



## NFL Draft 2017 Scouting Report: QB Mitch Trubisky, North Carolina

*\*Our QB grades can and will change as more information comes in from Pro Day workouts, leaked Wonderlic test results, etc. We will update ratings as new info becomes available.*

It's early January 2017, as of this writing, and after spending a week+ of the new year listening to general chatter among football analysts...they all seem to agree on one thing – this 2017 QB draft class is not very good.

I've been studying NFL Draft prospects and the football analysts and media for 7+ years now. I assure you that football analysts are almost never right about anything...especially about the NFL Draft...especially in January of a particular draft year. The only thing worse than football analysts' track records in January is the gullibility of football fans who swallow it, annually, without question...they do so because the football media hears 'this draft class is not very good' from one or two sources and then they all 100% run in lockstep with the thought. The football media does no homework...if they did there would be more variation and diversity of thought – there never is. The analysts buy into what college football promotes the most. The analysts are so wrong every December–January about prospects, that they would be fired from any normal job for such a poor ability to project the near- and long-term future within their industry. In the NFL...it is the opposite of that. So, yeah, '*weak draft class at QB*' is the nationally accepted talking point.

I've spent the first week of the new year starting to analyze and study some of the top QB prospects – I would say, at this point, it is one of the deepest, most diversely talented QB classes in recent memory. The top QBs are not from Alabama, Florida State, Ohio State, et al. so analysts don't know what to do with that but to call it *weak*. They got behind **DeShaun Watson** months ago, after his 2015 season, but when he failed early in the 2016 college season...they scattered. They'll be back since he led Clemson to the championship. The football media is going to push Watson because 'Clemson' and 'familiarity', and 'mobile'. All things they covet.

The analysts, and therefore the media, are lukewarm on **Mitch Trubisky**. Some people are saying '*best QB talent*', but most are taking a soft stance – '*He might be the only QB taken in the first round*', many analysts say at this stage. The endorsements of him as a top guy are tepid so far.

I would bet a lot of money on two things right now...

- 1: **Mitch Trubisky** is going to be drafted by the Cleveland Browns.
- 2: That Trubisky selection will likely be the #1 overall pick.

Why?



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**Mitch Trubisky** is by far the best QB prospect in the 2017 draft class, and that's not a putdown of the other top prospects in this class at all. Trubisky might be the best QB prospect in the draft in the past 2–3+ years.

College football typically gives us three types of QB prospects that garner some type of prospect attention...

1: Average QB talent who played at a smaller school against weaker competition and put up numbers so he gains some kind of draft 'look' or attention. These prospects are noted as 'sleepers' on draftnik boards and are usually never heard from again.

2: Mobile QBs who run the spread, but are more runner than passer...and the NFL doesn't like that as much.

3: QB prospects who played within high volume, video game-esque passing games in college and have silly numbers that catch attention, but the numbers are so silly and their schools are notorious for pumping out the same cookie-cutter QBs that go nowhere in the NFL that this kind of prospect is noticed but discounted quickly (from Texas Tech, and/or wherever **Mike Leach** is coaching, etc.).

Rare is a more traditional pocket passer prospect who excels from the pocket but can also run an up-tempo spread...a QB prospect who can sit in the pocket, read defenses, and throw medium and deep with accuracy but can also play in the new era short passing game. Trubisky is that guy. He also has the right size (6'2"-6'3", 220), arm strength, and above average feet.

Had Trubisky gone to a different school and/or started for his team right away...had college football had a chance to know him and promote him – they'd be calling him '*the next **Andrew Luck***' instead of '*maybe he goes in the first round*'. Trubisky's crime right now is he is not well known. He will be soon enough.

The Cleveland Browns, among others, are begging the media to keep undervaluing him so they can get a bargain. It won't happen. I believe Trubisky is going #1 overall, and it will be to Cleveland. More on why I'm almost 100% sure 'Cleveland' in a moment (why I could be wrong is at the very end of this report).

Why are we so hyped on Trubisky? Because I'm not sure I've seen as good a pure all-around pocket passer...the instinct, the arm, the touch, the ability to survey and decide and deliver, since scouting **Jimmy Garoppolo** in 2014.

The mechanics are right. The arm strength is a plus. He has nice feet – he slides in the pocket and he can take off for yards with an **Aaron Rodgers**-type speed/nimbleness. His UNC offense had elements of the spread, but there were far fewer quick passes and bubble screens, and many more medium and deep passes splitting zones and burning man-to-man coverage. Trubisky succeeded and put up huge numbers despite having little to work with in his receiving corps. It seemed like the tape was Trubisky and several **Julian Edelman**-types at work, essentially. The lack of athleticism and size across his WR corps



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(he did have one bigger WR to throw to, and he was a so-so talent) forced him to have to be precise and crafty to defeat defenses with his arm/vision – he did just that.

I want to share with you maybe the greatest slice of tape of a college quarterback I've ever seen – when you consider the time remaining, the score, the talent of the two teams. I implore you to set aside 10 minutes uninterrupted, seriously...don't take a phone call, etc. – just watch from the 1 hour 19 minute and 22-second mark to the end of the scoring drive. Let it just play **and observe what part of the field he picks apart, the ball placement on throws**, Trubisky's feet and demeanor. Just drink it in. Stay focused on Trubisky until he lets the ball go.

Don't rewind anything to watch it again on the first view...just watch it in the moment, and then go back and watch it again just to see all the things you missed on the first experience. You want to understand **Mitch Trubisky**...watch this 10 minutes of game tape, twice (at least).

*\*Should open right where I want it to when you click (a pause in the action) -- don't skip!*

**YouTube Link:** <https://youtu.be/mDaEUekg1C0?t=1h19m22s>

Now, at the end of the game, Trubisky got sacked trying to convert the two-point conversion, so UNC lost...and thus no full 'magic moment'/miracle comeback. In fact, I've seen more '*Trubisky sucked in his bowl game, so he's not that good*' talk coming from fans. He wasn't close to sucking in his bowl/final game. The overall college story of Trubisky is not sexy. He's not normal/hyped like most top college QB prospects, and thus he's being undervalued by the public.

Trubisky was the top high school player ("Mr. Football") in Ohio in 2012. He wanted to go to Ohio State, but **Urban Meyer** signed **J.T. Barrett** (because 'runner-passer'...emphasis on 'runner') to fit his offense, and thus Trubisky turned down OSU and went to UNC.

At UNC, he redshirted in 2013. In 2014, he challenged to start with a talented **Marquise Williams**...and they were initially stuck in an odd in-game QB rotation. UNC couldn't figure out who to start/bench...so they did a weird hybrid. Eventually, UNC leaned mostly on Williams with Trubisky as the backup. Williams was a pretty talented QB in his own right but didn't get much of a look from the NFL.

In 2015, same thing. Williams as the starter with some Trubisky sprinkled in. Only Trubisky caught more attention with the scraps he was thrown this time – 47 pass-attempts in eight games he entered, and he posted an 85.1% completion percentage with 6 TD/0 INT and rushed for 3 TDs. He threw a TD pass, off the bench, on average every 6.7 completions. Still, it was 'off the bench' and in mostly junk time...so 'who cares'?

2016 rolled along, Williams had graduated, and Trubisky took over – and he exploded...68.0% completion percentage with 30 TDs/6 INTs.



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I can find no fault with Trubisky as a prospect. The only thing the media is saying is '*inexperience*'...which is code for *the media doesn't know what to think because he didn't play several years and didn't get hyped for them*. His perceived inexperience is a reason to love him even more – he walked into a starter's role and in one season played like he'd been the starter for four years. No adjustment period needed.

If there's a better QB prospect in this class, I'll be shocked.

If he's not the #1 overall pick I'll be shocked.

On Trubisky's UNC website player bio, in the 'personal' section, it says '*if he could choose any NFL team to play for it would be*'...his answer: the Cleveland Browns. He grew up in upper Ohio. He's crazy enough to want to play for the Browns...and the Browns need a franchise quarterback. The stars have aligned.

### Mitch Trubisky, Through the Lens of Our QB Scouting Algorithm:

I would like to add quick two notes about his 2016 output. His two worst games, statistically – vs. Georgia and Virginia Tech.

13-for-33 passing for just 58 yards and 0 TD/2 INT in a loss to Virginia Tech...after starting the season with 13 TD/0 INT and posting three 400+ yard games in a row right before this contest. This game was in question of even being played due to a hurricane in that region. Both teams' QBs combined for 20-of-50 passing for 133 yards total...in a slippery, sloppy game. You should throw this game out of any statistical analysis of Trubisky. If you do throw it out, then he posted 30 TD/4 INT in his final 11 college games with an 8–3 record.

Against Georgia, opening day 2016, his first real start – 24-of-40 for 156 yards and 0 TD/0 INT. You could see two things watching this game with the luxury of an after-the-season context: (1) You could see the coaches reeled everything in and were conservative for this game...and then they opened it up for Trubisky very soon after this game. (2) You could see the beginning of the greatness. There were flashes that made you wonder why UNC played it so safe. UNC did lead 24–23 going into the 4th quarter. They tried to sit on the lead but gave up 10 points in a two-minute span late 4th quarter to blow it.

To me, the Georgia and Virginia Tech games were anomalies. Trubisky's other 11 games were more copies of each other as he got a little better every week. I would also re-mention...action was left on the table because Trubisky did not have any stud WRs to work with. They made some scrappy-great catches over the course of the season, but many times Trubisky put amazing throws right on the money in tight spaces and the WRs dropped them...like, a lot.



The Historical QB Prospects to Whom Mitch Trubisky Most Compares Within Our System:

Comparing any prospect to **Andrew Luck** is pretty dangerous. You make that comparison and you run the risk of looking foolish – if Trubisky doesn't live up to it then you look like a fool. I would argue that Trubisky is more like **Jimmy Garoppolo** in my eyes, and that is not a cop out because Jimmy G. may end up better than Luck if he stays in New England. Luck is terrific, but not the end-all be-all everyone thought. Garoppolo's crime is being on the same team as Brady.

Trubisky deserves this high praise, one-year starter or not.

You also have to fear whether Trubisky can succeed in Cleveland. Had Luck gone to the Browns there might be a whole different narrative on him.

<u>QB Grade</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Yr</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>Adj. Comp. Pct.</u>	<u>Adj. Yds per Comp</u>	<u>Adj. Pass per TD</u>	<u>Adj. Pass per INT</u>
<b>10.30</b>	Trubisky, Mitch	2017	UNC	75.0	220	73.0%	12.4	14.2	76.0
<b>12.15</b>	Luck, Andrew	2012	Stanford	76.0	235	72.7%	11.4	12.5	31.6
<b>8.02</b>	Garoppolo, Jimmy	2014	E. Illinois	74.2	222	66.9%	12.5	12.1	70.4
<b>9.86</b>	Rivers, Philip	2004	NC State	77.0	229	68.1%	12.0	14.2	58.1
<b>8.02</b>	Fales, David	2013	San Jose St	74.5	220	72.9%	12.0	15.5	59.3
<b>10.04</b>	Roethlisberger, B	2004	Miami, Oh	77.0	241	69.5%	13.7	17.4	50.6

*\*“Adj” = A view of adjusted college output in our system...adjusted for strength of opponent.*

*\*\*A score of 8.5+ is where we see a stronger correlation of QBs going onto become NFL good-to-great. A scouting score of 9.5+ is rarefied air—higher potential for becoming great-to-elite.*

*QB's scoring 6.0–8.0 are finding more success in the new passing era of the NFL (2014–on). Depending upon system and surrounding weapons, a 6.0–8.0 rated QB can do fine in today's NFL—with the right circumstances...but they are not 'the next Tom Brady' guys, just NFL-useful guys.*

**2017 NFL Draft Outlook:**

I am absolutely convinced it is destiny that Trubisky is going to be a Cleveland Brown, and I also believe that HAS to be a #1 overall pick. Hometown boy made good + super-talented = a story Cleveland fans can sink their teeth into. However, other teams are going to try to trick the Browns off this pick. They will con the media with disinformation, which in turn (they hope) will influence the Browns to believe



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they can fall back for Trubisky...that the Browns can trade away the #1 overall for more picks, and fall back to #10–15 overall and still get Trubisky. I'm pretty sure the Browns won't fall for it, but I don't know...this new Moneyball management group shows signs of wheeling and dealing.

Part of all the other teams' con of the media will be to push love for some other QB prospect – I think that will be **Deshaun Watson** as their 'patsy'. The media already liked him going into 2016. He won a national title...it will be painted as: *the Browns would be SO foolish to pass on such a dynamic player as Watson*. The generic football fans will go right along with it. Who would be so dumb as to take a QB who only started for a year with the #1 overall pick when you could have a National Championship QB who EVERYBODY loves? I could pre-write the script.

Part of the con is unwitting dupe **Hue Jackson**, who could be trying to protect his turf. He loves **RG3**. He loves/went to bat for **Cody Kessler**. He'll be embarrassed if the Browns then pick a QB at #1 overall because Hue failed with his other QB choices. We'll see if Hue has influence over the #1 pick or not.

### NFL Outlook:

Assuming Trubisky goes to Cleveland, then you have a whole new problem – Cleveland is a franchise where QBs go to die. Waiting there to coach him is destroyer of **Carson Palmer** in Oakland and **Cody Kessler** -lover **Hue Jackson**. Who knows what Hue will do? He could embrace Trubisky right away...or fight him/try to bury him and waste a year or two until Hue is fired.

Eventually, Trubisky will play and succeed in the NFL. You'd think. There could be forces out to undermine him like with **Jared Goff** last year and **Marcus Mariota** the year prior. I'm not sure Trubisky will get the immediate push he deserves and then the Browns can drag their feet...and then we all start to forget Trubisky in a year or two.

It's not a clear path to success via Cleveland.

Whatever happens, Trubisky should/could be a success with an organization fully embracing him. For his sake, I hope it's not Cleveland, but it's probably going to be Cleveland.

