NFL Draft 2018 Scouting Report: WR Anthony Miller, Memphis

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

*WR-B stands for "Big-WR," a classification we use to separate the more physical, downfield/over-the-top, heavy-red-zone-threat-type WRs. Our WR-S/"Small-WRs" are profiled by our computer more as slot and/or possession-type WRs who are typically less physical and rely more on speed/agility to operate underneath the defense and/or use big speed to get open deep...they are not used as weapons in the red zone as much.

At first blush, I thought **Anthony Miller** was for-sure going to rank as a top 3-5 WR prospect for us…perhaps, even a sneaky threat to be the #1 'smaller' (6'1"/205 or lower) WR prospect in this draft. But then I studied more of his tape and got a hold of the Pro Day numbers, which backed up what I saw on tape, and I realized – Miller is not likely to make an impact in the NFL.

The downbeat outlook doesn't make any sense on the surface…he was so productive in college – 95+ catches and 1,400+ yards and 10+ TDs each of the past two seasons. He has to be a legit prospect, right? He isn't terrible…he's just not as good as you might think at first.

This is a classic case of – best player on a college team, and they smartly go to the well with him as much as they can. With that, the numbers compile and he wins awards, etc., and it's a bit of a head-fake. Memphis had an up-tempo offense and built a lot of it around Miller…a lot short swing passes, bubble screens. He was college good/great and an American Athletic Conference good/great but not a great NFL prospect.

The problem lies on the tape and with his Pro Day/measurables. Two key issues…

1: Miller is not high-end in speed or agility…in fact, his agility might be so poor he never makes it in the NFL.

Miller ran a 4.5 +/- 40-time at his Pro Day. Reports of a 4.48 to 4.55 40-time probably means more of a 4.55-4.60…which is what I would have guessed watching several of his games. He smartly skipped his agility times because I think that would have exposed a true physical problem for translation to the NFL. I'll lay out the case for his poor speed-agility in the stats/next section, but I am here to report from his tape he's one of the stiffest WR prospects I've watched this draft season. Maybe the most obvious lacking 'wiggle' in the class.

2: He could lack 'high end' movement ability and still be a good NFL WR prospect as an interior worker because of his toughness. Very true, but there's one other issue – he has bad hands for a top WR prospect. Like, maybe the worst among the 'name' WR prospects.

Watching him on tape, he just looked a little unnatural. Fighting the ball, double catching passes. He had several drops on easy throws. I'm not a big, hysterical guy on 'drops' because all drops are different – in my judgment Miller has 'bad' drops…gaffing simple screens or swings from time-to-time. Sure, he has times where he makes a nice catch, but that's not the end of the argument. He saw like 150+ targets a season, of course, he'll have some nice grabs. Too many times, though, he fought the ball for a catch and had too many easy drops.

At his Pro Day…the reports were not good (and usually it's all *sugar and spice* reporting from Pro Days) – Miller was double-catching and dropping too many passes for the scouts' liking at a Pro Day…that won't sit well.

Miller made a lot of hay on easy throws in college – screens, swings, beat a guy deep. He's not going to have that luxury in the pros. He's not fast enough to get open nor speedy enough to have screens and swings built for him. He's tough and slower, so they'll try to make him an interior WR over-the-middle…and then his catch-ability flaw might really get pronounced working in traffic.

There are things to like with Miller…he's tough and hard-working. He was a walk-on who became all-everything for Memphis. He benched an impressive 22 reps. He's a tireless worker and gives all he has. You like him, you want him to succeed…but in the end he just doesn't have enough juice for the NFL.

When I watched him in two games against Central Florida in 2017, they didn't even bother to put their top cover guy on Miller all that much (**Mike Hughes**). When Hughes was on Miller…Hughes had no issues keeping up with him. Miller made hay (14-195-3) against the other corner in their second matchup. Hughes shut him down in their first appearance (3-37-0).

In the end, I fear Miller is '*great college player, fringe NFL player…who never makes it*'.

Anthony Miller, Through the Lens of Our WR Scouting Algorithm:

There are two things to point out that I believe start to make the case for Miller as not a great movement guy…

1: Memphis tried to use Miller in every capacity they could, including running the ball. If Miller was a high-end guy with the ball, working against a pretty weak schedule, and saw several jet sweeps, end arounds…you figure he would be pretty solid+ with the work, right?

31 carries with a 4.8 yards per carry average is pretty weak. Last season (2017) -- 10 carries for 25 yards (2.5 ypc).

This confirms what I saw on tape…a very challenged runner. There was no 'pop' or 'wow' when I watched him run the ball. More a sinking feeling that I knew I was watching a dud.

2: He was given the opportunity to return 20 punts over his college career – a measly 6.8 average per return. I never a saw a moment of 'juice' when he tried to return punts.

His receiving numbers are exquisite at a glance – several 10+ catch games and 140+ yard efforts, but I think it's just an indication of getting all the opportunity and doing well with it. Many other college prospects would have killed for his touch count and would have put up better numbers. I can't help but think – if it were **D.J. Moore** at Memphis here instead of Miller, he would have been a star and the #1 WR prospect today hands down…but he went to Maryland and barely saw the ball in a good position (mostly running medium/deep routes with a bad QB).

Miller's numbers, to me, should be taken with the dismissiveness you would with a Texas Tech or Hawaii or whatever high-flying offense you want to consider – we dismiss WRs and QBs at constant throw schools because the opportunity levels are more available. Miller falls in that category.

2018 Combine/Pro Day…

5'11.1"/201, 10.0" hands, 31.63" arms

4.5+ 40-yard dash, DNP agility times

22 bench reps, 39.0" vertical

The Historical WR Prospects to Whom Anthony Miller Most Compares Within Our System:

When I saw **Lance Moore** on the list it made me hopeful for Miller, but then I quickly recalled – Moore had steel trap hands. Miller does not. The comp list top 10 for Miller was Moore and nine guys I don't even remember anything about – not a good sign.

WR Score	Draft Yr	Last	First	College	H	H	W	Power Strngth Metric	Speed Agility Metric	Hands Metric
6.380	2018	Miller	Anthony	Memphis	5	11.1	201	11.28	3.54	6.84
3.732	2016	Burbridge	Aaron	Michigan St	6	0.0	206	9.61	1.23	7.76
4.886	2015	Harris	R.J.	N. Hampshire	5	11.7	191	7.73	-0.39	8.03
5.925	2005	Moore	Lance	Toledo	5	9.0	190	8.97	3.16	9.86
2.824	2014	Washington	Tony	Appalachian St	5	9.7	195	10.31	2.98	4.94

A score of 7.0+ is where we start to take a Small-WR prospect more seriously. A score of 8.50+ is where we see a stronger correlation of a Small-WR going on to become NFL good/great/elite. A score of 10.00+ is more rarefied air in our system and indicates a greater probability of becoming an elite NFL Small-WR.

All of the WR ratings are based on a 0–10 scale, but a player can score negative, or above a 10.0 in certain instances.

Overall WR score = A combination of several on-field performance measures, including refinement for strength of opponents faced. Mixed with all the physical measurement metrics, rated historically in our database.

"Power-Strength" = A combination of unique metrics surrounding physical-size profiling, bench press strength, etc. High scorers here project to be more physical, better blockers, and less injury-prone.

"Speed-Agility" = A combination of unique metrics surrounding speed, agility, physical size, mixed with some on-field performance metrics. High scorers here project to have a better YAC and show characteristics to be used as deep threats/create separation.

"Hands" = A combination of unique metrics surrounding on-field performance in college, considering the strength of opponents played. Furthermore, this data considers some physical profiling for hand size, etc. High scorers here have a better track record of college statistical performance, and overall this projects the combination of performance and physical data for the next level.

2018 NFL Draft Outlook:

Miller is tracking as a fringe top 100 pick, but after his poor Pro Day, I suspect he falls to 125+ overall.

If I were an NFL GM, I'm not interested unless he is a UDFA…and then not all that much interested. I see other sleepers with more physical tools/skills who also dominated FCS or D2, etc.

NFL Outlook:

He will get a shot because of his lauded college career and his great effort levels. In the end, he'll never make it…maybe as a special teamer and #5-6 WR.

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