Scouting Report
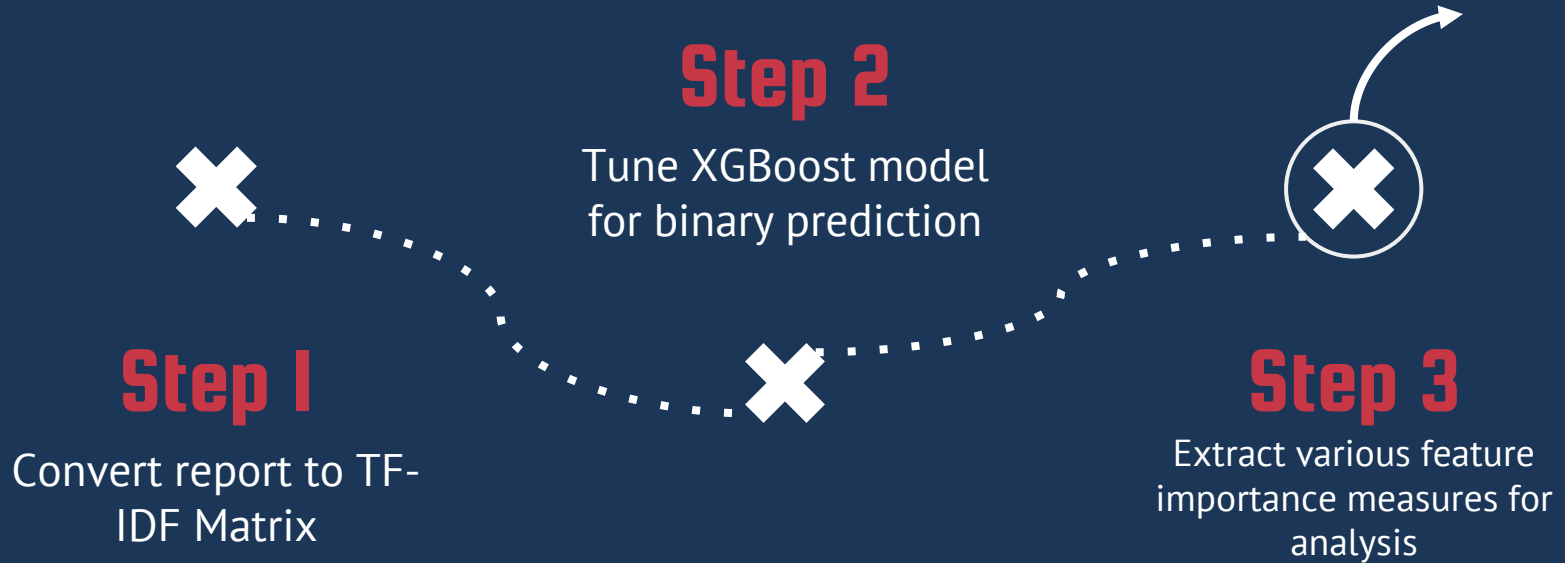## Predictability

Liam Smith

Project Objective

Every year writer's voice their opinions on the top players in the current draft class…

But do these reports hold up when it comes to draft time?

Can a model take words and correctly decide if a player will go in the first round?

Project Setup

Step 2

Tune XGBoost model for binary prediction

Step 1

Convert report to TF-IDF Matrix

Step 3

Extract various feature importance measures for analysis

Travis Hunter

- CB/WR for Colorado Buffaloes
- 4 interceptions and 14 receiving touchdowns this past season
- Averaged 120 plays per game
- 2024 Heisman Trophy Winner
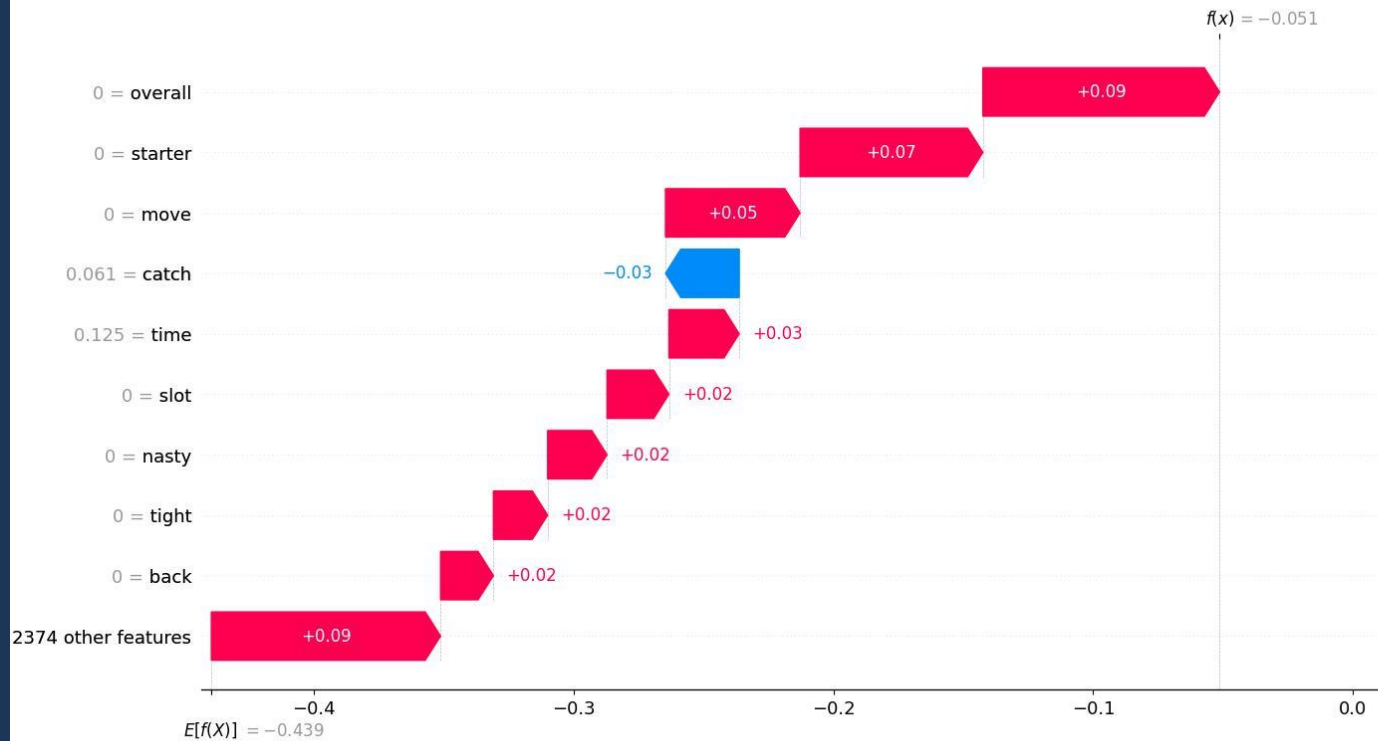- Model output : 2nd most likely 1st Rounder

Rank

2

Travis Hunter

Colorado · CB/WR · Junior

Hunter is a lean, athletic playmaker who starred on both sides of the ball for the Buffaloes, winning the Heisman Trophy in 2024. He has a narrow frame and is a very smooth-flowing athlete. On defense, he was much improved in 2024. He didn't take as many unnecessary risks at cornerback, relying more on discipline and technique to stay in position. He can locate the ball and picked it off seven times over the past two seasons. On offense, he is creative in his release to escape press as a receiver. He is constantly changing gears to keep cornerbacks off balance and he never wastes steps at the top of his route. He drops his weight and explodes out of the break. He has elite body control and hands. He can pluck balls well outside his frame with grace and ease. After the catch, he is silky smooth and elusive. He doesn't have elite top speed, but he's fast enough to not get caught. My only concern is the question of how long he will be able to physically hold up if he continues to play WR *and* CB full-time at the professional level. I believe there is a way for him to make an impact on both sides of the ball, but it will likely require him majoring in defense with a minor in offense.

Abdul Carter

- DE/LB for Penn State Nittany Lions
- 68 tackles, 24 TFL, and 12 sacks this past season
- 2024 Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year
- La Salle College High School Graduate
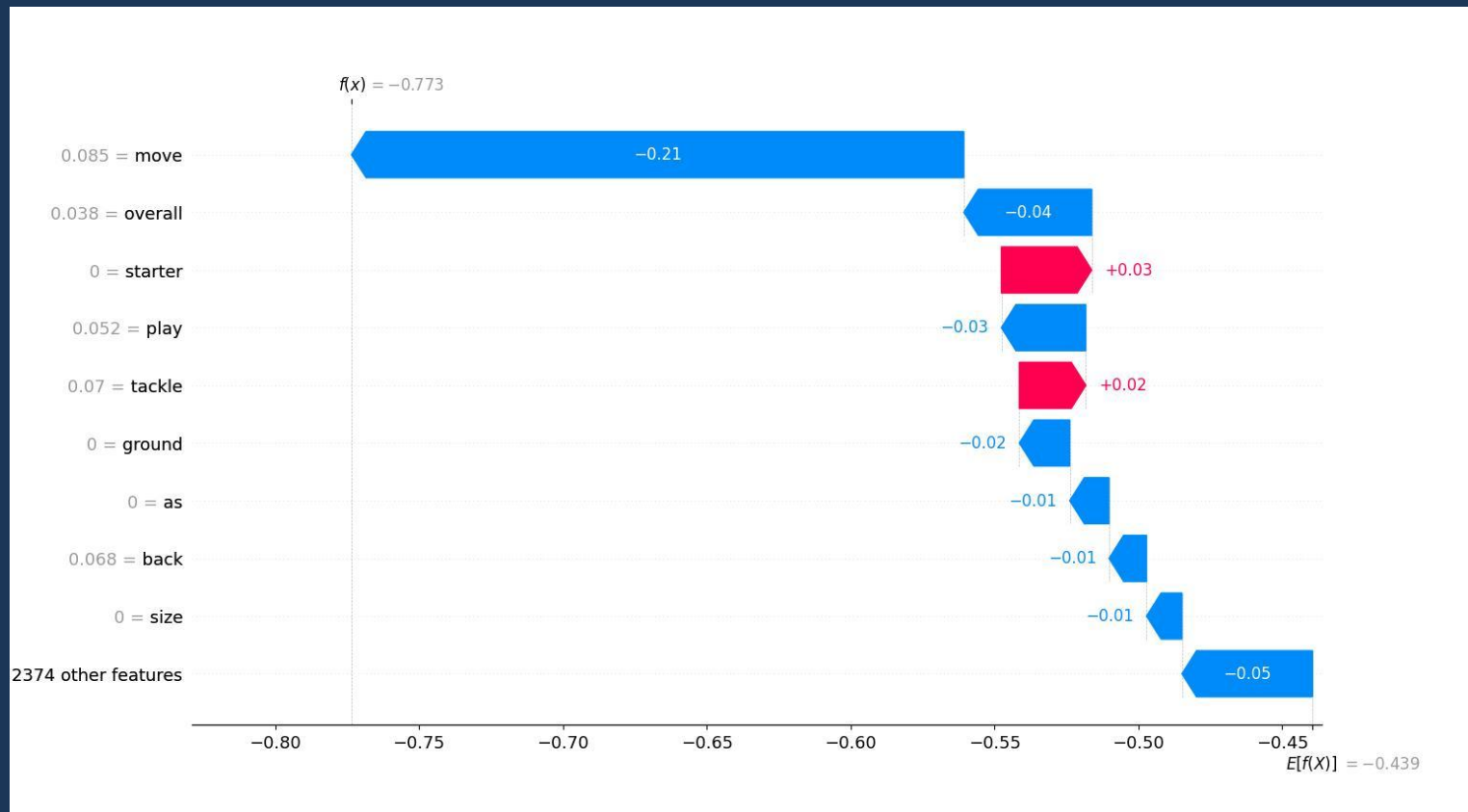- Model output : 48th most likely 1st Rounder

Rank
1

Abdul Carter
Penn State · Edge · Junior

Carter is an electric edge rusher. He has average height and bulk, but he has an ELITE burst and his ability to flatten at the top of his rush is special. He gets a lot of early wins because of that speed, and he also has a nifty swipe/rip move. If tackles overset, he senses it early and crosses their face for immediate pressures/sacks. He also has a natural ability to retrace underneath when quarterbacks climb the pocket to avoid him. He can press out and control tight ends at the point of attack. He's a blur when chasing plays down on the back side. Overall, Carter can take over and completely wreck an offensive game plan. He demands attention on every snap and that is going to free up everyone else around him.

Takeaways

1

Model selection is important

2

Text is tricky to work with

3

The media doesn't write with analytics in mind

Daniel Jeremiah ✔
@MoveTheSticks

My son just asked if I put any rage bait in my new mock draft.

7:39 PM · Feb 17, 2025 · **767.6K** Views