



NFL Draft 2017 Scouting Report: QB Patrick Mahomes, Texas Tech

**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.*

There have been a few college QB prospects lately that have been branded with a '*next Ben Roethlisberger*' label...**Blake Bortles** is probably the most associated with Big Ben. **Jameis Winston** got the label from some in the mainstream. For those looking for it, I think **Patrick Mahomes** is the true '*next Ben Roethlisberger*' of recent QB prospects...when it comes to style of play.

We all associate '*next Ben Roethlisberger*' with 'chunky' QB prospects with talent...the label is assumed success, projected for great numbers...a kind of validation of future greatness for any young QB. If you look back over Ben's NFL career...he wasn't that great statistically...until recently. He was a 'winner', for sure, but not a big statistical producer until 2014...his 11th season in the NFL. Prior to that, Ben was '*Joe Flacco good*'. 25+/- TD passes and 10–15 INTs in a season with 250–275 yards per game. Ben didn't throw for over 235.0 yards per game in a season until his sixth year in the NFL.

How would you describe Ben now? As a gunslinging, talented, sloppy quarterback? You'd take Ben over a lot of NFL QBs today, right? But you wouldn't put Ben in the **Tom Brady** or **Aaron Rodgers** class because he is not as precise or gifted...'*great*', but not that great. In 18 playoff games (as of this writing/editing), Ben has a 12–6 record and two Super Bowl titles. We get hung up on the Super Bowl titles part. He has also thrown for 24 TDs/21 INTs in those 18 playoff games...a lackluster 85.0 QB rating -- '*Gunslinger*'. '*Talented*'. '*Sloppy*'. '*Winner*'. All things you could describe Roethlisberger as.

Patrick Mahomes? A '*gunslinger*'...just like Ben. If young Big Ben was recruited to Texas Tech in 2014–16...we'd probably see the same gaudy, inflated college passer numbers...and the same questions – "*Is it the QB or the offense?*" I say '*gunslinger*' in the sense that Mahomes has that comfortable nature in the pocket...almost too comfortable...but then always seem to find a receiver in the nick of time. Mahomes can play up-tempo '*small ball*' or he will launch it deep...and he can scramble around to find a better throw, in the manner Ben does – neither fast-footed QBs (but faster than Ben), but somehow they always seem to escape trouble. They are QBs who are willing to try to make plays and take chances but usually come out on top on their throws.

Patrick Mahomes is a '*gunslinger*' and is '*talented*'. He was a top Major League Baseball prospect entering Texas Tech. His dad was an MLB pitcher for many years. Mahomes has a gun. Arm strength, vision, escapability as a quarterback...Mahomes has it. He has the size, mechanics, and instincts you'd want in an NFL prospect.



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Patrick Mahomes is a 'gunslinger', he's talented, and he's sloppy...just like Ben. The thing with gunslingers, especially talented ones (Favre, Roethlisberger) is that they try to 'make plays'. Sometimes they do and 'wow' the crowd. Sometimes they don't and make coaches want to pull their hair out. The sloppy throws – it's what coaches will have to live with on occasion in the NFL with guys like this...only NFL head coaches aren't ones who favor this style of play.

Therein lies the problem with scouting Mahomes for the NFL. There will be a great mainstream debate over whether he really is a great QB prospect for the NFL...or just a marginal, sloppy prospect pushed to eye-popping numbers in a video game offense (Mahomes had 88 pass attempts in one game this season vs. Oklahoma). My question would be – will NFL head coaches and offensive coordinators with totally different playbooks and tempos of offense (vs. Texas Tech's 'Air Raid' offense) want to work with a QB like Mahomes? And could Mahomes adjust to the slower pace and emphasis on reduced risk that there is in the NFL?

At Texas Tech, Mahomes could pretty much do whatever he wanted as a quarterback. He's throwing from the shotgun spread offense 40-50-60 times a game. He can afford to make a mistake because he'll be throwing so much and scoring so often...one bad series doesn't really matter. Mahomes led an offense on a bad/nonwinning team (12–16 as a starter in his career)...he's trying to score 50+ points so the team has a chance to win. That is 180 degrees opposite of the mindset in the NFL. What happens when Mahomes is put in a box by his coaches? What happened to **Jared Goff** when that happened his rookie season?

I think Mahomes is ready for the NFL as a passer because I think most top college QBs prospects like him in the 'new era' are 'ready'...beyond ready. They are so trained and experienced in passing the ball at a high volume from grade school on up that they make it look easy in college. And then they go the NFL and are stifled...depending on what team/offense/coach they land with. Mahomes is NFL-ready as a passing mind/talent, but he's not a traditional-looking/-playing quarterback, and the style clash may be a big problem.

I watched/studied several of Mahomes's games from 2015 and 2016. It's the same thing over and over – very comfortable in the pocket, running an up-tempo spread offense, making a lot of good throws. When I watched him against tougher opponents, like LSU and Oklahoma, I saw some trouble, some issues with the accuracy. He is not the most accurate passer I've come across, but not a major red flag – and it doesn't take away from his Big Ben-like ability to survey a field, especially being flushed from a pocket, and just locating a receiver under some duress. Mahomes has almost a point guard mentality playing quarterback...a 'flashy' point guard's mentality...maybe too flashy for his own good at times.

Mahomes got his shot to start for Texas Tech when another top 2016 QB prospect, **Davis Webb**, got hurt (lost for the season) in 2014 and Mahomes was thrown into the fire as a true freshman...and he threw for 14 TDs/1 INT in his first three starts. Mahomes won the job from Webb the following season (2015) and that forced Webb to transfer in 2016. Both are interesting pro prospects. Of the two, I'd say Webb is more NFL-ready...and probably more NFL-friendly. Webb acts and speaks like he is running for



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Congress...and not in a disingenuous way. He just has a leadership 'it' factor that old school coaches will love. Mahomes does not carry himself like/as well as Webb. He's not a troublemaker, but he's not as mature as Webb. Mahomes acts like he's in his early 20s. Webb seems like he's already in his 30s+. As silly as it might sound – that's going to matter in the evaluations...and it should. Webb is the better passer and leader compared to Mahomes.

In the end, I would call Mahomes more of a 'good' QB prospect than seeing him as a 'great one'...or as a bust.

Patrick Mahomes, Through the Lens of Our QB Scouting Algorithm:

Mahomes's number totals at Texas Tech are so ridiculous it's not worth digging into too far. I mean, 88 pass attempts in a game versus Oklahoma is like two games in one. Who throws 88 times in a football game? In general, breaking his college numbers down on a per attempt basis...Mahomes is good (not off the charts), historically, in our system.

Against his toughest foes the past two seasons (Oklahoma and Oklahoma State both 2x, LSU, Arkansas), his team went 1–5. Texas Tech was 7–11 in conference the last two seasons. If you take out wins against FCS schools, Mahomes went 10–16 as a starter in 2+ seasons at the helm. If QBs can be labeled 'winners'...you wouldn't assign that label to Mahomes. So the fact that in half of his starts Mahomes threw for four or more TDs or posted 390+ passing yards...it all seems a little like 'empty calories' in the game result department. A lot of activity that didn't mean much in the end. These numbers and his offense do not translate to the same in the NFL, not even close.

Mahomes rushed for 22 TDs in his 28-game career as a starter, but I would call him a mobile QB. He's athletic enough, maybe a 4.7+ runner. He runs as needed...enough to get out of trouble.

You to give credit to Mahomes for having the biggest numbers of the 'big number' Texas Tech offense under **Kliff Kingsbury** since he took over Tech in 2013.

392.8 passing yards per game = 2013

351.1 = 2014

382.2 = 2015 (Mahomes)

463.0 = 2016 (Mahomes)



The Historical QB Prospects to Whom Patrick Mahomes Most Compares Within Our System:

A mixed bag of possibilities according to our computer scouting models. **Graham Harrell** and **Brandon Doughty** is what I would figure to see. **Big Ben** and **Philip Rivers**, I did not expect as much. However, Mahomes has more data DNA in common with top QBs in the NFL than not in our system. More of a lean that he is not just a 'system' guy vs. good for college only.

<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>
7.80	Mahomes, Patrick	2017	Texas Tech	75.0	230	64.7%	13.2	16.8	91.3
5.18	Harrell, Graham	2009	Texas Tech	73.1	223	64.5%	12.5	15.9	83.4
10.04	Roethlisberger, B	2004	Miami, Oh	77.0	241	69.5%	13.7	17.4	50.6
6.04	Doughty, Brandon	2016	W. Ky	74.5	220	67.3%	12.0	15.3	55.3
9.86	Rivers, Philip	2004	NC State	77.0	229	68.1%	12.0	14.2	58.1
10.66	Bradford, Sam	2010	Oklahoma	76.3	236	67.0%	13.4	10.3	34.3

*“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:

Beauty will be in the eye of the beholder here. Some are going instantly write off Mahomes as 'another Texas Tech' guy. Some will be in awe of the numbers and make **Big Ben** comparisons. I'm going to guesstimate more of a second round pick because the whole 'always in the shotgun' thing will hurt, and I don't think he'll light it up his personal meetings with NFL coaches like **Mitch Trubisky** or **Davis Webb** will. Mahomes is going to run #3 (at best) among QB prospects this draft season...in an era where not as many NFL teams are as desperate for QBs as usual.

