since pro day numbers are typically a little juiced up. That resulted in a mediocre Speed Score, hurting him a bit.

The thing is, that speed shows up in the advanced analytics, too: Skattebo has the second-worst career explosive run rate among all running backs invited to this year's combine.

Pairing him with Tyrone Tracy in New York makes a lot of sense. Tracy has the ability to get down the field quickly and generate big plays, while Skattebo is going to be your man to get the tough yards. Having Tracy there will likely cap Skattebo's pass-catching ceiling -- and he's a very capable receiver -- but there are worse landing spots than New York.

Anticipate a running back-by-committee approach, with Skattebo taking on more early-down and goal-line work. And, obviously, if an injury were to occur with Tracy, Skattebo is more than capable of shouldering a big workload.

# TREVOR ETIENNE • RB

 **78.8**

ZAP Score

GEORGIA	FLEX PLAY	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'9	Weight: 198	NFL Team: Panthers	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Wendell Smallwood • Ito Smith • Tyler Badie

**Update:** The Panthers are probably going to be without Jonathon Brooks in 2025, so they added Rico Dowdle to the backfield this offseason via free agency to play behind Chuba Hubbard. They technically still could've used more depth, which is why they went and got Trevor Etienne in Round 4.

Etienne is a little undersized, weighing 198 pounds at this year's NFL Combine. That smaller frame led to him seeing no more than 133 carries in a single collegiate season. He played ball at Florida for two years and then Georgia for one.

The fact that Etienne had a smaller workload at multiple stops is telling. He's probably not going to be a high-volume back in the NFL, and Carolina isn't exactly the place where he'd see that work anyway. He's a pass-catcher. His top season in reception share ranks 10th-best in this loaded class, and his Breakout Score is 11th.

One glaring statistical piece to Etienne is that he never topped a 1.25 yards per team play rate in any season. That's, of course, driven by the fact that he didn't see a lot of work on the ground. But his best-season yards per team play figure is third-worst in the class.

That may not be a problem. In the ZAP Model database, there've been 12 drafted running backs with Breakout Scores above 70 (Etienne's is about 79) who failed to reach a 1.30 total yards per team play rate in college. Essentially, they were doing most of their work as receivers.

Some names on that list with similar draft capital to Etienne include Tony Pollard, Nyheim Hines, and Tyrone Tracy. There are more busts than hits, but you'll find that with Day 3 draft capital anyway.

It'd be a surprise to see Etienne as a high-volume ball-carrier in the NFL, but he's dynamic with the rock in his hands. And this type of profile has succeeded as good depth in dynasty for a long time now. You can draft him for more of a handcuff spot on your roster, just don't spend a premium pick to do it.

# JAYDON BLUE • RB

 74.5  
ZAP Score

TEXAS	FLEX PLAY	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'9	Weight: 196	NFL Team: Cowboys	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Tyler Goodson • Justice Hill • TJ Logan

**Update:** In a world where smaller backs have gotten some love from their coaching staffs, why not Jaydon Blue?

Players this small -- Blue is 196 pounds -- without the draft capital to back them rarely see big workloads in the NFL. In fact, the only three sub-200-pound backs drafted past Pick 100 in the ZAP Model to get to a 50% running back rush share during one of their first three seasons in the NFL have been Andre Ellington, Kyren Williams, and Bucky Irving.

Ellington had over 600 career carries in college. Irving was at 475. Williams was at 419.

Blue? 214.

Now, Blue had some ridiculous teammate competition at Texas in Bijan Robinson, Roschon Johnson, and Jonathon Brooks, to be fair. Honestly, his teammates in college were far better than his new teammates in Dallas.

But Blue didn't lead the backfield in 2024, either. That certainly should make us less optimistic about things changing in the NFL.

It's just that if you look at that Dallas Cowboys backfield, and you stare at names like Javonte Williams, Miles Sanders, and Phil Mafah, you start to ask yourself, "Why not?" As in, "Why not Jaydon Blue?" He has sub-4.4 speed, an element the veteran backs on the team can no longer bring to the field. And he's a plus receiver, having secured an 89.2 Breakout Score. He's an explosive play waiting to happen.

The probable outcome here is that Blue is just a change-of-pace player, playing a role similar to one of his top comps, Justice Hill. But if gamers don't buy into him in rookie drafts, I have no problem drafting him and hoping for an outlier outcome. Because his profile is low-key good.

# WOODY MARKS • RB

 73.6

ZAP Score

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA	FLEX PLAY
Height: 5'10   Weight: 207	NFL Team: Texans

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Max Borghi • Rasheen Ali • Michael Wiley

**Update:** Woody Marks has one of the better receiving profiles in the entire 2025 draft class. But they need at least a little bit of context.

Marks started his college career at Mississippi State. He played there for four years, three of them under the late Mike Leach.

That's important information to know, because running backs under Leach have, historically, posted some ridiculous receiving numbers. Even Marks' top comp is hilariously Max Borghi, who also saw a spike in receiving work within Leach's offense.

This doesn't mean Marks is a *bad* pass-catcher. He transferred to Southern Cal for the 2024 season, and, there, Marks still posted a 14.0% reception share. He played five years of college football, and he never dropped below a 12.2% prorated reception share in any of them. That's pretty impressive, regardless of the environment.

All of that experience, though, means that Marks isn't the youngest back in the world. He turned 24 back in December, making him the oldest back in this year's draft class. We haven't had long-lasting hits (yet) from running backs this old in the ZAP Model database.

Houston snagging Marks in Round 4 makes some sense, since they don't have a reliable pass-catching back behind Joe Mixon. And, as you all know, Mixon is getting up there in age -- he'll be 29 in July. The Texans also have an out with his contract after this season.

That may be intriguing from a dynasty perspective, but I have a hard time believing Marks would be the Joe Mixon answer if things open up next year. No player in this class avoided tackles at a lower rate throughout their career than Marks, and no player had a worse explosive run rate.

As a pass-catcher? Sold. As a true three-down workhorse? Unlikely.

# JARQUEZ HUNTER • RB

 72.4  
ZAP Score

AUBURN

FLEX PLAY

Height: 5'9 | Weight: 204 | NFL Team: Rams

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Chase Edmonds • Paul Perkins • Bryce Love

**Update:** Jarquez Hunter was a pre-draft ZAP Model favorite, and he got better draft capital than expected when the Rams took him in the fourth round.

That means he should be on your radar.

Hunter has the third-best Breakout Score in this year's draft class. It seems wild because he topped out at a 10.7% reception share at Auburn, which isn't anything special. His Breakout Score is high, though, because, as a Sophomore, Hunter had 224 receiving yards on a team that threw it just 308 times. He was efficient with his touches.

The combination of high-end Breakout Score and slightly-above-average reception share isn't common. In fact, there's only been one other running back in ZAP Model history with a Breakout Score above 90 (Hunter is at 93.8) and a best-season reception share below 11% (Hunter is at 10.7%).

The other guy to do it? Kenneth Walker.

Hunter didn't have quite the same rushing performance as Walker in college, but don't mistake that for him being a poor runner. Compared to the rest of the class, Hunter was fifth in career avoided tackles per rush, ninth in career explosive run rate, and ninth in career yards after contact per attempt. Shoutout to PFF for that data.

I haven't even mentioned that Hunter ran a 4.44 40 at the combine, coming through with a solid 105 Speed Score.

One knock with Hunter is his size, with him standing at just 5'9'', 204 pounds. But is there any other coach in football you'd want a smaller back to go play for? We watched Sean McVay give Kyren Williams -- a sub-200-pound back -- a massive workload over the last couple of years. The Rams also took a similarly-sized back in Round 3 last year when they selected Blake Corum. This is *the* spot for Jarquez Hunter.

Could the Rams also be thinking about life without Kyren Williams? He's a free agent next year, and they may not want to pay up to keep him.

Hunter is one of my favorite dart throws in this class. He may be my absolute favorite.

# DYLAN SAMPSON • RB

 **69.9**

ZAP Score

TENNESSEE

BENCHWARMER

Height: 5'8 | Weight: 200 | NFL Team: Browns

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Blake Corum • Devonta Freeman • Ronnie Hillman

**Update:** Most mock drafts had Dylan Sampson as a third-round selection, so Cleveland getting him in Round 4 seems like a good value. But it's kind of a weird fit.

Sampson played three seasons at Tennessee, where he gave us some production each year. He carried the ball 58, 106, and 258 times across his three seasons. As a 200-pound back heading to a team that spent an early-second-round pick on Quinshon Judkins, Cleveland is probably seeing Sampson as a nice complement to the Ohio State back, especially after having just one year of carrying a big workload.

The problem is that Judkins' biggest question mark is his receiving upside, and Sampson never posted great pass-catching numbers in college. He topped out at 20 receptions last year, which led to a best-season reception share of 8.5%. His Breakout Score was well under the class mean, coming in at 45.0.

That's now two Cleveland Browns running backs in this draft with below-average Breakout Scores.

We know that best-season total yards per team play can be predictive, and Sampson is below average there when compared to the rest of the class, too. He's also got a worse-than-average yards after contact per attempt rate, and he was ordinary at avoiding tackles, per PFF data.

Sampson did thrive in the explosive runs department, which is evidence that the Browns likely see him as a change-of-pace to Judkins. He can generate big plays, there's no doubt. But without the pass-catching backbone, it just seems like an odd fit -- it seems like Sampson is simply going to hurt Judkins rather than fully complement him.

You've at least got a future handcuff if you draft him, though.

# DJ GIDDENS • RB

 **67.0**

ZAP Score

KANSAS STATE	BENCHWARMER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'0	Weight: 212	NFL Team: Colts	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Cam Akers • Tevin Coleman • Marlon Mack

**Update:** Had DJ Giddens gotten Day 2 draft capital, he would've been in a great spot within the model. Now that he's officially a Round 5 pick, things aren't looking as rosy.

The ZAP Model, prior to this year, had 79 running backs in it drafted between Pick 120 and Pick 180. Giddens, for the record, was selected by the Colts at Pick 151.

Of those backs, the average Breakout Score was 56.2. Giddens is at 77.9. The average Speed Score has been exactly 100. Giddens had a Speed Score, thanks to his 4.43 40, of over 110. Giddens was also north of 2.0 in best-season total yards per team play, far higher than the typical back selected in this range.

Sitting behind Jonathan Taylor in Indianapolis isn't ideal, but the Colts do have an out with JT's contract next year. Giddens will compete with Khalil Herbert as Taylor's direct handcuff, and, if he gets a chance, maybe -- just maybe -- the Colts will feel comfortable moving forward with him in 2026.

Just don't count on that low-probability outcome. Giddens is only someone to take when you're in dart-throw territory in your rookie drafts.

# LEQUINT ALLEN • RB



66.1

ZAP Score

SYRACUSE

BENCHWARMER

Height: 6'0 | Weight: 204 | NFL Team: Jaguars

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Kenneth Gainwell • Marion Grice • Tyrone Tracy

In a draft class full of crazy talent, LeQuint Allen has one of the best receiving profiles you're going to find. His 19.8% best-season reception share trails only Ashton Jeanty and Cam Skattebo. Allen's 86.5 Breakout Score is seventh-best among combine participants.

There's unfortunately not a ton to like about Allen's ground-game work. He was below average at avoiding tackles across his career, and his yards after contact per attempt was south of the class mean, too. With those poorer numbers, Allen runs the risk of getting mediocre draft capital.

And, admittedly, that would be a problem. Allen's receiving profile is awesome, but it's more awesome for a Day 1 or Day 2 pick compared to a Day 3 one. When these types of players lose support -- when they fall in the draft -- they tend to not hit at as strong of a rate as you might think. In fact, in the model's database, there've been 23 backs who were selected after Pick 100 with Breakout Scores above 80 and top-season receptions shares higher than 15%. A handful of those players were able to give us 10, 11, 12 PPR point per game season during their first three years in the league, but the only real hit has been Kyren Williams.

Now, keep in mind, Day 3 backs aren't hitting very often in general. And a lot of these receiving-first players come with bad Speed Scores. It'd be nice to say Allen stands out there, but he didn't run at the combine. So we don't know for sure where he's at compared to other backs in his position.

Overall, though, Allen's an intriguing option to keep an eye on. He has a chance to play a key receiving role for a team at the next level after a 64-catch, 512-yard campaign in 2024. He definitely has pass-catching skills that can give him a nice floor in PPR formats when given an opportunity. And he's one of the younger backs in the class -- he won't even be 21 years old on draft day.

# DEVIN NEAL • RB

 **65.0**

ZAP Score

KANSAS

BENCHWARMER

Height: 5'11 | Weight: 213 | NFL Team: Saints

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Shane Vereen • Bishop Sankey • Isaiah Spiller

**Update:** Devin Neal is just solid across the board, which is why the ZAP Model views him as a low-risk profile.

It would've been nice to see Neal slay the 40-yard dash at the combine, but his 4.58 time was pretty meh. It didn't tank his Speed Score -- he's at about 97, which doesn't help or hurt his ZAP score -- but, with a pretty attractive production profile, adding some athleticism to those stat lines would've been great.

Neal was able to see moderate to strong production in all four seasons played at Kansas, including back-to-back 1,200-yard campaigns. And, vital to the model, his receiving numbers were excellent.

There are only five running backs in this year's class with a best-season reception share of at least 13% and a Breakout Score above 85. Neal is one of them. Ashton Jeanty and Cam Skattebo represent two of those five backs, and they're the only two in the group who have a higher best-season total yards per team play than Neal.

The slower 40 time at the combine did play out a bit within some of Neal's advanced data, as he was below the mean in explosive run rate compared to the rest of the class. But PFF graded him as one of the better pass protectors among combine invites.

That reliability is something the Saints, his new team, don't have behind Alvin Kamara. It's not wild to think Neal can quickly become New Orleans' number-two back, which makes him someone to think about deep in your rookie drafts. He's the kind of handcuff who actually can take on a three-down workload if need be.

# OLIE GORDON • RB

 63.4

ZAP Score

OKLAHOMA STATE	BENCHWARMER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'1	Weight: 226	NFL Team: Dolphins	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** James Conner ▪ Rhamondre Stevenson ▪ Javorius Allen

**Update:** Some considered Ollie Gordon's 4.61 40 at the NFL Combine a disappointment, but this is exactly why we use Speed Score. Gordon weighed in at 226 pounds in Indianapolis. He's a big man. Running at that speed resulted in a reasonable 100.1 Speed Score. He's not close to the mark where his prospect score starts to get dinged.

Gordon played three years at Oklahoma State. His second season was best, where he ran the ball 285 times for 1,732 yards and 21 touchdowns. He added 39 catches for 330 yards and a score through the air, too. That season, he led the country in rushing yards and won the Doak Walker Award.

There was a dip in production from 2023 to 2024 for Gordon, where his prorated total yards per team play rate went from 2.02, an elite number, to 1.31, a not-so-elite number.

Not great.

Like I said at the top, Gordon comes with a ton of size. He's the second-heaviest back in this year's class. Like other rushers with his frame, he's a downhill runner who can handle a big workload. That's not something the Miami Dolphins currently have.

The problem for Gordon's fantasy potential is that De'Von Achane still has two more years on his rookie deal -- he'll be the team's lead until at least 2027. Gordon may be able to take over the RB2 spot with Jaylen Wright there, but Achane's going to see plenty of work to cap Gordon's ceiling.

The ZAP Model really does like Gordon, so he's worth a roster spot. At worst, he could be a player to fill in if an injury occurs. At best, he carves out a legit role in a favorable rushing offense, giving your lineup some flex appeal.

# JORDAN JAMES • RB



61.4

ZAP Score

OREGON	BENCHWARMER	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'8	Weight: 205	NFL Team: 49ers	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Jaylen Warren • Scottie Phillips • Daijun Edwards

**Update:** You see a smaller back coming from Oregon, and your brain automatically thinks to itself, *Bucky Irving*. Even though Irving was a big ZAP Model L last year -- thankfully not a redraft L -- his profile is a lot stronger than James'.

For instance, James has a best-season reception share of just 7.8%. Irving's was 14.1%. James' Breakout Score is 34.4. Irving's was 78.4. And James' top year in total yards per team play was lower than Irving's, too.

The only ZAP Model backs to score 14 or more PPR points per game in one of their first three seasons with top-season reception shares below 10% and Breakout Scores below 40 have been Alfred Morris, Andre Ellington, Carlos Hyde, Jordan Howard, and Chris Carson. Ellington was the only one of those players who weighed under 218 pounds at the combine. James is 205.

The biggest plus to James' analytical profile is definitely his explosive run rate. He didn't have the best Speed Score in the world -- it was actually below average -- but he was able to post the second-best career explosive run rate in the class. That's good to see.

Being down on James and seeing Jaylen Warren as a top comparable is a little scary, since Warren's been a really solid back in the NFL. And while this 49ers team does have Christian McCaffrey and Isaac Guerendo, we have to recognize that this could be CMC's last year there, and Guerendo isn't necessarily a must-have back. So there's opportunity for James, if you want to throw the dart and sit him on your bench. It wouldn't be the first time the ZAP Model would be wrong.

You probably shouldn't reach for him, though.

# BRASHARD SMITH • RB

 **55.4**

ZAP Score

SOUTHERN METHODIST

BENCHWARMER

Height: 5'10 | Weight: 194 | NFL Team: Chiefs

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Tyler Ervin • Jason Huntley • Demetric Felton

**Update:** Brashard Smith didn't start his college career as a running back. And he didn't start it at Southern Methodist, either.

Smith was a Freshman at Miami back in 2021. And he was a wide receiver. He played wideout for three years there before eventually transferring to SMU for his Senior campaign, where the Mustangs converted him to a running back.

And Smith was great. He ran the ball 235 times for 1,332 yards, and he tied for 10th across college football in 15-plus-yard designed runs, per PFF. He showed off his explosive ability at the combine, too, when he ran a sub-4.4 40.

Many will inevitably compare Smith to Tyrone Tracy, since Tracy came out last year and he, like Smith, converted to running back from wide receiver before entering the NFL. A key difference is that Tracy had a little more experience at running back, and he's also just built differently. Smith weighed in at 194 pounds at the combine, when Tracy was 209.

Smith, more than likely, will be used as a change-of-pace player in the Chiefs backfield. That's generally what we see from smaller backs, and Kansas City still has Isiah Pacheco. If they wanted more of an early-down bruiser, they had plenty of time from Rounds 1 through 6 to get him within this loaded class.

We should all be interested to see what Andy Reid does with Brashard Smith, though, because he's got an innovative offensive mind. This is a spot where Smith can creatively get involved, and that may allow him to become fantasy relevant.

# TAHJ BROOKS • RB

 49.2

ZAP Score

TEXAS TECH

BENCHWARMER

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 5'9 | Weight: 214 | NFL Team: Bengals

**Statistical Comps:** Trayveon Williams • Ray Davis • Jeremy McNichols

**Update:** If you've got Chase Brown in dynasty, you were probably holding your breath with every Cincinnati Bengals selection in the draft. Fortunately for you, they didn't take a running back until the sixth round. Unfortunately for you, he's a pretty good player.

Tahj Brooks is built to see a lot of work. He was only 5'9" at the combine, but he weighed in at 214 pounds, giving him a top-three Body Mass Index in this year's class.

Brooks spent five seasons at Texas Tech, and he was really featured in the offense during his final two. In 2023 and 2024, he saw 290 and 284 rush attempts, respectively, and he hit total yards per team play rates of 1.71 and 1.99. That 1.99 number ranks top-10 in the class.

There may be some long speed concerns with Brooks, even if he exceeded expectations a bit at the combine with a 4.52 40. He was below average at generating explosive runs throughout his career. His receiving profile isn't stellar, either, with a bottom-10 best-season receiving yards per team pass attempt rate. Brooks' 35.7 Breakout Score is seventh-worst in the class.

Lots of respected analysts see good things in Brooks. Friend of the guide, Matt Waldman, calls him lemonade, because he routinely turns the lemons that his offensive line gives him into lemonade. It aligns with what his numbers say -- he's been a pretty effective ground-game back.

The question, for me, is whether he's a true three-down back in the NFL. The answer to that is "probably not" based on draft capital and his overall ZAP score, but he has the tools to potentially dig into Chase Brown's workload a bit. And Brooks can easily become the top handcuff in one of the best offenses in football. That alone warrants a late-round pick in rookie drafts.

# MONTRELL JOHNSON • RB

 44.5

ZAP Score

FLORIDA

BENCHWARMER

Height: 5'11 | Weight: 212 | NFL Team: Undrafted

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Isiah Pacheco • Jaylen Wright • Ty Johnson

Montrell Johnson was faster than anticipated at the NFL Combine, running a 4.41 40-yard dash. At 212 pounds, that gave him the second-best Speed Score in the class, behind only Bhayshul Tuten.

Should we care? I mean, kind of? It's always nice when there's a specific trait we can target with a late-round dart throw, and Speed Scores that high don't grow on trees.

Johnson's performance at the combine was necessary for the ZAP Model, too, because there's not a whole lot going for him outside of it. His top season in total yards per team play was just 1.30 across his four years of college, fourth-worst in the class. When looking at the ZAP Model's history, there've been just nine backs who scored 14 or more PPR points per game in either Year 1, Year 2, or Year 3 in the NFL who had a max-season total yards per team play rate below 1.40. Only four of them were drafted past Pick 100.

One of those players is Isiah Pacheco, who's Johnson's top comp. Pacheco runs with more ferocity than almost any running back in the league, and that's allowed him to find some success, but the two backs are similar in size, have elite Speed Scores, and both struggled a bit on the production front.

Johnson could be a solid early-down runner with some upside on the right team in the NFL. We don't get to say this a lot, but his combine performance saved him analytically.

# RAHEIM SANDERS • RB

 44.5

ZAP Score

SOUTH CAROLINA

BENCHWARMER

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 6'0 | Weight: 217 | NFL Team: Undrafted

**Statistical Comps:** CJ Prosise • DeMarco Murray • Da'Rel Scott

The depth of this running back class is absolutely bonkers. We're talking about Raheim "Rocket" Sanders as, what, the RB14 in this class? The RB13? In most groups, he'd easily be in the top-10. Maybe even the top-five.

Sanders is one of 13 running backs in the ZAP Model's history who weighed in at 210-plus pounds at the NFL Combine, ran a sub-4.5 40, and had a Breakout Score above 80. So he's big, fast, and has good age-adjusted receiving production.

The other 12 backs: Charles Sims, CJ Prosise, Jeremy McNichols, Kalen Ballage -- does this get any better? -- DeMarco Murray, Saquon Barkley, Antonio Gibson, D'Andre Swift, Jonathan Taylor, Breece Hall, Kenneth Walker, and Bijan Robinson.

There we go.

Sanders unfortunately fits more of the mold of one of the lower-tiered backs in that group thanks to poor projected draft capital, but his ZAP Model marks look great. He played four years of college ball, three with Arkansas before spending his final campaign with South Carolina. He dealt with injuries throughout, but he was still able to capture a best-season reception share of 13.1%. And because some of his receiving production came early on in his career, he's got an 87.3 Breakout Score, a top-six number in the class.

For a bigger back with great straight-line speed, it's a little alarming that Sanders was merely average in the class at generating explosive plays per rush across his four years of college football, and he didn't do anything special in the avoided tackles per rush department, either. You'd much rather have the athleticism match those measurements.

Sanders, however, looks like a good bet to capture a favorable Draft Capital Delta when it's all said and done. Maybe his NFL Combine performance will boost his draft capital, but with so many good running backs to choose from, we can't make any assumptions.

# DONOVAN EDWARDS • RB

 44.0

ZAP Score

MICHIGAN

BENCHWARMER

Height: 5'11 | Weight: 205 | NFL Team: Undrafted

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Ty Chandler • Johnny White • Evan Hull

Donovan Edwards is getting a bump in the ZAP Model because his Freshman season receiving work was better than most probably realize. As a first-year player -- at Michigan, mind you -- he caught 20 balls for 265 yards. The Wolverines threw it under 400 times that season, and, when adjusted for strength of opponent, it gave Edwards a 97.8 Breakout Score.

Now, Breakout Score is just one input in the running back model, and it's less predictive than the same metric for the wide receiver algorithm. But a score that high can't hurt.

The issue with Edwards' profile is that the production never got any better. He was always in a split backfield at Michigan, seeing no more than 140 carries in a season. And that Freshman campaign was arguably his best one as a pass-catcher.

The ZAP Model likes Edwards more than it probably should. His advanced numbers like avoided tackles per attempt and yards after contact per rush are middling, and he wasn't special in total yards per team play throughout college. He went to the NFL Combine and showed off 4.44 speed, but his explosive run rate didn't match that throughout college. That, to me, is a red flag.

We can be selective with this running back class because there are so many different choices. Edwards isn't a bad dual-threat prospect, but there are many combine invites this year who brought a little more to the table across their time playing college ball.

Edwards is a late-round dart throw who may be able to find the field as a receiver early on in his career. Considering the lack of ground-game work he saw at Michigan, it's tough to imagine him having a 200-plus attempt ceiling -- maybe even 150-plus -- at the next level. That'll cap his fantasy upside.

# DAMIEN MARTINEZ • RB

 43.7

ZAP Score

MIAMI

BENCHWARMER

Height: 6'0 | Weight: 217 | NFL Team: Seahawks

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Mike Gillislee • Tyler Gaffney • Chris Rodriguez

We have a ton of great pass-catchers in this year's draft class. So many of our 31 NFL Combine invites came with strong receiving numbers in the ZAP Model.

Damien Martinez's profile is lacking a bit there. His top year in prorated reception share is just 5.4%, second-worst in the class. He did have a 41.1 Breakout Score, but that's not exactly what we're looking for here.

From 2011 to 2022, we've seen 44 running backs get drafted with best-season reception shares below 7%. Of those 44, only two scored more than 13 PPR points per game in one of their first three seasons.

This isn't everything for Martinez. After all, the backs who do succeed with his type of receiving numbers tend to be bigger in size, and Martinez was nearly 220 pounds at this year's combine. He also ran a 4.51, giving him a 104.9 Speed Score, well above the threshold we're looking for these guys to get to.

We just probably won't see Martinez deployed much as a receiver in the NFL. Going back to those 44 running backs with sub-7% best-season reception shares, only two of them were able to get to a double-digit percentage target share in one of their first three NFL seasons. And neither player was able to do it more than once. The vast majority of them were under the 5% target share mark as pros.

Martinez is an angry runner who can lock up early-down work, but, especially in PPR formats, we'll need more pass-catching for a true ceiling to be hit.

# KALEL MULLINGS • RB

 **36.3**

ZAP Score

MICHIGAN

WAIVER WIRE ADD

Height: 6'1 | Weight: 226 | NFL Team: Titans

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Jonas Gray • Tiyon Evans • Miyan Williams

**Update:** The Titans don't have the most stable running back room, so picking one up in this year's draft was likely. And they did just that, snagging Kalel Mullings in Round 6.

The fit makes sense. Mullings is a huge body who can complement the existing pieces in the Titans offense. He actually started his collegiate career as a linebacker. As a Junior at Michigan in 2022, mid-season, he decided to switch to running back in order to fill in for injured teammates.

After a 2023 campaign with 36 rush attempts, Mullings hit 185 rushes in 2024. That, obviously, is where he did his damage on the production front, finishing the year with a total yards per team play rate of 1.34.

We can give Mullings all the props in the world -- and we should -- for doing what he did. Converting positions at one of the biggest programs in the country, and performing pretty well...that's impressive.

But we need to be objective about what this all means for fantasy football. Mullings has a top-season reception share of 3.4%. He has no Breakout Score. Only one running back in the ZAP Model with a sub-5% best-season reception share has scored more than 10 PPR points per game in one of his first three seasons in the league. And that player was Derrick Henry. Unlike Mullings, Henry had both draft capital and a Breakout Score of 32.6 backing him.

No shade to Mullings, but he's not Derrick Henry.

It'd be awesome if Mullings continues to develop in the NFL, but this Tennessee selection seems like a better one for real football than fantasy football.

# KYLE MONANGAI • RB

 **34.1**

ZAP Score

RUTGERS	WAIVER WIRE ADD	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'8	Weight: 211	NFL Team: Bears	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Thomas Rawls • Ray Lawry • Mike Ball

**Update:** The majority of us figured the Bears would get a running back with decent draft capital in this year's draft, and it just didn't happen. They ended up going with Kyle Monangai in Round 7, and while he's a physical back who proved to be above average at breaking tackles at Rutgers, there are a lot of red flags throughout his profile.

First, the Speed Score. Monangai is a bigger, more compact dude at 5'8'', 211 pounds, but he ran a 4.60 40 at the combine. That resulted in a 94.3 Speed Score. That's looked at as neutral in the ZAP Model, but it's inching towards "bad news".

To go along with that, his receiving numbers are really lacking. Not only did he fail to register a Breakout Score, but his top season in reception share is just 7.8%. Alfred Morris is really the only success in the model who entered the league without a Breakout Score. And Morris-like players don't come around very often.

People like to make comparisons between players who went to the same school as one another, but Monangai, to me, is nothing like Isiah Pacheco when he came out from Rutgers. Pacheco had a decent receiving resume, and, most importantly, his size-speed profile was next level. Monangai doesn't have that at all.

Situationally, this is amazing for Monangai. D'Andre Swift and Roschon Johnson aren't ridiculously tough backs to overcome. With Monangai getting final-round draft capital, hopefully he doesn't get steamed too high in rookie drafts. If you're spending, say, a fourth-rounder...sure. Why not? Your fourth-round picks have insanely low hit rates anyway.

But we know how the fantasy community works. Landing spot dictates so much. And this isn't the kind of running back to bet heavily on.

# PHIL MAFAH • RB

 **33.1**  
ZAP Score

CLEMSON	WAIVER WIRE ADD	Draft Capital △
Height: 6'1   Weight: 234	NFL Team: Cowboys	

**Statistical Comps:** Tavion Thomas • Matt Jones • Synjyn Days

**Update:** The landing spot is great for Phil Mafah. Dallas' backfield is pretty open, and the other back they invested in during the draft is an undersized speedster. (Granted, it's an undersized speedster that the ZAP Model loves.)

You're going to be tempted to draft Mafah. If it's with a final-round pick, sure. I won't stop you. Just don't get carried away. Please.

Mafah is really big.

That's honestly the best thing I can say about him analytically.

Mafah played four years at Clemson, and he ended up reaching 200 carries in only his final season. He did split work with NFLer Will Shipley, but it would've been nice to see Mafah, at his size, get more work.

Meanwhile, Mafah has a Breakout Score of zero in the ZAP Model, and his best season in reception share is under 7%. His max season in total yards per team play, which includes rushing numbers, isn't any better -- it's second-worst in the class.

The ZAP Model consists of 30 running backs with a Breakout Score of zero and a best-season total yards per team play below 1.25. Mafah makes that 31.

None of them have scored more than seven PPR points per game in one of their first three seasons in the NFL.

We shouldn't expect Mafah to be any different. Even in Dallas.

# MARCUS YARNS • RB

 **23.6**

ZAP Score

DELAWARE	WAIVER WIRE ADD	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 5'11	Weight: 193	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Trenton Cannon • Justice Hill • Kerrith Whyte

Don't make the mistake I did and think Marcus Yarns' name is Marcus "Yams". I wasn't hungry when I first read it -- the R and the N just really make an "M" with some fonts out there.

Oh, right, I'm supposed to talk about Yarns as a player here. Got it.

Yarns is really the only small-school guy who was invited to the combine this year -- he spent four years at Delaware. Unsurprisingly, his production was solid. But, to be honest, for a smaller program, I was hoping for better.

Yarns' best season in reception share is under 10%. His Breakout Score, which gets adjusted for program, is under 50. And while his career yards after contact per attempt is by far the best in the class, we have to remember that he did that against weaker competition. Not layering in that context can get us into trouble.

There's not a whole lot of size to Yarns, either. He weighed in at 193 pounds at the combine. He did run a good 4.45 40, so his Speed Score is hovering 100, but we know smaller backs aren't going to get huge workloads at the next level. In fact, among the 26 ZAP Model backs who weighed less than 200 pounds at the combine and had a best-season reception share under 10%, Andre Ellington is the only one who hit just a 30% running back rush share per game rate in one of his first three seasons in the NFL.

Yarns is in a similar analytical bucket as 2025 classmate Brashard Smith. That's why there's a share comparable of Justice Hill. Smith's profile is just enhanced more by his work as a receiver in college.

As much as I'd love to see a small-school back succeed, Yarns has a lot of things working against him. And I didn't even mention his age: He'll be 23-and-a-half by the time the draft hits.

# JA'QUINDEN JACKSON • RB



18.8

ZAP Score

ARKANSAS	DART THROW	Low Risk	Neutral	High Risk
Height: 6'1	Weight: 229	NFL Team: Undrafted	Draft Capital	Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Hassan Haskins • Anthony Allen • Darrell Scott

It's tough to get excited about Ja'Quinden Jackson's potential as a fantasy asset. He's definitely got size at 229 pounds, and, to be fair, he started his college career as a quarterback at Texas. He converted to running back during his third season of college ball, which was at Utah.

But he did not give us the goods.

Jackson's Breakout Score is 18.8, his best season in reception share is 6.6%, and his top year in total yards per team play is 1.33. It would've been nice to see him run the 40 at the combine, because he did have a decent explosive runs rate in college, but he didn't participate. He was also able to avoid tackles at an above-average clip, for what it's worth.

The model doesn't really care about that. And that's why his score is so low. We've quite literally never seen a hit from a back with this kind of profile, and I don't expect Jackson to be the first. Not with his projected draft capital.

# COREY KINER • RB



17.5

ZAP Score

CINCINNATI

DART THROW

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

Height: 5'9 | Weight: 208 | NFL Team: Undrafted

**Statistical Comps:** Edwin Baker • Cameron Artis-Payne • Damien Berry

Corey Kiner's best-season 6.4% reception share isn't anything to write home about, but, per NFL Combine measurables, Kiner did that with sub-8-inch hands. Apparently Kiner has the second-smallest hands in combine history. It doesn't matter, but, maybe it does?

I mean, it's not like there's a lot going on with Kiner's production profile. As I noted, he had a top-year reception share below 7%. He has no Breakout Score. His total yards per team play of 1.54 is more weak than strong. He didn't generate a ton of explosive plays, and he broke tackles at a below-average rate, too.

I just can't get over the hand size.

Kiner is firmly in Dart Throw territory, where we've seen zero running backs give us a double-digit B2S in the ZAP Model's history. Therefore, you shouldn't bet on Kiner.

# ULYSSES BENTLEY • RB



2.5

ZAP Score

OLE MISS

DART THROW

Height: 5'10 | Weight: 201 | NFL Team: Undrafted

Low Risk Neutral High Risk

Draft Capital Δ

**Statistical Comps:** Andre Ellington • Kenjon Barner • Mohamed Ibrahim

The ZAP Model really doesn't like Ulysses Bentley. He's only 201 pounds, so he's not the ideal weight for a maximum workload in the NFL. He also has a prorated top-season reception share below 10%, and his Breakout Score is well below 50.

But it's the age that's really breaking him. Bentley played six years of college ball -- three with SMU, three with Ole Miss. He started back in 2019. And his birthday, per Google, is December 30th, 2000. He's well over 24 years old.

Only 14 backs in the ZAP Model have entered the league older than Bentley. Tyrone Tracy ended up being a hit last year, and Ray Davis was to a degree, too. But both players had far, far better numbers in college than Bentley had.

There's no reason to target Bentley in your rookie drafts.

# Tight End

## POSITIONAL BREAKDOWN

Player	College	Team	ZAP	Notes
<b>ELITE PRODUCER</b>				
Colston Loveland	Michigan	Bears	94.3	Great profile; LaPorta-esque
Tyler Warren	Penn State	Colts	91.8	Solid across the board; Versatile
Terrance Ferguson	Oregon	Rams	88.1	Elite athlete; Solid production
<b>WEEKLY STARTER</b>				
Harold Fannin	Bowling Green	Browns	84.3	Elite production; Questionable athlete
Elijah Arroyo	Miami	Seahawks	81.1	Above-average everywhere
<b>WAIVER WIRE ADD</b>				
Mason Taylor	LSU	Jets	72.3	Sketchy production profile
Oronde Gadsden	Syracuse	Chargers	47.2	Good everywhere; Potential opportunity
Gunnar Helm	Texas	Titans	44.7	Unknown athleticism
Mitchell Evans	Notre Dame	Panthers	40.3	Replacement-level across the board
<b>DART THROW</b>				
Gavin Bartholomew	Pittsburgh	Vikings	23.3	Mid, but Hail 2 Pitt
Jackson Hawes	Georgia Tech	Bills	22.6	Horrible Speed Score
Thomas Fidone	Nebraska	Giants	19.5	Below-average across the board
Robbie Ouzts	Alabama	Seahawks	11.3	Bad production profile
Moliki Matavao	UCLA	Saints	10.7	Poor athleticism
Luke Lachey	Iowa	Texans	8.8	Not the usual good Iowa TE
Caleb Lohner	Utah	Broncos	3.8	Basketball player; No production

# The Year 2 Model

## Overview

Some of my favorite childhood memories are from tournament baseball. In the pre-YouTube era, my team and I would pile into the coach's van, watch wrestling videos on a small, strapped-in television, and arrive at some mysterious ballpark an hour later. We'd play baseball there for a day or two and then do it all over again a few days later.

Part of the fun of tournament ball was the unknown. If you played in an in-house league, you knew what you were up against. Everyone playing was local. In a tournament environment, when you'd first pull up to the park, you'd have no idea what to expect. Sometimes you'd get a team that had no business being there, and sometimes the opponent would have "12-year-olds" with mustaches.

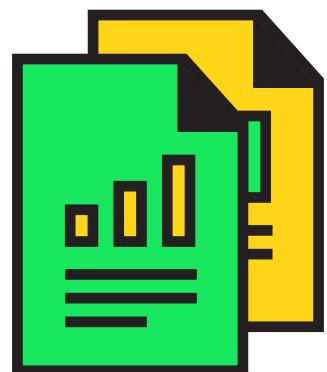
Since things were so ambiguous, the first couple of innings were always a crapshoot. It's not like your team full of little leaguers was doing scouting reports pre-tourney. You had to react on the fly.

As the game went on, though, you'd learn. You'd start to see tendencies from some of the opposing team's batters. You'd get a sense of the kind of pitches that were coming next. Time allowed you to understand the players a whole lot better.

This is no different in the world of player evaluation in the NFL. After someone gets through his rookie season, we know more about his game. Tyrone Tracy was picked up by the Giants on the third day of the draft last year. At that time, we didn't know much about him. It was still the first inning. After seeing him play as a pro, things have changed. Now we can adjust accordingly.

But how, exactly, should we adjust?

That's where the Year 2 Model can help.



**The goal of the Year 2 Model is to be much better at predicting a player's second- and third-year production than a player's rookie-season points per game average.**

The Year 2 Model -- both at running back and wide receiver -- incorporates a player's prospect score, some rookie-season production inputs, and his rookie-season points per game average to get a Year 2 score. That's the gist of it.

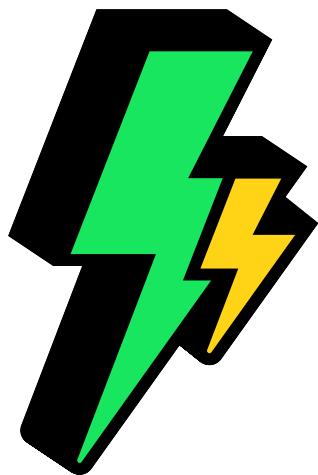
Everything in the Year 2 Model ties back to a player's max-season PPR points per game during his second and third season. So, if a player scored 16 and 19 points per game during his second and third year in the NFL, respectively, the model only cares about that 19-points-per-game mark.

As you'd guess, the Year 2 Model is much better at predicting a player's best points per game output in Year 2 or Year 3 than his rookie-season points per game average alone.

To me, this is all logical.

**If a player came from nowhere — if a guy wasn't supposed to be good, but he balled out during his rookie campaign — then there's more risk with that player than if an early-round pick did the exact same thing.**

Both Adonai Mitchell and Luke McCaffrey didn't do a whole lot as rookies. Neither player scored a significant number of points per game in fantasy.



Despite that, most of you would rather have a player like Mitchell than McCaffrey moving forward in fantasy, right? It's not that McCaffrey's incapable of outscoring Mitchell. It's that Mitchell has a little more substance to his baseline profile. He was the better prospect. He's not as risky.

Similar to the ZAP Model, there are some easy-to-understand probability tables for the Year 2 Model. And, just like the ZAP Model, the players are grouped in the categories we learned about earlier.

Wide Receiver (Max Season; Years 2-3)						
	>10	>12	>14	>16	>18	>20
Elite Producer	100.0%	100.0%	94.4%	66.7%	44.4%	22.2%
Weekly Starter	77.8%	74.1%	55.6%	29.6%	18.5%	7.4%
Flex Play	63.0%	38.9%	25.9%	11.1%	3.7%	1.9%
Benchwarmer	31.9%	8.5%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Waiver Wire Add	6.3%	3.1%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Dart Throw	1.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Running Back (Max Season; Years 2-3)						
	>10	>12	>14	>16	>18	>20
Elite Producer	90.0%	76.7%	73.3%	60.0%	36.7%	26.7%
Weekly Starter	40.0%	28.9%	17.8%	6.7%	2.2%	2.2%
Flex Play	36.9%	24.6%	12.3%	6.2%	3.1%	1.5%
Benchwarmer	14.8%	9.8%	6.6%	4.9%	3.3%	3.3%
Waiver Wire Add	3.2%	3.2%	2.1%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Dart Throw	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The Year 2 Model is better at forecasting than the ZAP Model is. We have more information. We actually know how some of these players stack up against NFL talent.

We're no longer in the first or second inning.

The Elite Producers at both positions in the Year 2 Model are absurdly good. This is where you'll find nearly every cornerstone piece in dynasty. Some will go down a strange path – Kyren Williams was definitely one – but, if a player is in the Elite Producer category, you can expect a nice floor-ceiling

combination.

To be transparent, the running back model isn't as impactful as the wide receiver one. That's due to a couple of reasons.

Running back production will often come down to a coaching decision. If a team leader wants to split his backfield, then he'll split his backfield. And, as we know, a split backfield isn't what we want for fantasy football, because it comes with a lower chance of producing a usable rusher.

Those decisions aren't always dictated by talent, either. The most talented running back *should* see his entire backfield's touches, but we know it doesn't always work that way. Talent itself is subjective, too.

This all makes running back prognostication that much more volatile.

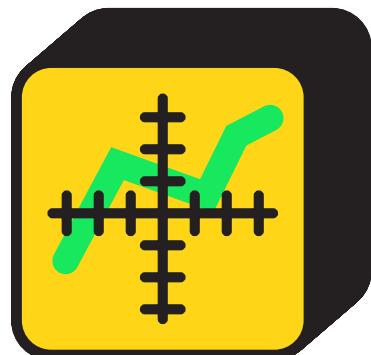
Running backs are also more replaceable than wide receivers are.

**Nerds have been writing about it for years, but  
non-elite running backs are sort of  
interchangeable in fantasy football.**

Dameon Pierce had a great rookie campaign just a couple of years ago, but it was by no means *elite*. That meant there was fragility to his positioning in the Houston backfield. One move, whether to the coaching staff or to his backfield's competition, had a chance to drastically change his outlook. Now, nobody really wants him in dynasty.

Because of all this, a running back in the Year 2 Model is anchored by his ZAP score more than what we see at wide receiver. To put that another way, a running backs' rookie-season metrics are less meaningful than a wide receiver's rookie-season numbers.

Even still, it's clear that a high-end score at running back yields amazing results.



## Journey Comparables

In 2019, the Patriots made N'Keal Harry the 32nd pick in the NFL Draft. He had a negative Draft Capital Delta -- the model lists him as an overvalued pick -- but Harry still had a ZAP score of 89.7, placing him in the Weekly Starter category.

(Narrator: He was not a weekly starter.)

Harry didn't show us much of anything as a rookie, leading to a Year 2 score of 75.9. A 14-point drop from ZAP score to Year 2 score is not what you like to see.

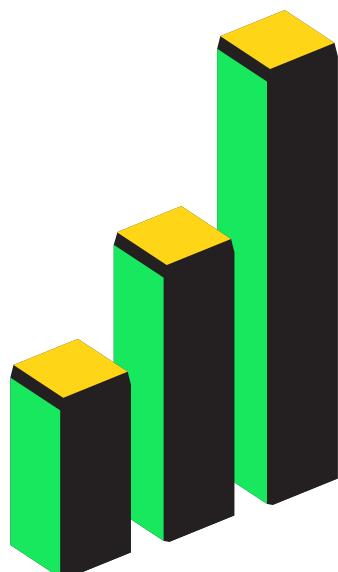
But were there any successes from players with a similar path? Could history give us any hope?

Enter Journey Comparables.

You've probably already read about statistical comparables with the ZAP Model profiles earlier. Journey Comparables are a little different. Rather than looking at a player's attributes as he enters the league, Journey Comparables inspect a player's ZAP Model score alongside his Year 2 Model score. It then looks at players in history who have gone through a similar path -- a similar journey -- from before Year 1 to before Year 2.

Journey Comparables don't deal with play style, height, weight, or any other qualities. It's simply a look at players in the past who entered the league as similarly-graded prospects, and then who went into their second season with a comparable Year 2 Model score as well.

History often repeats itself. In fantasy football, too.



# 2025 Year 2 Profiles

## Overview

There were some big hits and some big misses in last year's rookie class. If you scooped up Bucky Irving, you're probably feeling pretty good right now. If you snagged Ja'Lynn Polk? Quitting fantasy football has crossed your mind over the last four months.

What now? Should we expect Irving's final-season run to continue? Is Polk totally, unequivocally doomed?

I got you.

Over the final section of this guide, you'll read about all relevant wide receivers and running backs from last year's draft class.

**You'll see where the Year 2 Model has them ranked, and you'll get insight on how to manage each player moving forward.**

It's time to refine those dynasty rosters.

## Key Terms

**ZAP Score:** The score given to an incoming rookie in the ZAP Model. It's based on the factors outlined in the ZAP Model Overview section of this guide. All scores range from 0 to 100.

**Y2 Score:** The score given to a running back or wide receiver in the Year 2 Model. This is based on rookie-season numbers along with a player's ZAP score. All scores range from 0 to 100.

**Year 2 Score Category:** Every player's Year 2 score coincides with one of six categories, which were talked about earlier. Those categories will be listed on every player's Year 2 profile page.

**Journey Comparables:** Players in history who have had similar ZAP and Year 2 Model scores.

# Y2 Wide Receiver

## Elite Producer



MALIK NABERS.....	121
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# MALIK NABERS • WR

99.5  
Y2 Score

NEW YORK GIANTS

ELITE PRODUCER

99.5  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Ja'Marr Chase • Drake London • Amari Cooper

The ZAP Model was right to place Malik Nabers over Marvin Harrison Jr. last year. Because Nabers was a whole lot better.

On a team that started four different quarterbacks, Nabers managed a 2.17 yards per route run rate. No other Giants wide receiver was higher than 1.21. And he did that while running most of his routes on the perimeter, often matching up against the top corners from opposing teams.

Nabers became the first rookie wide receiver since at least 2011 to reach a 30% target share per game rate. And he didn't barely reach 30% -- he was at nearly 35%. The alternatives in New York's offense weren't amazingly talented, but Nabers walked out of his rookie season with the highest target share per game rate in the NFL. And it was the fourth-highest of any wide receiver -- not just rookies -- over the last 14 seasons.

Some may argue that Nabers was only the WR6 in PPR points per game because of volume, but volume is driven by talent. A player won't see looks if he's not getting open, or if his team doesn't want to use him.

Malik Nabers is a special talent. It shouldn't surprise anyone if he goes down the same path as one of his Journey Comparables. And I'm not talking about Drake London and Amari Cooper.

# BRIAN THOMAS JR. • WR

99.2  
Y2 Score

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

ELITE PRODUCER

94.7  
ZAP Score

**Journey Comps:** Justin Jefferson • Odell Beckham • Keenan Allen

Brian Thomas had a high-variance analytical profile entering the league last year, but the ZAP Model still loved him. His Draft Capital Delta was pretty favorable.

Thomas somehow exceeded those high expectations as a rookie.

There's an argument to be made that Brian Thomas was the most impressive first-year wide receiver in 2024. And, yes, that conversation includes Malik Nabers. Thomas had a yards per route run rate of 2.45, making him one of six rookie wideouts dating back to 2011 to get over the 2.40 mark. The other five? Chris Olave, Puka Nacua, Ja'Marr Chase, Justin Jefferson, and Odell Beckham.

Thomas paired that awesome per-route-run efficiency with a yards per team pass attempt of 2.35. Only Ja'Marr Chase, Justin Jefferson, and Puka Nacua have hit that mark over the last 14 years as rookies.

It's not surprising to see Thomas with a great Year 2 score given his first-season accomplishments, but maybe you weren't prepared to see *this*. The only players with a higher score than Brian Thomas in the Year 2 Model are Ja'Marr Chase, Justin Jefferson, Odell Beckham, and Malik Nabers.

What in the world do they have going on at LSU?

The reality is, based on all the data, there's really no reason to believe Nabers should be ranked significantly ahead of Thomas in dynasty moving forward, if at all. To me, they're both in the same tier.

They're both cornerstone pieces for your teams.

# LADD MC CONKEY • WR

98.0  
Y2 Score

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS

ELITE PRODUCER

88.3  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Michael Thomas • Tee Higgins • Zay Flowers

Ladd McConkey had a weird analytical profile as a prospect. Some of his ZAP Model numbers were pretty ordinary -- even with the Breakout Score methodology adjusted a bit, his was almost exactly average.

Where McConkey thrived at Georgia was in the yards per route run department. It was a Puka Nacua-esque situation: McConkey wasn't seeing as much work at Georgia as he could've, but, when he was on the field, he would dominate.

That per-route-run efficiency has officially translated into the NFL. McConkey's 2.38 yards per route run rate last season was seventh-best among league-wide receivers, and it trailed only Brian Thomas' 2.45 rate among rookies. McConkey was a chain mover, too, finishing as one of just 13 first-year wide receivers since 2011 to generate 50 or more first downs.

McConkey lined up in the slot on over 70% of his routes run, per PFF, so he was likely seeing more advantageous matchups compared to the two rookie wideouts with higher Year 2 scores this year. The Chargers were lacking at wide receiver as well, so there's some chance that they continue to build at the position, which could lower McConkey's ceiling longer-term.

With that being said, this type of production doesn't happen on accident. McConkey looks like the real deal, and if his manager in your league is scared off because he doesn't fit the mold of a typical alpha, you may be able to take advantage.

# MARVIN HARRISON JR. • WR

97.4  
Y2 Score

ARIZONA CARDINALS

ELITE PRODUCER

98.9  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Sammy Watkins • Jerry Jeudy • CeeDee Lamb

Among the many first-year wide receivers who ran 200 or more routes as rookies since 2011, Marvin Harrison Jr.'s yards per route run rate ranked in the 67th percentile. His targets per route run was in the 75th. His PPR points per game rate ranked in the top-50 overall.

But, man, he was still a pretty big disappointment, wasn't he?

After re-doing things with the ZAP Model, Harrison Jr.'s score came in slightly lower this year compared to last. Considering his rookie campaign, that's probably not a bad thing, but his Year 2 score would be a touch higher had he maintained the 99.3 ZAP score year-over-year.

Harrison Jr., fortunately, is still sitting in the Elite Producer category. Every single player grouped in that bucket since 2011 has reached at least 12 PPR points per game in either Year 2 or Year 3. Nearly all of them have gotten to 14 or more PPR points per game, which is a WR2 season most years.

Unlike Nabers, Thomas, and McConkey before him, though, Harrison Jr. does have a couple of scary Journey Comparables. Sammy Watkins was a stud prospect who put together a very similar Year 1, and he couldn't maintain momentum after a good Sophomore year in the league. Jerry Jeudy's mostly been an NFL disappointment.

The score is what matters most here in the end. Harrison Jr. saw a drop from Year 1 to Year 2, but it's not like he's in the danger zone. A 97.4 score is nothing to sneeze at. There's just more volatility to the profile than some of the other guys in this class. Considering the dynasty market isn't giving you much of a discount, Harrison Jr. is probably just a hold.

# ROME ODUNZE • WR

94.7  
Y2 Score

CHICAGO BEARS

WEEKLY STARTER

96.5  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Justin Blackmon • Kendall Wright • DJ Moore

The ZAP Model always saw a gap between Malik Nabers and Marvin Harrison Jr. to Rome Odunze. The Year 2 Model is seeing the same thing.

Odunze's peripherals were not strong in 2024. He finished the year with a sub-20% target share, and his yards per route run rate fell below 1.20.

There are over 150 wide receivers in the Year 2 Model who recorded a yards per route run rate south of 1.30 as a rookie, a number a good bit higher than Odunze's 1.18. To qualify here, the wideout had to run at least 50 routes.

Among those players, just six were able to give us a season of 15 or more PPR points per game in either Year 2 or Year 3: DeAndre Hopkins, Davante Adams, Tyler Boyd, DJ Chark, Michael Gallup, and Nico Collins.

Those aren't great odds for Odunze.

The details are important here, of course. Not many rookie wide receivers are playing alongside two legitimate pass-catchers with a rookie quarterback. Yards per route run is a great metric, but it doesn't capture everything, like teammate competition.

And among those many wide receivers who had a yards per route run rate below 1.30, any guesses as to which one led them all in yards per team pass attempt?

That's right. It's Rome Odunze.

We have to be open-minded to the idea that Odunze's career may not go the way many thought. He certainly had his moments in 2024, both good and bad.

I just can't shake the parallels I'm seeing to the path DeAndre Hopkins took, even if he's not one of Odunze's Journey Comparables. Hopkins played with a stud in Andre Johnson as a rookie, which probably didn't help his per-route-run numbers.

Hopkins' yards per route run rate was 1.28 compared to Odunze's 1.18. Hopkins scored 8.9 PPR points per game versus Odunze's 8.5. Hopkins generated a first down on 6.0% of his routes run. Odunze was at 5.9%. And the guy who ranks second in yards per team pass attempt among those wide receivers who failed to reach a 1.30 yards per route run rate?

DeAndre Hopkins.

You can always find exceptions to the rule, I get it. But the Year 2 Model isn't placing Odunze in the Benchwarmer category or anything. He's still a Weekly Starter. That should at least give you some optimism. Unfortunately, just like Marvin Harrison Jr., the market seems to be accounting for that enthusiasm.

# XAVIER WORTHY • WR

92.3  
Y2 Score

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

WEEKLY STARTER

92.9  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Marquise Brown • Robert Woods • Jahan Dotson

The biggest loser with the ZAP Model enhancements this offseason was probably Xavier Worthy. He looked great last year, coming in with a score well above 95. But with some changes to Breakout Score, and with slight size-related adjustments, his ZAP score dropped by a few points.

Worthy's landing spot with Kansas City couldn't have been better, and we saw glimpses of his potential down the stretch last season. And in the Super Bowl.

Worthy's start to 2024, however, was not great.

From Week 1 to Week 10, Worthy had, per PFF data, a 0.89 yards per route run rate. The only real hits that we've seen since 2011 from wide receivers with rookie-season yards per route run numbers below 0.90 are from guys who were either hurt (Jameson Williams) or barely played (Cecil Shorts). Davante Adams had a first-year yards per route run of 0.96, but his path was far from ordinary.

Fortunately, things were better for Worthy during the final portion of the season. That yards per route run nearly doubled from Week 11 onward, moving all the way up to 1.63. And that coincided with different usage.

You see, in that initial split, Worthy had an average depth of target of 11.9. Post-Week 10, that number fell to 7.5. After seeing a 20-plus-air-yard target on 25% of his looks through Week 10, he finished the remainder of the season with just a 13.2% deep-ball rate, per PFF.

Many assumed Worthy's fantasy value would come via a field-stretching role, and that wasn't really the case in 2024. He certainly can grow into that type of player, but, right now, that's not what he is. That, at least, isn't how he benefitted from a production standpoint as a rookie.

My fear with Worthy, as a result, is simply the unknown. The ZAP Model didn't hate him, and his Year 2 score isn't bad at all. But will he be able to consistently generate the down-the-field plays we expected from him as a prospect? What does his role look like when Rashee Rice is healthy and that offense has more competition at wide receiver?

Worthy's Journey Comparables are fine, but they're not incredible, making the evaluation even tougher. He would've been an easier post-Super Bowl sell before his recent off-the-field incident, but he may be more of a hold with everyone lower on him now.

# KEON COLEMAN • WR

89.3  
Y2 Score

BUFFALO BILLS

FLEX PLAY

 89.1  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Christian Kirk • Allen Robinson • Cordarrelle Patterson

Josh Allen threw it deep to Keon Coleman a lot in 2024. Coleman finished the season, according to PFF's info, with the seventh-highest deep-ball rate in the league, as he was targeted 20 or more air yards down the field on roughly 34% of his looks.

When you look at rookies over the last decade-and-a-half with Coleman's first-year numbers, you see deep threat after deep threat. Coleman had a 15.1% target share per game rate and a 15.5 average depth of target last year. The players who hit those thresholds as rookies are guys like Torrey Smith, John Brown, and Will Fuller. But we also get Mike Evans, George Pickens, and Devonta Smith, too.

The problem is that Coleman was someone who thrived more in the short and intermediate areas in college. Some thought he'd be a big slot at the NFL level, but his usage in 2024 didn't really align with what he did well at Michigan State and Florida State.

Instead, Buffalo would line him up on the perimeter and tell him to go. He played a team-low 10.9% of his snaps from the slot, ceding that work to Khalil Shakir. And with Shakir there more long-term now, it's doubtful we see a big change for Coleman's alignment.

I think this story is why we're seeing such a wide range of players in Coleman's Journey Comparables. An Allen Robinson career would be a great outcome, of course, but Cordarrelle Patterson is sitting right there, too. That'd be not-so-great.

Coleman's yards per route run of 1.71 last year is really solid. His peripherals aren't bad at all. I'm just not sure he'll get to play the role we want him to play within the next year or two, which could cap his potential.

# RICKY PEARSALL • WR

85.7  
Y2 Score

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

FLEX PLAY

87.4  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Alshon Jeffery • Devin Funchess • Jahan Dotson

What a strange, strange year for Ricky Pearsall. He was a surprise first-round pick in last year's draft, and he landed in a spot where he was likely to be buried on the depth chart. He was then shot in an attempted robbery, which got his season off to a slow start. A Brandon Aiyuk season-ending injury, though, allowed Pearsall to get more run than some anticipated in Year 1.

And he was...fine. He definitely had his ups and downs. There was a stretch of three games last season -- Weeks 11, 12, and 13 -- where Pearsall was just getting a ton of cardio on a football field. During those contests, he ran 63 routes without a single yard.

Even still, Pearsall finished his rookie campaign with a yards per route run rate of 1.31, and he ended the year strong with two top-15 performances. In those games, he saw target shares of 28% and 19%, leading to about 29 and 19 PPR points, respectively.

Age is something we have to consider with Pearsall. He was drafted well after turning 23, making him an older prospect compared to most. In the Year 2 Model, from 2011 to 2022, there were 13 guys who captured a score of 80 after being drafted at 23 years old or older. There are some hits from that group, including Terry McLaurin, Cooper Kupp, and Michael Thomas. That's great for the pro-Pearsall argument.

The problem is, those three guys weren't Flex Plays. They were better.

Of the 13 older wideouts, 6 were Flex Plays, just like Pearsall. Those six were Chris Givens, Terrance Williams, John Brown, Sterling Shepard, Kenny Golladay, and Hunter Renfrow. Golladay and Renfrow had a moment in the league where they were looking good, but both of them were also much better than Pearsall on a per-route-run basis as rookies.

Typically, older prospects who hit long-term have had much better rookie campaigns than the one Pearsall just had.

There's definitely a chance Pearsall takes another step forward in 2025 with Deebo Samuel now with the Commanders. The aforementioned Aiyuk is coming off a major injury, too, so he may not be 100% to kick off the season. Situationally, things don't look so bad. And it's not like he himself is a mediocre player. There's upside here.

Just know that Pearsall's not close to a surefire thing.

# XAVIER LEGETTE • WR

85.5  
Y2 Score

CAROLINA PANTHERS

FLEX PLAY

82.3  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Dante Pettis • Anthony Miller • Michael Pittman

One of the strangest ZAP Model profiles from last year's draft class belonged to Xavier Legette. He was well over 23 years old when selected by the Panthers at the end of the first round, and his Breakout Score -- well, his *updated* Breakout Score -- sat at 43.5. His Draft Capital Delta made him a high-risk selection.

I'm not sure anything has really changed since then?

Legette's Year 1 has me feeling a little nervous. He was able to improve on his ZAP score post-rookie campaign, but most first-year wideouts would be able to do that after running over 400 routes.

It's not like he was doing a whole lot on those routes.

Legette finished 2024 with a yards per route run rate of 1.19. Not only does that place him with a bunch of fantasy football busts, but, unlike Rome Odunze, Legette doesn't have the "competition for targets" excuse. And, unlike Xavier Worthy, Legette's rate didn't improve as the season went on. It actually got worse.

In the end, Legette's yards per route run rate ranked lower than Diontae Johnson's when he was in Carolina, and it was far worse than Adam Thielen's and fellow rookie Jalen Coker's. For all intents and purposes, Legette was the least effective wide receiver on the Panthers last year aside from David Moore, who's an NFL journeyman. When you Google David Moore and see his team photo, he's got gray hair. No shade to him -- I'm aging, too, dude -- but that's who Legette beat out.

Legette finished the year with a prorated yards per team pass attempt tally that was below 1.0. Here's a list of wideouts since 2011 with at least 70 targets (Legette had 84) and a yards per team pass attempt figure below that mark: Jonathan Mingo (ha!), Marquez Valdes-Scantling, Zay Jones, Marlon Brown, Cordarrelle Patterson, Ace Sanders, Rod Streater, Michael Floyd, and Titus Young.

The dynasty world isn't valuing Legette like he's some must-have asset, but I'm far more pessimistic than optimistic about his ceiling. His Sophomore teammate is a more attractive grab at cost, in my eyes.

# JALEN MCMILLAN • WR

84.5  
Y2 Score

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

FLEX PLAY

 77.5  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Alec Pierce • Chris Godwin • Davante Adams

Chris Godwin being one of Jalen McMillan's top Journey Comparable is cute and all -- Buccaneers! Yeah! -- but Godwin exited his rookie season in a much more attractive spot. He, for example, had a yards per route run rate of 2.03 versus McMillan's 1.18. The Bucs just didn't use him enough, so his raw volume numbers drove down his Year 2 score a bit.

McMillan's yards per route run was kind of weak last year, and that's with Godwin being out for most of the season. McMillan had opportunity, but he didn't do much with it until late in the year. In fact, prior to the final five games of 2024 where McMillan gave us five top-20 performances, his yards per route run rate was just 0.64. Had he maintained that through the end of the season, he would've had a bottom-10 yards per route run figure among all rookie wideouts in the database.

But he didn't. McMillan's final five games saw a 1.90 yards per route run rate, which is great number for a rookie wideout.

The problem, though, is that the Year 2 Model isn't going to pick and choose splits for convenience. There's nothing that's touchdown-driven in the model, either, so McMillan's 1.4 touchdowns per game during that wild finishing stretch isn't getting any love at all.

So, yeah, you could argue, as a result, that McMillan is a little overvalued at the moment. Fantasy managers tend to fall victim to recency bias, and McMillan did some unsustainable things to finish his rookie campaign. Per PFF's expected fantasy points formula, he played 7.5 PPR points per game above expected across the final five games of the 2024 season. That's just not going to continue.

McMillan was a big Late-Round Fantasy Football favorite last year, but I wasn't a fan of how the Buccaneers deployed him. Throughout college, McMillan was a slot receiver while playing alongside Ja'Lynn Polk and Rome Odunze. In Year 1 with the Bucs, he lined up in the slot on just 26.5% of his routes run according to Pro Football Focus.

Chris Godwin is a free agent, and Godwin has thrived in the slot throughout his career. If he's gone, then McMillan has a chance to see an uptick in work in that area of the field. If he's not -- and this is looking pretty likely -- then McMillan will have a tougher time to combat his inevitable regression that's going to hit. At least if you're banking on his season-finishing numbers.

It's good to see strong Journey Comparables for McMillan, because he's a good player. He's just someone whose cost could get out of hand given his 2024 finish.

# ADONAI MITCHELL • WR

81.0  
Y2 Score

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

BENCHWARMER

85.2  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Jonathan Mingo • Jalin Hyatt • Phillip Dorsett

Adonai Mitchell was one of the most polarizing prospects in last year's draft class. The ZAP Model had its concerns -- Mitchell came in with a pretty average Breakout Score -- but he does look better in 2024's version than 2023's. He just had some questionable production metrics, like a best-season yards per route run that ranked dead last in the class.

The athleticism was most definitely there for Mitchell, and he showed some signs of that at times as a rookie. He just didn't get a whole lot of run. Alec Pierce took a step forward for Indianapolis last year, effectively playing the role we all anticipated Mitchell playing. That resulted in just 3.2 PPR points per game for Mitchell and only 206 routes run.

Mitchell's top Journey Comparable of Jonathan Mingo is what the Year 2 Model spit out, but, under the hood, Mitchell's season was better. Mingo had some of the worst first-year per-route-run metrics your boy has ever seen, whereas Mitchell was at least at a 1.51 yards per route run rate. Some of that is due to a 14.7 average depth of target and a 31.4% deep-ball rate, but he converted just fine. We can't be mad about that.

You could argue either way for Mitchell right now versus the market, but a reason I'd be more negative than positive about his outlook is the overall situation in Indianapolis. Michael Pittman is still going to be around in 2025, and Josh Downs has two more years on his rookie contract. All evidence points to both of those wideouts being better than Mitchell, leaving Mitchell as the number-three option, at best, in the offense.

Meanwhile, the Colts kind of have a quarterback problem. If Anthony Richardson turns things around, that's good for Indy, but it also means a more run-heavy approach offensively, hurting the pass-catchers. If he doesn't, then we're looking at some time for Mitchell catching passes from, more than likely, a questionable quarterback. And for a player who didn't provide us much hope in 2024, is the dynasty market really going to be forgiving if he has another down season?

# JALEN COKER • WR

76.6  
Y2 Score

CAROLINA PANTHERS

BENCHWARMER

 21.1  
ZAP Score

**Journey Comps:** Jakobi Meyers • Allen Hurns • Preston Williams

Jalen Coker is the second player in the Year 2 Model's history to have a ZAP score above 20 and a Year 2 score that's at least 50 points above that mark. The only other player to do it was Allen Hurns, who ended up with 105 targets and 1,031 yards as a second-year player in the NFL.

Coker's the type of player that may fly under the radar in dynasty leagues. He was undrafted (that hurt his ZAP score), and he went to a small school (that also hurt it). But his collegiate age-adjusted production was strong.

It took Coker a minute to start producing in 2024, but that's because he wasn't promoted to the active Panthers roster until late September. Once there, he primarily played a slot role for them, running 61% of his routes from the interior part of the formation. When Adam Thielen was sidelined, that slot rate was 76%, per PFF.

Coker won both inside and out. His yards per route run without Thielen was at 1.75, but, from Week 12 onward -- games where Thielen was active and Coker ran just 43% of his routes from the slot -- his rate was still 1.68. Both of those numbers are not just impressive for a rookie -- an undrafted rookie -- but they were substantially better than first-round teammate Xavier Legette.

My friend Matt Harmon of Reception Perception did a film charting write-up on Coker last year where he wrote, "Some of the power slot shades of his game remind me of Chris Godwin, but the more conservative and accurate comparison might be Jakobi Meyers."

What's that, Harmon? Jakobi Meyers? You mean the guy who's the top Journey Comparable for Coker?

That match can't be a bad thing.

The Panthers may try to add another wide receiver piece to the offense this offseason, so maybe you'd want to wait until May to make a move for Coker. To me, he's a talented pass-catcher whose Year 2 score is being weighed down by an understandably low prospect score. His first-year numbers were actually quite good.

# DEVAUGHN VELE • WR

76.2  
Y2 Score

DENVER BRONCOS

BENCHWARMER

 30.3  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Hunter Renfrow • Olabisi Johnson • Robert Foster

If you were to tell me a year ago that I had to pick the more likely outcome between Luka Doncic getting traded and Devaughn Vele being higher than a 70 in the Year 2 Model, I would've said Luka's deal had the higher probability of happening. I'm a totally casual NBA viewer, though, so maybe that's impacting my choice here.

Vele's rookie season, while not flashy, was a huge surprise to me. He was a 26-year-old rookie after getting a late start to his college career, and there was nothing overly special about his production metrics. He seemed like a standard seventh-round depth selection.

We didn't get crazy numbers from Vele, but do you know how many Dart Throw prospects in the ZAP Model end up doing anything as rookies? Just six of them since 2011 have scored more than eight PPR points per game (minimum eight games played). And two of those six are from the 2024 draft class!

Among wideouts who had a ZAP score below 40 over the last five years, Vele's rookie-season raw routes run total ended up being the second-highest, trailing only Demario Douglas. And Vele secured a solid 1.51 yards per route run rate on those routes, primarily playing out of the slot. He wasn't ineffective with his touches overall.

Now, do I think Vele is going to be some locked-in WR2 or WR3 in fantasy for years to come? Probably not. His Benchwarmer status tells us that there's better than a coin flip's chance that he'll fail to score 10 or more PPR points per game in either Year 2 or Year 3.

But if you peep the dynasty landscape right now, you'll see Vele as an afterthought. He's getting drafted and being ranked around Tre Tucker. Even at 27 years of age, you may be able to squeeze out some production from Vele over the next two years. And, keep in mind, during Super Bowl week, Sean Payton said, "I would say we're stronger there than some would think" when referencing the team's wide receivers.

If Devaughn Vele is Denver's top slot receiver next year, with their up-and-coming offense, you'd love to have that sitting on your bench, wouldn't you? Because you can get it for the price of a trade throw-in.

# JA'LYNN POLK • WR

70.6  
Y2 Score

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

87.6  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Josh Doctson • Parris Campbell • N'Keal Harry

No wide receiver from the 2024 class saw a bigger drop in ZAP score to Year 2 score than Ja'Lynn Polk. That 17-point drop was the largest of any player. Including guys who didn't even play.

That's because Polk had more to lose. He was an early-second-round pick, and, honestly, he wasn't a terrible prospect. It feels like there's been a lot of revisionist history going on with Polk in the football space, and, no, he was by no means a great prospect. But his Breakout Score, on a college team with two pro wideouts, was 55, which is pretty average. Things could've been way worse.

Polk's rookie season was nothing short of horrific, though. Like, we're talking tragically bad.

Polk's yards per route run rate last year was 0.35. That's not a typo. He had 87 receiving yards on 252 routes run. There were multiple wide receivers last year who were over 87 yards on one route run.

Maybe we could excuse that poor number by pointing to teammate competition, but New England had arguably the worst pass-catchers in the league last year. The quarterback play -- especially with Jacoby Brissett -- was questionable, but this is ugly, ugly stuff.

There are only four other wideouts who were below a 0.50 yards per route run rate on 200 or more routes run in the Year 2 Model database. Not only are they all busts (Devin Smith, Braxton Miller, Chad Hansen, and Terrace Marshall), but Ja'Lynn Polk's 0.35 rate was lowest!

I know I'm focusing solely on one metric here, but it's one that matters. And it's one that's so pitifully depressing. Ja'Lynn Polk's rookie season was the Michael-Cera-Arrested-Development-sad-walking gif, but on a football field.

Other numbers don't look any more promising. Polk had a 7.5% target share per game rate on a team that, again, had no alpha weapon. His catch rate was 36.4%, a bottom-10 number from any wide receiver since 2011 (minimum 30 targets). Polk's prorated yards per team pass attempt figure was one of the worst we've seen, too.

I'm going to really put myself out there and say that Polk is unlikely going to hit big in the NFL. Just like his three Journey Comparables.

# JORDAN WHITTINGTON • WR

69.8  
Y2 Score

LOS ANGELES RAMS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

45.0  
ZAP Score

**Journey Comps:** Albert Wilson • Trent Taylor • Rishard Matthews

Jordan Whittington was better than you probably realize last year. He only ran 117 routes, but, on those, he secured a -- wait for it -- 2.50 yards per route run rate. A ridiculous 12% of his routes run resulted in a first down.

Over the last 10 years in the Year 2 Model database, there's only been one wide receiver with 100 or more routes run and a higher first-down-per-route-run rate than Whittington. That's Odell Beckham. And take a look at the players, aside from Beckham, above the 11% mark: Jarvis Landry, Michael Thomas, Tyreek Hill, Justin Jefferson, Chris Olave, Drake London, Puka Nacua, and Rashee Rice.

If we limit our parameters a bit to only part-time players, more good vibes emerge. We'll look at wide receivers who ran between 100 and 300 routes as rookies, and we'll filter out all the ones who failed to reach a 2.0 yards per route run rate and a 0.10 first downs per route run rate. So, they were hitting 2.0 yards per route run, and they were getting a first down on over 10% of their routes.

That results in Tyreek Hill, Chris Godwin, Hunter Renfrow, Kadarius Toney, Christian Watson, and Dontayvion Wicks.

Say what you want about some of those guys, but when we're talking about a dynasty asset that nobody really cares about, those are totally fine names to be associated with.

Cooper Kupp announced in early February that the Rams were looking to trade him, and that could -- as long as there's movement -- open up an opportunity for Whittington in the LA offense. He didn't necessarily play a Kupp-like role in 2024, but he's a capable slot player. Some would probably say that's where he should be playing, despite his lower 34% slot rate as a rookie.

Look. A lot of these numbers seem too good to be true. And they probably are. Whittington's still listed as just a Waiver Wire Add, where we know not a lot of great players come from.

But this is the kind of profile to throw a dart at in a trade. It won't hurt you if you miss -- the Rams are candidates to add in the draft, too -- but it has the potential to gain a lot of value.

# TROY FRANKLIN • WR

69.2  
Y2 Score

DENVER BRONCOS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

70.4  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Marvin Jones • Austin Pettis • Miles Boykin

Like most fourth-round selections, there was some good and some bad to Troy Franklin's ZAP Model profile. He weighed in at only 176 pounds at the NFL Combine, which was probably his biggest analytical knock. Film folks pointed out that he was pretty rough against press coverage, and his size didn't help.

Franklin, however, had a strong per-route-run body of work at Oregon, and his Breakout Score was 84.0, a really solid number. That resulted in a neutral Draft Capital Delta.

Nothing's really gotten better for Franklin post-Year 1. He failed to reach a yards per route run rate over 1.0 -- it was 0.99 -- and he only commanded a 10% target share per game rate. Even if we beef up the parameters to 1.10 yards per route run and a 12% target share, in the Year 2 Model database, the only wideouts to hit 12 or more PPR points per game with those rookie-season peripherals have been Cecil Shorts, Willie Snead, Nelson Agholor, DJ Chark, and Jameson Williams. Williams, as we know, barely played as a rookie, which is why he even qualified.

Franklin was mostly deployed as a deep threat for Denver last year. Among qualified receivers, only Alec Pierce and Marquez Valdes-Scantling saw a higher percentage of their targets go 20 or more air yards. That's what PFF data says, at least. It's kind of concerning that he was so poor in yards per route run despite the down-the-field opportunity.

Franklin's profile just doesn't do it for me. We need something unique to grab hold of with a wideout in the Waiver Wire Add group, and he doesn't really have that.

# JERMAINE BURTON • WR

68.8  
Y2 Score

CINCINNATI BENGALS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

77.2  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Dyami Brown • Andy Isabella • Brian Quick

We may never find out how good Jermaine Burton actually is, unfortunately. Off-the-field question marks were a problem entering the league, and he did nothing as a rookie to squash those concerns.

When Burton was on the field, we didn't see anything spectacular. He ran 96 routes in 2024, per PFF, and he amassed 107 yards. That was better than Ja'Lynn Polk, at least.

The raw talent is there for Burton, in my eyes. The updated ZAP Model has his Breakout Score at an impressive 83.2. Among wideouts in that prospect model to get selected after Round 2 but before Pick 100 -- right where Burton is -- just 12 were able to get to that type of Breakout Score. Of those 12, we've got Keenan Allen, Tyler Lockett, Chris Godwin, and Josh Downs in there. That's a higher-end hit rate for that portion of the draft.

With Tee Higgins getting hit with the franchise tag, it doesn't seem like the Bengals are looking for Burton to be a huge playmaker for them in the near future. Unfortunately, he's looking like a model miss. The off-the-field issues are likely to blame.

# MALIK WASHINGTON • WR

65.0  
Y2 Score

MIAMI DOLPHINS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

53.3  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: AT Perry • KeeSean Johnson • Cody Core

Malik Washington's a fun player. He just didn't really get things going in college until he transferred to Virginia, and that happened during his fifth collegiate campaign. So his age-adjusted production was...not great. Hence the low-ish ZAP score.

His rookie-season NFL production wasn't impressive, either. We can at least throw out more analytical excuses for a player like him compared to someone like Ja'Lynn Polk, since the Dolphins are littered with talent offensively. It's tough to compete for looks with Tyreek Hill, Jaylen Waddle, De'Von Achane, and, of course, Jonnu Smith.

Washington profiled as a thick slot receiver coming out of school, and the Dolphins threw him in the slot on over half of his snaps. That's going to be a more natural position for him, but it could be tough for him to see short-term production from there with Jonnu Smith still around for at least another year.

Washington's yards per route run rate was just 0.86 on 258 routes in 2024, a number that rarely gives us much hope. In the Year 2 Model data set, only Nelson Agholor, Zay Jones, and Quentin Johnston have been able to score double-digit PPR points per game after failing to reach a 0.90 yards per route run rate as a rookie on at least 200 routes run. That's out of 27 possible wideouts. And let's not pretend like those are good hits.

As much as I enjoy Washington's game, I've got to be realistic: He's probably not going to be a weekly starter for your dynasty squads.

# LUKE MCCAFFREY • WR

64.3  
Y2 Score

WASHINGTON COMMANDERS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

66.9  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Khalil Shakir • Dez Fitzpatrick • Riley Ridley

It was easy to get excited about Luke McCaffrey's potential in Washington after the Commanders traded Jahan Dotson last year, but, in hindsight, it's not surprising that he didn't do much as a rookie. McCaffrey converted to wide receiver during his fourth year in college after playing quarterback prior to that. There wasn't much experience there. Expecting a big rookie season was pretty foolish when looking back.

We did see McCaffrey on the field for almost 250 routes run. He was pretty mediocre with those opportunities, securing a target on just 9.7% of his routes. Of all Year 2 Model wide receivers who had at least 200 routes run as rookies, only six guys had a targets per route run rate that low. And all six of them have been irrelevant in fantasy football.

The hope for McCaffrey is that 2024 was truly a season of learning. Khalil Shakir being his top Journey Comparable is interesting, because Shakir, while better as a prospect and more productive as a rookie, took a minute to really become part of the fantasy football conversation. Maybe that'll happen with McCaffrey as well. Probability just doesn't favor it coming to fruition.

# BUB MEANS • WR

63.5  
Y2 Score

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

46.1  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Cody Core ▪ KeeSean Johnson ▪ Scotty Miller

Bub Means and Malik Washington aren't a whole lot different within the Year 2 Model. Their prospect scores are a little off, but, with gains seen in their Year 2 score, they share some Journey Comparables.

But they're definitely not similar wide receivers.

While Washington played a fair amount in the slot, Means ran 68.4% of his 90 routes from the perimeter. He played both inside and outside at Pitt (#Hail2Pitt), but his final collegiate season -- the one where he had his best production -- saw him line up in the slot on just 9.5% of his routes. That's all according to PFF data.

Means was also a deep threat throughout college, but we didn't really get to see a ton of that in 2024 with Marquez Valdes-Scantling and Rashid Shaheed on the Saints roster. It didn't help that, when Means finally started seeing significant snaps, he suffered a high-ankle sprain that completely derailed his season.

We had a Week 6 performance from Means that resulted in eight targets and a score, and that led to him being mentioned in plenty of waiver wire articles throughout the fantasy space. It's just hard to imagine he would've been close to that type of playing time had the many injuries not occurred to Saints receivers. Because, prior to that contest, he wasn't getting any run for them.

The Year 2 Model isn't seeing Means as a total avoid because he did get a little love for a three-week stretch before his injury. His 1.31 yards per route run rate wasn't horrible, and he did have a game last year with a 21% target share, which isn't something every Day 3 wide receiver can say.

The Saints are candidates to build at wide receiver this offseason, though, and the hope is that Shaheed and Chris Olave are both back and healthy. That could very easily bury Means.

# MALACHI CORLEY • WR

60.8  
Y2 Score

NEW YORK JETS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

73.4  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Tylan Wallace • Chad Williams • Demarcus Robinson

One of last year's ZAP Model hits was with Malachi Corley. It's easy to forget, but he was a popular target in rookie drafts. People loved him. The ZAP Model, however, saw him as a high-risk investment based on Draft Capital Delta, and after a three-catch season, that's looking like the right call.

Corley was a raw prospect from a smaller program, so maybe we'll see development as a Sophomore in the NFL. Math tells us that players who aren't even able to score one PPR point per game as rookies almost never pan out, though.

Of the hundreds of wide receivers in the Year 2 Model database who registered less than one fantasy point per game as a rookie (minimum eight games played, or else they'd get a zero), two were able to score 12 or more points per contest in either Year 2 or Year 3. Jameson Williams was one, and he was a first-round wide receiver who was injured for most of his rookie season. The other was Willie Snead, who was an undrafted rookie in 2014 and didn't get a shot until 2015.

Odds are not in Corley's favor.

# JACOB COWING • WR

58.8  
Y2 Score

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

61.9  
ZAP Score

**Journey Comps:** Rashad Greene • Michael Campanaro • Parker Washington

Evaluating a player after he ran 67 routes as a rookie isn't very easy. And, if we're being truthful, a rookie wide receiver who ran just 67 routes probably doesn't have a superstar future in fantasy football.

Jacob Cowing ran 67 routes, if that wasn't clear already.

Cowing was an interesting prospect who analytically compared a bit to Tank Dell. His ZAP score took about a five-point hit with the year-over-year model improvements, but he still has a Breakout Score of 78.1, which isn't bad for a Day 3 wideout.

We didn't think there would be, but there was some opportunity to be had for Cowing as a rookie. With Brandon Aiyuk out and Deebo Samuel not always healthy, Cowing had a shot to step in and get some work. He just didn't capitalize, running, as I've now noted three times, just 67 routes.

Nothing special happened on those, either. His targets per route run rate was about 9%, and his yards per route run was a below-average 1.19. He also wasn't good when it came to gaining first downs.

We're likely looking at just a depth piece with Cowing. If there was something there, we probably would've seen it in Year 1. Especially considering he was a 23-year-old rookie.

# ROMAN WILSON • WR

58.5  
Y2 Score

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

WAIVER WIRE ADD

 72.6  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Jalen Tolbert • D'Wayne Eskridge • Cecil Shorts

Roman Wilson was only the ninth wide receiver since 2011 to get selected in the top-100 of the NFL Draft and then play three or fewer games as a rookie. Of the other eight receivers, just one was able to score more than 10 PPR points per game in either Year 2 or Year 3. And that one wideout was John Ross, one of the biggest draft busts of the last decade.

When a player is banged up as a rookie, it sets them back. And since the model isn't looking beyond Year 3, it's tough for someone who missed their first year to really take a big leap in just two seasons.

That's what we're looking at with Roman Wilson. Because of the lack of production, his Year 2 score is taking a pretty massive hit. Maybe you see it as unfair, but we don't have a long list of injured Year 1 players becoming something big by the end of Year 3. The best example is probably Jameson Williams, but he was a higher-end prospect playing in a higher-end offense. We can't say that about Wilson. And Williams did see the field more as a rookie.

All of this doesn't make Wilson an automatic sell. When players are hurt, they're also forgotten about. The dynasty market isn't valuing Wilson high at all right now -- the masses are putting him in dart-throw territory -- so you're probably better off just holding. The Steelers are in the market for a wide receiver, but they may be looking for more of a boundary player instead of a slot, which is where Wilson will often line up. His role could be saved. "Could" being the key word there.

You could also cross your fingers and hope Wilson goes down the path that one of his Journey Comparables, Cecil Shorts, went down. Shorts was a rookie in 2011 and saw 12 total targets in 10 games, but he burst onto the scene in 2012 with over 100 targets in 14 outings. That outcome isn't impossible for Wilson. It's just highly unlikely.

# Y2 Running Back



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# BUCKY IRVING • RB

91.4  
Y2 Score

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

WEEKLY STARTER

65.0  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Tarik Cohen • Dameon Pierce • Zac Stacy

If we're judging running back classes by their rookie-season production, the 2024 group is probably the worst one in the Year 2 Model's history. Bucky Irving is the only player above a Year 2 score of 90, and we have zero Elite Producers from the bunch. Woof.

Some of you may be surprised that Bucky's score isn't any higher, and, to be honest, I was a little, too. But the ZAP Model didn't see a whole lot of greatness from Irving entering the NFL -- which is looking like one of the biggest misses the model has ever seen -- and ZAP score gets more weight in the running back Year 2 Model than the wide receiver one. That's dragging Irving's score down.

But let me get this out of the way: Bucky Irving is great. He's more than great. The dude led 100-plus carry backs last year in yards after contact per attempt. He had the highest yards per carry average of any 200-plus attempt rookie rusher since at least 2011. Pro Football Focus graded him as a top-five running back in the league.

The only real question mark we should have relates to volume reliability. We usually don't see backs his size get the type of workloads that are necessary for fantasy-breaking seasons. Even in 2024, Irving was barely over a 50% running back rush share, and his target share didn't reach 10%. We're obviously going to project more work moving forward, but the million-dollar question -- or, maybe, like, \$50, depending on your dynasty league's buy-in -- is how much? As in, how much more volume will he see?

As we talked about earlier, history hasn't been kind to smaller backs. But that sort of is changing. Maybe. There are over 70 running backs in the Year 2 Model (dates back to 2011, remember) who weighed in under 200 pounds at the NFL Combine. Of those 70, just 9 have had a season with at least a 50% running back rush share per game rate. More than half of those nine were drafted in either 2022, 2023, or 2024.

Now, that may seem like a big shift in philosophy, but three of those backs are James Cook, Jahmyr Gibbs, and De'Von Achane. Each one of them were really strong prospects in the ZAP Model. Kyren Williams is the only one with a more mediocre prospect score to consistently see good volume totals. Irving looks like he's more talented, but it does put some fear in my mind.

Essentially, we're in a place with Bucky Irving that we've never really been before. His Journey Comparables are all pretty bad, but it's clear the model just missed on him last year, which lowers his Year 2 score. So my recommendation is to hold, unless you can truly sell him at a high-end price. After all, he's a Weekly Starter, not an Elite Producer.

# TYRONE TRACY • RB

87.1  
Y2 Score

NEW YORK GIANTS

WEEKLY STARTER

77.5  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Tyjae Spears • Devin Singletary • Roy Helu

Tyrone Tracy's Year 2 score isn't super far off of Bucky Irving's because the prospect model loves Tracy. He was a pass-catcher in college -- he played wideout -- and he was rewarded for that in the model. You can't say it was totally wrong, all things considered.

Tracy didn't get RB1-style work until Week 5 for the Giants, and, from that point on, he averaged well over 13 PPR points per game. His 9.6% target share per game rate ranked first when compared to the rest of the 2024 class, and he handled 71.5% of New York's running back rushes across the final 13 games of the regular season. The workload was strong for a Day 3 pick.

The pass-catching has a chance to stick year-over-year for Tracy, but I do think, despite the fact that he helped my reputation as an analyst last year, there's some concern with him.

First off, we know it's not easy for Day 3 NFL Draft selections to maintain big workloads. Their backfield positioning is pretty fragile.

Tracy also wasn't special on the ground. His PFF grade on offense ranked 44th among qualified backs, his rate of gaining 10 or more yards was pretty ordinary, and he was 33rd in yards after contact per attempt. That leads me to believe that the Giants, during a year where there are a lot of good running backs to choose from, may opt to go in that direction in the draft. And that would really hurt Tracy.

That's why this could be your opportunity to sell. Tracy's in the Weekly Starter category, so it's definitely possible that he hits an OK ceiling. We just know it's not probable. There's a much better chance we see that from someone like Bucky Irving, who's coming off a rookie campaign that actually was extraordinary.

Tracy's top comparable, Tyjae Spears, was kind of in a similar position last year. He sat atop his depth chart, ready to take that next step in his offense. And then we saw how delicate those situations can be. It's not that Spears is bad -- Tracy isn't, either -- but neither player is great enough to always be "the guy" in their backfield.

# RAY DAVIS • RB

79.6  
Y2 Score

BUFFALO BILLS

FLEX PLAY

68.4  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Roschon Johnson • Devonta Freeman • Chuba Hubbard

We know Ray Davis won't be the Bills starter in 2025. James Cook still has another year left on his rookie deal, and Cook balled out in 2024. So, at best, Davis will find the field when Cook needs a break. At worst, he's a full-blown handcuff.

But Davis isn't bad! You may be surprised to see him with the third-best score from last year's class, and it's because he generated some explosive plays and was excellent per route run as a receiver. He was an older prospect, but he was a pretty good one for his draft slot within the ZAP Model.

With the running back class looking as strong as it is, a lot of backfields could see a shakeup across the league. Maybe the Bills will try to plan ahead, or maybe they'll try to fill Ty Johnson's role via the draft. Johnson's a free agent. At the very least, it's unlikely Buffalo spends up at the position over the next couple of months. And that potential alone makes Davis more attractive in dynasty.

His price point does, too. You can get Davis as an RB4, which isn't bad for a guy who sits in a category that's seen 12.3% of its players provide 14 or more PPR points per game in their second or third year in the league. And you know he's attached to an offense that'll almost definitely rank in the top-10 next year in overall production.

Davis is already 25 years old, but he's oddly kind of a buy candidate at the moment. Don't expect him to go nuts, but the talent seems to be present. And acquiring talent is the name of the game in dynasty.

# TREY BENSON • RB

78.5  
Y2 Score

ARIZONA CARDINALS

FLEX PLAY

86.1  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Tevin Coleman • CJ Prosise • Kendre Miller

It's not impossible for Trey Benson to turn things around and become a starter for your fantasy team. His 86.1 ZAP score gave him a negative Draft Capital Delta -- the model didn't like him as much as the NFL seemed to -- but he was by no means a bad prospect. And, among all rookies in last year's class with 50 or more rush attempts, he was best at gaining 10 or more yards.

Benson may or may not be good. We really don't know. History does tell us, however, that Flex Plays provide us an RB2ish season in Year 2 or Year 3 at a sub-13% rate.

If you look at the guys who've gotten it done out of the Flex Play category since 2011, you get a lot of players who were injured as rookies, leading to poorer Year 2 scores. Like Travis Etienne and Dalvin Cook. That's not really what we're getting with Benson.

One Flex Play hit was, funny enough, James Conner, who saw a unique situation arise in Pittsburgh during his second year in the league. That's the dude Benson will have to beat out in 2025 in order to see a bigger workload. And that presents a pretty big problem, because, unlike Conner back in 2018, there's no sign that Benson is in line for a huge spike in workload. In 2024, his running back rush share was just 24.1%.

As a result, his current dynasty price tag seems a little inflated. Benson may be able to grab hold of that job -- without an injury -- in 2026, but is holding onto a running back asset who isn't a surefire prospect worth it? If his ZAP score had been higher, maybe we'd see this differently, but, to me, Benson is more "sell" than "buy" right now.

# ISAAC GUERENDO • RB

78.2  
Y2 Score

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

FLEX PLAY

70.9  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Samaje Perine • Chuba Hubbard • Aaron Jones

Isaac Guerendo's size-speed combination helped out his ZAP score, and we saw his big-play ability at times during his rookie year. On limited touches -- he wasn't the team's starter for most of the season -- Guerendo registered a 20-plus-miles-per-hour run on multiple occasions according to Next Gen Stats. Only nine running backs had more of those types of rushes.

Guerendo's season was relatively ordinary, though. He did finish the year with a rushing yards over expected per attempt in the green, and he led the 49ers in rushing expected points added across the season.

The odds that San Francisco really leans on him in 2025 seem slim, though. Christian McCaffrey should be around at least another year, and Jordan Mason, who led the team in rushing yards over expected per attempt, is a restricted free agent. He could be back, too. Maybe the 49ers add to the room in the draft? That would all mean Guerendo, at best, is a committee back with an injury to the team's starter.

Guerendo does look OK in the Year 2 Model, and his Journey Comparables aren't too shabby given the scores we're working with here. Chuba Hubbard was the rare Year 4 breakout at running back, but it does give us hope that, if things open up for Guerendo towards the tail-end of his rookie contract, he may be able to do some damage. It would just be easier to buy into that if he wasn't already almost 25 years old.

# JONATHON BROOKS • RB

73.5  
Y2 Score

CAROLINA PANTHERS

FLEX PLAY

93.8  
ZAP Score

**Journey Comps:** Ryan Williams • Derrius Guice • Travis Etienne

It's no surprise that Jonathon Brooks' top Journey Comparables are running backs who didn't play as rookies after being highly drafted. Ryan Williams was a second-rounder in 2011, and he suffered a knee injury in the preseason, ending his year. Derrius Guice was a promising second-rounder, too, but he tore his ACL, derailing his first season. And most of us know the Travis Etienne story -- he didn't play as a rookie, either.

The Year 2 Model lacks compassion for the guys who get hurt in their first year of pro football. But you have to remember that the model is predicting Year 2 and Year 3 output. When someone is injured, he could have a hard time bouncing back as a second-year player, leaving just one season to make his mark in the model.

Jonathon Brooks is in that position right now. He's actually worse off than some of the previously-mentioned guys, because he re-took his ACL late in the season. He's now likely to miss the 2025 season entirely.

It's tough to be bullish about a once-promising prospect. Brooks had a really solid score in the ZAP Model -- the best score by far in last year's class -- after tallying a Breakout Score of 92.2. He was listed as a Weekly Starter. Now, he's a weak flex play because he's not going to give us any production, probably, until 2026.

Chuba Hubbard is still around, too. The Panthers have a potential out with his contract after next season, but with Brooks unlikely to play, they may need to guarantee Hubbard's there as insurance. So even when Brooks is back in 2026, what are the odds that he's the team's bell-cow back?

That's why it's hard to get excited about this situation. I'm not one to hold onto an unproductive asset who may not see much value movement throughout the year, so if you want to just trade him now -- he was around RB30 in dynasty ADP throughout February -- I wouldn't totally blame you. It largely depends on how deep your league rosters are.

# BRAELON ALLEN • RB

73.0  
Y2 Score

NEW YORK JETS

FLEX PLAY

 60.9  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Josh Adams • DeAndre Washington • Lorenzo Taliaferro

Last year's version of the ZAP Model liked Braelon Allen a good bit more than this year's. With more of an emphasis on receiving, Allen took a hit -- his Breakout Score fell to just 46.7.

Some may see that as an L for the model given Braelon Allen's rookie-season campaign, and his Year 2 score does tell us that his prospect score was probably too low.

But there's a chance you think Allen's first year in the league was better than it was.

There's no doubt that Allen got off to a pretty hot start. He tallied a pair of touchdowns in Week 2 against the Titans, and, at one point, fans were wondering why he wasn't stealing more work from Breece Hall.

Well, with the season now in the rearview, we can see that Allen lost 0.6 yards per attempt over expected, when Hall was completely neutral within the statistic. Hall gained 10 or more yards on 12.4% of his rushes, when Allen gained that much on just 5.4% of his. It wasn't totally night and day within every metric, but Hall was probably the better choice for the Jets in 2024.

Allen, for what it's worth, became just the 14th running back in the Year 2 Model to have failed to gain 10 yards on at least 6% of his rushes as a rookie. Le'Veon Bell and Trent Richardson did that, too, but both of them were well over 1.0 in yards per team play as first-year players. Allen wasn't close to that. And every other running back on that list would be considered more of a plodder than an explosive back. Every single one. And that's a little scary when it comes to the ceiling Allen may be able to hit.

In the short term, Hall is still on his rookie deal, and Allen has Isaiah Davis to deal with in the Jets backfield at this moment, too. A new coaching staff could shake things up, but the competition isn't easy for him to all of a sudden grab hold of a huge workload.

If you want some good news, it's that Allen is still only 21 years old. And he just turned 21. He's a unique prospect just from that perspective only: No player in the Year 2 database was drafted at a younger age. There's plenty of time for him to develop into something more. In the meantime, he's looking like a handcuff with the potential for some flex appeal. The models don't see him as a special player.

# BLAKE CORUM • RB

68.0  
Y2 Score

LOS ANGELES RAMS

FLEX PLAY

80.2  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Kalen Ballage • Mike Davis • Pierre Strong

It would've been nice to get a real look at Blake Corum in 2024, but Sean McVay loves him some Kyren Williams. Thanks to that, Corum only carried the ball 58 times, resulting in a 13% rush share per game rate.

The sample was small, but we didn't see anything spectacular out of Corum. He finished with a lower success rate than Ronnie Rivers last year, his yards after contact per attempt was also worse, and he had the crappiest expected points added per rush on the team. It doesn't mean he's doomed. It just means we didn't really learn anything positive about Corum in 2024.

Corum being labeled a Flex Play -- the same as a lot of these Year 2 backs -- means there's at least a 37% chance he'll score 10 or more PPR points per game in either 2025 or 2026. With Kyren Williams still around in 2025, Corum will most likely need an injury to see the field enough to get to that double-digit-point-per-game score. The Rams may do their best to keep Williams around on a second contract, but Year 3 -- 2026 -- could be a spot for Corum to get more work. Even then, the Rams would probably add to their running back room.

The Journey Comparables aren't great, and that's because the outlook is mediocre. Treat Corum like a handcuff for now.

# JAYLEN WRIGHT • RB

67.3  
Y2 Score

MIAMI DOLPHINS

FLEX PLAY

 75.0  
ZAP Score

**Journey Comps:** Lamar Miller • Jay Ajayi • Stevan Ridley

Last year's draft class is, apparently, just filled with a bunch of flex-type plays who don't have a ton of immediate opportunity. They're largely handcuffs.

You can add Jaylen Wright to the list. Sort of.

Unlike some of the other backs we've talked about, Wright has a chance for some work in 2025. In 2024, De'Von Achane led the Dolphins backfield with a 53% running back rush share per game rate, which resulted in 203 carries. The other Dolphins backs, mostly Raheem Mostert and Wright, combined for 179 attempts. Similar to Ray Davis' starter in Buffalo, Achane probably isn't going to be a 300-attempt player for Miami, which will leave work for another back or set of backs.

And, fortunately for Wright, Raheem Mostert was released in February. Even if he finds his way back to Miami, we have to recognize that he's a soon-to-be 33-year-old running back who was dead last on the team last year in success rate, rushing yards over expected per attempt, and expected points added per rush. Wright is probably the team's RB2 in 2025 regardless.

Similar to what's been said about other backs in this class, Wright was average to below average as a rookie. The biggest problem with his season was the lack of receiving upside -- he saw just six targets all year. With Achane in the backfield, it's going to be tough for Wright to hit a proper ceiling. He's going to need an injury to really step in and be a fantasy starter, more than likely.

It's the same story as nearly everyone else from last year's draft class: They're capable enough, but they're not at the point where a team will just hand them their backfield.

# AUDRIC ESTIME • RB

61.0  
Y2 Score

DENVER BRONCOS

BENCHWARMER

49.6  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Chris Evans • Hassan Haskins • Brandon Bolden

Audric Estime's biggest ZAP Model problem was that he wasn't much of a pass-catcher in college. His best-season reception share was well below 10%, and his Breakout Score was essentially average. Estime's rookie year didn't really alter perception, with him seeing just five targets across the entire season.

Estime was better at breaking off big plays per rush compared to his Denver teammates last year, but he was by far the worst of the three -- this includes Javonte Williams and Jaleel McLaughlin, for the record -- in 10-plus-yard run rate. Estime's 35.5% success rate, per Next Gen Stats, wasn't anything to write home about, either.

Sean Payton, in an interview with Kay Adams in February, talked about how the Broncos look at offseason acquisitions as musts, needs, and wants. As a "must" here in 2025, he referenced his famous "joker" position, which has typically been a tight end or running back with exceptional pass-catching ability. They're interior players who have to be, as he put it, "elite" receivers.

Javonte Williams is now a free agent, so more early-down work could easily be shifted to Estime, who's still only 21 years old, in 2025. But, considering his pass-catching prowess, he's not exactly the dude Payton would be looking for to possibly be his most fantasy-relevant back. To Payton, that player is more of an Alvin Kamara or Darren Sproles type who can take advantage of two-high safety looks as a receiver. Or, if he opts to go tight end in that role, think "Jimmy Graham".

With this year's draft class looking as strong as it does at running back, there's a chance that joker comes from that position. At the very least, Denver's in a place to add to their backfield during the draft, or possibly even in free agency. And that would really hurt Estime.

# KIMANI VIDAL • RB

59.9  
Y2 Score

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS

BENCHWARMER

52.1  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Chase Brown • Alex Collins • Myles Gaskin

Having Chase Brown, Alex Collins, and Myles Gaskin as Journey Comparables could certainly be worse. I mean, we're talking about a running back who had a ZAP score of just 52 and saw that rise by just a handful of points after his rookie year. Brown did his thing last year, and Collins and Gaskin had their moments, too.

It wasn't a great rookie season for Kimani Vidal, though. He had some opportunity -- JK Dobbins was injured later in the season, opening the door for Vidal to get more work -- and he didn't do a whole lot with it. Vidal's rushing yards over expected per rush was worst on the Chargers last year, and he was dead last in success rate, too.

We did see some good from Vidal as a pass-catcher at times, but his PFF receiving and pass-blocking grades were both well below average in 2024.

JK Dobbins is a free agent, but it wouldn't be surprising if he's back in LA next year. That actually might be the best-case scenario for Vidal, because it would mean the Chargers are less likely to spend significant draft capital on a back in April. We'll have to wait and see.

Maybe the small-school product sees improvement in Year 2 after getting used to NFL game speed. That's really your only hope. There just seems to be a lot in Vidal's way right now to assume he'll make a giant leap. Benchwarmers very rarely do.

# WILL SHIPLEY • RB

58.7  
Y2 Score

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

BENCHWARMER

70.2  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Eno Benjamin • Isaiah Spiller • Mark Walton

We had a garbage time moment with Will Shipley in the NFC Championship against the Commanders, and that was pretty much the highlight of his season offensively.

Running behind Saquon Barkley will do that. The thing is, Shipley didn't even operate as Philly's number-two back in 2024, with Kenneth Gainwell typically seeing work behind Barkley.

Gainwell, however, is a free agent in 2025. If the Eagles let him go, there's a chance we'd then see Shipley operate below Barkley this upcoming season.

Shipley's not a bad handcuff, either. His ZAP score of 70.2 was about a point higher than where his draft capital had him, and he has a decent receiving backbone, having hit almost a 13% reception share at Clemson.

Benchwarmer odds aren't great, but Shipley should still be rostered since there's a chance he's one injury away from a decent amount of work in 2025.

# ISAIAH DAVIS • RB

58.5  
Y2 Score

NEW YORK JETS

BENCHWARMER

53.9  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Josh Ferguson • Travis Homer • Alex Collins

Isaiah Davis and Kimani Vidal look pretty similar in both the ZAP Model and the Year 2 one, with Vidal getting a little bit of an edge due to his higher increase in year-over-year score. But that's why you see them with a shared Journey Comparable in Alex Collins.

We didn't see a ton of Davis until the end of the 2024 season, but he was low-key impressive. On 30 rush attempts, Davis had a rushing yards over expected per attempt of +1.4, a rushing expected points added of +4.9, and a success rate of 56.7%. It's a tiny sample, yes, but each of those numbers were far, far superior compared to both Breece Hall and Braelon Allen out of that same backfield.

Hall and Allen are unfortunately still the problem. In order for Davis to see work, he'll need to beat out both players. Even if his per-rush numbers were better, they're not everything. Especially within such a small sample.

But if you want to take a chance on a bench-warming back, Davis isn't a bad one to throw a dart at. There's a new coaching staff in New York -- maybe they'll go with a clean-slate approach, allowing someone like Davis to work his way into volume -- and the ZAP Model didn't totally mind Davis in the first place. Just toss him into a bigger dynasty trade, and you can essentially get him for free.

# MARSHAWN LLOYD • RB

56.5  
Y2 Score

GREEN BAY PACKERS

BENCHWARMER

78.4  
ZAP Score

Journey Comps: Bryce Love ▪ Darrynton Evans ▪ James Conner

MarShawn Lloyd was supposed to at least get some work for the Packers in 2024, but injuries totally derailed his season. Those injuries destroyed his Year 2 score, too.

The Year 2 Model has seen five other running backs, aside from Lloyd, enter their careers with a ZAP score in the 70s and exit their rookie season with a score that was 20-plus points below said ZAP score. Each one of those backs ended up busting.

You can say that it's not Lloyd's fault, but availability matters at the running back position. And, despite head coach Matt LaFleur having a "split backfield" mentality historically, he wasn't afraid to give Josh Jacobs 300 attempts in 2024.

Jacobs will probably be around for another year -- his contract does have a potential out -- and, if that's the case, Lloyd is looking like nothing more than a handcuff. The Packers may even throw a Day 3 dart at the position in the draft to make things even muddier.

# Closing

*Severance* has been a joy to watch over the last couple of months. It's one of the deepest, most creative shows I've ever seen. The puzzle solving, the camera shots, the acting...it's brilliant.

With the show's increase in popularity, more people are coming out and joking -- but also not joking -- about being severed. They'd be open to getting a little chip in their brain in order to forget everything they do each day at work.

Not that we're actually faced with that decision, but, if we were, there's no chance I'd want to go down that route. I love this stuff. I'm obsessed with finding ways to improve my evaluation process. I enjoy the you know what out of tweaking the ZAP Model. I can't wait to have conversations about it all.

Call me a geek. Call me four-eyes. Call me whatever you want.

I call myself fortunate.

This is the fourth year of this prospect guide. When I created the first, there was no telling how long it'd continue for. Because of you and your unwavering support, I'm excited as can be to do more of these in the future.

We'll get stuff right. We'll get stuff wrong. But, through it all, **we'll nerd out and do what we love.**

Cheers to another season of rookie draft values.



# ZAP Model Rankings

RUNNING BACK			WIDE RECEIVER			TIGHT END		
Rk	Player	ZAP	Rk	Player	ZAP	Rk	Player	ZAP
ELITE PRODUCER			ELITE PRODUCER			ELITE PRODUCER		
1	Ashton Jeanty	99.7	1	Travis Hunter	97.1	1	Colston Loveland	94.34
2	Omarion Hampton	98.2	2	Tetairoa McMillan	96.0	2	Tyler Warren	91.82
WEEKLY STARTER			3	Emeka Egbuka	95.8	3	Terrance Ferguson	88.05
3	TreVeyon Henderson	94.1	4	Luther Burden	95.2	WEEKLY STARTER		
4	Quinshon Judkins	93.4	WEEKLY STARTER			4	Harold Fannin	84.28
5	Kaleb Johnson	86.5	5	Matthew Golden	88.7	5	Elijah Arroyo	81.13
6	Bhayshul Tuten	84.9	6	Jayden Higgins	88.1	WAIVER WIRE ADD		
7	RJ Harvey	84.2	FLEX PLAY			6	Mason Taylor	72.33
FLEX PLAY			7	Tre Harris	80.9	7	Oronde Gadsden	47.17
8	Cameron Skattebo	79.8	8	Jack Bech	77.5	8	Gunnar Helm	44.65
9	Trevor Etienne	78.8	9	Jaylin Noel	76.8	9	Mitchell Evans	40.25
10	Jaydon Blue	74.5	10	Kyle Williams	76.6	DART THROW		
11	Woody Marks	73.6	11	Savion Williams	76.6	10	Gavin Bartholomew	23.27
12	Jarquez Hunter	72.4	12	Pat Bryant	73.2	11	Jackson Hawes	22.64
BENCHWARMER			13	Isaac TeSlaa	72.1	12	Thomas Fidone	19.50
13	Dylan Sampson	69.9	14	Elic Ayomanor	68.6	13	Robbie Ouzts	11.32
14	DJ Giddens	67.0	BENCHWARMER			14	Moliki Matavao	10.69
15	LeQuint Allen	66.1	15	Tai Felton	66.4	15	Luke Lachey	8.81
16	Devin Neal	65.0	16	Jaylin Lane	61.1	16	Caleb Lohner	3.77
17	Ollie Gordon	63.4	17	Chimere Dike	58.4			
18	Jordan James	61.4	18	Dont'e Thornton	57.7			
19	Brashard Smith	55.4	19	Jalen Royals	56.9			
20	Tahj Brooks	49.2	20	Jimmy Horn	55.9			
21	Montrell Johnson	44.5	21	Tory Horton	55.8			
22	Raheim Sanders	44.5	22	Jordan Watkins	54.2			
23	Donovan Edwards	44.0	23	KeAndre Lambert-Smith	52.3			
24	Damien Martinez	43.7	WAIVER WIRE ADD					
WAIVER WIRE ADD			24	Dominic Lovett	46.7			
25	Kalel Mullings	36.3	25	Isaiah Bond	43.6			

# Rookie Rankings

## Single-QB Top-48

Rk	Player	Pos	Pos. Rank	Tier	Rk	Player	Pos	Pos. Rank	Tier
1	Ashton Jeanty	RB	1	1	25	Harold Fannin	TE	4	8
2	Omarion Hampton	RB	2	2	26	Pat Bryant	WR	11	8
3	Travis Hunter	WR	1	2	27	Devin Neal	RB	11	9
4	Tetairoa McMillan	WR	2	2	28	Dylan Sampson	RB	12	9
5	TreVeyon Henderson	RB	3	3	29	Jalen Royals	WR	12	9
6	Quinshon Judkins	RB	4	3	30	Jaxson Dart	QB	2	10
7	Emeka Egbuka	WR	3	4	31	Elijah Arroyo	TE	5	10
8	Matthew Golden	WR	4	5	32	Isaac TeSlaa	WR	13	10
9	Luther Burden	WR	5	5	33	Ollie Gordon	RB	13	10
10	Kaleb Johnson	RB	5	5	34	Mason Taylor	TE	6	10
11	RJ Harvey	RB	6	5	35	Jordan James	RB	14	10
12	Colston Loveland	TE	1	6	36	Tahj Brooks	RB	15	10
13	Tyler Warren	TE	2	6	37	Woody Marks	RB	16	11
14	Jayden Higgins	WR	6	6	38	Trevor Etienne	RB	17	11
15	Tre Harris	WR	7	6	39	Brashard Smith	RB	18	11
16	Bhayshul Tuten	RB	7	6	40	Jalen Milroe	QB	3	11
17	Jack Bech	WR	8	7	41	DJ Giddens	RB	19	12
18	Cam Skattebo	RB	8	7	42	Savion Williams	WR	14	12
19	Cam Ward	QB	1	7	43	Elic Ayomanor	WR	15	12
20	Jaylin Noel	WR	9	7	44	Tai Felton	WR	16	12
21	Kyle Williams	WR	10	7	45	LeQuint Allen	RB	20	12
22	Terrance Ferguson	TE	3	7	46	Kyle Monangai	RB	21	12
23	Jarquez Hunter	RB	9	8	47	Jaylin Lane	WR	17	13
24	Jaydon Blue	RB	10	8	48	Tory Horton	WR	18	13

## Superflex Top-48

Rk	Player	Pos	Pos. Rank	Tier	Rk	Player	Pos	Pos. Rank	Tier
1	Ashton Jeanty	RB	1	1	25	Terrance Ferguson	TE	3	8
2	Omarion Hampton	RB	2	2	26	Shedeur Sanders	QB	5	9
3	Travis Hunter	WR	1	2	27	Jarquez Hunter	RB	9	10
4	Tetairoa McMillan	WR	2	2	28	Jaydon Blue	RB	10	10
5	Cam Ward	QB	1	2	29	Harold Fannin	TE	4	10
6	TreVeyon Henderson	RB	3	3	30	Pat Bryant	WR	11	10
7	Quinshon Judkins	RB	4	3	31	Devin Neal	RB	11	11
8	Emeka Egbuka	WR	3	4	32	Dylan Sampson	RB	12	11
9	Jaxson Dart	QB	2	4	33	Jalen Royals	WR	12	11
10	Matthew Golden	WR	4	5	34	Elijah Arroyo	TE	5	12
11	Luther Burden	WR	5	5	35	Isaac TeSlaa	WR	13	12
12	Kaleb Johnson	RB	5	5	36	Ollie Gordon	RB	13	12
13	RJ Harvey	RB	6	5	37	Mason Taylor	TE	6	12
14	Colston Loveland	TE	1	6	38	Jordan James	RB	14	12
15	Tyler Warren	TE	2	6	39	Tahj Brooks	RB	15	12
16	Jayden Higgins	WR	6	6	40	Woody Marks	RB	16	13
17	Tre Harris	WR	7	6	41	Trevor Etienne	RB	17	13
18	Bhayshul Tuten	RB	7	6	42	Brashard Smith	RB	18	13
19	Jack Bech	WR	8	7	43	DJ Giddens	RB	19	14
20	Jalen Milroe	QB	3	7	44	Savion Williams	WR	14	14
21	Tyler Shough	QB	4	7	45	Elic Ayomanor	WR	15	14
22	Cam Skattebo	RB	8	8	46	Tai Felton	WR	16	14
23	Jaylin Noel	WR	9	8	47	LeQuint Allen	RB	20	14
24	Kyle Williams	WR	10	8	48	Kyle Monangai	RB	21	14

# Rookie Rankings Notes

- Ashton Jeanty is the clear 1.01 in all formats, but things get interesting immediately after him. To me, **Omarion Hampton** is the safest bet, with elite running back seasons being the most important piece to the fantasy football puzzle. But **Travis Hunter** and **Tet McMillan** are high-end prospects, and, in superflex, you can obviously go with **Cam Ward**, too.

- After the Ohio State backs are off the board, you've got another tough decision to make. I've got **Emeka Egbuka** in his own tier, mostly because...what do we even do with that situation? He's a very strong talent with a high floor, though you may need to wait for the production.

- If you'd rather not wait with Egbuka, hop into the next tier. This group truly is a "choose your own adventure" one. You could easily argue **Kaleb Johnson** and **RJ Harvey** over **Luther Burden** and **Matthew Golden**. And I'm not married to the order the running backs and wide receivers are listed in at all. Burden, to me, has a higher ceiling than Golden if things break right. Same deal with Johnson. But Harvey and Golden will probably project better in 2025 alone.

- I went back and forth a lot between **Jayden Higgins** and **Tre Harris**. Higgins got the nod within the tier because of his ZAP score, but I really love Harris' fit with the Chargers. It wouldn't surprise me at all if he's the best Day 2 wide receiver from a fantasy perspective, at least in the short term.

- **Jack Bech** could very easily be undervalued in rookie drafts due to the draft capital lag we often see with average draft position. Even though Bech was expected to go Day 2, gamers didn't seem to price that into pre-draft mocks. It may take a minute for folks to realize that Bech is at least an interesting prospect who fell to a great spot for immediate production.

- The ZAP Model really likes **Terrance Ferguson**. He's still the TE3 in this class, but he may end up being the best value tight end in rookie drafts.

- Day 3 picks are usually not ones you want to reach for, but **Bhayshul Tuten** is an exception for me. Not only was he an early Day 3 selection, but the ZAP Model loves him, justifying a slight reach compared to previous fourth-round backs.
- **Jarquez Hunter** and **Jaydon Blue** are two backs the ZAP Model likes, and they've found themselves in very interesting situations. I'm willing to get them into Round 3 in most rookie draft formats. There's a pretty big wall after the tail-end of the second round (single quarterback leagues), so it's easier to take on the risk there.
- You read it with his profile, but I really like the **Devin Neal** landing spot. He'll probably be someone I'll have a lot on my teams based on where I've seen him ranked in the early parts of this process.
- In that same tier is **Jalen Royals**. I'm going against the ZAP Model a tad by allowing landing spot (Chiefs) and comp (Rashee Rice) to elevate his ranking. If it were in the early rounds, it'd be different. As a post-second-rounder, I have no problem with it.