



## Scouting Report: QB Kyler Murray, Oklahoma

*\*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.*

This scouting report is interesting...filled with all kinds of angles to discuss. This could be a lot of words coming up...

I'll focus on two questions in this scouting report: (1) Is **Kyler Murray** a legit NFL prospect and what's his ceiling or comparisons? (2) Will he/should he choose football over baseball?

The answer to #1 has everything to do with how to answer #2, so we'll start by scouting him as an NFL prospect, and then I'll address the football v. baseball prediction and economics at the end.

If **Tyreek Hill** could pass the ball better than **Lamar Jackson**, but not as well as **Russell Wilson**...you have an idea of the unique, bewildering talent we're dealing with here with **Kyler Murray**. He is not a bad 'passing' QB at all. His passer stats with a Big 12 schedule...stellar. Watching tape of him throwing in games...surprisingly better than what you might pre-judge. His rushing tallies, on paper, are...wonderful. Watching tape of him running...intoxicating.

He's 5'9" or so tall, and a dual-threat runner-passer...so he has an 'image', a preconceived notion. I know I had an image in mind going into this study, but about 1-2 minutes into watching him play, my bias lay crushed and tattered.

To try to convey what I see in Murray, I'm going to invoke seven QB names/comps to try to work from and play off. I hope it helps dial in a proper image...

**1) Tim Tebow** = Murray is nothing like Tebow, anyone who brings up Tebow as a comparison is ridiculous.

**2) Tom Brady** = Murray is nothing like Brady, and that's going to be an issue for the mainstream analysts. It's a bias I tend to have as well. I'm used to/I like the taller pocket passers who make you drop your jaw at how much better they are at passing than anyone on the planet (Brady, Mahomes, Mayfield, et al.).

It's the **Tom Brady**-colored glasses that will make scouts and analysts look like fools here. It happened with the scouting miss on **Russell Wilson**. It happened with the scouting miss on **Baker Mayfield**. It could happen with **Kyler Murray**. The 'height' issue is nearly about to be destroyed as 'a thing'...and Murray may be the one to put the final nail in the coffin. It's why Murray probably got a bad 'projected draft round' idea from 'the committee' (of old farts and some young ones) who are stuck in football



ways from 10-20 years ago – which likely led Murray to think baseball was his best path. But something has changed and we'll get to that.

You use a **Tom Brady** mentality...you're going to miss this. You use a *'I like to go to the mall and touch what I'm buying'*, you're going to miss the deals, increased selection, and ease of shopping on Amazon. You use, *"I'll get a cab (because it's yellow and that makes it official),"* then you'll miss a more efficient Uber/Lfyt. I suspect the NFL establishment is filled with people who aren't comfortable using a computer or the latest technology (thus they often denigrate analytics as 'for nerds'), and I get that, but it sure as hell means they want their QBs a certain way...an established way things 'should be'. The knee jerk reaction will be/is – *Murray is too small to play in the NFL...*and with that there will be no further investigation or consideration.

**Kyler Murray** is not **Tom Brady**...and **Tom Brady** is not **Kyler Murray**.

**3) Lamar Jackson** = LJax was supposedly not going to make it in the league because he's an inaccurate passer and run-first QBs don't last long. Maybe, but he just saved his franchise in the second-half of 2018 season and won the AFC North over the experienced QB-led Steelers.

Murray is a faster runner than Jackson, to my eyes, and a much, MUCH better passer. Not even close comparing their college passer output and tape, and to what I just saw of Jackson in the pros. However, remember, **Lamar Jackson** has a special gift...he doesn't have to be **Tom Brady** when he can run dangerously as a weapon and thus change defensive reactions, schemes, and extend plays to allow receivers to break from coverage, etc.

Murray is not a Jackson-like 'looking to run at all times' QB. Murray is a more cautious running QB, like **Russell Wilson**.

**4) Russell Wilson** = Murray is built more like Wilson...a couple inches smaller and not as heavy/thick, but Murray is pretty muscular/built. Again, Murray looks like **Tyreek Hill** playing QB...Tyreek takes on a lot of tackles every week/season, and so far so good – and, like Hill, Murray has a muscular, lean, sturdy frame.

Murray is a smart runner like Wilson...he runs and looks to get down anywhere near contact. He's not trying to be a hero.

Murray is faster than Wilson. At his NFL Combine, Wilson ran a 4.5+ 40-time, and I suspect Murray is 4.4+. He was supposedly hand-timed at 4.38, which probably means in the 4.48 range.



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Murray is not the lethal assassin passer Wilson is. Murray looks a lot like Wilson, mechanically, but I would deem Wilson as the superior passer (reader of defenses and throwing into tight windows). Wilson is an 'A' passer...Murray more a C+/B-.

**5) Cam Newton** = Murray isn't anywhere as big as Newton, physically, as a runner, but if I needed to get down the field 80 yards with 1:30 left and one timeout – I'd want Murray throwing the ball, not Cam. Murray is a more talented passer than Cam or **Lamar Jackson** or Tebow, but not as talented as **Russell Wilson**.

**6) Michael Vick** = The closest thing to Murray as a runner at QB is Vick. Blazing speed and good instincts/evasiveness. Can be thousand-yard rushers in the NFL. Only, Murray is a much better passer. Vick could throw the ball 100MPH but threw right into coverage all the time. Murray isn't far off with arm strength, a very talented/gifted arm, but Murray is a much smarter passer reading the defense and making quick decisions.

Vick was so dangerous running he created passing opportunities. Murray the same, only a better passer...but 2-3 inches shorter. Murray probably a little thicker/sturdier than Vick.

**7) Patrick Mahomes** = Murray was raised in the new era of quarterbacking. He's well-schooled as a runner-passer. The guy just led the Big 12 in Completion Percentage, passing yards, passing TDs, and passer efficiency...and led the country in passing yards per attempt. He won the Heisman. He's not just a 'right place, right time' lucky QB who runs around a bunch. He was undefeated in high school as a starting QB. He won the high school football Player of the Year award. He's the only person to make the Under Armour High School All-Star Elite game in both baseball in Football. He's going to be a 1st-round draft pick in major league baseball and professional football. Murray is no joke.

I mention Mahomes, who was also a baseball/football star (though not like Murray) – Murray played QB better (statistically) in the same conference in college and was more sought after for baseball purposes. And, I see Murray making some athletic throws that are amazing...just like Mahomes. Why? Because Murray is super-athletic. You know all those 'how did he do that?' throws from Mahomes this year? Murray has some of that as well...he just does it standing 4-5 inches shorter, and he isn't as gifted in ball placement as Mahomes. If I needed to get 80-yards in 1:30 remaining with one timeout – I'd want Mahomes as my arm to ride.

To some degree, we have never seen a talent like Murray...so, it's hard for anyone to classify him. And then the easy thing to do is assume the worst...fear the 'what ifs?'



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Let's talk about the negatives...

-- *Murray is short.*

I mean...I'm pretty much done with this 'short' argument. We all are trained to think that 6'2"+ is what you have to have to be a successful NFL QB. Why? Well, think about it...we learned this from football people who are non-stop wrong about everything in football, and always wrong on QB scouting...and told us for seven years how bad (tall) **Nick Foles** was. Why do we assume THEY know what they are talking about on height for QBs?

Being taller would be nice, I guess, but if Brees-Mayfield-Wilson are arguably three of the best 6-7 QBs in the NFL and likely all future Hall of Famers, then you can take your 6'2"+ requirement and shove it. It doesn't even hold up statistically anymore. When it was just Brees (and **Doug Flutie**) it was an 'aberration'...now, it's normal/fine.

What if the problem, for years, wasn't a few inches of height, but idiot coaches convincing all the short players they couldn't be QBs, so they just never pursued it? There was a time 'black quarterbacks' were not seen to be 'fit' for the *oh so complicated* NFL. Ask **Patrick Mahomes** how complicated the NFL was his first year of play or **Dak Prescott**. From the same minds likely came 'short QBs are not built for the NFL'. We also had 'Running QBs are not good for the NFL'. 'System QBs are not good translating to the NFL' and 'Lefthanded QBs are not good in the NFL'. Really...I think all this was bad coaching and bad perceptions we all just bought in on because we believed people in lab coats and people with coaching whistles and clipboards were smarter about things than us.

NFL coaches like 'tall and sucks, but we'll fix him' rather than 'shorter and ready-made good at what they do'. Let's not allow them and their stupid, antiquated always-wrong axioms rule our decision making without even realizing it's happening. You go listen to **Norv Turner** or **Bruce Arians** or **Jeff Fisher** or **John Fox** or **Steve Wilks** types. I think I'll explore new thinking.

-- *Murray is too small, not thick enough to take NFL hits.*

He doesn't take that many hits. He slides, with his baseball training, on almost every run. Besides, a lot of 180+ pound guys take some hits. Many deliver hits as DBs or RBs or WRs...they take more hits than a smart running QB will. This is an overblown argument we believe but if we think about it...we're not even sure why.

You enjoyed **Phillip Lindsay** as a lead RB this year...at 180+ pounds? Guys that small can't be lead-RBs either, right? Don't trust smaller **Tyreek Hill** or **Tarik Cohen** either.

-- *Murray's got a little attitude.*

What NFL coaches hate more than 'short' is 'not slavishly following everything I say'...they hate



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'independent' (see: Mayfield), they hate unorthodox (see: Tebow), they hate 'distractions' (see: Kaepernick). They do like **Cody Kessler** and **Chase Daniel** because they're 'the first guy in and last to leave'...never mind that they pretty well suck at football, and that undrafted QBs from 2018 scrambling to make the league this year are already better than these guys. There are QB lack-of-talents that have to con their way to a job by being 'first in'/kissing the coach's ass...and coaches LOVE it.

RUN MY SCRIPTED PLAYS I've been working with since 1975!! That's not Murray.

Murray is not blue collar like Mayfield (or **Gardner Minshew**), he's more diva-ish...or he comes off that way a little. More Deion Sanders-like. He doesn't smack of 'Grinder' or 'Gym Rat'...because he doesn't have to be. He's a natural talent. I'm not sure how well coaches or teammates will take to Murray. He's not as natural a leader as Dak or Baker, in my early opinion. Murray is not repulsive, he's just not a CEO worker...he's just great at making plays on a football field.

*-- He isn't a polished passer...or 'he's a system QB'.*

Murray is not a high-end polished passer. He is not as accurate throwing over the middle as I like to see in my QBs. He tends to force passes because he's so gifted and it works a lot (like Mahomes did in college), but he doesn't have the natural accuracy Mahomes-Mayfield do throwing meticulously into tight windows. But, again, I say...you don't get Murray to be your **Tom Brady**. Murray is a unique weapon that needs to have things built around him and not just be forced into a West Coast or whatever system.

When Murray has time, or when he's on the run – he shows a lot of natural arm talent and accuracy. I'd say he's like a **Deshawn Watson**, only better, as a spread offense passer/reader of the defense. He's accurate enough, but he's not high-end accurate in the pocket throwing into tight windows...he's good enough, not terrible...and he comes with all the other benefits.

**Kyler Murray** could change the NFL as we know it...a nuclear bomb about to go off and change the perception of quarterbacking forever – bringing the pro game closer to the more interesting, advanced college game of passing/offense.

It all depends upon the landing spot. He goes to **Doug Marrone** in Jacksonville to become a gimmick handing the ball off a lot – he'll be erratic and have a restrictive lid forced upon him. Put him with **Kliff Kingsbury**, who knows Murray and adores his abilities -- and the Arizona Cardinals will be one of the hottest tickets in the NFL. Murray will turn a franchise around in an instant.

Would you rather see a game with **Josh Rosen** starting...or **Kyler Murray** starting? You know the answer...and thus you know why Murray is going to go high in the NFL Draft. If I'm a new NFL head coach, in an industry where I'm likely to be fired in 2-3 years regardless...do I try to out-Brady teams with my lacking, boring, capable **Josh Rosen** or **Joe Flacco** signing – or do I shove all my chips in on a



total game changer with Murray and make a legacy for myself...or, if I'm wrong, I get fired in 2-3 years anyway because it doesn't work out.

Drafting and installing Murray as a starter Week 1 in 2019 is trying to change history. Bypassing Murray for whatever Alabama or Ohio State player the mainstream is pushing makes you like the 30 other non-Belichick/McVay teams – and counting down to your failure and firing. I'd *go for it* with Murray...and then if I fail with him, I take my fat NFL money still due after being fired and go back to coaching college.

### Kyler Murray, Through the Lens of Our QB Scouting Algorithm:

His two seasons at Oklahoma...69.8% Comp. Pct., 45 TDs/7 INTs, 7+ yards per carry, a 200+ passer rating – it's all amazing. It's not dinking and dunking, not at all – the #1 in the NCAA with 11.6 yards per attempt in 2018 season.

Against his toughest defensive opponents, Alabama, Texas (2x), TCU, Army, Iowa State...19 TDs/2 INT with 3 rushing TDs.

Against Alabama, a game they were down 28-0 and then got back into in the 2nd-half (got to 31-20), Murray threw for 308 yards, 2 TDs/0 INTs, and rushed for 109 yards and a TD.

Statistically, Murray had one of the best seasons, weighted by strength of opponent, that my system has ever seen...as a passer.

Murray is listed as 5'10", but 5'9" may be more likely. More telling than his height will be his speed. If he's a 4.5+ runner...then a little air comes out of the balloon, a bit. If he's a 4.4+ runner, then 'game on' as a weapon. If he's a 4.3+ runner, then he's a weapon of mass destruction headed towards the NFL.

### The Historical QB Prospects to Whom Kyler Murray Most Compares Within Our System:



You'll see **Vernon Adams** as the top comp, and you'll probably push back a little on the Murray excitement. However, I believe Adams was screwed over by the NFL...Adams missed a better window for a player like him to enter the league by a year or two. He deserved a chance to show off in the NFL. However, I think Adams might have had some off-field issues as well. He destroyed FCS and then D1 play as a dual threat guy, but he was not as fast or electric as Murray. Really, Murray is a mash-up of all the comp QBs listed here...the good and the bad.

He's better than Adams, but not as good as Wilson...somewhere in-between.

<u>QB-Score</u>	<u>Last</u>	<u>First</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>8.809</b>	Murray	Kyler	2019	Oklahoma	69.0	190	68.3%	16.4	10.2	72.5
<b>8.283</b>	Adams	Vernon	2016	Oregon	71.0	201	66.9%	17.0	10.5	35.1
<b>10.306</b>	Wilson	Russell	2012	Wisconsin	70.6	210	70.3%	13.4	10.4	38.9
<b>8.895</b>	Mayfield	Baker	2018	Oklahoma	73.0	215	70.6%	15.5	11.2	58.4
<b>0.222</b>	Vick	Michael	2001	Virginia Tech	72.0	210	53.5%	16.0	24.7	31.1

\*“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 on to 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 the 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.

**2019 NFL Draft Outlook:**

This will be the debate of 2019: Should Murray be a top NFL draft pick? Should he play baseball instead? What team will take him so highly?

First off, the top pick in the 2019 NFL Draft will make \$22M guaranteed. You can forget about him playing baseball (and the \$4.7M deal Oakland paid him) if Murray is a top 20 or so NFL draft pick. If he's top 10 NFL Draft pick...then it's not even a close decision, monetarily. I think he will be a top 10 pick, so I'm sure he's going to be in the NFL.

So, what team will take him that highly? Look no further than the #1 draft pick – Arizona Cardinals. **Kliff Kingsbury** knows all about Murray. Kingsbury would want to run an offense just like what Murray would offer. Season ticket sales would skyrocket for the home field challenged Cardinals.



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I think Murray will go #1, and if he doesn't, some team will move up to get him top 10 – he's a game changer on the field and at the box office. Plus, Murray has leverage...major league baseball. He can also send word that if he isn't drafted by a team he wants to go to – then he's going to the MLB and leaving an NFL high & dry. Possibly, Arizona trades into the top 10 and keeps their #1 and drafts Murray top 5-10?

**Josh Rosen?** Trade or keep, if you're Arizona. You're not beating **Baker Mayfield** or **Patrick Mahomes** or **Sean McVay** or **Bill Belichick** with a sound **Josh Rosen** unless the planets all align one particular season. You got a shot at something radical here with Murray – you take it if you're Arizona and clean up the mess later if you're wrong. Hell, look at the damage done just from hiring **Steve Wilks!**

One way or the other, Murray goes top 10 to a team he wants to play for. His agent will quietly let certain teams know to not bother (and those teams will blab it).

### NFL Outlook:

Gets drafted by Arizona/**Kliff Kingsbury** and changes football as we know it.

Starts Week 1 and becomes one of the hottest watches/tickets around and a top fantasy football player, especially in 4pts per pass TD leagues – arguably the top QB in fantasy from Week 1 of 2019...IF IN ARIZONA with Kingsbury.

If he fails, he takes his nice guaranteed money and jumps over to baseball in a few years. Kingsbury goes back to college football.

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