

2025 NFL Draft: TE Prospect Profiles

The 2025 NFL Draft tight end class stands out as one of the deepest and most diverse in recent memory, blending generational talents with high-upside hybrids and rugged blockers ready to make an immediate impact. Headlined by Penn State's Tyler Warren, whose 104-catch, 1,233-yard 2024 season redefined the position, and Michigan's Colston Loveland, a polished pass-catcher with 117 career grabs, the group boasts first-round potential at the top. From Elijah Arroyo's explosive Senior Bowl ascent to Harold Fannin Jr.'s FBS-record production, and down to gritty trench warriors like Jackson Hawes and CJ Dippre, this class offers a rare mix of athletic freaks, reliable chain-movers, and scheme-specific gems. With 18 prospects ranging from Day 1 starters to developmental Day 3 steals, teams across the league will find tight ends to fit any offensive vision, making 2025 a banner year for the position.

Consensus Rankings:

1. **Tyler Warren** – A generational TE1 with 104 catches and Wildcat versatility, Warren's a mid-first-round lock.
2. **Colston Loveland** – Polished with 117 career grabs, Loveland's elite hands make him a late first-round gem.
3. **Elijah Arroyo** – Explosive (21.8 MPH) with 2024 breakout buzz, Arroyo's a rising late first-round talent.
4. **Harold Fannin Jr.** – FBS-record 117 catches and 1,555 yards in 2024, Fannin's a production king for Day 1.
5. **Mason Taylor** – Steady with 129 catches and glue-like hands, Taylor's a safe late second-round TE1 bet.
6. **Gunnar Helm** – A 2024 breakout (73-786-7) with plus blocking, Helm's a sleeper for late Round 2.
7. **Terrance Ferguson** – Big-framed (6'5", 245 lbs) and consistent (134 catches), Ferguson's an early third-round value.
8. **Oronde Gadsden II** – Hybrid star with 2,000 yards and WR speed, Gadsden's a late second-round mismatch weapon.
9. **Jake Briningstool** – Clemson's TE catch leader (127) with red-zone knack, Briningstool fits early Round 3.
10. **Mitchell Evans** – Rugged blocker with 77 grabs, Evans is a late third-round TE2 with TE1 upside.
11. **Jalin Conyers** – A 265-lb freak with YAC juice, Conyers' raw tools project late second to mid-third.

12. **Jackson Hawes** – Blocking king (80.1 PFF grade), Hawes is a late fourth-round gem for run-first teams.
13. **Caden Prieskorn** – Peach Bowl MVP with hands and grit, Prieskorn’s a late third to early fifth-round sleeper.
14. **Moliki Matavao** – Late bloomer (41-506 in 2024) with 6’6” size, Matavao’s a Day 3 upside swing.
15. **Luke Lachey** – Iowa’s chain-mover (74 catches) with pedigree, Lachey’s late second to early fourth-round value.
16. **Gavin Bartholomew** – Reliable (105 catches) with blocking effort, Bartholomew fits late second to early fourth.
17. **Bryson Nesbit** – Speedy hybrid (124 catches, 1,665 yards), Nesbit’s a Day 2/3 mismatch specialist.
18. **CJ Dippre** – Blocking stud (80.9 PFF grade) with steady hands, Dippre’s a late second to early fourth-round pick.

#1 Tyler Warren – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: Penn State University

Height: 6’6”

Weight: 260 lbs

Class: Senior

Hometown: Mechanicsville, VA

Recruiting Rank: 3-star (No. 18 TE, No. 483 overall, Class of 2020 per 247Sports)

Background

Tyler Warren was a multi-sport athlete at Atlee High School in Virginia, starring as a quarterback and tight end while also excelling in basketball. A 3-star recruit, he picked Penn State over offers from Virginia Tech, Pitt, and others. Initially a quarterback in high school, he transitioned to tight end full-time with the Nittany Lions, culminating in a breakout 2024 season that thrust him into the first-round conversation.

College Career Stats (2020–2024)

- **2020 (Freshman):** 1 game, no stats (COVID-shortened season)
- **2021 (Freshman):** 6 receptions, 61 yards, 1 TD
- **2022 (Sophomore):** 10 receptions, 123 yards, 3 TDs
- **2023 (Junior):** 34 receptions, 422 yards, 7 TDs; 1 rush, 4 yards
- **2024 (Senior):** 104 receptions, 1,233 yards, 8 TDs; 26 rushes, 218 yards, 4 TDs

- **Career Totals (55 games):** 154 receptions, 1,839 yards, 19 TDs; 27 rushes, 222 yards, 4 TDs
- **Notable Game:** October 12, 2024, vs. USC – 17 receptions, 224 yards, 1 TD (tied FBS TE single-game reception record)

Strengths

1. **Versatility:** Played everywhere—inline, slot, backfield, even snapping the ball and taking Wildcat snaps (3-for-6 passing, 35 yards, 1 TD in career). A former QB with high football IQ.
2. **Hands & Catch Radius:** Soft, reliable hands—only 3 drops on 135 targets in 2024 (2.2% drop rate). Excels in contested catches (61.9% success rate in 2024).
3. **YAC Ability:** 6.6 career yards after catch per reception, with 30 forced missed tackles in 2024. Long strides and toughness through contact.
4. **Size & Frame:** 6'6", 260 lbs—prototypical NFL TE build with room to add strength for blocking duties.
5. **Red-Zone Threat:** 19 career receiving TDs, leveraging height and body control to dominate smaller defenders.
6. **Athleticism:** Estimated 4.6–4.7 40-yard dash speed, with burst to separate post-catch.

Weaknesses

1. **Route Running:** Still refining nuance—relies on size and burst rather than crisp breaks. Stiffness shows against tight man coverage.
2. **Blocking Technique:** Willing but inconsistent inline blocker. Lacks functional strength and needs better hand placement to hold up vs. NFL edges.
3. **Speed Limitation:** Not a burner—gallops more than sprints, limiting deep-threat potential.
4. **Position Transition:** Only four years as a full-time TE after playing QB in high school, so there's untapped potential but also a learning curve.
5. **Usage Context:** Penn State's lack of elite WRs inflated his targets (135 in 2024)—can he thrive with less volume?

NFL Comparison

George Kittle (San Francisco 49ers): Like Kittle, Warren brings a blend of receiving dynamism, toughness, and multi-positional usage. He's not yet the blocker Kittle is, but his athletic profile and YAC ability echo the All-Pro's early career.

Scouting Report

Tyler Warren exploded onto the NFL radar in 2024 with 104 catches for 1,233 yards and 8 TDs, becoming Penn State's top offensive weapon. At 6'6", 260 lbs, he's a matchup nightmare—too big for DBs, too quick for most linebackers. His 17-catch, 224-yard masterpiece against USC showcased his hands, versatility, and clutch gene. Warren thrives finding soft spots in zones (a nod

to his QB roots) and turns short passes into chunk gains with 30 missed tackles forced in 2024. Inline blocking remains a work in progress, but his effort and frame suggest growth potential. He's a move-TE/H-back early in his NFL career, with the upside to become a top-tier starter if he polishes his craft.

Draft Projection

Mid-to-Late First Round (Picks 15–32): Likely the TE1 off the board, with a ceiling in the top 15 if teams prioritize his versatility and production. Combines could solidify his stock.

Best Team Fits

1. **Kansas City Chiefs:** A long-term Travis Kelce successor, giving Patrick Mahomes a big, reliable target.
2. **Denver Broncos:** Sean Payton craves a dynamic TE for Bo Nix—Warren fits the bill.
3. **New York Jets:** Tyler Conklin is a free agent and Warren can step right in and be the #2 target behind Garrett Wilson.

Final Thoughts

Warren's 2024 season was a statement: he's not just a tight end, he's a playmaker. His rare blend of size, hands, and versatility makes him a plug-and-play weapon, though blocking development will dictate his ceiling. He's a safe bet for early impact and a potential star in the right scheme.

#2 Colston Loveland – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: University of Michigan

Height: 6'5"

Weight: 245 lbs

Class: Junior

Hometown: Gooding, ID

Recruiting Rank: 4-star (No. 13 TE, No. 302 overall, Class of 2022 per 247Sports)

Background

Colston Loveland starred at Gooding High School in Idaho, a rare football talent from a state not known for producing elite recruits. As a multi-sport athlete (football and basketball), he set school records with 91 receptions in a single season and 235 career catches for 3,141 yards and 35 TDs. A 4-star recruit, he chose Michigan over offers from Alabama, Auburn, and LSU, emerging as a key piece of the Wolverines' 2023 national championship run and a record-setting tight end by 2024.

College Career Stats (2022–2024)

- **2022 (Freshman):** 16 receptions, 235 yards, 2 TDs (14 games)

- **2023 (Sophomore):** 45 receptions, 649 yards, 4 TDs (15 games, First-Team All-Big Ten)
- **2024 (Junior):** 56 receptions, 582 yards, 5 TDs (10 games, school record for TE receptions)
- **Career Totals (39 games):** 117 receptions, 1,466 yards, 11 TDs
- **Notable Game:** September 30, 2023, vs. Nebraska – 8 receptions, 103 yards, 1 TD

Strengths

1. **Route-Running Savvy:** Elite nuance for a TE—snaps breaks with fluidity and finds holes in zones (2.67 yards per route run in 2024). Excels on crossers and seams.
2. **Catch Radius:** 6'5" frame with long arms and soft hands—only 2 drops on 73 targets in 2024 (2.7% drop rate). Wins contested catches (55% success rate).
3. **Athleticism:** Estimated 4.6–4.7 40-yard dash speed with short-area burst. Smooth mover for his size, aided by basketball background.
4. **Versatility:** Lined up inline (40%), slot (45%), and wide (15%) in 2024. Flex-TE threat who stresses defenses at all levels.
5. **Football IQ:** Former high school QB with a knack for reading coverages—sits in soft spots and adjusts mid-play like a veteran.
6. **Competitive Toughness:** Plays through contact and fights for extra yards (5.2 YAC per catch career average). Willing blocker despite limitations.

Weaknesses

1. **Blocking Deficiency:** Effort is there, but lacks play strength and technique to anchor inline. Struggles to sustain vs. LBs and edges (42% run-block success rate in 2024).
2. **Limited YAC Elusiveness:** Tough runner but not a tackle-breaker—relies on momentum over agility (only 8 forced missed tackles in 2024).
3. **Frame Development:** Lean build (245 lbs) needs more mass to handle NFL physicality, especially in the trenches.
4. **Deep Speed:** Solid burst but not a true burner—rarely stretches defenses vertically past 20 yards (longest catch of 54 yards in 2023).
5. **Scheme Dependency:** Thrived in Michigan's run-heavy system but saw fewer targets in 2024's shaky passing game—untested as a high-volume TE.

NFL Comparison

Mike Gesicki (Cincinnati Bengals): Loveland mirrors Gesicki's profile as a tall, lean pass-catcher with plus athleticism and route polish but limited blocking chops. He's got more toughness than Gesicki early in his career, with room to grow into a more complete TE.

Scouting Report

Colston Loveland is a polished pass-catching tight end who blends size, athleticism, and instincts into a pro-ready skill set. At 6'5", 245 lbs, he's a mismatch mover—racking up 117 catches for 1,466 yards and 11 TDs in three years at Michigan, including a TE record 56 grabs in 2024. His route running is a cut above, with crisp breaks and an uncanny ability to find space (think a big slot WR). A standout in the 2023 title run, he hauled in 45 catches for 649 yards with J.J. McCarthy, but even in 2024's QB mess, he led the Wolverines with 58.2 yards per game. Blocking is his Achilles' heel—willing but underpowered, he's not ready for heavy inline duty. Still, his hands (2 drops in 2024) and versatility (slot, inline, wide) scream early-impact potential. At 20 years old (turns 21 in April 2025), his frame and skills have upside to spare.

Draft Projection

Late First to Early Second Round (Picks 20–40): Likely TE1 off the board, with a ceiling in the top 20 if teams buy his receiving upside. A strong Combine could lock him into Round 1.

Best Team Fits

1. **Los Angeles Chargers:** Jim Harbaugh knows Loveland's game—perfect as a security blanket for Justin Herbert and a boost to a thin TE room.
2. **Cincinnati Bengals:** Joe Burrow needs a reliable chain-mover post-Higgins. Loveland fits Zac Taylor's pass-happy scheme.
3. **Denver Broncos:** Bo Nix thrived with TEs at Oregon—Loveland adds a dimension to a run-first offense at pick 20.

Final Thoughts

Loveland's a plug-and-play pass-catcher with the tools to be a QB's best friend—think 70 catches as a rookie in the right system. His blocking caps him short of elite TE status for now, but in today's NFL, his receiving gravity outweighs that flaw. He's a safe bet for instant aerial impact and a potential top-10 TE by Year 3 if he bulks up.

#3 Elijah Arroyo – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: University of Miami (FL)

Height: 6'4½"

Weight: 251 lbs

Class: Redshirt Junior

Hometown: Frisco, TX

Recruiting Rank: 4-star (No. 4 TE, No. 201 overall, Class of 2021 per 247Sports)

Background

Elijah Arroyo was a standout at Independence High School in Frisco, Texas, hauling in 76 receptions for 1,283 yards and 17 touchdowns over his final two seasons. A consensus 4-star recruit and top-10 tight end nationally, he chose Miami over blue-chip offers from Alabama, Georgia, LSU, and

Michigan. After battling injuries early in his college career, Arroyo erupted in 2024, earning Second-Team All-ACC honors and declaring for the 2025 NFL Draft.

College Career Stats (2021–2024)

- **2021 (Freshman):** 5 receptions, 86 yards, 1 TD (12 games, 1 start)
- **2022 (Sophomore):** 5 receptions, 66 yards, 0 TDs (4 games before ACL injury)
- **2023 (Redshirt Sophomore):** 1 reception, 11 yards, 0 TDs (4 games, injury recovery)
- **2024 (Redshirt Junior):** 35 receptions, 590 yards, 7 TDs (13 games, 13 starts)
- **Career Totals (33 games):** 46 receptions, 753 yards, 8 TDs
- **Notable Game:** November 30, 2024, at Syracuse – 6 receptions, 92 yards, 1 TD

Strengths

1. **Athletic Fluidity:** Moves like a wide receiver at 6'4½", 251 lbs—clocked at 21.8 MPH as a ballcarrier in 2024. Showcased explosive burst and smooth strides at the Senior Bowl.
2. **Route-Running Savvy:** Manipulates defenders with head fakes, shoulder dips, and rocker steps—2.5 yards per route run in 2024. Excels on seams and crossing routes.
3. **Hands Reliability:** Just 1 drop on 63 career targets (1.6% drop rate)—plucks the ball cleanly and adjusts to off-target throws with a wide catch radius.
4. **Vertical Threat:** Stretches the field with speed and leaping ability—averaged 16.9 yards per catch in 2024, with a longest grab of 58 yards.
5. **YAC Potential:** Quick hips and acceleration post-catch—12 forced missed tackles in 2024 despite limited career volume.
6. **Effort & Versatility:** Willing blocker with good range in space. Aligned inline (52%), slot (34%), and backfield (14%) in Miami's offense.

Weaknesses

1. **Blocking Development:** Effort is there, but technique and play strength lag—struggles to sustain inline blocks vs. Power 5 edges (38% run-block success rate in 2024). Needs better hand placement and core power.
2. **Injury History:** Torn left ACL in 2022 limited him to 8 games over two seasons. No setbacks in 2024, but medicals will be scrutinized at the Combine.
3. **Route Polish:** Rounds breaks at times and lacks elite crispness against man coverage—slow release off the line can get him jammed.
4. **Limited Sample Size:** Only one full season as a starter (2024)—production spike raises questions about consistency vs. top competition.

5. **Physicality vs. Press:** Struggles to shed physical DBs early in routes—needs to refine hand-fighting skills to win at the line.

NFL Comparison

Darren Waller (Retired, Giants/Raiders): Arroyo echoes Waller's blend of size, speed, and fluid athleticism as a converted receiver-turned-TE. He's not yet the route technician Waller became, but his upside as a move-TE is similar, with blocking as a work in progress.

Scouting Report

Elijah Arroyo burst onto the NFL radar in 2024 with 35 catches for 590 yards and 7 TDs, a breakout fueled by Miami's high-octane offense and QB Cam Ward's trust. At 6'4½", 251 lbs, he's a matchup nightmare—too fast for linebackers (projected 4.65–4.70 40), too big for safeties. His Senior Bowl week turned heads, dominating one-on-ones with silky route running and a 21.8 MPH top speed that screams big-play potential. Arroyo's hands are glue-like (1 drop in 2024), and his YAC ability flashes after quick hip turns. Inline blocking is raw—he's more comfortable in space than at the point of attack—but his effort and frame suggest growth potential. A 2022 ACL tear derailed his early career, but a healthy 2024 erased most doubts, though teams will poke at his knee's long-term durability. He's a modern "big slot" or flex-TE with Day 1 receiving impact and a ceiling as a top-10 NFL tight end if he refines his craft.

Draft Projection

Late First to Early Second Round (Picks 25–50): Likely TE2 or TE3 off the board behind Warren and Loveland. A strong Pro Day (March 24, 2025) after skipping Combine drills due to a minor Senior Bowl knee tweak could push him into Round 1.

Best Team Fits

1. **Los Angeles Rams:** Sean McVay craves explosive TEs—Arroyo's speed and YAC fit perfectly with Matthew Stafford's attack.
2. **Cleveland Browns:** Adds a dynamic No. 2 TE behind David Njoku, boosting a passing game needing juice.
3. **New York Giants:** A seam-stretcher for a QB (Shedeur Sanders?) in a potential 2025 overhaul—complements Theo Johnson.

Final Thoughts

Arroyo's 2024 renaissance and Senior Bowl buzz mark him as a riser with rare tools—few 251-pounders move this well. His injury past and blocking chops temper the hype, but as a pass-catching weapon, he's a Day 2 lock with Round 1 upside. At 21 (turns 22 in April), he's a high-ceiling chess piece for creative playcallers.

#4 Harold Fannin Jr. – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: Bowling Green State University

Height: 6'4"

Weight: 238 lbs

Class: Junior

Hometown: Canton, OH

Recruiting Rank: Unranked (No star rating, one FBS offer from Bowling Green per 247Sports)

Background

Harold Fannin Jr. was a multi-positional dynamo at McKinley High School in Canton, Ohio, excelling as a linebacker, safety, and wide receiver. As a senior, he earned First-Team All-Ohio honors with 106 tackles, 2 INTs, 6 forced fumbles, and 2 defensive TDs on defense, plus 36 catches for 601 yards and 6 TDs on offense. Despite flying under the recruiting radar with no star rating and just one FBS offer from Bowling Green, he transitioned to tight end in college, rewriting the FBS record books in 2024 with a historic season that landed him Consensus All-American honors.

College Career Stats (2022–2024)

- **2022 (Freshman):** 19 receptions, 218 yards, 1 TD (12 games, 2 starts)
- **2023 (Sophomore):** 44 receptions, 623 yards, 6 TDs (13 games, First-Team All-MAC)
- **2024 (Junior):** 117 receptions, 1,555 yards, 10 TDs; 9 rushes, 65 yards, 1 TD (13 games)
- **Career Totals (38 games):** 180 receptions, 2,396 yards, 17 TDs; 9 rushes, 65 yards, 1 TD
- **Notable Game:** September 7, 2024, at Penn State – 11 receptions, 137 yards, 1 TD

Strengths

1. **YAC Mastery:** FBS-record 868 yards after contact in 2024, with 32 forced missed tackles (PFF era TE record). Turns short throws into chunk plays with contact balance and long strides.
2. **Route-Running Fluidity:** Silky mover with sharp breaks and tempo changes—2.7 yards per route run in 2024. Finds soft spots vs. zone and wins vs. off-man coverage.
3. **Hands & Ball Skills:** Plucks the ball cleanly with strong hands—only 3 drops on 141 targets in 2024 (2.1% drop rate). Adjusts mid-air and high-points with a 6'4" frame.
4. **Athletic Versatility:** Lined up everywhere—inline (35%), slot (40%), wide (15%), backfield (10%). Ran jet sweeps, took direct snaps, and thrived as a jumbo slot receiver.
5. **Production Ceiling:** Shattered FBS TE records with 117 catches and 1,555 yards in 2024—led all NCAA players in receptions and yards, not just TEs.
6. **Competitive Toughness:** Blocks with effort and leg drive in space, held his own vs. Penn State's Abdul Carter and Texas A&M's edges (19 catches, 282 yards, 2 TDs combined).

Weaknesses

1. **Inline Blocking:** Willing but undersized and underpowered—lacks functional strength to anchor vs. NFL edges (40% run-block success rate in 2024). Better in space than at the point of attack.
2. **Physicality vs. Press:** Struggles to shed sticky DBs at the line—release package needs work to counter jams (lost reps vs. Penn State’s physical secondary).
3. **Size Concerns:** 6’4”, 238 lbs is light for a traditional TE—may project as a power slot or H-back rather than an every-down inline player.
4. **Route Tree Depth:** Leaned on shorter routes (5.7 avg. depth of target in 2023) until 2024’s breakout. Deep speed (projected 4.65–4.70 40) isn’t elite.
5. **Level of Competition:** MAC dominance is eye-popping, but limited Power 5 exposure (two big games vs. Penn State and Texas A&M) leaves some scouts wanting more.

NFL Comparison

David Njoku (Cleveland Browns): Like Njoku, Fannin is a leaner, explosive TE with YAC wizardry and seam-stretching ability. He’s not as physically imposing yet, but his athletic profile and toughness mirror the Pro Bowler’s early career arc.

Scouting Report

Harold Fannin Jr. rewrote the tight end script in 2024, posting an FBS-record 117 catches for 1,555 yards and 10 TDs—numbers that outpaced every NCAA receiver, not just TEs. At 6’4”, 238 lbs, he’s a matchup bully—too quick for linebackers, too sturdy for DBs—with freakish YAC ability (868 yards after contact) and reliable hands (3 drops all year). His Penn State tape (11-137-1) showed he can hang with elite defenses, shredding projected first-rounders like Abdul Carter. Fannin’s fluidity as a route runner and alignment versatility—he’s a slot WR, H-back, and occasional ballcarrier—make him a schemer’s dream. Inline blocking is his kryptonite; he’s scrappy but lacks the mass and power to move NFL edges, projecting him more as a “big slot” than a classic TE. Still, at 20 years old (turns 21 in July 2025), his frame and skills have room to grow. He’s a Day 1 mismatch creator with a Pro Bowl ceiling if paired with a creative playcaller.

Draft Projection

Late First to Early Second Round (Picks 20–40): Could sneak into Round 1 as TE1 if Combine testing (February 28, 2025) confirms his speed and burst. Likely TE2 or TE3 behind Warren and Loveland, but his production gives him an edge.

Best Team Fits

1. **Indianapolis Colts:** Anthony Richardson needs a YAC monster—Fannin’s versatility upgrades a thin TE room.
2. **Cleveland Browns:** A Njoku-esque complement to Njoku, doubling down on athletic mismatches for Deshaun Watson.

3. **San Francisco 49ers:** Kyle Shanahan would salivate over Fannin's multi-positional juice in a loaded offense.

Final Thoughts

Fannin's 2024 season was a statistical fever dream—117 catches and 1,555 yards don't just happen. His blend of athleticism, toughness, and production screams instant-impact receiver, even if his blocking caps him as a flex-TE or power slot early on. At 20, he's a moldable talent with a sky-high ceiling—think Njoku with better hands and less polish. The only question is whether teams see him as a true TE or a hybrid weapon worth a first-round swing.

#5 Mason Taylor – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: Louisiana State University (LSU)

Height: 6'5"

Weight: 255 lbs

Class: Junior

Hometown: Plantation, FL

Recruiting Rank: 3-star (No. 25 TE, No. 561 overall, Class of 2022 per 247Sports)

Background

Mason Taylor, son of NFL Hall of Famer Jason Taylor and nephew of Hall of Famer Zach Thomas, was a multi-sport athlete at St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Florida. He caught 68 passes for 1,018 yards and 11 TDs over his final two prep seasons, helping lead his team to a 2020 7A state title. A 3-star recruit, he picked LSU over offers from Miami, West Virginia, and Pitt, becoming the Tigers' all-time leader in receptions (129) and receiving yards (1,308) by a tight end before declaring for the 2025 NFL Draft in December 2024.

College Career Stats (2022–2024)

- **2022 (Freshman):** 38 receptions, 414 yards, 3 TDs (14 games, Freshman All-SEC)
- **2023 (Sophomore):** 36 receptions, 348 yards, 1 TD (12 games)
- **2024 (Junior):** 55 receptions, 546 yards, 2 TDs (12 games, Third-Team All-SEC)
- **Career Totals (38 games):** 129 receptions, 1,308 yards, 6 TDs
- **Notable Game:** November 5, 2022, vs. Alabama – 3 receptions, 31 yards, game-winning 2-point conversion in OT

Strengths

1. **Reliable Hands:** Just 3 drops on 169 career targets (1.8% drop rate)—snags throws in traffic with focus and soft mitts (59.3% contested catch rate in 2024).

2. **Chain-Mover:** Converted 72 of 129 catches (55.8%) into first downs—68% in 2024 alone. Thrives on hitches, crossers, and flats as a QB's safety valve.
3. **Route Instincts:** High football IQ from QB bloodlines—sits in zones, adjusts to coverage, and runs a full tree with tempo (2.4 yards per route run in 2024).
4. **Blocking Effort:** Willing in-line blocker with decent technique—seals edges and chips effectively (17% of snaps in pass pro, 1 sack allowed over 3 years).
5. **Versatility:** Split 50/50 between in-line and slot at LSU, with occasional H-back and wide reps. Scheme-diverse with a pro-ready frame.
6. **Clutch Gene:** Iconic 2022 Alabama OT winner, plus 37 first-down grabs in 2024—steps up when it counts.

Weaknesses

1. **Limited Explosiveness:** Solid mover but lacks elite burst or deep speed (projected 4.65–4.70 40). Rarely threatens past 20 yards (career-long 38).
2. **Man Coverage Struggles:** Stiff hips and modest acceleration limit separation vs. sticky DBs—relies on scheme and size over raw agility.
3. **Blocking Power:** Effort outpaces strength—gets stood up by bigger defenders and lacks pop to drive (42% run-block success rate in 2024).
4. **Untapped Ceiling:** Steady but not dynamic—10.1 yards per catch career average reflects a safety blanket, not a playmaker. No 100-yard games.
5. **Supporting Cast Effect:** Overshadowed by LSU's star WRs (Nabers, Thomas Jr.) early, then capped by a shaky 2024 passing game—untested as a focal point.

NFL Comparison

Dallas Goedert (Philadelphia Eagles): Taylor mirrors Goedert's reliable hands, chain-moving knack, and adequate-but-not-elite blocking. He's not as explosive but offers a similar high-floor, no-frills TE2 with starter upside.

Scouting Report

Mason Taylor leaves LSU as the program's most productive tight end ever, with 129 catches for 1,308 yards across three seasons of SEC battles. At 6'5", 255 lbs, he's a polished pass-catcher—55 grabs for 546 yards in 2024, with 37 first downs and just 1 drop on 79 targets. His hands are money, and his feel for finding space (72 career first downs) makes him a quarterback's best friend on third-and-medium. Taylor's route running is savvy, not flashy—think shallow crossers and checkdowns over deep shots—and his 59.3% contested catch rate in 2024 shows he can win in a crowd. Blocking-wise, he's a willing scrapper with sound technique but lacks the juice to dominate NFL edges or linebackers consistently. His iconic 2022 Alabama two-point conversion sealed his legacy, but his game is more about dependability than dazzle. At 21 (turns 22 in October 2025), Taylor's a high-floor prospect with a frame to add strength, projecting as a Day 1 contributor and a potential every-down TE if his blocking matures.

Draft Projection

Late Second to Mid-Third Round (Picks 50–80): Likely TE3 or TE4 off the board behind Warren, Loveland, and possibly Fannin. A strong Combine (February 28, 2025) could nudge him toward Round 2's end; he's a safe pick with modest upside.

Best Team Fits

1. **New England Patriots:** Hunter Henry's heir apparent—a reliable target for Drake Maye with starting experience and value at pick 69 or 77.
2. **Cincinnati Bengals:** A short-field complement to Ja'Marr Chase, replacing Mike Gesicki long-term and aiding Joe Burrow's quick game.
3. **Los Angeles Chargers:** Jim Harbaugh loves TEs—Taylor's a rugged chain-mover to pair with Ladd McConkey for Justin Herbert.

Final Thoughts

Taylor's not the sexiest name in a stacked 2025 TE class, but he's a plug-and-play pro with NFL bloodlines and a knack for the little things. His hands and instincts guarantee early reps, and while he won't stretch the field like a Waller or break tackles like a Kittle, he's a steady TE2 with TE1 potential if he bulks up and refines his blocking. Think 50 catches as a rookie in the right spot—low risk, solid reward.

#6 Gunnar Helm – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: University of Texas

Height: 6'5"

Weight: 252 lbs

Class: Senior

Hometown: Englewood, CO

Recruiting Rank: 3-star (No. 23 TE, No. 578 overall, Class of 2021 per 247Sports)

Background

Gunnar Helm was a multi-sport star at Cherry Creek High School in Colorado, leading his football team to back-to-back state titles (2019–2020) with a 23-game win streak. He racked up 79 catches for 1,309 yards and 14 TDs as a senior, earning All-State honors, while also shining as a basketball forward. A 3-star recruit, he picked Texas over offers from Alabama, Auburn, and Arizona State, evolving from a special teams role player into the Longhorns' top receiver and a Second-Team All-SEC pick in 2024 before declaring for the 2025 NFL Draft.

College Career Stats (2021–2024)

- **2021 (Freshman):** 0 receptions, 0 yards (12 games, special teams focus)
- **2022 (Sophomore):** 5 receptions, 44 yards, 0 TDs (13 games, 4 starts)

- **2023 (Junior):** 14 receptions, 192 yards, 2 TDs (14 games, 6 starts)
- **2024 (Senior):** 73 receptions, 786 yards, 7 TDs (16 games, 15 starts)
- **Career Totals (55 games):** 92 receptions, 1,022 yards, 9 TDs
- **Notable Game:** September 7, 2024, at Michigan – 7 receptions, 98 yards, 1 TD

Strengths

1. **Hands Reliability:** Elite catch consistency—2 drops on 113 career targets (1.8% drop rate). Snags off-target throws with soft hands and a wide radius (6 catches, 77 yards led Texas vs. Clemson, 2024 CFP).
2. **Route-Running Craft:** Smooth releases and subtle fakes create separation—2.5 yards per route run in 2024. Excels on seams, crossers, and delays, with a knack for exploiting zones.
3. **Red-Zone Threat:** 7 TDs in 2024, leveraging his 6'5" frame and body control to box out defenders (3 TDs in goal-to-go situations).
4. **Blocking Foundation:** Best run-blocking TE in the class per some scouts—engages with leverage and knee bend (54% run-block success rate in 2024). Quick to seal edges and combo block in space.
5. **Football IQ:** Adjusts mid-play to coverage—scored vs. Clemson by reading a disguised safety look (per Steve Sarkisian). High awareness in pass pro (1 sack allowed in 142 snaps).
6. **YAC Potential:** 5.8 yards after catch per reception in 2024, with hurdle moves (UTSA, 2024) and 12 forced missed tackles showing sneaky agility.

Weaknesses

1. **Limited Explosiveness:** Fluid but not twitchy—projected 4.65–4.70 40 lacks elite burst. Rarely stretches past 20 yards (career-long 38).
2. **Blocking Power:** Technique outshines strength—struggles to drive bigger defenders (lost reps vs. Georgia's Mykel Williams). Needs more mass and pop.
3. **One-Year Wonder Risk:** 79% of career production (786 of 1,022 yards) came in 2024—sparse prior usage raises consistency questions.
4. **Physicality vs. Press:** Slow off jams by physical DBs—needs to refine hand-fighting to win early (struggled vs. Ohio State's secondary).
5. **Route Tree Depth:** Heavy on short-to-intermediate patterns (6.7 avg. depth of target in 2024)—untested as a deep threat or complex route runner.

NFL Comparison

Hunter Henry (New England Patriots): Helm shares Henry's reliable hands, red-zone knack, and blocking effort with a similar sturdy frame. He's less polished but offers a higher YAC ceiling early on.

Scouting Report

Gunnar Helm exploded in 2024 with 73 catches for 786 yards and 7 TDs, stepping out of Ja'Tavion Sanders' shadow to become Texas' leading receiver and a Quinn Ewers security blanket. At 6'5", 252 lbs, he's a well-built target—smooth, not sudden—with elite hands (2 drops ever) and a basketball-honed catch radius that shines in traffic (7-98-1 at Michigan). His route running blends savvy and salesmanship, carving space on crossers and seams, while his 12 missed tackles forced in 2024 hint at untapped YAC juice. Helm's blocking stands out—quick feet and sound leverage make him a plus run supporter, though he lacks the raw power to dominate NFL edges consistently. A late bloomer (19 catches pre-2024), his one-year spike and modest burst cap his ceiling, projecting him as a high-floor "Y" TE or H-back. At 22 (turns 23 in August 2025), he's a Day 1 contributor with TE1 potential in a 12-personnel scheme if he adds strength and refines his release.

Draft Projection

Late Second to Early Third Round (Picks 45–75): Likely TE3 or TE4 off the board behind Warren, Loveland, and possibly Fannin. A strong Combine (February 27, 2025) could cement him in Round 2; he's a safe bet for teams needing a reliable No. 2 TE with starter upside.

Best Team Fits

1. **New Orleans Saints:** Juwan Johnson's exit looms—Helm's hands and red-zone skills fit Derek Carr's short game at pick 67.
2. **Indianapolis Colts:** A chain-mover for Anthony Richardson, complementing a thin TE room at pick 73.
3. **Baltimore Ravens:** Mark Andrews' cap hit looms—Helm slides in as a TE2/3 with Isaiah Likely at pick 62.

Final Thoughts

Helm's 2024 breakout—73 catches, 786 yards, 7 TDs—screams reliability over flash. He's a quarterback's pal with glue-like hands and enough blocking chops to stay on the field, though his ceiling hinges on adding power and proving his one-year leap wasn't a fluke. Think 50–60 catches as a rookie in a TE-friendly system—a low-risk, high-reward pick in a loaded class.

#7 Terrance Ferguson – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: University of Oregon

Height: 6'5"

Weight: 245 lbs

Class: Senior

Hometown: Littleton, CO

Recruiting Rank: 4-star (No. 8 TE, No. 216 overall, Class of 2021 per 247Sports)

Background

Terrance Ferguson was a standout at Heritage High School in Littleton, Colorado, racking up 153 receptions for 2,373 yards and 26 total touchdowns across his prep career, earning First-Team All-Colorado honors as a senior. A 4-star recruit and top-10 tight end nationally, he chose Oregon over offers from Alabama, LSU, and Colorado, among others. After a steady climb in Eugene, he capped his career in 2024 with a Third-Team All-Big Ten nod, finishing as one of Oregon's most productive TEs ever before declaring for the 2025 NFL Draft.

College Career Stats (2021–2024)

- **2021 (Freshman):** 17 receptions, 141 yards, 2 TDs (13 games, 8 starts)
- **2022 (Sophomore):** 32 receptions, 391 yards, 5 TDs (13 games, 6 starts)
- **2023 (Junior):** 42 receptions, 414 yards, 6 TDs (14 games, 12 starts, First-Team All-Pac-12)
- **2024 (Senior):** 43 receptions, 591 yards, 3 TDs (15 games, 13 starts)
- **Career Totals (55 games):** 134 receptions, 1,537 yards, 16 TDs
- **Notable Game:** December 1, 2023, vs. Washington – 5 receptions, 34 yards, 2 TDs (Pac-12 Championship)

Strengths

1. **Prototypical Frame:** 6'5", 245 lbs with long arms—ideal NFL TE build with room to add mass. Lean, athletic mover who carries his weight well.
2. **Hands Consistency:** Just 5 career drops on 178 targets (2.8% drop rate)—reliable in traffic and adjusts to off-target throws (11 red-zone catches in 2023).
3. **Route-Running Finesse:** Smooth strider with sharp cuts and tempo control—2.5 yards per route run in 2024. Excels on seams and crossers, finding soft spots in zones.
4. **Red-Zone Utility:** 16 career TDs, including 3 in 2024 goal-to-go situations. Boxes out defenders and high-points with timing and leaping ability.
5. **Blocking Willingness:** Solid run-blocker with quick feet and leverage—54% run-block success rate in 2024. Shines on screens and perimeter seals (15 pancakes in 2023–24).
6. **Versatility:** Aligned inline (40%), slot (44%), and wide (16%) in 2024. Functional in multiple roles, from H-back to flexed receiver.

Weaknesses

1. **Lack of Elite Burst:** Fluid but not explosive—projected 4.70–4.75 40 lacks top-end speed or twitch. Rarely separates deep (career-long 58 yards).
2. **Blocking Power:** Technique and effort outpace strength—struggles to anchor vs. bigger edges and gets pushed back (lost reps vs. Ohio State's JT Tuimoloau).
3. **YAC Limitation:** 5.8 yards after catch per reception career average—competitive but not elusive (10 missed tackles forced in 2024). Relies on momentum over agility.

4. **Contested Catch Inconsistency:** Wins 50% of contested targets but doesn't dominate with his frame as often as expected—occasionally bobbles under pressure.
5. **One-Gear Athlete:** Lacks a second gear to pull away—linear speed caps his ability to stretch defenses vertically or turn short gains into breakaways.

NFL Comparison

Zach Ertz (Washington Commanders): Like Ertz, Ferguson is a dependable, well-rounded TE with sure hands and route savvy, thriving in the short-to-intermediate game. He's not as dynamic but offers similar reliability and blocking effort with room to grow.

Scouting Report

Terrance Ferguson capped his Oregon tenure with a career-best 43 catches for 591 yards and 3 TDs in 2024, anchoring the Ducks' passing attack en route to a Big Ten title game run. At 6'5", 245 lbs, he's a prototypical TE—tall, lean, and versatile—with a knack for moving chains (87 career first downs). His hands are a standout (2 drops in 2024), and his route running blends finesse and feel, making him a QB-friendly target on seams and crossers (5-34-2 vs. Washington, 2023). Ferguson's blocking is a plus—quick off the snap with sound leverage, he's a willing perimeter mauler and screen asset, though he lacks the raw power to displace NFL edges consistently. His Senior Bowl week flashed polish over pop, with a 7-77-0 day vs. Clemson in the CFP underscoring his reliability. Athleticism is solid but not special—his projected 4.70 40 and linear style limit his ceiling as a deep threat or YAC monster. At 22 (turns 23 in March 2025), Ferguson's a high-floor prospect with Day 1 rotational juice and a shot at TE1 status if he bulks up and refines his contested-catch game.

Draft Projection

Early-to-Mid Third Round (Picks 65–90): Likely TE4 or TE5 off the board behind Warren, Loveland, Fannin, and possibly Arroyo. A strong Combine (February 27, 2025) could push him to late Round 2; he's a safe pick with starter potential in a 12-personnel system.

Best Team Fits

1. **Philadelphia Eagles:** Dallas Goedert's age (30) and injury history make Ferguson a seamless fit as a TE2 with TE1 upside at pick 63—keeps Jalen Hurts' attack humming.
2. **Baltimore Ravens:** Mark Andrews' decline looms—Ferguson's hands and blocking give Lamar Jackson a reliable weapon at pick 88.
3. **Seattle Seahawks:** Noah Fant's contract expires in 2025—Ferguson's versatility fits Seattle's scheme at pick 79.

Final Thoughts

Ferguson's a polished, no-frills tight end—think 50 catches and 5 TDs as a rookie in the right spot. He won't dazzle with speed or power, but his hands, route savvy, and blocking effort make him a plug-and-play asset. In a loaded TE class, he's a mid-tier gem with a floor as a quality TE2 and a ceiling as a low-end starter if he adds strength and contested-catch flair.

#8 Oronde Gadsden II – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End/Wide Receiver Hybrid

School: Syracuse University

Height: 6'4½"

Weight: 247 lbs

Class: Redshirt Junior

Hometown: Plantation, FL

Recruiting Rank: 3-star (No. 66 WR, No. 413 overall, Class of 2021 per 247Sports)

Background

Oronde Gadsden II, son of former NFL wide receiver Oronde Gadsden (Dolphins, 1998–2003), was a multi-sport athlete at American Heritage High School in Florida, excelling as a wide receiver and track sprinter. He hauled in 79 catches for 1,238 yards and 14 TDs as a senior, earning All-Broward County honors. A 3-star recruit, he chose Syracuse over offers from Pitt, Toledo, and UCF, transitioning from wide receiver to tight end after his 2021 freshman year. Gadsden declared for the 2025 NFL Draft on January 5, 2025, after a record-setting Syracuse career marred only by a 2023 Lisfranc injury.

College Career Stats (2021–2024)

- **2021 (Freshman):** 2 receptions, 30 yards, 0 TDs (8 games, WR role)
- **2022 (Sophomore):** 61 receptions, 969 yards, 6 TDs (12 games, First-Team All-ACC)
- **2023 (Redshirt Sophomore):** 7 receptions, 67 yards, 1 TD (2 games, Lisfranc injury)
- **2024 (Redshirt Junior):** 73 receptions, 934 yards, 7 TDs (13 games, First-Team All-ACC)
- **Career Totals (35 games):** 143 receptions, 2,000 yards, 14 TDs
- **Notable Game:** November 23, 2024, vs. UConn – 11 receptions, 112 yards, 1 TD

Strengths

1. **Catch-Point Dominance:** Attacks the ball with arrogance—56% contested catch rate in 2024 (per PFF), snagging 10 of 18 tight-window throws. High-points and adjusts like a power forward (33⅝" arms).
2. **Route-Running Polish:** WR roots shine—runs fades, hitches, deep crosses, and seams with tempo and nuance (2.6 yards per route run in 2024). Creates space vs. LBs and safeties.
3. **Athletic Fluidity:** Moves like a big slot at 6'4½", 247 lbs—clocked 21.8 MPH at the Senior Bowl. Long strides and burst stretch defenses (8 catches of 20+ yards in 2024).
4. **Hands Reliability:** Just 5 drops on 180 career targets (2.8% drop rate)—plucks with soft hands and focus under duress (11-112-1 vs. UConn's physical secondary).

5. **YAC Toughness:** Runs angry post-catch—15 forced missed tackles in 2024. Lacks wiggle but powers through arm tackles (5.9 YAC per catch career average).
6. **Mismatch Potential:** Too fast for LBs (projected 4.60–4.65 40), too big for nickel corners—thrives in the slot (66% of 2024 snaps) and flexed roles.

Weaknesses

1. **Blocking Deficiency:** Minimal in-line experience—effort is there, but lacks play strength and technique to sustain (35% run-block success rate in 2024). A liability vs. NFL edges.
2. **Injury History:** Lisfranc injury wiped out 2023 after 32 snaps—required multiple surgeries. No setbacks in 2024, but medicals will loom large at the Combine.
3. **Limited Elusiveness:** Linear runner—lacks lateral agility or creativity after the catch (only 2 broken tackles on 73 grabs in 2024). Wins with power, not jukes.
4. **Tweener Concerns:** Not a true TE or WR—247 lbs is heavy for a slot, light for in-line. Teams must define his role (H-back? Big slot? Flex TE?).
5. **Hip Stiffness:** Slight rigidity when sinking into breaks—can get stuck vs. tight man coverage by twitchy DBs (lost reps vs. Miami's press in 2024).

NFL Comparison

Darren Waller (Retired, Raiders/Giants): Gadsden echoes Waller's WR-to-TE transition, with fluid athleticism, catch-point tenacity, and seam-stretching ability. He's not as fast or refined yet, but the mismatch vibe tracks.

Scouting Report

Oronde Gadsden II leaves Syracuse as the school's most prolific TE ever—143 catches, 2,000 yards, 14 TDs—highlighted by a 73-934-7 swan song in 2024 with Kyle McCord. At 6'4½", 247 lbs (up from 223 lbs in 2022), he's a hybrid weapon—too big for DBs, too smooth for LBs—with a WR's soul in a TE's body. His 2022 breakout (61-969-6) and 2024 rebound (73-934-7) bookend a lost 2023 (Lisfranc injury), showcasing elite hands (5 drops ever) and a knack for winning 50/50 balls (10 contested grabs in 2024). Gadsden's route tree—fades, crosses, outs—pops off the tape, and his 21.8 MPH Senior Bowl burst hints at untapped juice. Blocking's the rub—he's a non-factor inline, with effort outpacing power, projecting him as a flex-TE or big slot rather than a traditional "Y." At 21 (turns 22 in August 2025), his frame and skills have growth ahead, but the 2023 injury and tweener label will spark debate. He's a Day 2 pass-game sparkplug with Pro Bowl upside in a pass-heavy offense.

Draft Projection

Late Second to Early Third Round (Picks 40–75): Likely TE3 or TE4 off the board behind Warren, Loveland, and possibly Fannin. A clean Combine (February 27, 2025) and 4.6 40 could nudge him into Round 2; he's a high-upside gamble in a loaded TE class.

Best Team Fits

1. **Los Angeles Chargers:** Justin Herbert needs a mismatch TE—Gadsden’s size and hands pair with Ladd McConkey at pick 45.
2. **Miami Dolphins:** Tua Tagovailoa thrives with slot weapons—Gadsden’s a bigger Tyreek Hill complement at pick 67.
3. **Green Bay Packers:** Jordan Love leans on TEs—Gadsden upgrades a thin room behind Luke Musgrave at pick 58.

Final Thoughts

Gadsden’s a unicorn—143 catches and 2,000 yards don’t lie. His WR-to-TE arc, catch-point swagger, and 2024 bounce-back scream impact receiver, but his blocking void and 2023 injury cap him as a flex-TE or power slot early on. In the right hands (think McVay or Shanahan), he’s a 70-catch mismatch nightmare by Year 2. The question is fit—teams chasing a pure TE may pass, but those craving a hybrid star will pounce.

#9 Jake Briningstool – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: Clemson University

Height: 6’5½”

Weight: 234 lbs

Class: Senior

Hometown: Brentwood, TN

Recruiting Rank: 4-star (No. 3 TE, No. 86 overall, Class of 2021 per 247Sports)

Background

Jake Briningstool was a standout at Ravenwood High School in Tennessee, catching 92 passes for 1,375 yards and 15 TDs across his final two seasons, earning First-Team All-State honors as a senior in 2020. A top-100 national recruit and the No. 1 player in Tennessee, he picked Clemson over offers from Alabama, Ohio State, and USC. After a quiet freshman year, he broke out as a starter in 2023, finishing his career as Clemson’s all-time leader in receptions by a tight end (127) and earning Third-Team All-ACC honors in 2023 and 2024.

College Career Stats (2021–2024)

- **2021 (Freshman):** 3 receptions, 67 yards, 1 TD (8 games)
- **2022 (Sophomore):** 25 receptions, 285 yards, 4 TDs (14 games, 1 start)
- **2023 (Junior):** 50 receptions, 498 yards, 5 TDs (13 games, 12 starts)
- **2024 (Senior):** 49 receptions, 530 yards, 7 TDs (13 games, 13 starts)
- **Career Totals (48 games):** 127 receptions, 1,380 yards, 17 TDs

- **Notable Game:** October 21, 2023, at Miami – 8 receptions, 126 yards, 2 TDs (Clemson TE single-game yardage record)

Strengths

1. **Catch Radius:** 6'5½" with 33-inch arms and soft hands—only 4 drops on 163 career targets (2.5% drop rate). Wins contested catches (55% success rate in 2024) and climbs the ladder in traffic.
2. **Route-Running Fluidity:** Silky mover for his size—snaps off breaks with short-area quickness (2.6 yards per route run in 2024). Excels on crossers, outs, and seams, selling fakes like a big slot.
3. **Vertical Threat:** Buildup speed (projected 4.65–4.70 40) stretches defenses—8 catches of 20+ yards in 2024, including a 54-yarder vs. Stanford. Threatens LBs and safeties over the top.
4. **Red-Zone Reliability:** 17 career TDs, with 7 in 2024—leverages height and timing to dominate smaller defenders (5 goal-line scores in 2023–24).
5. **Alignment Versatility:** Split between slot (48%), inline (35%), and wide (17%) in 2024. Flex-TE or power slot who mismatches nickel DBs and LBs alike.
6. **Football IQ:** Finds soft spots vs. zone and adjusts mid-route—126-yard, 2-TD Miami game showcased his feel for exploiting coverage gaps.

Weaknesses

1. **Blocking Deficiency:** Willing but underpowered—slender frame (234 lbs) lacks functional strength to anchor inline (38% run-block success rate in 2024). Gets bullied by bigger edges.
2. **Limited YAC Elusiveness:** 5.6 YAC per catch career average—long strides but minimal lateral agility (8 missed tackles forced in 2024). Wins with reach, not wiggle.
3. **Body Catching Tendency:** Traps balls to his chest too often—smaller hands (8⅞") can lead to bobbles under pressure (lost a key grab vs. Texas, 2024 CFP).
4. **Tweener Build:** Light for a classic TE, heavy for a pure slot—needs mass to stick inline or risks being a one-dimensional receiver.
5. **Explosiveness Cap:** Lacks twitch or top-end juice—buildup speed is solid but rarely turns short throws into breakaways (no 100-yard game in 2024).

NFL Comparison

Dalton Kincaid (Buffalo Bills): Like Kincaid, Briningstool is a lean, pass-first TE with route polish and red-zone chops. He's less explosive but offers a similar flex-TE mold with blocking as a work in progress.

Scouting Report

Jake Briningstool exits Clemson as the program's TE reception king (127 catches, 1,380 yards, 17 TDs), peaking with 49-530-7 in 2024 despite a run-first offense. At 6'5½", 234 lbs, he's a mismatch maker—too tall for DBs, too smooth for LBs—with a WR-like feel (8-126-2 at Miami set a Clemson TE record). His hands are mostly money (4 drops ever), and his route running—crisp breaks, subtle fakes—carves space over the middle and down the seams. A Senior Bowl standout (5-63-0 vs. American Team), he flashed vertical juice (21.5 MPH tracked speed) and red-zone savvy (7 TDs in 2024). Blocking's the hitch—wiry and willing, he's outmuscled inline, projecting as a slot-heavy flex-TE or H-back rather than a three-down "Y." At 22 (turns 23 in December 2025), his frame needs 10–15 lbs to unlock every-down potential, but his pass-game polish ensures early reps. He's a rhythm-and-timing weapon with a ceiling as a top-10 TE if he bulks up and sharpens his hands.

Draft Projection

Early-to-Mid Third Round (Picks 65–90): Likely TE4 or TE5 off the board behind Warren, Loveland, Fannin, and possibly Arroyo. A 4.6-something 40 at the Combine (February 27, 2025) could bump him to late Round 2; he's a safe Day 2 pick with starter upside in a pass-happy scheme.

Best Team Fits

1. **Kansas City Chiefs:** Travis Kelce's heir—Briningstool's route savvy and hands fit Andy Reid's TE-centric attack at pick 64.
2. **Buffalo Bills:** A Kincaid clone to pair with Kincaid—doubles down on slot mismatches for Josh Allen at pick 91.
3. **Tennessee Titans:** They need targets—Briningstool's size and reliability boost a thin pass game at pick 72.

Final Thoughts

Briningstool's a polished pass-catcher with NFL-ready traits—127 catches and 17 TDs prove he can produce. His Senior Bowl buzz and red-zone knack make him a Day 2 lock, but his blocking and tweener frame cap him as a flex-TE early on. In the right offense (think Chiefs or Bills), he's a 60-catch, 6-TD rookie with a shot at TE1 status by Year 3 if he adds mass and refines his catch technique.

#10 Mitchell Evans – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: University of Notre Dame

Height: 6'5"

Weight: 260 lbs

Class: Senior

Hometown: Wadsworth, OH

Recruiting Rank: 3-star (No. 35 TE, No. 493 overall, Class of 2021 per 247Sports)

Background

Mitchell Evans was a multi-sport athlete at Wadsworth High School in Ohio, starring as a quarterback, tight end, and punter while also playing basketball and baseball. As a senior QB, he threw for 2,132 yards and 23 TDs, but as a junior TE, he caught 19 passes for 306 yards and 7 TDs. A 3-star recruit with a football lineage—his father played at Penn State, his mother played volleyball at Akron, and his sister Kacie was an All-SEC volleyballer at Georgia—he chose Notre Dame over offers from Pitt, West Virginia, and Cincinnati. After backing up Michael Mayer early, Evans became ND's top TE, setting the program record for TE receptions (77) before declaring for the 2025 NFL Draft on January 29, 2025.

College Career Stats (2021–2024)

- **2021 (Freshman):** 2 receptions, 21 yards, 0 TDs (13 games)
- **2022 (Sophomore):** 3 receptions, 39 yards, 1 TD; 7 rushes, 11 yards, 1 TD (7 games, foot injury)
- **2023 (Junior):** 29 receptions, 422 yards, 1 TD (8 games, ACL/MCL tear)
- **2024 (Senior):** 43 receptions, 421 yards, 3 TDs (16 games)
- **Career Totals (45 games):** 77 receptions, 903 yards, 5 TDs; 7 rushes, 11 yards, 1 TD
- **Notable Game:** October 14, 2023, vs. Duke – 6 receptions, 134 yards

Strengths

1. **Physical Blocking:** Stout inline presence—fires off low with a strong punch (54% run-block success rate in 2024). Seals edges and peels off combos to wall off second-level defenders.
2. **Hands & Catch Radius:** Sure-handed with focus—5 drops on 104 career targets (4.8% drop rate). Snags high and low throws with a 6'5", 260-lb frame (6-134 vs. Duke showcased acrobatic grabs).
3. **Route Nuance:** Fluid for his size—mixes tempo and uses head fakes to open windows (2.5 yards per route run in 2024). Finds soft spots vs. zone and works the seam with leverage awareness.
4. **Toughness:** Plays through contact—13 first downs in 2024 came post-hit. Willing to bully DBs at the catch point and grind as a blocker (slowed OSU's Jack Sawyer with punch in 2023).
5. **Red-Zone Value:** 5 career TDs, with 3 in 2024—high-points and shields defenders near the goal line (2 TDs vs. Navy, 2024).
6. **Durability Post-Injury:** Rebounded from 2023 ACL/MCL tear to play all 16 games in 2024, peaking late with 7-77-0 vs. Clemson in the CFP.

Weaknesses

1. **Limited Athleticism:** Lacks elite burst or twitch—projected 4.75–4.80 40 caps his separation vs. man coverage and YAC (6.8 YAC per catch in 2024, 8 missed tackles forced).

2. **Blocking Power:** Technique outpaces strength—gets stood up by bigger edges (lost reps vs. OSU's JT Tuimoloau). Needs more mass and core pop to dominate.
3. **Injury History:** Torn left ACL/MCL (2023) and broken foot (2022) cost him 11 games over two years. Looked sub-100% early in 2024; medicals will be key.
4. **One-Speed Runner:** Linear mover without a second gear—rarely threatens deep (career-long 44 yards) or turns short grabs into chunk plays.
5. **Pass Pro Rawness:** Limited experience staying in to block—technique lags, and balance wavers under pressure (1 sack allowed in 110 pass-pro snaps).

NFL Comparison

Cole Kmet (Chicago Bears): Like Kmet, Evans pairs a big frame with reliable hands and solid blocking, thriving in the short-to-intermediate game. He's less dynamic but brings a similar two-phase, blue-collar vibe with room to grow.

Scouting Report

Mitchell Evans leaves Notre Dame as the program's TE reception leader (77 catches), a testament to his reliability despite a bumpy injury road. At 6'5", 260 lbs, he's a throwback "Y" TE—sturdy, not flashy—with a breakout 2023 (29-422-1 in 8 games) cut short by a torn ACL/MCL and a gritty 2024 rebound (43-421-3 over 16 games). His hands are a standout—5 drops ever—and his 134-yard Duke game flashed high-point flair and body control. Evans runs routes with nuance, not speed, sitting in zones and working seams with a QB's-trust feel (13 contested catches in 2024). As a blocker, he's stout inline—quick off the snap with firm hands—but lacks the juice to displace top-tier edges consistently. His Shrine Bowl week (accepted invite, January 2025) showed toughness and polish, not explosiveness. At 21 (turns 22 in September 2025), Evans' injury past clouds his ceiling, but his size, hands, and effort make him a Day 2 or 3 plug-and-play TE2 with low-end TE1 upside in a 12-personnel system.

Draft Projection

Late Third to Early Fourth Round (Picks 80–120): Likely TE5 or TE6 off the board behind Warren, Loveland, Fannin, Arroyo, and possibly Gadsden. A clean Combine (February 27, 2025—measurements and interviews only, no drills due to late-season fatigue) and Notre Dame Pro Day (March 2025) could lock him in Round 3; he's a safe pick for depth with starter potential.

Best Team Fits

1. **Chicago Bears:** Cole Kmet's twin—adds a rugged TE2 for Caleb Williams, boosting 12-personnel looks at pick 83.
2. **New York Jets:** Evans' hands and blocking fit a run-first reset at pick 96.
3. **Los Angeles Chargers:** Blue collar TE fits the vibe for Coach Harbaugh.

Final Thoughts

Evans isn't a game-changer like Bowers or Mayer, but he's a rock-solid TE2 with three-down utility—think 40 catches and 4 TDs as a rookie in a balanced offense. His blocking and hands ensure early snaps, while his injury recovery and late-2024 surge (7-77-0 vs. Clemson) hint at untapped juice. In a deep TE class, he's a mid-round value for teams craving reliability over flash.

#11 Jalin Conyers – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: Texas Tech University

Height: 6'4"

Weight: 265 lbs

Class: Redshirt Senior

Hometown: Gruver, TX

Recruiting Rank: 4-star (No. 4 TE, No. 71 overall, Class of 2020 per 247Sports)

Background

Jalin Conyers was a multi-sport star at Gruver High School in Texas, excelling as a quarterback, wide receiver, and basketball player. He led Gruver to a Class 2A state title game appearance in 2018, catching 37 passes for 690 yards and 10 TDs as a junior, and followed with 61 catches for 1,225 yards and 19 TDs as a senior. A top-100 national recruit, he committed to Oklahoma before transferring to Arizona State after a redshirt year, then finished at Texas Tech in 2024. His breakout 2022 season at ASU (38-422-5) and Shrine Bowl invite in 2025 cemented his draft stock.

College Career Stats (2020–2024)

- **2020 (Freshman at Oklahoma):** Redshirted, no stats
- **2021 (Redshirt Freshman at ASU):** 6 receptions, 62 yards, 1 TD (11 games)
- **2022 (Redshirt Sophomore at ASU):** 38 receptions, 422 yards, 5 TDs (12 games)
- **2023 (Redshirt Junior at ASU):** 30 receptions, 362 yards, 0 TDs; 22 rushes, 92 yards, 1 TD (11 games)
- **2024 (Redshirt Senior at Texas Tech):** 30 receptions, 320 yards, 5 TDs; 6 rushes, 15 yards, 0 TDs (13 games)
- **Career Totals (47 games):** 104 receptions, 1,166 yards, 11 TDs; 28 rushes, 107 yards, 1 TD
- **Notable Game:** October 29, 2022, at Colorado – 6 receptions, 108 yards, 3 TDs

Strengths

1. **Physical Freak:** 6'4", 265 lbs with a power-forward frame—high-points balls like a hoops star (multi-sport HS background). Tracked at 21.8 MPH at the Shrine Bowl.
2. **Contested Catch King:** Strong hands and body control—wins 60% of contested targets (per PFF, 2024). Snagged 10 of 16 tight-window throws in 2022–23 combined.

3. **YAC Power:** Punishing after the catch—21 forced missed tackles in 2022–23 at ASU (5.9 YAC per catch career average). Bulldozes DBs with a stiff arm and thick lower half.
4. **Versatility:** Lined up inline (35%), slot (45%), wide (15%), and Wildcat (5%) in 2024. Threw a TD pass in 2023 and ran for 92 yards as ASU’s Wildcat QB.
5. **Blocking Effort:** Above-average run-blocker for a pass-first TE—80.1 PFF run-block grade in 2024 led all top TEs. Quick off the snap and engages with intent.
6. **Red-Zone Magnet:** 11 career TDs, including a 3-TD outburst vs. Colorado in 2022. Uses size and leap to dominate goal-line fades and slants.

Weaknesses

1. **Route-Running Rawness:** Rounds breaks and lacks crispness—relies on size over technique to get open (slow release vs. press). Struggles vs. tight man coverage.
2. **Blocking Inconsistency:** Effort and size shine, but technique lags—pad level rises, and hands slip vs. stronger edges (lost reps vs. OSU’s Ollie Gordon in 2024).
3. **Inconsistent Motor:** Hot-and-cold tape—disappears for stretches (0 catches vs. Cincinnati, 2024). Focus wanes when not targeted early.
4. **Speed Limitation:** Linear athlete—projected 4.68–4.72 40 lacks elite burst or deep-threat juice (longest career catch: 47 yards).
5. **Tweener Risk:** Heavy for a slot (265 lbs), light for a full-time inline TE—needs a creative OC to unlock his hybrid skill set without forcing a square peg into a round hole.

NFL Comparison

Evan Engram (Jacksonville Jaguars): Like Engram, Conyers blends WR-like fluidity with TE size, excelling as a move-TE with YAC juice. He’s not as fast or polished but carries a similar mismatch vibe with blocking as a work in progress.

Scouting Report

Jalin Conyers is a toolsy, high-upside TE who capped his winding college path—Oklahoma to ASU to Texas Tech—with a 30-320-5 senior year in 2024. At 6’4”, 265 lbs, he’s a physical specimen—built like a linebacker but moves like a jumbo slot, with 21 forced missed tackles across 2022–23 highlighting his tackle-breaking grit. His Shrine Bowl week (accepted invite, January 2025) turned heads—5 catches, 62 yards, and a 21.8 MPH GPS flash showed off his rare size-speed combo. Conyers’ hands are mostly reliable (7 career drops), and his red-zone knack (11 TDs) makes him a scoring threat. Blocking-wise, he’s ahead of most pass-first TEs—an 80.1 PFF run-block grade in 2024 stands out—but technique needs work to hold up inline consistently. His Wildcat wrinkles (107 rush yards, 1 TD) and a 2023 TD pass add spice, but hot-and-cold effort and unrefined routes temper the hype. At 23 (turns 24 in December 2025), he’s an older prospect with a frame to tweak (add power or shed weight?), projecting as a Day 2 move-TE with TE1 upside in a spread system.

Draft Projection

Mid-Third to Fourth Round (Picks 80–120): A strong Combine (February 27, 2025—he’s invited) with a sub-4.7 40 could vault him into Round 2; he’s a high-ceiling gamble in a deep TE class.

Best Team Fits

1. **Denver Broncos:** Bo Nix’s Oregon ties mesh with Conyers’ Wildcat flair—adds a big slot for Sean Payton at pick 54.
2. **Jacksonville Jaguars:** Evan Engram 2.0—pairs with Trevor Lawrence’s quick game to stretch defenses at pick 61.
3. **New York Giants:** A hybrid weapon for a 2025 QB (Shedeur Sanders?)—complements Wan’Dale Robinson at pick 66.

Final Thoughts

Conyers is a unicorn—a 265-lb TE with WR burst and RB toughness, flashing All-Pro traits when dialed in. His Shrine Bowl buzz and 2022 Colorado tape (6-108-3) scream star potential, but inconsistency and blocking polish hold him back from the elite tier. In a creative offense, he’s a 60-catch, 6-TD rookie with a runway to stardom—think Engram with untapped juice. The trick is fit: teams needing a pure inline TE may pass, but those craving a mismatch creator will salivate.

#12 Jackson Hawes – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: Georgia Tech University

Height: 6’5” (*listed; unofficial 6’4½” per Senior Bowl weigh-in*)

Weight: 252 lbs (*listed; 258 lbs per Senior Bowl*)

Class: Redshirt Senior (Sixth-Year)

Hometown: Salt Lake City, UT

Recruiting Rank: 3-star (No. 73 TE, No. 1,033 overall, Class of 2019 per 247Sports)

Background

Jackson Hawes was a two-sport standout at Highland High School in Salt Lake City, Utah, starring as a tight end and basketball forward. As a senior, he caught 41 passes for 608 yards and 7 TDs, earning First-Team All-State honors in Utah’s 5A division. A late-blooming 3-star recruit, he committed to Yale over offers from Utah State and Weber State, spending four seasons (2019–2023, including a redshirt and COVID year) with the Bulldogs before transferring to Georgia Tech for his final year in 2024. At Tech, he became a linchpin in the run game, earning a Senior Bowl invite after a career-high 16 catches in 2024.

College Career Stats (2019–2024)

- **2019 (Freshman at Yale):** Redshirted, no stats
- **2021 (Redshirt Freshman at Yale):** 5 receptions, 47 yards, 0 TDs (8 games)

- **2022 (Redshirt Sophomore at Yale):** 11 receptions, 108 yards, 2 TDs (10 games, Second-Team All-Ivy League)
- **2023 (Redshirt Junior at Yale):** 19 receptions, 216 yards, 4 TDs (10 games, Second-Team All-Ivy League)
- **2024 (Redshirt Senior at Georgia Tech):** 16 receptions, 195 yards, 0 TDs (13 games)
- **Career Totals (41 games):** 51 receptions, 566 yards, 6 TDs
- **Notable Game:** October 26, 2024, at Virginia Tech – 3 receptions, 42 yards (key blocks in 245-yard rushing win)

Strengths

1. **Elite Run Blocking:** Arguably the best blocking TE in the 2025 class—82.2 PFF run-block grade at Yale in 2023, 80.1 at Tech in 2024. Pancakes edges with leverage and a nasty streak (15 pancakes in 2024).
2. **Physicality:** 6'5", 252 lbs with functional strength—plays through the whistle and resets the line with hip torque. Held his own vs. Miami's Rueben Bain Jr. (2 catches, 27 yards, 271 team rush yards).
3. **Pass Protection:** Quick eyes and a firm punch—1 sack allowed in 142 pass-pro snaps over three years. Anchors vs. power and redirects speed rushers effectively.
4. **Alignment Versatility:** Lined up inline (55%), slot (30%), and H-back (15%) in 2024. Executes pre-snap shifts and motions with processing speed (per Senior Bowl tape).
5. **Hands Consistency:** Modest stats but reliable—3 drops on 71 career targets (4.2% drop rate). Snags short-area throws with focus (3-42 vs. VT).
6. **Special Teams Value:** Logged 112 snaps on kickoff and field-goal units at Yale and Tech—tackles and hustle boost his roster odds.

Weaknesses

1. **Limited Receiving Upside:** Tape shows a basic route tree—flats, curls, shallow crossers. Lacks separation vs. man coverage (11.1 yards per catch career average).
2. **Athletic Ceiling:** Projected 4.80–4.85 40—lumbering strides and no second gear (longest catch: 38 yards). Rarely threatens vertically or breaks tackles (6 missed tackles forced lifetime).
3. **Blocking vs. Twitch:** Struggles to mirror quick LBs or DBs in space—overextends and loses balance (lost reps vs. VT's Mansoor Delane). Needs tighter footwork.
4. **Age Concern:** Turns 24 in June 2025—six college years (including redshirt and COVID) mean he's older than peers, potentially capping development.

5. **Production Context:** Only 16 catches in 2024 despite Tech's run-heavy scheme—untested as a focal point in the pass game. Modest stats vs. Power 5 foes (5-69 vs. Miami, VT combined).

NFL Comparison

Will Dissly (Los Angeles Chargers): Like Dissly, Hawes is a blue-collar blocker with dependable hands and minimal flash as a receiver. He's a notch below in athleticism but mirrors the rugged, in-line role with special teams juice.

Scouting Report

Jackson Hawes turned heads in 2024 at Georgia Tech, morphing from a Yale depth piece into an ACC run-game mauler with a Senior Bowl nod. At 6'5", 252 lbs (258 at weigh-in), he's a throwback "Y" TE—built to block, not dazzle—with a career-high 16 catches for 195 yards but no TDs in his final year. His calling card is run blocking: an 80.1 PFF grade in 2024 reflects pancake power and a mean streak, keying Tech's 186.2 rushing yards per game (No. 4 in ACC). Hawes fires off low, latches with strong hands, and finishes through contact—think 245 yards vs. Duke, 271 vs. Miami. Pass pro is a quiet strength (1 sack allowed in three years), and his hands are steady if unspectacular (3-42 vs. VT). But the shine fades in the pass game—his route tree's basic, his speed's pedestrian (projected 4.8 40), and he's not breaking tackles or stretching seams. At 24 by June, his age and Ivy-to-ACC leap raise ceiling questions. Hawes is a Day 3 glue guy—TE2 or TE3 in heavy sets, with special teams juice to stick. In a Shanahan-style scheme, he's a hidden gem; elsewhere, he's a roster bubble battler.

Draft Projection

Late Fourth to Sixth Round (Picks 120–200): Likely TE8–TE10 off the board behind Warren, Loveland, Fannin, Arroyo, Gadsden, Helm, Ferguson, and possibly Taylor/Evans. A solid Combine (February 27, 2025) with a sub-4.8 40 could nudge him to Round 4; he's a scheme-specific value pick with a floor as a practice squad stash.

Best Team Fits

1. **San Francisco 49ers:** Kyle Shanahan's run-heavy utopia—Hawes slots as a TE2 behind Kittle, mauling in 12-personnel at pick 135.
2. **Seattle Seahawks:** John Schneider loves blockers—Hawes backs up Noah Fant with special teams grit at pick 179.
3. **Pittsburgh Steelers:** Arthur Smith's ground-and-pound dream—Hawes complements Pat Freiermuth at pick 152.

Final Thoughts

Hawes isn't rewriting NFL record books—51 catches in six years won't—but his 2024 Tech tape and Senior Bowl buzz cement him as the class's premier blocking TE. He's a Day 3 plug-and-play piece for run-first teams, with enough hands and pass-pro savvy to carve a Will Dissly-esque niche. Age and athletic limits cap him as a TE2/3, but in the right system, he's a 10-year roster survivor.

#13 Caden Prieskorn – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: University of Mississippi (Ole Miss)

Height: 6'5" (*listed; unofficial 6'5¼" per Senior Bowl weigh-in*)

Weight: 255 lbs (*listed; 258 lbs per Senior Bowl*)

Class: Redshirt Senior

Hometown: Lake Orion, MI

Recruiting Rank: Unranked (Walk-on at Memphis, Class of 2019 per 247Sports)

Background

Caden Prieskorn took an unconventional path to the NFL Draft. A high school quarterback at Orchard Lake St. Mary's in Michigan, he threw for 200 yards and 2 TDs to win a 2016 state title as a junior, then prepped at Fork Union Military Academy in 2018. Unranked out of high school, he walked on at Memphis in 2019, redshirted, and transitioned to tight end. After a breakout 2022 (48 catches, 602 yards, 7 TDs), he transferred to Ole Miss in 2023, battling injuries but shining in the 2023 Peach Bowl (10-136-2, Offensive MVP). Prieskorn declared for the 2025 NFL Draft on January 5, 2025, after two productive years with the Rebels.

College Career Stats (2020–2024)

- **2020 (Redshirt Freshman at Memphis):** 0 receptions, 0 yards (no games played)
- **2021 (Redshirt Sophomore at Memphis):** 7 receptions, 79 yards, 0 TDs (9 games)
- **2022 (Redshirt Junior at Memphis):** 48 receptions, 602 yards, 7 TDs (12 games, First-Team All-AAC)
- **2023 (Redshirt Senior at Ole Miss):** 30 receptions, 449 yards, 4 TDs (11 games)
- **2024 (Redshirt Senior at Ole Miss):** 27 receptions, 401 yards, 3 TDs (12 games)
- **Career Totals (44 games):** 112 receptions, 1,531 yards, 14 TDs
- **Notable Game:** December 30, 2023, vs. Penn State (Peach Bowl) – 10 receptions, 136 yards, 2 TDs

Strengths

1. **Hands & Ball Skills:** Elite catch reliability—7 drops on 149 career targets (4.7% drop rate). Snags one-handers and adjusts to errant throws with a massive radius (10-136-2 vs. PSU showcased fingertip artistry).
2. **Blocking Technique:** Aggressive in-line blocker—maximizes 34-inch arms to punch and seal (79.8 PFF run-block grade in 2024). Angles well to LBs and sustains vs. DBs with a firm base.

3. **Zone Awareness:** Finds soft spots with QB instincts—70% of 2024 targets vs. zone resulted in catches (per PFF). Sits and adjusts mid-route like a vet (6-63 vs. Duke, 2024 Gator Bowl).
4. **Red-Zone Threat:** 14 career TDs, with 7 since transferring—leverages size and body control to win fades and slants (3 TDs in 2022 goal-to-go situations).
5. **Toughness Post-Catch:** Hard to bring down—13 missed tackles forced in 2022 at Memphis. Runs through arm tackles with a thick lower half (5.8 YAC per catch career average).
6. **Versatility:** Aligned inline (40%), slot (45%), and H-back (15%) in 2024. Fakes blocks to slip into routes, adding deception (per Senior Bowl tape).

Weaknesses

1. **Athletic Ceiling:** Lacks twitch or top-end speed—projected 4.75–4.80 40 limits separation vs. man coverage and deep threats (career-long 58 yards). Linear, not explosive.
2. **Route Polish:** Rounds breaks and struggles vs. press—slow releases get him jammed at the line (lost reps vs. Miami’s physical DBs, 2023). Needs sharper cuts.
3. **Injury Concerns:** Foot surgery (2023) and nagging lower-body issues sidelined him early in both Ole Miss years—played only 23 of 27 possible games at UM. Medicals will be pivotal.
4. **Blocking Power:** Technique outpaces strength—gets uprooted by bigger edges (lost reps vs. OSU’s Nic Scourton, 2024). Needs more core pop to anchor consistently.
5. **One-Gear Mover:** No second gear post-catch—lacks elusiveness to turn short gains into chunk plays (only 3 catches of 20+ yards in 2024).

NFL Comparison

T.J. Hockenson (Minnesota Vikings): Like Hockenson, Prieskorn blends reliable hands, zone-beating savvy, and solid blocking with a sturdy frame. He’s not as nimble or dynamic but offers a similar high-floor, chain-moving vibe with room to refine his route tree.

Scouting Report

Caden Prieskorn’s winding road—high school QB to Memphis walk-on to Ole Miss star—peaks with 112 catches, 1,531 yards, and 14 TDs across five active seasons. At 6’5”, 255 lbs, he’s a classic “Y” TE with a modern twist—elite hands (10-136-2 in the Peach Bowl) and a knack for finding space (27-401-3 in 2024 despite early injuries). His Senior Bowl weigh-in (6’5¼”, 258) and Shrine Bowl invite (accepted, January 2025) spotlight a frame built for the pros, with 34-inch arms snagging back-shoulder dimes and late-window lasers. Prieskorn’s blocking is a quiet strength—quick off the snap with a firm punch, he’s a willing trench fighter who keyed Ole Miss’ 167.8 rushing yards per game in 2024. But he’s no burner—his 4.75-ish 40 caps his ceiling as a seam-stretcher or YAC threat, and raw routes leave him blanketed vs. twitchy DBs. Injuries (foot in 2023, lower body in 2024) dented his consistency, but a full 2024 slate (12 games) eased some durability fears. At 23 (turns 24 in October 2025), he’s an older prospect with a floor as a TE2 in heavy sets and a ceiling as a low-end TE1 if he sharpens his separation skills.

Draft Projection

Late Third to Early Fifth Round (Picks 80–150): A strong Combine (February 27, 2025) with clean medicals and a sub-4.75 40 could push him to Round 3; he's a scheme-fit pick with immediate rotational value.

Best Team Fits

1. **Minnesota Vikings:** T.J. Hockenson's backup plan—Prieskorn's hands and blocking fit Kevin O'Connell's 12-personnel at pick 89, easing injury concerns with depth.
2. **Indianapolis Colts:** Shane Steichen craves TEs—Prieskorn's size and reliability pair with Anthony Richardson's arm at pick 112.
3. **Philadelphia Eagles:** Dallas Goedert's age looms—Prieskorn's red-zone chops and blocking add value at pick 97 in a late-round TE hunt.

Final Thoughts

Prieskorn's Peach Bowl heroics (10-136-2) and Shrine Bowl buzz paint him as a pro-ready TE—think 40 catches, 400 yards, and 4 TDs as a rookie in a balanced attack. He won't dazzle with speed or jukes, but his hands, blocking, and football IQ guarantee a roster spot. In a stacked TE class, he's a mid-round steal for teams prioritizing reliability over flash—durability's the only asterisk.

#14 Moliki Matavao – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) (*Transferred from Oregon*)

Height: 6'6" (*listed; unofficial 6'5½" per Senior Bowl weigh-in*)

Weight: 263 lbs (*listed; 259 lbs per Senior Bowl*)

Class: Senior

Hometown: Henderson, NV

Recruiting Rank: 4-star (No. 4 TE, No. 201 overall, Class of 2021 per 247Sports)

Background

Moliki Matavao was a standout at Liberty High School in Henderson, Nevada, catching 141 passes for 2,636 yards and 37 TDs across three varsity seasons, earning First-Team All-State honors as a senior. A 4-star recruit, he committed to Oregon over offers from Alabama, Georgia, Penn State, and UCLA, playing two seasons with the Ducks before transferring to UCLA in 2023. After a breakout 2024 season with the Bruins (41 catches, 506 yards, 2 TDs), Matavao earned Honorable Mention All-Pac-12 honors and a Senior Bowl invite, declaring for the 2025 NFL Draft on January 10, 2025.

College Career Stats (2021–2024)

- **2021 (Freshman at Oregon):** 9 receptions, 75 yards, 1 TD (12 games, 2 starts)
- **2022 (Sophomore at Oregon):** 10 receptions, 134 yards, 1 TD; 3 rushes, 11 yards, 1 TD (12 games, 6 starts)
- **2023 (Junior at UCLA):** 14 receptions, 283 yards, 2 TDs (13 games, 6 starts)

- **2024 (Senior at UCLA):** 41 receptions, 506 yards, 2 TDs (12 games, 10 starts)
- **Career Totals (49 games):** 74 receptions, 998 yards, 6 TDs; 3 rushes, 11 yards, 1 TD
- **Notable Game:** November 30, 2024, vs. Fresno State – 8 receptions, 120 yards

Strengths

1. **Size & Catch Radius:** 6'6", 263 lbs with 33½-inch arms—massive target with a hoops background (HS basketball star). Adjusts to off-target throws and high-points with soft hands (3 drops on 92 targets since 2022, 3.3% drop rate).
2. **Physicality at Break:** Uses frame to box out defenders—punches arms or leans into contact to create space (8-120 vs. Fresno State). Consistently wins contested catches (58% success rate in 2024).
3. **Route Feel:** Excels vs. zone—sits in windows and adjusts mid-play with QB instincts from HS (6-104 vs. Rutgers). Hitches, crosses, and sail routes are his bread and butter.
4. **Red-Zone Presence:** 6 career TDs, leveraging size and leaping ability—scored twice in 2023 on fades and slants (e.g., 26-yard TD vs. Colorado). Reliable in tight quarters.
5. **YAC Toughness:** Thick lower half powers through tackles—12 missed tackles forced in 2024 (5.8 YAC per catch career average). Not elusive but grinds for extra yards.
6. **Developmental Upside:** Late breakout (41 catches in 2024) hints at untapped potential—improved route nuance and catch consistency post-transfer.

Weaknesses

1. **Blocking Deficiency:** Willing but raw—lacks functional strength and polish inline (42% run-block success rate in 2024). Struggles to sustain vs. Power 5 edges (e.g., lost reps vs. Iowa's Yahya Black).
2. **Limited Explosiveness:** Lacks twitch or top-end speed—projected 4.70–4.75 40 caps him as a short-to-intermediate threat (longest catch: 58 yards). Slow off the line vs. press.
3. **Route Crispness:** Rounds breaks and lacks snap vs. man coverage—leans on size over agility to separate (stymied vs. USC's sticky DBs). Needs sharper stems.
4. **Inconsistent Usage:** Underutilized at Oregon (19 catches in 2 years) and slow to emerge at UCLA—41 of 74 career catches came in 2024. Untested as a high-volume target.
5. **Athletic Ceiling:** One-gear mover—lacks the juice to stretch seams or break away post-catch (no 100-yard game until Fresno State finale).

NFL Comparison

Mark Andrews (Baltimore Ravens): Like Andrews, Matavao is a big-bodied, handsy TE who thrives in the middle and red zone, relying on size and catch-point skills over elite speed. He's less dynamic and polished but shares the same pass-first, developmental vibe.

Scouting Report

Moliki Matavao erupted in 2024 with 41 catches for 506 yards and 2 TDs, leading UCLA in receiving despite a 5-7 season, finally cashing in on his 4-star hype after a quiet Oregon stint. At 6'6", 263 lbs (259 at Senior Bowl), he's a hulking mismatch—too big for DBs, too savvy for LBs—with a Senior Bowl week (5-62-0 vs. National Team) that showcased his catch radius and physicality (per LAFB's Ryan Anderson). His hands are glue-like (3 drops since 2022), and his zone feel—honed as a HS QB—shines on crossers and sails (8-120 vs. Fresno). Prieskorn's a red-zone bully (6 TDs lifetime), using long arms and timing to win fades. Blocking's the rub—effort's there, but he's outmuscled inline, projecting as a move-TE or H-back early on. His 4.7-ish 40 and stiff hips limit separation vs. man, and pre-2024 stats (33 catches in 3 years) raise consistency flags. At 22 (turns 23 in August 2025), he's a late bloomer with a frame to tweak—add power or shed weight?—and a ceiling as a mid-tier TE1 if he refines his routes and blocking.

Draft Projection

Day 3: A strong Combine (February 27, 2025) with a sub-4.7 40 and clean agility drills could push him to Round 3; he's a developmental pick with Day 2 upside.

Best Team Fits

1. **Los Angeles Rams:** Sean McVay's TE love—Matavao's size and hands mesh with Stafford's back-shoulder game at pick 105. Multiple pre-draft interviews noted.
2. **Indianapolis Colts:** Anthony Richardson's big slot—competes with Kylen Granson, adding red-zone juice at pick 112.
3. **Denver Broncos:** Sean Payton's late-round gem—pairs with Bo Nix's short game, bolstering a thin TE room at pick 138.

Final Thoughts

Matavao's 2024 leap—41 catches, 506 yards—flips the script on a slow-starting career, blending prototypical size with late-blooming polish. He's not a burner or a blocker yet, but his hands, physicality, and red-zone knack scream 50-catch potential in a spread offense. In a loaded TE class, he's a Day 3 sleeper with a runway to TE1 status—think Andrews lite if he lands with a QB who trusts him. The Rams' interest (per Senior Bowl chatter) could make him a local steal.

#15 Luke Lachey – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: University of Iowa

Height: 6'6" (listed; unofficial 6'5½" per Shrine Bowl weigh-in)

Weight: 253 lbs (listed; 245 lbs per Shrine Bowl)

Class: Redshirt Senior (Fifth-Year)

Hometown: Columbus, OH

Recruiting Rank: 4-star (No. 11 TE, No. 380 overall, Class of 2020 per 247Sports)

Background

Luke Lachey, son of NFL All-Pro offensive tackle Jim Lachey, was a multi-positional athlete at Grandview Heights High School in Ohio. He caught 43 passes for 738 yards and 9 TDs as a senior wide receiver while adding 3 INTs on defense, earning All-State honorable mention. A 4-star recruit, he picked Iowa over offers from Ohio State, Michigan, and Wisconsin, following the Hawkeyes' "Tight End U" pipeline. After redshirting in 2020, he broke out in 2022 (28-398-4) but lost most of 2023 to a broken leg. Lachey returned for 2024, hauling in 28 catches for 231 yards, and earned Honorable Mention All-Big Ten before declaring for the 2025 NFL Draft on January 15, 2025.

College Career Stats (2020–2024)

- **2020 (Freshman):** Redshirted, no stats
- **2021 (Redshirt Freshman):** 8 receptions, 133 yards, 0 TDs (13 games, 3 starts)
- **2022 (Redshirt Sophomore):** 28 receptions, 398 yards, 4 TDs (13 games, 6 starts)
- **2023 (Redshirt Junior):** 10 receptions, 131 yards, 0 TDs (3 games, broken leg)
- **2024 (Redshirt Senior):** 28 receptions, 231 yards, 0 TDs (12 games, 11 starts)
- **Career Totals (41 games):** 74 receptions, 893 yards, 4 TDs
- **Notable Game:** September 10, 2022, vs. Iowa State – 7 receptions, 89 yards, 1 TD

Strengths

1. **Prototypical Size:** 6'6", 253 lbs with long arms (estimated 33½")—ideal NFL TE frame with room to add mass. A natural hands-catcher with a wide radius (7-89-1 vs. Iowa State).
2. **Route Savvy:** Finds holes vs. zone with high football IQ—stem manipulation and subtle fakes create windows (2.6 yards per route run in 2022). Thrives on sticks, sits, and flats.
3. **Chain-Moving Reliability:** 47 career first downs (63.5% of catches)—a QB's best friend on third downs (6-63 vs. Illinois State, 2024). Only 5 drops on 108 targets (4.6% drop rate).
4. **Blocking Effort:** Willing in-line blocker with sound knee bend—drives feet to seal edges (63.7% of snaps inline, per PFF). Keyed Iowa's No. 4 Big Ten rush attack in 2024 (191.8 yards/game).
5. **Catch-Point Comfort:** Absorbs contact and secures through traffic—55% contested catch rate in 2022 (per PFF). Adjusts to errant throws with focus (5-45 vs. Ohio State, 2024).
6. **Pedigree & Intangibles:** NFL bloodlines (dad Jim: 3x Pro Bowler) and Iowa captaincy signal coachability and toughness. Returned post-injury to finish his legacy.

Weaknesses

1. **Limited Explosiveness:** Lacks elite burst or speed—projected 4.70–4.75 40 caps him as an underneath target (longest catch: 44 yards). Not a mismatch creator.

2. **Injury History:** Broken right leg in 2023 (Week 3 vs. Western Michigan) cost him 11 games—returned slower in 2024 (8.3 yards per catch vs. 14.2 in 2022). Medicals will be scrutinized.
3. **Blocking Power:** Effort outpaces strength—lacks pop to displace bigger defenders (lost reps vs. OSU’s Cody Simon). Needs more core mass to anchor consistently.
4. **YAC Limitation:** Minimal wiggle—10 missed tackles forced career-wide. Grinds forward but rarely breaks away (falls inside vs. cutting outside, per Shrine Bowl notes).
5. **Scheme Constraint:** Iowa’s run-heavy, QB-challenged offense stunted his stats—74 catches in 41 games undersells his ability. Untested as a high-volume receiver.

NFL Comparison

Sam LaPorta (Detroit Lions): Like LaPorta, his Iowa predecessor, Lachey pairs size, hands, and blocking effort with chain-moving reliability. He’s less explosive and dynamic but offers a similar high-floor, TE2-to-TE1 arc with polish.

Scouting Report

Luke Lachey carries the Iowa “Tight End U” torch with 74 catches for 893 yards and 4 TDs across four active seasons, peaking in 2022 (28-398-4) before a gruesome 2023 leg break. At 6’6”, 253 lbs, he’s a prototypical “Y” TE—tall, sturdy, and savvy—with a Shrine Bowl nod (5-58-0 vs. East Team) that showcased his hands and grit. His route running is nuanced, not flashy—think sticks, hitches, and bootleg flats—making him a safety valve deluxe (47 first downs lifetime). Blocking-wise, he’s a willing mauler with decent technique, keying Iowa’s elite 2024 rush attack, though he lacks the raw power to dominate NFL edges. The 2023 injury sapped some burst—his 8.3 yards per catch in 2024 lags his 14.2 in 2022—but a full season (12 games) eased durability fears. Lachey’s not a game-breaker; his 4.7-ish 40 and linear style cap him as a short-to-intermediate threat. At 23 (turns 24 in June 2025), his NFL bloodlines, captaincy, and bounce-back grit shine, projecting him as a Day 2 or 3 TE2 with low-end TE1 upside in a wide-zone scheme.

Draft Projection

Day 3: A strong Combine (February 27, 2025) with clean medicals and a sub-4.75 40 could lock him in Round 2; he’s a high-floor pick with starter potential.

Best Team Fits

1. **Green Bay Packers:** Jordan Love’s TE duo (Kraft, Musgrave) gets depth—Lachey’s hands and blocking fit LaFleur’s scheme at pick 90. Local ties (Ohio native) add appeal.
2. **Kansas City Chiefs:** Travis Kelce’s heir apparent—Lachey’s reliability and Iowa pedigree align with Reid’s TE love at pick 64.
3. **Detroit Lions:** Sam LaPorta’s Iowa twin—adds a TE2 for Goff, boosting 12-personnel at pick 94. Lions scouted him heavily pre-Shrine Bowl.

Final Thoughts

Lachey's not the next Kittle or Hockenson—his ceiling's closer to LaPorta lite—but his size, hands, and blocking effort make him a plug-and-play TE2 with a shot at TE1 reps. Think 40–50 catches and 4 TDs as a rookie in a TE-friendly system. Iowa's QB woes and 2023 injury masked his upside, but his Shrine Bowl buzz and “Tight End U” stamp ensure a Day 2 or 3 call. He's a safe bet for teams craving a rugged chain-mover over a flashy mismatch.

#16 Gavin Bartholomew – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: University of Pittsburgh

Height: 6'5" (*listed; unofficial 6'4¾" per Senior Bowl weigh-in*)

Weight: 250 lbs (*listed; 241 lbs per Senior Bowl*)

Class: Senior

Hometown: Schuylkill Haven, PA

Recruiting Rank: 3-star (No. 65 TE, No. 1,324 overall, Class of 2021 per 247Sports)

Background

Gavin Bartholomew was a multi-sport athlete at Blue Mountain High School in Pennsylvania, excelling at tight end, quarterback, defensive end, and punter. As a junior, he caught 27 passes for 527 yards and 5 TDs; as a senior QB, he threw for 521 yards and 4 TDs while rushing for 145 yards and 3 TDs. A late-blooming 3-star recruit, he flipped from Buffalo to Pitt, emerging as a four-year contributor for the Panthers. His 2021 freshman year (Second-Team Freshman All-American) and back-to-back Honorable Mention All-ACC nods (2022–23) paved the way for a Senior Bowl invite after a 38-catch 2024 season, after which he declared for the 2025 NFL Draft on January 20, 2025.

College Career Stats (2021–2024)

- **2021 (Freshman):** 28 receptions, 326 yards, 4 TDs (13 games, 8 starts)
- **2022 (Sophomore):** 21 receptions, 283 yards, 2 TDs (13 games, 10 starts)
- **2023 (Junior):** 18 receptions, 326 yards, 1 TD (10 games, missed 2 with shoulder injury)
- **2024 (Senior):** 38 receptions, 322 yards, 4 TDs (13 games, 11 starts)
- **Career Totals (49 games):** 105 receptions, 1,257 yards, 11 TDs
- **Notable Game:** October 8, 2022, vs. Virginia Tech – 5 receptions, 84 yards, 1 TD

Strengths

1. **Hands Consistency:** Sure-handed catcher—6 drops on 142 career targets (4.2% drop rate). Snags high and low throws with focus and plays through contact (5-84-1 vs. VT).
2. **Route-Running Feel:** Smooth strider with subtle fakes—finds soft spots vs. zone (2.5 yards per route run in 2024). Excels on crossers, seams, and drags with tempo control.

3. **Blocking Effort:** Gritty in-line blocker—fires off with leverage and finishes with leg drive (79.6 PFF run-block grade in 2024). Keyed Pitt’s ACC title run in 2021 (167 rush yards/game).
4. **Catch-Point Toughness:** Wins in traffic—54% contested catch rate in 2024 (per PFF). Boxes out DBs and adjusts mid-air (6-68 vs. Cincinnati, 2024).
5. **Versatility:** Aligned inline (40%), slot (45%), and wide (15%) in 2024. Adapts to scheme shifts—learned three OCs at Pitt—and adds special teams value (punt, kickoff units).
6. **Football Character:** Fan-favorite “Pitt man”—stayed loyal despite transfer portal buzz. Senior Bowl reps (5-63-0) showed work ethic and coachability.

Weaknesses

1. **Limited Athleticism:** Lacks elite burst or speed—projected 4.75–4.80 40 caps him as an underneath threat (longest catch: 44 yards). Not a dynamic separator.
2. **Blocking Power:** Effort outpaces strength—lacks pop to displace bigger edges (lost reps vs. FSU’s Jared Verse, 2023). Needs more mass to anchor consistently.
3. **YAC Limitation:** Minimal elusiveness—12 missed tackles forced career-wide. Long strides grind forward but rarely break away (5.8 YAC per catch in 2022).
4. **Route Definition:** Rounds breaks at times—upright posture slows cuts vs. man coverage (stymied vs. WVU’s physical DBs, 2023). Lacks twitch to shake tight defenders.
5. **QB Context:** Pitt’s shaky QB play (post-Pickett) curbed his stats—105 catches in 49 games undersells his ability. Untested as a high-volume focal point.

NFL Comparison

Greg Dulcich (Denver Broncos): Like Dulcich, Bartholomew blends reliable hands and route savvy with a leaner frame, thriving as a move-TE. He’s less explosive but offers similar receiving upside with blocking effort as a bonus.

Scouting Report

Gavin Bartholomew exits Pitt with 105 catches for 1,257 yards and 11 TDs, a steady four-year rock despite offensive turmoil. At 6’5”, 250 lbs (241 at Senior Bowl), he’s a well-built target—smooth, not sudden—with Senior Bowl reps (5-63-0) flashing his hands and grit. His route running leans on feel over flash—think drags, crosses, and seams—making him a chain-mover (62 career first downs). Blocking’s a strength for his profile—quick off the snap with a nasty streak, he’s a plus run supporter (79.6 PFF grade in 2024), though he lacks the raw power to dominate NFL edges. His 2021 freshman splash (28-326-4) and 2024 rebound (38-322-4) bookend a 2023 dip (shoulder injury), proving resilience. Athleticism’s the cap—his 4.75-ish 40 and linear style limit him as a seam-stretcher or YAC threat, projecting him as a “Y” TE or H-back early on. At 22 (turns 23 in April 2025), his blue-collar vibe and “Pitt man” loyalty shine, making him a Day 2 or 3 plug-and-play TE2 with low-end TE1 upside in a timing-based passing game.

Draft Projection

Day 3: A strong Combine (February 27, 2025) with a sub-4.75 40 and clean agility drills could push him to Round 2; he's a high-floor pick with starter potential.

Best Team Fits

1. **Green Bay Packers:** Jordan Love's TE room (Kraft, Musgrave) adds depth—Lachey's hands and blocking fit LaFleur's scheme at pick 90. Local ties (Ohio native) add appeal.
2. **New England Patriots:** Drake Maye's security blanket—Bartholomew's reliability upgrades a thin TE group at pick 77, echoing Iowa-to-NE pipeline.
3. **Detroit Lions:** Dan Campbell's grit fit—pairs with Sam LaPorta as a TE2, boosting run and pass at pick 94. Lions scouted Pitt heavily in 2024.

Final Thoughts

Bartholomew's not a headliner in this stacked TE class—his 1,257 yards lack the wow of a Warren or Fannin—but his hands, blocking, and toughness make him a pro-ready TE2 with a shot at more. Think 40–50 catches and 4 TDs as a rookie in a balanced attack. His Senior Bowl buzz and “Pitt man” ethos ensure a Day 2 or 3 call—perfect for teams craving a rugged, reliable No. 2 with upside if the QB clicks.

#17 Bryson Nesbit – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End/Wide Receiver Hybrid

School: University of North Carolina

Height: 6'5" (*listed; unofficial 6'5½" per Senior Bowl weigh-in*)

Weight: 235 lbs (*listed; 233 lbs per Senior Bowl*)

Class: Senior

Hometown: Charlotte, NC

Recruiting Rank: 4-star (No. 13 TE, No. 334 overall, Class of 2021 per 247Sports)

Background

Bryson Nesbit, son of former NFL guard Jamar Nesbit (11-year vet) and South Carolina soccer alum Tara Nesbit, was a late bloomer at South Mecklenburg High School in Charlotte. Starting football just before his junior year, he caught 31 passes for 400 yards in six games as a senior, earning Third-Team All-Observer honors despite no full stats due to COVID-19. A 4-star recruit, he chose UNC over offers from South Carolina, Ole Miss, and Virginia Tech, evolving into a matchup nightmare. After mulling a 2024 declaration, Nesbit returned for 2024, battling injuries but posting 41 catches for 419 yards and 4 TDs, earning a Senior Bowl invite before declaring for the 2025 NFL Draft on January 8, 2025.

College Career Stats (2021–2024)

- **2021 (Freshman):** 7 receptions, 154 yards, 1 TD (11 games, 1 start)
- **2022 (Sophomore):** 35 receptions, 507 yards, 4 TDs; 1 rush, 43 yards, 1 TD (14 games)

- **2023 (Junior):** 41 receptions, 585 yards, 5 TDs (12 games, First-Team All-ACC)
- **2024 (Senior):** 41 receptions, 419 yards, 4 TDs (11 games, missed Fenway Bowl with injury)
- **Career Totals (48 games):** 124 receptions, 1,665 yards, 14 TDs; 1 rush, 43 yards, 1 TD
- **Notable Game:** October 15, 2022, vs. Virginia Tech – 4 receptions, 98 yards, 1 TD

Strengths

1. **Vertical Speed:** Long-strider with legit juice—tracked at 21.6 MPH in 2023 (per PFF). Stacks DBs on seams and fades (8 catches of 20+ yards in 2023).
2. **Catch-Point Prowess:** Attacks the ball with strong hands and focus—5 drops on 167 career targets (3% drop rate). Wins contested grabs (58% success rate in 2023).
3. **Route Flexibility:** WR-like stem variation—uses head fakes and rocker steps to open windows (2.5 yards per route run in 2024). Thrives on crossers, posts, and verts.
4. **YAC Ability:** Deceptive after the catch—15 missed tackles forced in 2022–23 combined. Long strides and hurdle moves (e.g., JMU, 2024) stretch short gains.
5. **Mismatch Potential:** Too fast for LBs, too big for nickel DBs—66% of snaps in slot/wide in 2024. Outran Clemson's Barrett Carter on a 47-yarder in 2023.
6. **Developmental Arc:** Late football start (2019) and 2024 rebound (41 catches post-injury) hint at untapped ceiling—still refining his craft at 22.

Weaknesses

1. **Blocking Deficiency:** Non-factor inline—lacks mass and play strength (35% run-block success rate in 2024). Avoids contact and struggles to sustain (per Senior Bowl tape).
2. **Tweener Build:** 235 lbs is light for a TE, heavy for a pure slot—needs a specific role to thrive. Not built for trench duty or heavy sets.
3. **Injury History:** Lower-body issues sidelined him for 2023 Mayo Bowl, 2024 spring, and 2024 Fenway Bowl—durability questions linger despite 11 games in 2024.
4. **Release vs. Press:** Slow off jams—upright stance and modest twitch let physical DBs disrupt timing (lost reps vs. Miami's press, 2023). Needs hand-fighting work.
5. **Route Crispness:** Rounds breaks at times—leans on speed over precision vs. man coverage (stymied vs. NC State's Aydan White, 2024).

NFL Comparison

Evan Engram (Jacksonville Jaguars): Like Engram, Nesbit is a lean, speedy TE with WR roots, excelling as a move-TE with YAC juice and seam-stretching ability. He's not as polished or twitchy yet but shares the same hybrid, pass-first mold.

Scouting Report

Bryson Nesbit leaves UNC with 124 catches for 1,665 yards and 14 TDs, a Tar Heel TE record for TD receptions (14), blending WR fluidity with TE size. At 6'5", 235 lbs, he's a matchup unicorn—too quick for LBs (projected 4.60–4.65 40), too tall for safeties—with Senior Bowl reps (4-56-0) showcasing his catch-point tenacity and burst. His 2023 peak (41-585-5) and 2024 grit (41-419-4 despite injuries) highlight hands (5 drops ever) and vertical juice (21.6 MPH vs. Clemson). Nesbit's route tree—crossers, posts, fades—pops with subtle salesmanship, and his YAC knack (15 missed tackles in 2022–23) adds flair. Blocking's the Achilles' heel—minimal inline snaps (17% in 2024) and a wiry frame scream "slot-only," projecting him as a flex-TE or power slot over a traditional "Y." At 22 (turns 23 in September 2025), his late start (2019) and injury setbacks cloud his ceiling, but his tools and Senior Bowl buzz make him a Day 2 or 3 mismatch weapon with TE1 upside in a spread attack.

Draft Projection

Day 3: A clean Combine (February 27, 2025) with a sub-4.65 40 could vault him to Round 2; he's a scheme-specific riser with a floor as a TE2.

Best Team Fits

1. **Miami Dolphins:** Tua's quick game—Nesbit's speed and hands stretch seams, pairing with Hill/Waddle at pick 67. Attended UNC pro day per reports.
2. **Denver Broncos:** Bo Nix reunion—adds a big slot for Sean Payton's attack at pick 54, leveraging prior Oregon ties.
3. **Cincinnati Bengals:** Burrow's chain-mover—slots behind Chase as a mismatch TE at pick 52, per Senior Bowl chatter.

Final Thoughts

Nesbit's not a plug-and-play TE—his blocking's a wash—but his 1,665 yards and Senior Bowl flash scream mismatch potential. Think 50–60 catches and 5 TDs as a rookie in a pass-happy system, with a runway to top-10 TE status if he lands with a creative OC. His tweener tag and injury past might spook traditionalists, but teams chasing a modern move-TE (Dolphins, Broncos) could strike gold on Day 2 or 3.

#18 CJ Dippre – 2025 NFL Draft Profile

Position: Tight End

School: University of Alabama (*Transferred from Maryland*)

Height: 6'5" (*listed; unofficial 6'4½" per Senior Bowl weigh-in*)

Weight: 257 lbs (*listed; 260 lbs per Senior Bowl*)

Class: Senior

Hometown: Scranton, PA

Recruiting Rank: 3-star (No. 45 TE, No. 893 overall, Class of 2021 per 247Sports)

Background

CJ Dippre was a multi-sport athlete at Lakeland Junior-Senior High School in Pennsylvania, starring as a quarterback, tight end, and track discus thrower (third in AA states). As a senior QB, he threw for 1,296 yards and 13 TDs while adding 5 rushing scores; as a TE, he caught 20 passes for 297 yards and 5 TDs across his prep career. A 3-star recruit, he committed to Maryland over offers from Pitt and Rutgers, spending two seasons with the Terrapins (2021–22) before transferring to Alabama in 2023. After a breakout 2022 at Maryland (30-314-3), he became a blocking-first TE at Bama, finishing with 32 catches for 443 yards across two years. Dippre declared for the 2025 NFL Draft on January 2, 2025, following a Senior Bowl nod.

College Career Stats (2021–2024)

- **2021 (Freshman at Maryland):** 3 receptions, 25 yards, 0 TDs (13 games)
- **2022 (Sophomore at Maryland):** 30 receptions, 314 yards, 3 TDs (12 games)
- **2023 (Junior at Alabama):** 11 receptions, 187 yards, 0 TDs (14 games, 11 starts)
- **2024 (Senior at Alabama):** 21 receptions, 256 yards, 0 TDs (13 games)
- **Career Totals (52 games):** 65 receptions, 782 yards, 3 TDs
- **Notable Game:** October 5, 2024, at Vanderbilt – 2 receptions, 66 yards

Strengths

1. **Elite In-Line Blocking:** Top-tier blocker in the 2025 TE class—80.9 PFF run-block grade in 2024. Fires off with leverage, wide base, and strong hands to seal edges (keyed Bama’s 40-35 upset bid vs. Vandy).
2. **Physicality:** 6’5”, 257 lbs with a thick frame—plays with a mean streak, finishing blocks through the whistle (15 pancakes in 2023–24 combined). Held his own vs. SEC edges like LSU’s Bradyn Swinson.
3. **Hands Reliability:** Sure-handed in tight windows—4 drops on 87 career targets (4.6% drop rate). Adjusts to off-target throws with soft hands (2-66 vs. Vandy showed late-window grabs).
4. **Zone Awareness:** Sits in soft spots with QB-like instincts (HS signal-caller)—68% catch rate vs. zone in 2022 (per PFF). Chain-mover on hitches and flats (7-88 vs. Auburn, 2024).
5. **Pass Protection:** Stout protector—1 sack allowed in 168 pass-pro snaps over four years. Quick eyes and firm punch redirect rushers (zero pressures vs. Georgia, 2024).
6. **Multi-Sport Upside:** Track and basketball background hints at untapped athleticism—21.5 MPH tracked at Senior Bowl, per scouts. Room to grow with coaching.

Weaknesses

1. **Limited Route Tree:** Underutilized as a receiver at Bama—ran basic patterns (flats, curls, shallow outs). Rounds breaks and lacks nuance vs. man coverage (stymied vs. UGA’s Malaki Starks).

2. **Athletic Ceiling:** Lacks elite burst or speed—projected 4.70–4.75 40 caps him as an underneath target (longest catch: 66 yards). Not a seam-stretcher or YAC threat (8 missed tackles forced career-wide).
3. **Scheme Shift:** Pass-first at Maryland (30 catches in 2022) to block-first at Bama—32 catches in 27 games post-transfer. Untested as a high-volume receiver since sophomore year.
4. **Blocking vs. Twitch:** Struggles to mirror quick LBs or DBs in space—overextends and loses balance (lost reps vs. Tennessee’s Elijah Herring). Needs tighter footwork.
5. **Catch-Point Aggression:** Passive at times—doesn’t always attack the ball with authority (50% contested catch rate in 2024). Smaller hands (9½”) can lead to bobbles under duress.

NFL Comparison

Will Dissly (Los Angeles Chargers): Like Dissly, Dippre is a rugged, block-first TE with dependable hands and modest receiving flash. He’s a notch below in agility but mirrors the in-line, blue-collar role with special teams potential.

Scouting Report

CJ Dippre exits Alabama with 65 catches for 782 yards and 3 TDs across four years, a two-school journeyman who morphed from Maryland’s pass-catcher (30-314-3 in 2022) to Bama’s trench warrior. At 6’5”, 257 lbs, he’s a throwback “Y” TE—built to maul, not dazzle—with Senior Bowl reps (4-50-0) spotlighting his blocking chops (80.9 PFF grade in 2024). Dippre fires off low, latches with strong hands, and drives edges, keying Alabama’s SEC rush attack (e.g., 245 yards vs. Auburn). His hands are steady (4 drops ever), and his zone feel—honed as a HS QB—shines on underneath routes (7-88 vs. Auburn). Pass pro’s a bonus—near-flawless in 168 snaps. But the shine fades as a receiver: his route tree’s basic, his 4.7-ish 40 limits separation, and he’s not breaking tackles or stretching seams. At 22 (turns 23 in April 2025), his multi-sport roots (track, basketball) and “Iron Church” upbringing (dad’s a powerlifter) suggest growth potential, but he’s a Day 2 or 3 TE2/3 with TE1 upside in a heavy-set scheme if he refines his pass-game polish.

Draft Projection

Day 3: A strong Combine (February 27, 2025) with clean medicals and a sub-4.7 40 could push him to Round 2; he’s a high-floor pick for run-first teams.

Best Team Fits

1. **San Francisco 49ers:** Kyle Shanahan’s run-heavy dream—Dippre slots as a TE2 behind Kittle, mauling in 12-personnel at pick 135.
2. **Indianapolis Colts:** Anthony Richardson’s blocker—competes with Granson, boosting run and pass at pick 112.
3. **Pittsburgh Steelers:** Arthur Smith’s ground-and-pound—pairs with Freiermuth as a TE2 at pick 152, per Senior Bowl buzz.

Final Thoughts

Dippre's not rewriting TE record books—65 catches in 52 games won't dazzle—but his Senior Bowl nod and SEC trench tape make him the 2025 class's premier blocking TE with sneaky receiving upside. He's a Day 2 or 3 plug-and-play piece for 12-personnel teams, with enough hands and pass-pro grit to stick. Think 30–40 catches and special teams juice as a rookie—Will Dissly 2.0 with a shot at more if his route tree expands.